LITERARY SPACE AND THE PRINT MEDIA IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM. THE EXAMPLES OF THE *NEW NIGERIAN* AND *THE GUARDIAN* NEWSPAPERS

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D) ENGLISH (LITERATURE)

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation entitled: "Literary Space and the Print Media in Northern Nigeria: A Study of literature and Journalism. The examples of the *New Nigerian* and *Guardian* newspapers," has been carried out by me in the department of English and Literary Studies. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Carmel Aseer Igba Luga

Name of Student Signature Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled **LITERARY SPACE AND THE PRINT MEDIA IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM. THE EXAMPLES OF THE *NEW NIGERIAN* AND *THE GUARDIAN* NEWSPAPERS** by CARMEL ASEER IGBA LUGA meets the regulations governing the award of Doctor of Philosophy of the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, and is it approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

PROF SANI ABBA ALIYU CHAIRMAN SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE	SIGN	DATE
PROF TANIMU A.N. ABUBAKAR MEMBER SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE	SIGN	DATE
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PROF A. Z. HASSAN DEAN SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES	SIGN	DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God and to the lovely children he gave me who complete my joy.

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ABSTRACT

This study is titled "Literary Space and the Print Media in Northern Nigeria: A Study of Literature and Journalism. The Examples of the New Nigerian and the Guardian Newspapers," proceeds on the argument that, both literature and journalism lay claim to the same historical material as their ontological bases. Overtime, they have operated as distinct disciplines but their inter-displinary relationship is reinforced by the current advances in cultural studies which interrogates the categories of literary, non-literary or sub-literary texts. The work deploys one of the theories of Post Structuralism called New Historicism as its analytical framework. In New Historicism texts are viewed as the many discourses of a culture. There is no hierarchy of texts or the separation amongst texts as literary, non-literary or historical material. It does not interpret history as proceeding linearly, but privileges many strands of narratives. Within New Historicist discourse the research argues that literary materials published in conventional medium like textbooks or journals that appear in the format of newspaper exist as materials of co-ordinate importance to literary studies. The research undertook an empirical survey in some Universities in Northern Nigeria. Two hundred and sixty-eight (268) questionnaires were administered to the sample population comprised of students and lecturers. The Literary editor of the New Nigerian newspaper was also interviewed. This study contends that the association between literature and journalism is fostered by evolving nature of literature that is grounded in post modern literary trends.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

English studies; its language and literature are rooted in Western civilization of the British Isles. The British are made up of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which is comprised of England, Wales, Scotland (Britain) and Northern Ireland, with its capital situated at London. Christianity which engendered writing spread in from Palestine. A major attraction to Christianity was literacy. The Roman script was introduced by the missionariies for writing both Old English and Latin. The need to initially produce a literate populace has been an endearing characteristic of Christainity and the Islamic religions. In Northern Nigeria the pull of literacy has been an instrument that the two religions used to undermine or incorporate the ancient oral traditions that existed before their presence in the region.

Over a period of many centuries dating from about 1066 AD the lexicon of the old English has developed through borrowing, adaptation of words from other languages and compounding. The emphasis of the study is not on the evolution of the English language but its general history is germane to the development of literature. The major genres that were operational in about 1066AD were poetry and prose. A classic of the period is the *Beowulf*, an epic poem. Its narrativity is blended with "…pre-christian and Christian elements" (Jowitt, 26). Other poetic themes were drawn from religion and morality. Prose was also written by mostly clerics and priests. Works of the medevial English society were read by a select group of people who were literate in Latin, French, and Middle English languages, this correlates to northern Nigeria society when a few Muslim clerics was literate in the Arabic script. In Britain, was about the 13 and 14 centuries that the English language began to establish itself over Latin. It is also of note that the Romans who were the early colonizers of the British

Isles carried over influences from Greek civilization into the aisles. And the English also passed over these literary influences to the nations they colonized. That is why studies in Greek philosophy are studies in African educational institutions. Writing in English society of the 17th century was a mixture of fact, fantasy, history and political events. The genres of literature in the form diaries, letters, and philosophical writings flourished. It is also the period that aided the association of different forms of writing which were enmeshed with one another literature was anything that was written. Writng was also viewed as intellectual labour. There is the example of John Dryden who earned his living through writing.

The study traces a general evolution of English of literature. Literacy engendered writing and in literate cultures, literature was propagated into many forms of writing as tales, narratives and stories in the form of religious writing, history, political exploits, and philosophy. Consequently, fictional writing before the 18th century was not clearly distinguished in form and technique, biography, epistolary form, picaresque writing, were all classed as prose. Many novels of the eighteenth century have fictional characters and scenes but they also contain empirical evidences of the events that they narrate, for example, writing about piracy is infused with a lot of historical material about the activities of pirates. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is a case to cite.

1.2 The Bond and the Tension between Literature and Journalism

Britain became a foremost industrial society during the reign of Queen Victoria which lasted between1837-1901. It is also known as the age of enlightenment when liberal humanist ideals flourished. The economic and social changes also spilled to literature. The genres of literature expanded beyond poetry to include the novel and other non-fictioan prose works in the form of philosophy, travel writing, children's fiction, journalism which appeared in the form of reportage and investigative writing, and other writings (because it was not yet known by the name of journalism).. The novel evolved into a complex genre for example, the novels

of Charles Dickens were known for their complex plots. They portrayed the social life of the variegated English society created by the industial age. Writers of the novel exploited the spaces in newspapers for publication. The relationship between literature and the print media was aided by the advances in print technology. With the printing presses, paper materials were churned out in large numbers. The emergence of the printing presses has been described by a reviewer for *The Times* as "the great event of modern history" (qtd in Ruperty, 7).

Therefore, early literature in its publishable form was therefore sustained by the print culture. Wilkie Collins, in an article describes the period as the "age of periodicals" (qtd in Ruperty, 5)). Literature of this time has been described as periodic literature after the media through which it was extensively published. The major aim of the printing presses was to satisfy the yearnings of a mass reading public. These were the new and rising middle class, the elite, newly-educated, who emerged with the industrial revolution in Britain, for whom reading and writing was prestigious activity and also a mark of civilization. The publishing agencies that did not publish on a daily basis were named periodicals. Ruperty notes that periodicals were "a complex cultural artifact" He explains further that, the authorship of the periodicals was polyvocal and writing in periodicals was a "collaboration among proprietors, editors, writers, illustrators and even advertisers" within this set up it was difficult to locate and define the literary text (8). The quarterly and monthly periodicals were written in the fashion of belles lettres, also referred to as "higher journalism" for the middle class. The dailies were meant for the reading attention of the masses, while the weekly papers bridged the divide between the middle and lower classes in society (Ruperty, 8).

A writer, Underwood, corroborates that in earlier times, especially during Victorian times, "fiction, journalism, the novel, popular literature, biography, narrative or interpretive history, the topical essay, the short story, humour writing, the advice column, literary criticism, journal keeping, travel writing" were blended, intermingled and appeared together

in periodicals, pamphlets and newspapers (3). Historians documenting these early developments observe that both journalists and literary scholars lay claim to the same materials as their ontological sources for intellectual studies. Underwood also highlights that journalism and literature were not known by their current names until the 19th century. He cites the example of James Boswell, the Biographer of the famous English writer, Samuel Johnson. Boswell who wrote many things that included making notes in his journal in the evening, working as a columnist for a periodical, writing travel literature and quoting sayings from people in his social circle. And all these got published as either news, fictional or non-fictional works in newspapers or magazines.

In their evolution literature and journalism were without hierarchical distinction in newspaper publication. Journalism and literature served writers' purposes at many stages of writing. Writers who started their writing careers as journalists also used their experiences in reportage in the creative production of the novels they wrote. Wadsworth (1) notes that, newspapers have played an important role as "popularizers of literature and as instructors to a mass audience (and reading populace)." Through the aegis of print production in theVictorian era, Charles Dickson, a literary personality and an investigative journalist, used his research into the poor working conditions of the proletariate as the basis and substance of his novels. This background establishes that the novel from around the 1700 has been a "mixture of reportage (journalism) dialogue (drama) and poetry" (Wadsworth 1). Before the 19th century, journalists were called editors or writers without differentiation and their mark of identity was the newspaper and the publishing houses which produced them. Many newspapers were also published and edited by great literary figures like Samuel Johnson and Jonathan Swift. A historical tour illustrates that, journalism like literature during this period was multidimensional; occurring as information in the form of news, documentary letters or memoirs, long essay or narratives. From the foregoing, writers disrupt and blur the

boundaries that separate literature and journalism in the print media. This is achieved in many ways; they use the special features of newspaper or dailies to feature literature and journalistic writing. Writers also deployed the techniques associated with writings in literature to write captivating feature stories and other news items while the adopted "journalistic methodology for developing realistic plots" for fictional works (Underwood 4).

In the 18th and 19th century literature was comprised of "a whole set of ideological institutions, periodicals, coffee houses, social and aesthetic treatise, sermons, classical translations, Guidebooks to manners and morals" Theses institutions and circles where public readings were done, were to cristalize into intellectual movements (Eagleton 17). Literary genres continued to evolve as distinct forms of writing. Mathew Arnold, a prominent poet and critic of the Victorian age, described the 18th century as the "age of prose" (qtd in Bate 438). He was preoccupied with the dignity of critical thinking and the value of literature. In his renowned book: *Culture and Anarchy* published in1869, he distinguishes between culture, which he termed refined reasoning, and the popular forms. He defines culture as "an activity of the mind" that is curious and thirsty for knowledge (Bate, 438). For him, poetry became the effective tool of education and the means to developing a "total man" (Bate, 441). He was in the vangauard of writers who insisted that poetry must be written in sublime language. "A requirement without which it would have no character of its own" (Jowitt 206). Poetic language was to be different from the every day languge associated with prose writing. The criteria caused Victorian poets to revert to outdated language usages. In this venture, poetry gained prominence over the novel; the prose form acquired negative connotations and was considered inferior to poetry because it was associated with familiar language usage. The entrenchment of the ideals of English civilization and culture was realized in elevated and sublime language of poetry.

Satre also explores a historical disengagement of literature from other forms of writings classified as non-literary. He contends that, in the 19th century, Literature disengaged from "religious ideology" and proceeded to "assert its autonomy." It identified itself with the "mind…with the permanent power of forming and criticizing ideas." Literature advanced by experimenting with methods of writing and techniques epecially "towards current forms of drama and the novel, free verse and the criticism of language"(91). Writers did not write for what Satre calls a "virtual public." Once it had skewed its readership and created an elite class. Literature was no longer willing give up "some of the exquisite form of narrative, poetry, and even reasoning for the sole reason that they would be in accessible to readers without culture" (91). Literature was distinquished as *belles letrres,* sublime writing which was of the medeval and classical nature superior to other forms of writing. This definition of literature is part of the historical matrice of bourgoise values that came into prominence during a period gnenrally referred to as liberal humanism. The 'purification' of literature and the need to maintain the distinction of literature as a caatgory heightened in the era of the Modernist movement that took root in Britain, America and France. It began in the 19th century and concretized in the 20th century. Concepts like "socialism" and "realism" became the finer versions of the enlightment. During this time, aestheticism was expressed in prose, poetry and the emerging genre of drama. Literary criticism also became a feature of literature it was developed as an intellectual and academic exercise. Literary writers promoted the aesthetic integrity of their work. Prominent among them are Eliot, Woolf, who accorded literature a ''privileged status in relation to other forms of writing'' (Ruperty, 14). The newspapers became the avenue for championing the separation between the literature and journalism, through persuasion by writers like Mathew Arnold and Henry James convinced readers about the ''privileged status of literature''over other forms of writings that did not have the qualities of creativity and imagination (Ruperty, 'Victorian Print Culture,''14

The preoccupation with creativity and aestheticism, the beauty of creating art for its sake without reference or influence from the society was a major project of 20th century literature.. It was made into a serious subject of study by F.R.Leavis, Q.D. Leavis, I.A. Richards and others after them. Before this time, studies in English were considered as trivial subjects that could not compare with serious professions like Medicine and Engineering. Before the 1920s, the study of English was for women of the rising middle class who were grudgingly admitted into the academic circles. Consequently, the Leavis established *Scrutiny* in 1932. The journal *Scrutiny* emphasized critical analysis, described by Eagleton as "a disciplined attention to the 'words on the page' (Eagleton 32). In literature, creativity was manifest. And the demarcation between great literature and popular forms became pronounced.

Studying English at Cambridge became prestigious and valuable. English studies at the time, was superior to law, Science, Politics and History. *Scrutiny* re-structured the English curriculum. It made demarcation about types of writing known as genres. Intellectual activity separated writing into literary, non-literary and sub-literary texts. The Journal was also the crusader of moral and Cultural Revolution. The Leavisites were the true inheritors of Mathew Arnold. The Journal, *Scrutiny* contended that studying English and its literature was a mark of civilization. English studies also imbibed the ideas of the New Criticism school proponded by I.A. Richards in America. Texts written by English authors were also set apart as great works of a writing tradition that are of ancient value and of a timeless nature. English studies also imbibed the ideas of the New Criticism school proponded by I.A Richards in America. Texts written by English authors were also set apart as great works of a writing tradition that are of ancient value and of a timeless nature. English therefore became the "repository of high cultural values" (Ashcroft, 11). Eagleton argues that changes and developments in literature are more than 'literary' they are influenced and tailored by politics, culture and the

prevailing tastes and values of the time. Literature existing within this ambit is a historical invention as well as an ideological one. It means that its development is always influenced by circumstances that are extrinsic to its categorization as a discipline.

In distinguishing journalism, Easley rejects the pervading view that, journalism is an apprenticeship to prepare the writer for serious writing in literature. It should instead be understood that, journalism allows the authors to "experiment with different personae and intellectual interest (qtd in Ruperty 12). Essentially, they are both divergent in the form, technique, methodology and ethics that they adopt to achieve communication, while they explore similar subject matter. Newspapers as a medium of communication are an invention of the the Modern European society. Before the advent of newspapers in Britain and other parts of Europe News was written in the form of newbooks and news ballads and only one story was told. These were a carry-over of the Roman Empire. Stephens (1) describes a newspaper as a publication that is printed regulary and frequently. Its contents are "news about a wide variety of current events." In Europe newspaper printing was made possible by the invention of the letter printing machine in 1441 by the German Johnnes Gutenburg. The printing press also made books cheaper. Early newspapers were published in Britain in the 17th century. These were the *Daily Universal Register*. It was first published in1788 and later re-named *The Times* in 1814. Others are the *Observer* 1791, The *Manchester Guardian* (1821) later *The Guardian.*

The Newspaper has features that distinquishes it, the staff of newspaper houses are reporters, writers, photographers and graphic artists. Editors are the ones who assign duties to the reporters to get the news. They also check the stories by editing them, the editors write the headlines and also plan the layout of the paper. An editor- in -chief supervises the entire staff. The presentation of news is also associated with the fast lane of city life and criminal reporting. The newspapers venture disseminates information it also promotes commerce

through advertisement. Newspapers also provide entermainent to the readers through comic strips and cross puzzles. News media became part of the widening market economy and the commodified relations, of a commercial society. Journalism targeted mass readership. News informs the readers faster than the novel. Journalism was aligned to commercial news. News in the media is a commercial commodity that keeps pace with current, daily and minute by minute happenings. Therefore one of its distinguishing features is the insistence and ability to meet or keep deadlines. Journalism dwells in the present moment. It is fast-paced and keeps abreast with happenings around the world that are news at the time. Newspapers have gone ahead to quickly key into the advantages of putting news on the World Wide Web.

Owing to the emergence of cultural studies, the separation between literature and journalism has blurred. Some modernist writers use the tools of journalism, for example James Joyce's *Ulysses* adopts the broadsheet form of newspapers by 'bringing together discordant material with no obvious connections'' (Kiberd, cited in Ruperty, 15). In essence, the journalists who at other times were novelists enjoy the freedom of writing in the unlimited world of fiction. Fishkin in *Fact to Fiction* (qtd in underwood 2010 p.10) notes that a category of journalist found the rules of practicing journalism restrictive, as such they sought to express themselves freely through fiction. Writers of the emergent forms of creative nonfiction or new new journalism adopt techniques from literature and journalism and merge them in their writings. These are caught within the gray area that Ruperty calls them "crossover" writers. (15) They exhibit the use of reportorial technique and factual investigation in the materials they write. Ruperty also insists that the:

> interplay between the media and literature is a continuation rather than a departure from the dynamics visible in the 19th century when Victorian novelists drew upon the press both as a means of formal innovation and as a countertext against which to define their own fictional discourse. (p.15)

New Journalists of the 1970s like Tom Wolfe and Gay Talese are reawakening an old form of writing. Their works affirm that the combination of journalistic principles and the narrative techniques of the novel reinforce the disciplines. Underwood (8) notes that literary figures are "connected to the world of journalism"and they also contributed to the development of the literary canon in the eighteenth century when the novel and other forms of writing were emerging. The experiences of these writers as journalists have influenced their literary philosophies. The diminished lines amongst high culture, the media and popular performances signal a return to pre-nineteen century. The fresh changes are propelled by Post Modern theories. These are held together by the common feature of undermining tradition and institutions and by a consistent effacement of objects.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Research into mass communication and other disciplines is an on-going phenomenon which digs into the relationship that exists between the mass media and other disciplines within the Humanities. Interdisciplinary studies in the mass media recognise the relationship between the mass media and literature. Best (182) discusses the early links between literature and journalism in Northern Nigeria especially as both were published by the same corporation; Gaskiya Corporation. In her research, *The Guardian* tops the list of media preference by the public with a frequency of 65 readers and the *New Nigerian'*s frequency is 17 readers. This puts it in fifth position as preferred by her sample population at the time. These figures are important to the present research because the two newspapers, *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* are the subject of its study. Best submits that literary write ups are a "regular reading feature of newspapers" (182). Ironically, they record the lowest consistent readership, registering a frequency of 20 people. From the foregoing, it is evident that newspaper publication of literary features is meant to serve literature's interest and despite recording a low readership, newspapers have continued to feature literary materials.

Bamidele (1) explores the intersections between literature and sociology by examining how sociological sources influence literary creativity. He criticises conservatives and Leavisites who insist that the "sacrosanct nature of literature is left to the scrutiny of words on pages". Literary theory is linked with multiple disciplines. It draws materials from sociology, history, political science, psychology and the like. Literary sociologists argue that the social, cultural and political matters discussed in fiction have a bearing on society. The ways in which literature relates with sociology extends the frontiers of literature. The social environment from which the writer gets his materials to create the text is part of the study of literature. It is still the same society that houses the text as a referential document. He demonstrates that literature can actually relate with most disciplines in ways that are beneficial to the disciplines. In all these relationships, literature illuminates and is illuminated by other fields. The approach cited above relates to the present study because both are concerned with literary development as part of social processes. Literature by its nature interacts with other disciplines in a relationship that modifies literature and whatever it comes in contact with

The relationship between literature and journalism influences literary trends especially when it is viewed within the phenomenon of continually evolving literary theory. Literary theory is made up of many discourses such as Formalism/ structuralism and many strands of post structuralism. Others are psychoanalytic discourse, reader response criticism, New Historicism/cultural materialism. There are latest additions like Post Colonial discourse, Eco criticism, Queer theories et cetera. This present study contends that association between literature and journalism modifies literary theory and its canonical institution. The present study explores another area of research. It examines other forms through which literary phenomenon is extended and modified by the non-literary aspects of journalism. Literary materials in newspapers appear in a different form from the 'normal' textbooks or journals

that are know and widely accepted to be a feature of literature. There is need to explore literature that takes on the features of journalism, appears in newspapers and is written in the form of news.

The research is premised on the following propositions:

i. Literary works appear in new light when linked with journalism and this relationship blurs the traditional separation between literary and non-literary materials.

ii. Literary materials published in newspaper are not adequately used for the purposes of literary research.

iii. Research into newspapers reveals certain aspects about 'canonical' writers and their works and the non-literary aspects that influence them

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of the Study are to:

i Show that literary materials in newspapers have helped to build up the body of critical materials that sustain literary studies, thus contributing to literary development.

ii Deploy New Historicism as a viable tool for the study of the relationship between literature and journalism

1.5 Justification for the Study

Since the emergence of Cultural Studies in the 1970s, the expansion of mass media activities into the literary terrain has been acknowledged as a form of literature. This is aligned with popular culture phenomenon which is studied alongside music, gestures and other popular culture activities. This study argues that the literary institution ignores the role that the print media has played to project literary activity in the form of popularizing creative outputs, critical write-ups and sustaining the production of literature. Literary features in *The Guardian* and *New Nigerian* newspapers, for instance have existed for as long as the papers were established. Initially as bits in the columns: 'arts and entertainment' of the respective

newspapers and later as consistent and definite literary features. Regular literary writing is featured as the "The Write-stuff" in *New Nigerian* and the "Guardian Literary Series" in the *Guardian* newspapers. The literary features create a relationship between literature and Journalism of a multidisciplinary interest that should be explored.

The production of literature is not confined to traditional publishing institutions like Heinemann, Macmillian and the like, therefore in situations of publishing bottlenecks and huddles, literary materials that would ordinarily have remained unpublished and unknown, have an opportunity to be made public through serialization of primary texts, reviews and critical write-ups in newspapers. In some case even where texts get published by the institutional publishing houses, newspapers still remain the first public announcer of literary texts. Newspaper publication of literary materials complements textbooks, journals, seminar papers and other critical materials by being part of the culture of criticism that literature depends on to thrive. There is a need to acknowledge newspapers contribution to the sustainance of literature. A reading of these two newspapers shows that many of the writers of both primary and critical texts are academics or researchers in the field of literary studies, teaching and researching largely in Nigerian universities. A paradoxical situation exists whereby university academics use newspaper publications for professional advancement but fail to adequately recognise and acknowledge them as part of the institution of literary criticism. The historical relation of literature and journalism yield that a good number of writings were first serialised on the pages of newspaper before the materials were bound as books. A example to cite is the writings of Samuel Johnson in the form of biographies, memoirs, essays, poems and critical works. These were published in periodical of the 18th century print tecnology.

Again educational policies are best formulated when concrete evidences are obtained from people and learners in the school environment or away from school. In literary studies,

empirical investigation is unpopular. Traditional literary studies or its core areas concentrate on theoretical discussion. For instance, literary approaches like Reader Response, Phenonmenology and Hermerneutics that have their tenets based on theoretical assumptions will benefit immensely from empirical research. The literary curriculum does not have inclusions of empirical studies except for oral poetry. Indeed the narrow confines of literary studies, does not encourage empiricism. Hanauer contends that "literary education is by definition an empirical situation and as such will benefit from utilizing both an empirical and theoretical approach" (169).

In pedagogical situations, teachers interact with students through asking them questions in class, allow students to express their views and administer continuous assessments, this is a form of empirical data generation. It is through empirical investigation that knowledge on a subject with already formulated theoretical approach is broadened. As the current research indicates, sometimes, responses are contrary to the "idealizations that tend to be inherent in a purely theoretical approach" (Hanauer, 169). Again a survey of concrete objects (in this case, humans who are the readers, audience or recipients of literary materials) broadens literary studies and as Hanauer argues it "counter(s) …dogmatic responses that sometimes permeate discussions of educational practice." (169). There is the established practice that a literary discourse must be grounded in theory. But, empiricism will ultimately produce evidences to enhance the position of theoretical inquiry. An empirical study is thus undertaken to ascertain the extent to which researchers in the literary field are preoccupied with newspapers as viable materials for academic purposes.

1.6 Literature in Northern Nigeria

It is general knowledge that oral literature existed in all ethnic groups in Nigeria before the coutry first had contact with the Arab world as was the case in Northern Nigeria and the southern part of Nigeria with Europe and the subsequent spread of European

influence over all of Nigeria. The evolution of written literature in Northern Nigeria has a long history that is linked with the spread of Islam. Sani (13) traces these early beginnings. The faith spread through Kanem-Borno. "Early merchant scholars from the Islamic centers of Timbuktu and Ghana the ruling dynasties were the first targets of conversion." The writer chronicles that Islam reached Borno around the 11th century and arrived Hausa land in the 14th century. It was spread to Kano by Muslim Dyula (wangarawa) merchants. Muslim traders brought with them religion and a new way of life that included literacy. Islamic literacy dominates the Hausa oral culture, leaving only remnants that were later absorbed into the Arabic written culture. Pilaszewich makes the point that: "The strong impact of Islam upon the Hausa people has caused the almost complete disappearance of their original beliefs" (qtd in Sani, "The Beginning of Literature" 13). It is therefore of note that, even before physical presence of Arab Muslim scholars in the 15th century, Arabic manuscripts were imported into Hausa land, North Africa and other parts of West Africa from the Middle East, through the Trans Saharan trade. During this time, printing facilities were not available so reading materials were produced through writing by hand.

Similarly, writers like East, (1936); Skinner, (1980); Aliyu, (1997); Adamu, (2006) document that Northern Nigeria has been literate since the 15th century, before colonial incursion into Africa. It was early contact with Islam that produced an elite that is literate in Arabic and the Arabic-based Hausa script; Ajami. Literary activities existed before colonial presence textual production was a minimal level and that affected circulation of the materials to the literate proselyetes. Therefore the manuscripts were reproduced and distributed to a few learned clerics and those who studied under them (Sani, 150). The spread of Islam also led to the establishment of Islamic schools to encourage more literary activities. It is recorded by Darah that by 1914 "there were 20,000 koranic schools with a population of about 250,000 learners" (179). Gerard, (2007) and Tsiga (2011) also argue that civilization and

writing did not begin in Africa with the presence of European literacy and printing presses. Writing from Arabian civilization and Islamic culture spread to vast areas of the African continent. Early contact between Arabic merchants and Africans in the form of trade existed in about the 11th century. Arabic is a language just like English or any other language that carries along with it, its other cultural aspects. Gerard documents that writing in Arabic records "important events in local political life" (*Sub-Saharan African History,* 17). Gerard also chronicles that writing before the advent of Christian missionaries did not exist solely as sheets of paper collected together as manuscripts. But "many books were written by Islamic scholars (but these were) destroyed by the Christian missionaries" in about the 19th century in the attempts to entrench the Roman script (17).

Arabic literacy, though restricted to Northern Nigeria, was culturally broader than the oral cultures of pre-Arabic and pre-Islamic Hausa societies. The early literary activities were exhibited in the 'Mahrams.' These were "rendered in highly formal and structured language... (having) introductions, a body and a conclusion." Sani remarks that great value is attached to these materials because; they have contributed to an understanding of the "content, structure and orientation of contemporary literature in Nigerian languages" (13). The Mahrams often opened with prayers to God and to the prophet, Mohammed, followed by a panegyric or prose narrative in honour of the Mai. There also exist some satirical Mahrams. These early literary compositions set the 'Ulama' apart (Muslim clerics) as a class of people that lived entirely on intellectual labour. They were solely devoted to the spread of Arabic literacy such that Sani calls their intellectual skill "manuscripting," a creative and imaginative process of producing original materials by scholars (13). The manuscripts were reproduced by hand-copying. They were bound as books through a manual process "using local materials like paper, thread and animal skins" (Jibril, 116). These early beginnings of literacy and literary creativity do not indicate an interaction with the print media but they are important in

the sense that an already established literary culture became the foundation for enmasse colonial printing activities.

The literary history of Northern Nigeria is complex because of the multiplicity of Nationalities, cultures, languages, religions and social formations that have metamorphosized in the area. Consequently, the study has found itself frequently intermingling, an examination of literary developments and artistic features rendered in Hausa, Arabic, Ajami, and English. These are complicated by their accompanying indigenous tradition, Arabic/Islamic culture and Euro/Christian values. In the 19th century, the Jihad (holy war) occurred as an important historical marker to entrench Arabic literature. Mahmud writes that "a cultural blossoming occurred which prepared the path for the full bloom of Arabic literature... under the leadership of the Sokoto revivalists" (41). At the end of that century, Arabic literature was entrenched in the Hausa speaking parts of Northern Nigeria.

Furthermore, literary development remained "essentially Islamic and (writing) was modeled on classical Arabic prototypes" (Scharfe and Yahaya, 36). In this regard, Usman Dan Fodio's son translated poems from Arabic into Hausa while his sister, Asamau rendered their father's poems from Fulfulde into Hausa. Before the 20th century literary creativity was the preserve of the Muslim clerics. Eventually, men of other professions began practicing the art especially those who acquired higher western education; prominent among them was Sa'adu Zungur. Others were Na'ibi Wali and Muazu Hadejia. Zungur made critical efforts to bring enlightenment and education to his society. After abandoning his studies at the Yaba College, Lagos, he formed the Zaria Literary Society. Its members were the educated class. He also initiated the Bauchi discussion circle; a radical movement that opposed the native authority instituted by colonial policy. Abdulkadir chronicles that, the new elite expanded

their themes to go beyond religion to "modern life...social conditions, education, politics and even the war" (Scharfe & Yahaya, 240).

The Roman script that came with Western education met an already established form of literacy and literary composition in existence. Therefore, the new form of writing met with stiff resistance. Skinner (163) remarks that there were poems written around the 1900 titled "On the Christians" by a Hausa poet (Umaru Salaga) as a form of protest to British occupation. Aliyu Dan Sidi, Emir of Zaria also wrote a long poem as protest verse to British occupation after the military conquest of the North by Lord Lugard. The protest poem led the emir's deposition. The account also observes that it is his poetic rendition that entrenched Ajami as a dominant literary form. Another serious revolt against colonial dominance was in the form of the Satiru revolt. A writer describes the social upheaval in the form of the Satiru revolt as: The social movement which began around 1898 in the Sokoto caliphate and, reached its climax with the battle against British colonial forces in 1906 in the Sokoto province (Mohammed, 194). The writer opines that the uprising served dual purposes. It was initially directed against the aristocrats of the Sokoto caliphate, then, it became a resistance against British colonialism. Its leaders were poor Islamic clerics who were not accommodated within the aristocratic structure of the caliphate. And their followers were slaves who had escaped from their masters, also peasants who were evading and protesting against forced conscription into labour camps and exploitative taxes.

The resistance to western type of writing can be viewed against the view that colonial presence meant the relegation or outright destruction of African "oral and other performative arts. And the undermining of "... other signifying practices such as sculpture, painting, carving, weaving and ceramics"(Ashcroft et al, 44). Colonial interference in indigenous cultural values results in what has been referred to as "patronage systems", a kind of occupation policy that rejects some aspects of a culture and accepts others for the reason that

they serve well or interfere negatively with her master plan of administering the 'colonies.' For example, fictional narratives were encouraged among creative writers. This was to promote the acquisition of literacy to help nurture a class of educated elite. They were to serve as clerks, typists, and teachers for the colonial administration. Intense pressure from the colonial government, assisted by the activities of the media, contributed to the relative dissemination of the Roman script in the Hausa speaking areas. The genres of poetry and prose were the most promoted forms of writing. Yerima argues that traditional performances suffered, because, Muslim clerics view theatrical acts as rooted in paganism. Therefore early literature was inspired by religious beliefs. As a result there is the absence of drama in Arabic literature in Nigeria. Poetic epics and long narratives are the "core genres of Arabic literature" (17). Yerima also observes that between prose and poetry, poetry stands out as the most developed genre. Poetry also served colonial interest. Yerima posits that, between 1939 and 1953, poetic expression from the indigenes was made popular. Poems were directed against fascist Germany or written in support of British colonial economic activities of tin-mining and agricultural production. The mid 1950s saw a change in poetic composition. Poems began to address the political and ethnic problems that arose as a result of impending political independence from the British colonial administration.

The colonial government was entering a territory that was already occupied by Islamic education. So it needed to establish the structures to enable the empire to perpetrate colonial dominance and subjugation. First, it established schools for sons of the Emirs in about 1911. By 1930s, a literate population emerged. Educational structures were followed by technology in the form of the printing press. Consequently, in Northern Nigeria, literature and newspapers found themselves published by the same medium and serving the same purpose of producing educated elites to serve British interest in the establishment of schools and in administration as clerks. It has been argued that it is no coincidence that western styled

schools and the publishing outfit were instituted at the same time. The aim was to transform a "predominantly oral and Arabic – Islamic scripting into a Christian, Western and bourgeois written culture" (Sani, "Cultural Imperialism" 286). The colonial printing technology was overbearing. It insisted on to create literature among those it considered "conquered natives…in dire need" of a literary culture. And the coloniser's language was viewed as the medium of civilization (286). The same English language was used for the translation of indigenous materials. The purpose was to produce literature to enhance literacy in the newly founded colonial schools.

Under the guardianship of Dr. Rupert East, the vernacular section of adult education was transformed first as Translation Bureau in 1929 with its headquarters in Kano, later to be moved to Zaria Its name indicates that the responsibility of that office was to officially translate story books from Arabic and English into the various local languages in the Northern Region. Colonial authority also guarded and restricted the materials to be translated for public consumption. Hausa became the language of note into which translations were made. This "influenced the precise course of the dominant literate culture in Nigeria" (Sani 287). It was also the dominant language of communication in Northern Nigeria in the midst of other minor languages of Fulfulde, Kanuri, Nupe, Tiv, and Birom and others. These were submerged into the linguistic dominance of the Hausa language. Politically, it became expedient to adopt Hausa language as the medium of expression alongside the English language. It became suited to the indirect rule system of colonial administration, in which indigenous peoples were administered through already existing political structures in the form of traditional rulers.

In creative writing activities therefore Hausa was the linguistic medium of choice. When the Translation Bureau was changed to Zaria Literature Bureau in 1934, its literary activities had an already established indigenous medium. Sani also critiques that the role of

the bureau was to "encourage cultural dependence on the West…by weaning…the literate population away from their pre-colonial cultures" (288). The Bureau's activities were expanded to include publishing literary and other textbooks for use in schools. Its overall objectives went beyond the translation of Arabic script into Hausa Roman script. It organized the writing competition of 1933. Commenting on the growth of literature in Northern Nigeria, Skinner contends that the bureau "was already in fact if not in name, fostering local authorship" (60). Pre-Islamic and Islamic Northern society engaged in narratives, religious and moral poems and other didactic writings. But, the themes of their creative output, was not of the nature that colonial literate culture through the writing completion aimed to produce. Colonial administration set out to produce indigenous literary authorship of a secular nature. The stories were to be written in the extended form of prose fiction especially in the manner of western literary fiction.

Writing competitions were organised to prompt the educated people to unearth their imaginative abilities. As for the Muslim clerics, they were already settled in their style of writing as well as their medium of communication, which were, Arabic and Ajami. The works of these scholars were influenced by a particular world view that is based on a philosophy of life that draws its principles from religion.These were also the group of people conscripted to write secular stories of fiction. East was to comment that:

> Since the religious revival of the beginning of the last century, nearly all the original work produced by Northern Nigerian authors has been purely religious or written with a strong religious motive…The art of storytelling is of course well-known to all people of West Africa, but in Northern Nigeria as elsewhere, it is looked down upon as a past time for the amusement of women and children, somewhat below the dignity of a man who has attained the status of a malam…To these people therefore, the idea of writing a book whiich

> frankly intended neither for the edification of the mind, nor for the good of the soul, a "story" book which, however followed none of the prescribed forms of story-telling, seemed very strange. (qtd in Sani171)

This project by the colonial establishment was welcomed with misgivings by the Muslim clerics for whom Islam was a complete way of life. Again, exploring secular imagination and creativity meant a regression to the non-Islamic way of life that Islam sought to erase. Under a normal situation then, the organised competition should have been discarded. The local writers should have been allowed to give free rein to their imaginative and creative abilities, as they were previously rendered. But colonialism was a well taught out plan of domination. The slave trade, political and cultural domination was only one of its many phases. Therefore, the disdain expressed by the Muslim 'ulama' did not deter East in his attempts to create a roman script in Hausa literary culture. The project was carried out with the intention to counter and consequently subdue the Arabic religious and literary culture.

It has been noted that the art of story-telling was prevalent in Hausa society. Indeed Hausa literature has a long established tradition of literary forms divided into nine genres: "tales (tatsuniyoyi), tradition (labaru), praise songs (kirarai), plays (wasanni), proverbs (Karin Magana), songs (wakoki), poetic fiction (littattafan hira); other prose forms are (zube) riddles; (tatsuniya or ka-cinci) epithets, (kirari) and tongue twisters." (Skinner 1). Sani (149-156) in a gender-based study highlights the creative handling of 'tatsuniyoyi' (tales) by Hausa women story-tellers. The dominant art form in traditional society was the verbal/oral form "and women were pivotal to the rendition of imaginative narrative" (150). The narratives towed the line of the division of labour between men and women. Story telling that is the tatsuniya was a women's art, while the 'hikaya' and labara, as Sani documents, were handled by men. These were also preserved in written forms unlike the tatsuniyoyi (tales).

A socio-cultural existence of Hausa-Fulani society is surveyed. The reason is to explain better how unsuitable an imposition of foreign literary forms was, amongst a people who had practiced centuries of their own art forms. The tales were told with a moral twist, and the audience was usually children. The setting of the stories, were, in enclosure of households. The stories were told indoors because the combination of "Islam and Hausa cultural codes forbid women to partake" in the public rendition of this form (Sani, "Hausa Women" 151). The artistic terrain of pre-colonial Hausa society was not suited to prose-fictional writing. Men other than women engaged in other arts forms as "entertainers, praise-singers, musicians, hawkers, palace courtiers and medicine men" (151). Before the early literary works written in the English language emerged in Northern Nigeria, the oral story telling tradition was transported from family compounds to the radio. On the Hausa service of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, the descendants of Hausa women story tellers aired the famous Shafa Labara Shunni (Making Stories Sweeter).

The success of imaginative story telling on radio does not emanate from proficiency in western education or experiences in fictional European stories.The stories had roots in a tradition of eloquent story telling, that was part of the fabric of indigenous cultural life. Oral art complemented the Islamic literary culture because most converts abandoned their pre-Islamic practices and embraced the Islamic written culture. They recited poetic renditions in Arabic. The proselytes were made up of a reasonable number, the young and old alike. These and other literary forms were popular. But the fictional genre in the form of the novel had little or no acceptance in society. And as East puts it the "practice of mixing truth and falsehood under the same cover appeared to some to be deliberately immoral"(2). Again the experience of putting these stories in written form was new. The new literary culture of the West excluded a significant number of people who were yet to come to terms with the alien culture.

On the insistence of East the writing competition produced the works of Tafawa Balewa's *Shehu Umar;* Bello Kagara's *Gandoki;* Abubakar Imam's *Ruwan Bagaja,* Muhammadu Gwarzo's *Idon Matambayi* and *Jiki Magayi*, co-authored by M. Tafida and Rupert East. Another major contribution that Imam made to the development of literature in Northern Nigeria is the production of triology *Magana Jari Ce*. The purpose of the competition was to produce the replicas of the English novel in Hausa language. The intention was "to undermine the pre-colonial culture of the North by creating a written tradition of literature" in Roman script (Sani 290). In terms of style, submissions for the competition were drawn from the residue of pre-Islamic oral narrative trends. Correspondingly, the themes dwelt on whimsical and unnatural stories of sub-human (djinns) and supernatural creatures. The competition was organised in the heat of colonial activities when the people resisted colonial domination. But, the tone of the writings did not capture the disenchantment of the time. Sani observes with dismay that, the content and subject matter of the writings were "uniformly mute about colonial violence and repression" (289) Instead, texts like Tafawa Balewa's *Shaihu Umar;* Bello Kagara's *Gandoki* eulogized colonial contact. They highlighted that, the individual and the larger community benefitted from the civilizing impact that colonialism imposed on the hitherto naïve and deficient communities (289). Sani's observation exposes the indirect rule system an instrument that the colonial administration deployed to aid it in the administration of the colonies. So that minimal cost was incurred by the central empire. Again it is possible that, there were attempts at fictional creativity by budding writers. But in most of literature that is available, the dominant narratives link the beginnings of fictional creativity to the writing completion of 1933.

Writers who entered the competition were urged to produce novellas without the influences of religion or the oral tradition. In essence, they were coerced to imitate Western literary traditions. It has been observed that East himself acknowledged that the manuscripts

were substandard. The writers failed to bring their stories to an appropriate end. The stories were simply brought to a halt when the writers grew weary of them or felt they had written the stipulated number of words. Constentino expatiates that, East "suggested grafting onto a culture with adequate forms of expression an alien genre with no literary, social and intellectual basis." (quoted in Sani 290) Constentino argues further that:

> Literary forms are born out of specific cultural and social matrices. They are freely created, not prescribed. There is nothing inevitable about the novel. It is not the final flowering of a literary tradition, nor the end product of artistic evolutions. It may be that Hausa society will never create novelists, but will instead concern itself with other literary forms more relevant to its world view (290).

Constention fails to acknowledge that the scheme of British colonial empire was to foister western literary techniques on indigenous creativity. The ultimate aim of prescribing what should be written in a genre like tha novel, with free forms of expression was to entrench the values of another culture.

Furthermore, the writing competition as prescribed by the Zaria Literature Bureau did not generate mass literature.The aspiration of colonial policy was to provide reading materials for mass education. The attempts at Western-styled writing enhanced the process of incorporating Northern Nigeria into the cultural milieu of the West. Consequently, African creative products were judged by the standard of Western literary modes. It also meant that the critics of indigenous literature are 'naturally' Europeans. Post Colonial scholars have argued that, to ascribe the beginning of the written cultures of Northern Nigeria to the presence of colonial apparatus in the region thwarts historical records. Economically, literature was to become a commodity whose process was to attain completion in the era of

global economy. But ironically, it is also a period when the concept of literature includes the many modes of cultural production like, the Cinema, Media, et cetera.

Abubakar comments on the state of creative writing in Northern Nigeria several decades later. He affirms that colonial activities had long initiated the "commodification of literary creativity" (3). Facilitated by international trade and global agencies such literary creativity is now subject to the vagaries of economic factors that are always determined by international capital. It produces effects that spill to what he describes as "a degenerate, barren outpost of global capitalism that the Nigerian economy is" (3). Colonial literary activities thwarted the natural course of creativity in Northern Nigeria and set the stage for a difficult terrain to be encountered by subsequent writers of the Northern Nigerian states. The competition produced an outstanding talent in the person of Abubakar Imam. His writings are heavily influenced, linguistically, by Arabic. Technically, he modelled his works after the literary traditions of Arabia, India and Persia, The Middle East and the West. Jibril notes that subsequent writings imitated and adopted the "structure of stories" written by earlier novelists especially in their preoccupation with pre-Islamic and Islamic cultures (118). In the creative and administrative personality of Imam, it all but seemed East had groomed an elite indigene to take charge of the Bureau. Under Gaskiya Corporation, the expanded structure of the Burea included newspaper publication. A structure of the association between literature and journalism as it is traced from Euorpe was replicated in the colony.

The history of literature and journalism is linked with the Bureau. The Bureau acted as the melting point for promoting literacy, literary production as well as print media activities. The large responsibilities it took on threatened to cripple the Bureau. Therefore, the Bureau was expanded to become Northern Regional Literature Agency known by the acronym NORLA. Hayatu points out that the government's aim of establishing NORLA was to:

> Facilitate the rapid production of reading materials to serve the activities of the adult education department. It took over all the book publishing activities... in combination with the newspaper publishing of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* and later the *Nigerian Citizen*, the forerunner of … the *New Nigerian*. (51)

NORLA also set up a periodical unit to publish monthly newssheets for the provinces of Adamawa: Ilorin: Kabba: Kano: Katsina: Niger: Plateau: Sokoto: and Zaria. The establishment's heavy responsibility attracted enormous financial commitment. The government as the major financier of the agency could not sustain for so long the publication of literature, other textbooks and newspapers by NORLA. It became expedient for government to split the books and newspaper production and also abolish the provincial newsletters. The newspaper division was taken over by Gaskiya Corporation, while the book publishing section was later handed over to the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company. It is incisive to note that the government of the time was the colonial apparatus whose interest was paramount in the administration of the colonies.

Eventually, Newspapers publishing and books especially for use in primary and secondary schools, was taken over by the European printing presses. The foregoing history of Western inculsion in Northern Nigeria indicates that the colonial authorities needed an effective method of education. The new elite schooled in Western values were the ones that will continue with the propagation of Western values. Colonial intention was to thwart the publishing of local literary texts. The disintergration of NORLA stalled indigenous literary publishing, *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo* was given to publishing British Propaganda and those of its war allies. Where literature was featured, poems were published to propagate British policies. Consequently in colonial Nigeria, literature and the print media publishing were

meant to serve the many folds of colonial interest. It therefore meant that few newspaper houses were publishing during the colonial era.

1.6.1 Trends in Literature in Northern Nigerian

Northern Nigeria as a geographical, historical and literary region is beset by controversy. It has been difficult for writers to arrive at a consensus about conceptualising the space of this area in the attempts to delineate its literature. An advocate of the diversity of literature from this area, Tsiga establishes a base. He quotes from Alioue Diop that "art has no homeland" (156). Certain art is not the preserve neither does it remains peculiar to a particular group of people. Literature of or about Northern Nigerian states is made up of a conglomerate of literary voices that addresses diverse issues. The formation of multiple cultures that inhabit northern Nigeria is as a result of the thwarted course of societal transformation which gave rise to the intersection of a variety of cultures, languages and religions. A position exists that Nigeria, Africa and other developing nations were regionally demarcated to suit colonial interests. The evolution of the long contact of unequal relations between Africa and the colonising empires was responsible for this historical landmark. The early contact began with minimal trade at the hinterlands. The slave trade entrenched the presence of the Western world; and direct colonial occupation consolidated their influence. European interest in Africa advanced to the imperialist stage when their direct presence was no longer required, but imperial assrts needed to be protected.

A historical reminder is always necessary. The Berlin conference of 1884 first carved out the regionalities to resolve the problems of territorial acquisition by powerful nations. They created Ideological as well as regional identities by their competiting colonial interests. These were not challenged by the new elite who took over political power at independence. European conglomerates were over seen by the new elite, who in most of Africa gained political independence through negotiations with the parent governments, the initial

geographical boundary that was first named Nigeria in 1914. The country has constanly come under serious strain that sometime resulted in the civil war that lasted from 1967 to 1970. The continual shifting of terminologies from Northern region, Western/Midwestern region to Eastern region are namings that are derived from the language or ethnic lines that began at independence and have continued to present times. Northern Nigeria was to emerge from the historical evolution of what came to be the "modern Nigerian state" and the "interaction of the various peoples that make up the north long before the advent of colonialism" (Tsiga, 168).

Consequently, the area is made up of diverse cultural and ethnic identities that are characteristic to the north, but whose constellations are also found in other parts of the country. Practically, because of settlement patterns one is bound to find a concentration of Hausas in the North, Yorubas in the West and Ibos in the East and so on. But in Literary parlance, the creative writer is not limited and bound by geographical classification. It is obvious that the literary history of Northern Nigeria is greatly influenced by Islamic culture and civilization, but literature of this area is still diverse. Omoha argues that because of the diverse nature of the country, "Nigerian literature defies regional classification" especially in contemporary times (248). Early in the evolution of literary creativity in Nigeria, Cyprian Ekwensi, a writer of Ibo origin, consistently used Northern Nigeria and its people as the subject matter of his texts. Works like *The Passport of Mallam Ilia* (1960) *The Burning Grass* (1961) *An African's Night Entertainment* (1962) affirm that Nigerian literature is "national rather than ethnic" in character (Obafemi, 21).

Olu Obafemi, a famous writer is by geographical situation of state is classed with Northern Nigeria. But he still shares ethnic affinity with the Western/ Southern part of Nigeria. Other examples are Iorwuese Hagher's *Mulkin Mata* (1991) written by Christian of the Tiv nation. In the play, he explores the tension created by the existence of more than one

religion and multicultural values. The conglomeration of cultural formation that is found in northern Nigeria, also exist in other parts of Nigeria. Some critics still conceive of a need to approximate the concept of Northern Nigeria to a specific delineation. Raji refers to the area as:

> The mass of land naturally separated from Southern Nigeria by combination of physical geography and colonial history. Literally speaking "Northern Nigeria" is a reference to the entire trough and bulk of land above Rivers Niger and Benue; it is also the savannah space occupied by various ethnic nationalities, with the Hausa and Fulani in majority,… (107)

A category of writing that has also contributed to the development of literature of the region is War literature.This is in the genre of poetry written by Nigerian soldiers. Again this category of writing reflects the multifarious nature of the region. Tsiga contends that poetry from soldiers must be examined with "a balanced" perception. They are characteristic of the protest literature that condemned the failures of the newly independent state. These new political cum ethnic formations, were beset by conflicts that resulted in the breakdown of peace and cohesion. These problems were rooted in the creation of ad hoc nation states, that were formed from disparate cultures and forced together for the convenience of colonial administration.

Tsiga's analysis of military poetry delves into the complex and intricacies in the minds of soldiers fighting the civil war, the uncertain circumstances of their lives that led them to write poetry "from the trench" (156). The aim of *Poetry Post,* a bi-annual publication, is to encourage members of the "armed forces to see more of the world than meets the eye" especially when confronted with the destruction of war (Vatsa qtd in Tsiga, 170). Other collections of poetry by military men are *Voices from the Trench: an Anthology of Poems by Soldiers of the Nigerian Arm* and *War Cries,* another anthology written by DomKat Bali.

These poems exist alongside Achebe's *Girls at War* and Soyinka's A *Shuttle in the Crypt.* The soldiers' preoccupation with the poetic genre follows in the tradition or influences of the artistic medium of the oral or verse tradition that has existed in the northern Nigeria. The poetic genre is free of the tediousness that accompanies the novel it became a suitable medium in war time. The urgency of war requires a terse and compact medium to express and record events. Mamman Vatsa who is a foremost voice in the writing of military poetry finds a complementarity between the poetic genre and the military profession when he says that: "A trained soldier is an automatic poet for he is taught to say so much in limited words in all fields of his career" (qtd in Tsiga, 173). Poetry written by Nigerian soldiers, of Northern origin, is situated within the history and development of a Nigerian literary tradition. The soldiers wrote with an urgency that characterizes war and as Tsiga says "not (being) sure about one's fate during the next battle or two" (173). They were compelled to express their perspective of the socio-political quagmire that the new nation, Nigeria was steeped in. The study observes with dismay that Olu Obafemi's text *Nigerian Writers on the Nigerian Civil War* published in 2007 has no single entry on poetry from soldiers of northern Nigerian origin. The collection undertakes a lopsided assessment of literature on the Nigerian civil war. It features criticism on mostly writers from the Southern part of the country while neglecting literary creativity by soldiers.

Literary activity in Northern Nigeria is widely practiced in the multilingual communicative instruments of Arabic, Hausa, other local languages and the English language. These languages, especially Arabic and English, are the legacies of the relationship that the area shares with the Eastern and Western world. Colonial influence which superimposed itself on the already existing writinsgs in Hausa, Arabic and Ajami; a derivative of the Arabic language also introduced the print technology. This was to thwart the course and nature of literary creativity. Manuscripts were no longer produced in limited

copies but were published enmasse and made available to the public. But mass production was not necessarily complemented by a large reading population. Adamu posits that colonialism contributed to backwardness in the print media. The newspapers established by the colonial administration called "Northern provinces newspaper (Jaridar Nigeria Ta Arewa)" reported essentially about the activities of the colonial administration in the indigenous languages spoken in the region (1). Again the printing presses concentrated their energies on the production of primary and secondary textbooks to serve the newly established western type schools and paid little attention to the encouragement of indigenous artistic creativity in written form. Writers in Northern Nigeria face severe challenges because of the existence of few publishing outlets, an outstanding example to cite in the Gaskiya Corporation which had to bear the weight of publishing a growing body of literature. Obafemi agrees with Sani that limited publishing houses results in self-published books which are poorly publicized, inadequately reviewed, and rarely available in book stores. Obafemi insists that "Journals, magazines, newspapers should show greater interest in the publication and serialization of literary texts" to overcome the difficulties posed by few publishing houses (1).

In the 1980s, the Romance series of Hausa origin popularized by the name *soyayya* novels featured prominently in shaping prose fiction. It was made prominent by the Kano market literature. Its writers exist in "their hundreds, scattered over the North in Nigeria" (Umaisha, 1). The genre has a large market and therefore enjoys a wide readership. It "has produced about three thousand titles between 1984-2007" (Tanimu 3). Yusuf Adamu, a famous writer in Northern Nigeria, observes that authorship of the romantic Hausa popular fiction dominated by female writers. He also affirms that the genre has progressed from romantic subject matter to addressing contemporary subjects. Its themes question cultural and religious norms especially as the authors are enlightened women. The *soyayya* is a

popular genre that enjoys readership from non-literary scholars. It does not involve the kind of serious reading that is required of a literary text that is read for academic purposes. In recent times, it has metamorphosised into popular Hausa literature.

Popular fiction and other literary texts published around this time have had to contend with publishing challenges just like in earlier times. The foundation of publishing in Northern Nigeria is conditioned by colonialist publishing activities that were always aimed at producing textbooks for school subjects. After political independence, international publishers formed alliances with local ones. The pact between Macmillian and Gaskiya ccorporation which gave rise to the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company, Hodder and Stoughton and Huda Huda Press were merged while OUP took over Ibadan University Press. Sani remarks that, the agreements between international and local publishing institutions did not solve the financial problems experienced by NORLA rather, indigenous publishing rights were taken over by Macmillian and the "earnings of NNPC tended to get carted back to the metropolitan colonial headquarters, in the form of dividends and expenditure on the accommodation, salaries and personal allowances of expatriate staff (Sani, "Cultural Imperialism," 297). Much of publishing was also done in the expatriate country on the excuse that works produced at Gaskiya were "Shoddy, delayed (and) costly…" (Cultural Imperialism, 297) There were no attempts by the colonial administration to deploy foreign expatriate to train indigenous staff, or to transfer superior machinery to tackle the problems faced by Gaskiya Corporation. Consequently, the venture of publishing many creative works collapsed with the crashed economy of Structural Adjustment.

Abubakar remarks about the dilemma of the Northern Nigerian writer in modern society. He posits that the path of literary development in Northern Nigeria is "thorny" (*Beyond the Frontiers of micro-nationalism* 12). Creative writing in Northern Nigeria, is, challenged by other means of acquiring knowledge and pleasure without recourse to reading.

In the global age more than any other time, the film culture competes for cultural space with literature. It is also reinforced by advancements in the form of internet. Global trends generally are not new to Northern Nigerian literature. It is documented by Jibrin that literature written in English has been translated into Hausa by Abubakar Imam and Ibrahim, Yaro Yahaya (qtd in Abubakar, 9). Otherr translations were carried out by Neil Skinner, Graham Furniss and others. The translation literature of northern Nigeria was to expose local authorship and creativity to world literature. Beyond the challenges, literary activity in English language picked up in 1970s. Themes in the novel changed to social concerns and technically they deployed humour, satire and didactism. Labo Yari's *Climate of Corruption* published in1978 is an example of creative ouput that came to prominence about the 1980s. Prominent writers have been Zainab Alkali who began writing in the 1980s with her debut text the *Stillborn* in 1984. The new and notable writers are amongst those that are struggling to make their mark on the national and international scene. These are: Ibrahim Tahir, Muazu Maiwada, Sefi Attah, Maria Ajima, Dan Fulani, Akilu Aliyu, Yusuf Adamu, Umaisha Sumaila, Bilikisu Funtua and a host of others. In the 1980s, the negative impact of Structural Adjustment Policies on the publishing industry ignited the creative spirit among Nigerian writers and revitalized the relationship between media publishing houses and writers.

The era of Structural Adjustment stimulated further creativity. This is evident in the works of Abubakar Gimba. Gimba's writing contributes to the fast growing fictional world of writing in the English in northern Nigeria. Within a short time, between, 1900s to 2000s Gimba has published a large collection of literary texts in prose-fictional writing. Ismaila and Fajenyo, opine that, Gimba's writings provide "a model that is characteristic of writing in Northern Nigeria because he dwells on Islam as philosophy of life by presenting many facets of Islamic culture" (144). But, it has been established that writing of the Nigerian literary terrain shares social themes that nullify geographical and cultural boundaries. The 21st

century has produced other writers of Northern Origin like Sefi Attah, Helon Habila and others. Helon Habila for instance does not bear the characteristics that Ismaila and Fajenyo label Gimba with. One of Habila's masterpieces, *Oil On water,* address the topical issue of oil extraction in the Niger Delta region, the despoliation on the environment, the politics of oil and the insurgence that characterize life in the region. Another text by Habila, *Measuring Time* adopts motif of relaying cultural legends through historical narratives to explore the history of Gombe. The texts are national as well as international in outlook.

In contemporary times, the writer of Northern Nigerian descent has to surmount many challenges. These are, the prolonged negative effects of the Stuctural Adjustment programme on the publishing industry which is still imminent. Another menace is the activities of pirates who reproduce the intellectual property of writers, using cheap quality materials. In the new dispensation, the challenges facing the book publishing industry also affects newspaper publishing. To contain the challenges, newspapers must also update the practice of featuring literary materials. There is a need to by create durability for literary features by bonding them in quality form.

1.7 Research Methodology

The research adopts the method of collecting data**.** Data is collected from a representation of the entire population. Empirical research studies a particular population by carrying out an investigation of sample population. In research circles, the term population encompasses "institutions, things, objects or members of the target being studied or observed" (Biereenu-Nnabugwu 174). The sample population is selected based on the objectives of the research.

1.7.1 Sampling

A particular method must be used to select the population to be sampled. Sampling is therefore the technique of selecting a part of the population to be investigated. It is not

possible to study the entire population, therefore a sample "a sub-group or sub-set" is taken as representative of that population" (174). The definitions emphasises that a sample is not the entire thing, only some part that is its semblance.

1.7.2 Sampling Techniques

In the course of carrying out field research several sampling techniques are available for the researcher's use. Subsequently, the research assembles the combination of sampling methods suited to the work. Probability sampling is also called random sampling. This is a method whereby samples are chosen at random so that, every member stands a chance of being selected for study. This implies that members are given equal opportunity of being sampled. In this study, the research first adopted the stratified sampling method, a technique imbedded in the probability technique. The method was used to stratify Northern Nigerian Universities into those that existed for more than ten years, and those established for less than that time as at 2009. Universities that have been in existence for about ten years or less are listed thus: Adamawa State University, Mubi; Bukar Abba Ibrahim University: Gombe State University: Nasarawa State University: Yobe State University, Damaturu: Kaduna State University: Kogi State University: Ibrahim Babangida University, Lapai: Plateau State University.

Other Universities are, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurd:, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi: Federal University of Technology, Minna: Federal University of Technology, Yola: Kano State University of Science and Technology. These have been in existence for more than ten years, at the time of selecting the sample group in 2009, but these universities did not have established departments of English. Therefore they were stratified out of the sample population. Furthermore, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria: Bayero University, Kano: Benue State University: University of Ilorin: University of Jos: University of Maiduguri: Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto and University of Abuja are

schools that had existed for more than ten years. The research drew its sample population from these latter universities. By a simple random sampling method, the research selected Univeristy of Abuja, Ahmadu Bello University, Bayero University Kano, Univerity of Jos and University of Maiduguri. The reason for the stratification was that the methods of learning and the curriculum in older Nigerian Universities were at advanced levels. This is evident in the presence of Post graduates studies that are carried on there.

1.7.3 Instruments of Data Generation

Data was collected through the administration of structured and unstructured questionnaire. The questionnaire method is best suited to the nature of the research. The study requires actual responses from researchers in the field of literary studies. Lecturers, Post and Undergraduate students were also sampled. Osuala remarks that the questionnaire really "constitutes the first attempt at true scaling" (qtd in Biereen- Nnabugwu 268). It is the most preferred method to other survey techniques because of its enormous advantages. The questionnaire method makes it possible to cover a wide population. Because of its anonymity, favourable and honest response is expected from respondents. It also has the advantage of proper documentation, because information obtained can be cross-checked long after the instrument is served on respondents. Again the instrument of the questionnaire is a printed document as such information once put down cannot be changed. Again it does not pressurize the respondent for immediate response. A complementary instrument of data collection was also used, that is the interview method. Biereen-Nnabugwu aptly defines that an interview "involves a face-to-face, verbal communication between the investigator and his sample" (223). It is an important instrument of data collection because it provides information on peoples' values, attitudes and experiences. In this study, the kind of interview used was the single interview method, whereby one person is interviewed at a time. Interview carried out in this way allows the interviewee to talk freely because the interfering presence of other

people is absent. An Interview was conducted with a writer from the north, especially that his works are published in the *New Nigerian.* The aim is to advance reasons why writers publish in newspaper. It is also intended to provide empirical data on the linkages between literature and journalism. Another interview was conducted with the editor of the *New Nigerian* on literary matters. The essence is to understand why newspapers publish literary pieces even though some literary works are largelyl published as textbooks. This multi-approach of data collection aims to explain the dynamics that exist in the continued evolution between literature and journalism also to accomodate the limitations of the instruments of data generation. .

1.7.4 Types of Data Collected

Data collected encompasses personal information such as, age, marital status, educational level, religion and income. These are factors that on the whole may influence readership attitudes and preferences of the respondents. A population comprising literary researchers was sampled to ascertain their involvement with literary write-ups in newspapers. Questionnaire of both structured and unstructured nature was distributed to the sample population. These were made up of lecturers, postgraduate and undergraduate students in the Universities sampled. The aim was to ascertain whether researchers are aware that literary materials exists in these newspapers and the level of their engagement with these materials for the purposes of academic studies. The research used *The Guardian* and *New Nigerian* newspapers as representative samples, because the inclusion of more newspapers may not significantly alter the pattern of responses. Empirical studies in literature, is an authentic way to measure the reading habits of scholars. Empiricism frees research from assumptions as to whether literary scholars realise that newspapers contain an extensive knowledge base. The responses enabled the study to measure the impact that literary features in newspapers have on studies in literature.

1.7.5 Data Presentation and Analysis

Presentation means to show something off or make it available. In research register, data presentation is an effort to make available materials obtained from survey research. A follow up to data presentation is its analysis. This Biereenu-Nnabugwu posits involves, the presentation of "tables, groups, pictorials and statistics as…evidence in support of a given pattern of relationship between variables." In data analysis fresh interpretations are offered to materials that have been assembled from the field. Askia (Qtd in Biereenu-Nnabugwu (276) defines that "data analysis is the breaking down and ordering of quantitative information gathered through research." This involves establishing relationships and patterns of association among the data collected. Analysis of data brings coherence and provides reasonable answers to the mass of data accumulated during data collection. Data analysis is therefore the end product of data collection. Data analysis is the logical climax and subsequent end to field research because data is generated so that it will be assessed. Both the collection and analysis of data are various stages of a research. They represent a stage in the process of a research one occurring before the other. In data analysis issues raised by the research problem and propositions are resolved. It completes the entire process of empirical study.

Data obtained from the field is analyzed using quantitative data analysis. It provides the use of statistical presentation to arrive at interpretations between variables presented in tabular form. Various stages are enumerated as prominent features of quantitative data analysis that the research adopts. The data is arranged manually. The information provided by respondents is fed into the computer and the items coded using the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The simple frequency distribution is used to allocate percentages to values. The tabular form is also used to arrange categories of given variables and a thematic

analysis of the data is done. This stage of data analysis proffers answers to the issues that the research raises.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The area of study is universities situated in the Northern part of Nigeria. The Northern Nigerian literary space is conglomeration of several literacy cultures of Arabic, Hausa and English. The English culture appeared as a latter one and has continued to influence the development of literature in that part of Nigeria. There are some definitions of what constitutes Northern Nigeria. Saleh approriates Bhabha concept when he delineates cultural and political formations. Saleh views that, the Northern Nigerian space is borne out of "cultural formations and social processes" that have evolved over time and yet remain contemporary, a community of people whose description is more metaphoric than geographic (Bhabha Qtd in Saleh, 2). The concept of Northern Nigeria has been dwelt with earlier. The research is situated within geographical space knon as northern Nigeria that is made up of the following states in their alphabetical order: Adamawa, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Abuja; The Federal Capital Territory, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe and Zamfara. In these states federal and states universities exist. It is from this region that the study study selects the universities that were sampled.

The study foregrounds the beginnings and unceasing interation between literature and journalism in Northern Nigeria. It examines indigenous newspapers that came into prominence as the British colonial administration disengaged. The emphasise of the study is on two Nigerian newspapers, the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian.* The research examines the contributions of the literary features in the two newsoapers to the sustainance of literature in Northern Nigeria. Literary works were published under the title of 'The Write-Stuff' in the *New Nigerian* and "Guardian Literary Series" in *The Guardian* newspapers. In the years from

1995 to 2000, the literary column of the *New Nigerian* consistenly featured literary works. In *The Guardian* newspaper from 1985 to 1987, the 'Guardian Literary Series' ran uninterrupted.

The research adopts *The Guardian* newspaper which is a newspaper published in southern Nigeria. The paper's geographical location does not limit its engagement with literature. *The Guardian* demonstrates, as noted by Alioune Diop that art has no "homeland" (qtd in Tsiga, 156). There were other newspapers in the North other than the *New Nigerian* at the time of carrying out the empirical study which lasted from 2009 to 2012. *This Day* newspaper was considered for the research, but it was discarded because the paper did not feature literary works consistently. A daily's commitment to literary matters was paramount. An aim of the *The Guardian* is to be read in every part of Nigeria. It is only the logistics of distribution that may present a hurdle. Its engagement with literary works from Nigeria is evident in the collections from the "Guardian Literary Series" (GLS).

1.8.1 Literary Space

In conceptualizing 'literary space' the research first defines space although it is the last of the compound word. This is because the 'space' that the study refers to must first be elucidated before there is an understanding of the compound word 'literary space.' Space connotes, the scope, ambit, the confines of something, while the concept 'literary' is used to describe, include or involve materials written, oral, lyrical or otherwise that relate with literature as a discipline or are the subject of literary criticism. The attention-drawing word is used as a head word in the topic of the research to project the emphasis of the research. Its emphasis is to examine, conceptual and empirical concerns related to the study of literature. Consequently the word 'literary Space' posists that the research is carried out within the confines of literary studies, but the 'literary' is re defined, its scope is extended beyond the confines of texts tagged canonical and beyond traditional textual analysis. It examines the

discourses that support literature. Discourses in the form of history, culture, journalism fall within the scope or space of literature, thus literature's space is enlarged to acknowledge the interdiplinary cooperation that literature shares with other disciplines. A related use of the word 'space' of close bearing on the research is that used by Obafemi, when he affirms the relationship between literature and media. He chronicles that media outfits offered literature "growth space" in its early years of development (16). Within the space provided by the media in the form of broadsheets, newspapers or magazines, literary materials got an opportunity to be publicised and were later published as texts in hardcover.

1.9 Chapter Outline

Chapter one, explores the historical formation of English. It examines the beginnings of literature and journalism. The chapter also establishes the research problematic, its objectives and justification for the study. The chapter traces the evolution of a literary culture in northern Nigeria. It also delineates the research area, by defining its scope. Chapter two a literature review of the relationship between literature and aspects of creative nonfiction. The chapter also explores the evolution of the canon and the problematic of the the concept of literature. Chapter three presents the nature of the interaction between literature and the print media in northern Nigeria. It also deploys New Historicism as a framework of analysis and its application to the study. Chapter four undertakes the presentation and analyses of data obtained empirical study. Chapter five presents a summary of the findings and the conclusion to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Literature and Aspects of Creative Non-Fiction

Generally, newspapers and literature have existed together as avenues of information that were used to serve the same purpose; that of producing a literate populace. Their common goal therefore fostered a relationship between them. Ashcroft et al point out that, newspapers, journals and various kinds of fiction have existed together as written "forms of communication, initially to fulfill colonial purpose of encouraging the emergence of an educated and 'civilized' elite and later to serve the indigenous purpose of bringing to limelight creative works from Northern Nigeria and other parts of Nigeria (44).

Jones argues that English studies, along with its attendant scope, literature in English is due for redefinition. He insists that part of the problem of failing to redress the subject; 'what is literature?' is that up-coming African writers are scared off. This is because those who determine what gets published or not, live outside the immediate environment of the writer. Jones also points out that African literature has deep roots in its cultural milieu but it also faces competition from the "well-established literatures of other lands against which it (is) judged" (412). An unfair situation exists where the techniques that apply to literatures written outside Africa are used to measure African literature. He observes that the pamphlets of Onitsha market literature as well as broad sheets all contribute to the growth of African literature. He cautions that the almost sole attention with materials in "hard cover" at the expense of news papers and magazines narrows research in literature (413). He views the place and role for literature beyond the skewed readership of those directly involved with literary studies, contending that "writing which treats in an imaginative way the consequences of the African way of life should be brought to the attention of all African students" (Jones 412). Even beyond the university environment, writing can be made to

appeal to the larger public. Jones' position illustrates that what is regarded in literature as canonical is not fixed but is subject to change and modification. In line with the preceding view, Raji (111) posists that newspapers provide a "strategic recourse" for distressed writers. Coupled with their "immediacy" struggling writers, especially women, have gained a place on the literary scene which expands beyond the restrictions of the elitist canon.

Odey also argues that, empirical studies in literature are justified. She cites the pioneering works of Norbert Groeben and Siegfried J. Schmidt. They advocate actual contact with the readers of literary materials to be able to measure literary development, while Groeben's concern is with cognitive psychology as it influences the reader's response to the text. Schmidt concentrates on the social systems and the influences they exact on literature through its readership. Empirical studies demonstrate a shift from textual analysis to literary production, readership culture and other intervening variables that affect non-textual analysis. Critics insist that these are no less important to literary appreciation. Consequently, Schmdit assets that "No literary scholar who wants to be taken seriously by the academic world will deny that it is inadequate to study literary texts in isolation from their contexts" (1 Qtd in Odey, 77).

Odey reiterates that there is need for "relevance and utility value as well as objectivity" especially in the arts (77). As an area of academic discourse it is necessary to explore the readers' perspective of the text. It is along these lines that the study surveys the influence of journalism on literary studies by testing readership involvement and attitude to literary works that do not appear in the famous form of textbooks. It examines the contributions that literary features in two Nigerian newspapers have made to literary scholarship. The study also argues that these newspapers exist as vital complements to literary journals and critical texts.

Macebuh posits that a relationship between literature and journalism is inevitable because new writers often face problems of publishing which became intense during years of economic instability. He observes that creative writing in Nigeria has existed for a long time, but it was only the early generation of writers that were extensively published. He advances factors for the lack of acknowledgement of upcoming writers to the "economic slump" of the 1980's that severely affected the book industry (ix). Owing to this situation *The Guardian* initiated a rescue strategy; a literary series to feature "critical appraisals of the works of Nigerian writers" (Ogunbiyi ix). Ogunbiyi describes the efforts of *The Guardian* as attempts to "popularize our vibrant literature" (ix). Spur agrees with Ogunbiyi when he posits that journalism puts itself at the service of literature, because "(In the) third world, the …publishing outlets newspapers houses…help immensely in broadly introducing a creative writer to the larger society comprising his reading public…" (qtd in Babajo 18)

Babajo (18) lists *The Guardian* as a "pioneer promoter of literature in Nigeria," In the "Guardian Literary Series." *The Guardian* newspaper gave serious attention to literary matters. Babajo also opines that "critics and interest groups" consult newspapers to know more about a writer and his works (18). He emphasises that newspapers make literary works accessible to the reading public. The efforts of newspaper publishers also influence the curricula of departments of academic institutions to turn attention to upcoming writers. Consequently, newspapers are sometimes the first publicity outlet for authors. Folarin observes that, literature serves to further the gains of communication through creativity and artistry. He argues that the "communicator's creative abilities, such as planning a newspaper…and his genius for conceiving a plot for a…story,… or a feature for a newspaper…must be seen as part of the artistic aspect of mass communication" (15). Folarin further observes that public relations outfits are seeking out people with a "background training involving language studies/or theatre arts (because) artistic abilities and competence

are an advantage for writing catchy headlines for newspaper stories (15).” He does not show explicit knowledge of the inter-disciplinary relationship that exists between literature and communication. It is only implied in his analysis but he points out that communication studies can be situated within the arts as they both have common grounds of interaction.

Stephanie Newel, editor, *Writing African Women* highlights that newspapers and magazines are “an important outlet for writers who are confronted with a crisis in local publishing as paper prices soar” (3-4). Newell also makes an observation that even newspapers are sometimes not a safe haven for disadvantaged writers, because newspapers are often dumped in the archives and most times remain un-researched. It is in the bid to educate and awaken interest in research materials other than literary textbooks that these scholars. Jake Bruce and Nana Jane Opoko-Agyeman went into an innovative project of opening up to scholars “under-researched” archives (qtd in Newell 4). Opoko-Agyeman specifically sets out to recover lost literary voices. In her research, she explores literary journals, anthologies as well as newspapers that have been left unexplored, in their archival *states thus whether it is to unearth history or to explore recent works. Newspapers along with other texts on literature are the great collection comprised of creative works, reviews and critical materials. Opoko-Agyeman (68) uncovers “other unheard voices in abandoned newspapers, journals and anthologies that precede currently well-known writers. She also discovers the writings of Mabel Dove-Danguah who published in the early 1930s. Although the study is situated in Ghana, the result of the study holds true for other African countries. Newell contributes to the argument when she insists is that, it is not enough that newspapers feature literary works or that they are recovered from the archives. The literary features in newspapers must be used by researchers for them to be relevant to literary studies and its development.

Paul Gaitet makes a brief observation concerning the relationship between literature and the print media. He views the press as a crucial mediating agent. Gaitet cites the city of Paris as an example of a place where newspaper circulation is on the increase, despite competition from the electronics and computer technology. The press' intervention makes up for the limitation of specialised publications like the novel and journals. The print medium addresses a wider readership, provides "unabashed value judgments and clear-cut interpretation of literary materials" (42). He also observes that literary publication serves to promote the ideology of a particular newspaper, for example certain aspects of a text will be emphasized, while others are ignored. In newspapers, connections and parallels are also drawn to achieve a political end. Gaitet is more concerned with newspapers as avenues to propagate a merger between stylistics and politics, thus, his emphasis is on the political end that literature may be made to achieve.

Another newspaper writer, Okhakume insists that, there is a vibrant relationship between literary techniques, news writing and other newspaper features. He observes that an outstanding characteristic that a newspaper must possess is to "profitably engage its consumers" (64). Okhakume observes that, while investors expect returns, business must be matched with professionalism. It is indeed the writers' expertise that ensures financial success, because the art of news writing attracts a wide readership. Okhakume prescribes that to succeed at writing news, the journalist must first be acquainted with prose writing.When the journalist adopts the technique of literature he produces writing that extends journalism from mere reportage to what he calls "modern day" or new journalism as it has come to be widely called (64). He argues that the journalist who does not read will be lacking in literary prowess, general information and exposure, because, there is more to newspapers than selling news. As attention moves to literature as an aspect of cultural expression, the dividing line between literature and more popular entertainment like detective fiction and romance is being

challenged. Lye argues that selecting some literary works as belonging to the canon, that is the "collection of texts considered worthy of study by those in control of the curriculum" comes under strain because literature is part of culture (4). Lye does not specifically mention journalism but the term 'popular genres' is inclusive of newspapers. By implication this creates a relationship between literature and the print media. They are both products of culture and as such they are not intrinsic or independent of each other, but they are both rooted in a society's customs, values and history. This piece of criticism forms one of the early arguments that literature and other communicative forms that are considered non-literary share common characteristics as products of culture, as such they do not have mutually exclusive features.

The foregoing discussion on the relationship between literature and journalism also engages aspects of creative non-fiction that adopt literary attributes. Evidence abounds that these forms of writing have existed together in earlier times. It was the age of enlightenment, liberalization and civilization which also engendered modernism that instituted distinctions amongst various forms of expression and communicative disciplines. Literature, journalism and other cultural values are coming round to interacting with each other in ways that blur the distinction between high, middle and low culture.Also, the distinctions between the literary arts and popular culture. Some writers cite globalization as reason for the narrowing spaces and growing similarities between literature and journalism. Globalisation permeates political, economic and cultural life and bridges geographical distances. It is also responsible for the spread of mass culture aided by the presence of electronic media, information and communication technology. Globalisation as a word is new, but the relations between Europe and Africa are ancient and global trends are only a continuation of those ties. Liman puts this situation in perspective. "Globalisation is not in any qualitative sense different from previous

systems and relations of exploitation, inequalities and injustices that characterised the periods of slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism, respectively ((28).

The global phenomenon assumes widespread and intense dominance of Western values transferred to peripheral Africa. New ideas, values and practices generated by foreign institutions are again touted as universal norms. Globalisation also commodifies literary products. Again like in the Victorian era, literature, journalism and other forms of cultural expression are relayed to the public through the same medium of the print and more advanced communication channels like the electronic media. Through the aegis of a global culture, the 21st century mass culture envelopes and transforms the hitherto Western classical art of sublime and high brow writing which was a mark of "good education and superior breeding.'' (Liman, 28). Consequently literature and journalism coalesce as similar disciplines. The concept of literature as distinguished from journalism in the 18th century emerged at a particular phase of development in Western culture. Once again, the historical continuum on which literature rides, the resultant upheaveals in social and political life led to changes in the relationship between literature and other communicative forms. For nations colonized by imperial powers, the elite in those societies made up of scholars from Africa, Ireland and Asia formulated the Post Colonial discourse in the 1990s. It is a tool for harnessing African writing that dates back to the 1960s. The approach adopts principles and methodological tools for redefining literary art as a non-universal concept.

Still, some writers point out that certain features differentiate literature, creative non-fiction and literary journalism. They insist that intersections do not necessarily exist amongst literature and creative non-fiction. Hvid's (2005) opening statement summarises that the difference between literature and journalism is more fundamental than issues of fact and fiction. Central to their distinguishing characteristics are their "expression" "criteria for truth and relevance." (4) He draws extensively from Roy Peter Clark but seems to rescind when he

allows that, the journalist can adopt the techniques of literature and use them to report real life situations in forms that conform to journalistic ethics of objective presentation. He juxtaposes this with fictional writers who "have the privilege of inventing and making up stories" (1) to create an unreal world of universal truths. He distinguishes truth when he insists that truth is upheld in a real sense, when the story is objective with nothing added to it that did not exist when it was first captured. In addition, Scenes are clearly spelt out in a narrative form and the timing of events is adhered. Again the above criteria are appropriate to forms of journalism that are narrative or investigative.

Hvid further argues that another essential difference between literature and narrative journalism is how the "genres express their messages."(2) In this kind of journalism, the message is clear and unambiguous. But in literature, the text yields multiple meanings that are subject to the readers' perspective. Literary texts are given to various interpretations even by the same reader. Related to the message is another important and significant difference; the reader or audience to whom the text is directed. His responses are determined by the trend of the kinds of writings. Journalism presents the reader with what Hvid calls a "complete package" (3); in other words the reader of journalistic material does not have to unravel anything, but readers of literature are engaged in an active process to "unwrap the package" which they must also imbue with meaning, and meaning in a literary text yields unceasing signification.

The relevance of literature to society has always been a point of contention amongst scholars. Literature dwells on universal truths. It creates a fictional world that we can relate with because it mirrors our lives. But it still remains that, a mirror does give an identical representation of the reality it seeks to capture. In this vein, literature creates a parallel unreal world to which humanity can escape. The reader knows that the text is fictional, yet he identifies with it. In this way he chooses his "truth and relevance" when he encounters the

text. Conversely, and especially in traditional journalism, the writer has an obligation and is bound by ethics to write a true story that must be relevant. Relevance is measured by the newness and importance of the story to society. Again the relationship between reality and the text is a deciding factor for relevance. Truth of the text is tied to its relevance to society. The writer must relate to important issues in the world outside the reader and the text.

Goode's article "Honest Journalism and Good literature'' is relevant to the study, because his analysis possesses universal application. He traces the relationship between literature and journalism back to the time of the Greek philosopher, Aristotle. He summarizes Aristotle's 'treaties.' In his works, Goode substitutes 'history' for journalism' and 'poetry' for 'literature'. He notes that for Aristotle, "statements of poetry-literature had to do with "universals" while those of history-journalism had to do with 'singulars" or particulars. Poetry "is something of more philosophic and of graver import than history" (1). Some journalists share this attitude with their literary counterparts and view journalism as ephemeral and literature as permanent. Goode agrees with Nietzsche's biting comment on the press when he insists: "sick are they always; they vomit their bile and call it newspapers" (qtd in Goode 2). Nietzsche also relegates newspapers to the role of providing company to the reader during the morning coffee; at leisure time. He elevates literary books to the position of "more intimate and meaningful times." This means that with the literary text, reading is private and more intense. Goode shares these views about journalism with fellow critics, but he turns round to remark that, it is unfair to compare the best literature with the worst journalism. He finds a meeting point between literature and journalism through words and their usages and concludes this part of his argument that, it is best to judge both disciplines by how their subject matters are handled. Some writers of literature also view journalism with some contempt. Waugh comments that journalism is "the pursuit of the ephemeral to make those with short attention span momentarily happy" (qtd in Goode 7).

Writers, who straddle the worlds of journalism and literature, do not share negative attitudes towards journalism. Some of the famous writers of literature actually started out as journalists. George Orwell, writer of the famous satire, *Animal Farm,* and many other successful novels insists that journalism and literature both contributed to his growth as a writer. Goode notes that most practitioners of journalism are high-minded, multi-talented professionals. He observes that critics quarrel with the press because "it misuses the power it enjoys, and it is a misuse of power that literature cannot share" (11). He also draws examples from Mark Twain's criticism of journalism which includes unfair reporting and lack of truth and honesty by journalists. The evil in journalism, Twain (once a journalist turned novelist) observes, lies in "its ability to sway public opinion (to a large extent)" (qtd in Goode 13). He concludes that journalism shares with literature, the purpose of writing and the aesthetic use of words. Aesthetic experience, Goode points out: "is being able to write as one can, to make the best use of words" (17-18).

The tension that exists between literature and journalism does not sever their association. Jake acknowledges that literature and journalism share "audiences, authors, (and) themes" (1). Like Goode, he still finds a meeting point for the two disciplines, when he illustrates that literature and journalism meld together subtly when there is a masterly handling of the two. He also contends that journalism can benefit from literature in many ways: "there is news-item, but what follows is a mediation of completely literary kind." It is information that quickly reaches the reader but it is "conveyed using literary language." Still he differentiates them when he points out that, "journalism has an immediacy that literature does not possess" (1). Osho does not view the-present-moment nature of journalism as presenting an edge over literature. He insists that journalism should be "more than a news medium." A news medium becomes old at the end of the day (1). If it is to be compared to great literature like the novels of Dostoevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Turgenev and others then it must

have permanent status to remain significant. Osho's criticism touches on the kind of news that newspapers turn out and the format in which it is presented. He opines that minimal space should be reserved for news, so that poets, painters and writers can be given significant attention in newspapers. His position is that politics should be allotted little or no space at all.

Osofisan introduces another dimension to the dynamics which defines the relationship of the artists, the writer and the journalist. His treaties explore the impact that the artist and writer can make in society. He posits that, the artist and journalist can both influence societal values in similar yet different ways. Osofisan's position is especially important here, because, he discusses the relationship between literature and journalism. He affirms that the writer and the artist aim to communicate with words as well as pictures through creativity. The journalist is different but in actual sense he is also a writer. He observes that the artist exploits "imaginative space," the writer does this with words, while his fellow visual artist "creates with chisel or palette or with his body in theatrical space" (31). He creates an intersection where the different forms of art meet. The artist and journalist also find a meeting point as writers. On this common ground, both the artist and journalist create with words. They also communicate with the public. They both take their raw material from society which Osofisan observes is an approach of the realist discourse. In realist parlance "fiction is fact refracted through the lens of imagination" (31). Osofisan remarks that the journalist works with facts or truth while the artist "invents… (that) charming but fallacious appeal of fantasy" (32).

Osofisan argues that the literary journalist does not only report, he also comments, edits, reshapes information. The facts of news are mixed with creativity in their retelling. And the products of journalism loudly echo the achievements of the artist. He, like other writers, draws similarities between literary products and journalism that aligns itself with literature. Still the differences that continually keep them apart since they evolved as distinct fields remain significant. Journalism is transient and fast-perishing. With journalism the message

that reaches a wider audience is described as soaring "across space, and across the banners of cultural prejudices" (36). The literary artist fixes and makes permanent the same material but he is not bound by the fast pace of daily life. Through fictionality, he projects into the future to prophesy. Osofisan envisages the role that the journalist can play in extending literary enterprise, thus he encourages other writers to be engaged with newspapers as columnists as does Osundare, Ogundipe- Leslie and others.

Satre also attempts to draw a similar distinction between art forms. He observes that while art forms "mutually influence each other" it is differentiated in its technique as well as subject matter. He makes the point that the intricate patterns that are brought together to create impressions in a painting are interpreted visually. But with words, the artist may not connect to his audience, if words are not properly employed, thus he says it is "one thing to work with colour and sound and another to express oneself by means of words" (1). He does not make journalism the subject of his discussion but he draws attention to the intricacies that are found in artistic creations.

Abdu submits that literature is continually "creating and recreating" whatever it chooses. This has been an outstanding feature of literature since early times to the contemporary period. It creates a "saw-sew" relationship between "fact and fiction" thus literature need not disown or sever itself from journalism (4-5). One of the avenues to ensure its continued survival is through its readiness to appropriate journalistic values. Literary enterprise from about the 19th century when it was defined as a distinct category has continued to operate in a state of flux. There is no permanence to the form and nature of literature. The discourse exists and is influenced by social transformations occasioned by different historical epochs. Literature is prolific, it can bring into being, through the imagination what does not exist. Within literary space, journalism co-operates with literature. Abubakar cites the examples of recent Nigerian prose fiction that adopts the techniques of

investigative journalism i.e. *Outrage* written by Ogochukwu and *Oil on water* by helon Habila. He observes that these writers "use the technique of investigative journalism to signify the mission, the ambiguities and trauma of the struggle against marginalization, environmental degradation and deprivation" (17). Writers who stride the divide of literature and journalism merge contents and technique from both areas to foreground subject matter in the texts. Texts by means of artistry define and redefine the concept of truth, which is also a cardinal rule of journalism. In literary texts truth is redefined within the realm of the fictional world.

Ismailov is concerned with how the boundaries between literature and journalism are becoming less distinct. He observes that writers of literature who are considered to be high-brow no longer dismiss nonfictional writing as "mundanely journalistic… or newspaperly…" (2). He insists that in recent times, literary texts and newspaper reports compete for readers' attention. The writers of literature whom he calls "most refined and subtle knights of belle-lettres" are also preoccupied with tabloids and even television. Ismailov acknowledges that journalism is concerned essentially with news – "here and now event" and literature is more timeless; the language of journalism is "simpler" and the topic of writing in journalism is "narrower and more predictable" (2). Still, he insists that literature is also moving towards the characteristic that are typical of journalism. He concludes that: "If 40 to 50 years ago it was usual to say that journalism was at its best a shadow of good literature, nowadays one is tempted to say that the best of literature is a reflection of good journalism" (2).

2.2 Creative Nonfiction

Literature and creative non-fictional writing seek to capture human experiences in words. A review of literature examines the dynamics between literature and journalism. A good number of writers (Tom Wolfe; Gay Talese et cetera) have merged literature and journalism under another name known as creative non-fiction. Other forms of creative non-

fictional writings like biographies, memoirs and personal letters that make use of literary techniques are also included in the classification. Before the 1970s, writers went to extra intellectual effort to establish that literary techniques were used in writings normally considered by the institution of the literary canon as non-literary. This is in spite of the existence of the sub-genre of biography in literature. The presence of self-acclaimed non-fiction writers like Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and Joan Didion and a non-fiction journal, the *Fourth Genre* is gradually establishing the genre as a literary phenomenon. Its growing influence blurs the traditional separation between literature and journalism and other forms of writing that adopt literary styles.

The term creative nonfiction first came into public use at a meeting organised by the National Endowment for Arts (NEA) in 1983. The purpose was to conceptualise and distinguish the genre of creative nonfiction, as a criteria used to accept essays submitted for the creative writing competition. The fund acknowledged that writing of nonfictional nature existed. But the art of creative non-fiction as it stood at the time did not capture the essence of the genre as NEA had delineated it. Essays were submitted by university academics, critics as well as journalists, but the panel defined that, journalism did not fit the prescription although it was agreed that the "anchoring element of the best creative nonfiction requires an aspect of reportage" (Gutkind 1). Gutkind documents that NEA first explored the concept of belle-lettres as the criteria for accepting articles but, essentially high brow writing did not capture the personal essence and foundation of the literature they sought "because in belle-lettres emphasis was placed on style and technique" (1).

Eventually, creative nonfiction emerged to embrace the various types of writing that deploy creativity, in the presentation of real events, in an exciting and persuasive manner. Gutkind distinguishes the genre from other forms of writing when he points out that, the writer of a "creative non-fiction aims to communicate information in the manner that a

reporter does but his work reads like fiction" ("What is creative?" 1). In the literary world, writers are gradually accepting creative nonfiction as a literary genre. She notes that, arguments about the suitability of the genre in literary studies is hypocritical, because the "practice of writing nonfiction in a dramatic and imaginative way, has been an anchoring element of the literary world for many years" (2). Again differences exist about the limits or characteristics of the genre. For instance, arguments arise about the line that divides fiction and fact, because fiction thrives essentially on imagination while traditional nonfiction like journalism maintains an allegiance to fact. A Nigerian critic, Adesanmi, posits that the 'new' genre is "unknown to African writing" (1). This supposition is erroneous. In Africa the genre has operated in texts written by prominent African writers. Examples are Wole Soyinka's *Ake,* Camara Laye's *African Child* and *Radiance of the King,* Niyi Osundare' collection of poems, *The Eye of the Earth*, biographical writings on Abubakar Imam, Tafawa Balewa, *Shehu Umar* and a host of others. These writings have been the subject of literary criticism in many African and Nigerian universities.

Still on expounding creative nonfiction, another writer, Bassity, classifies the genre by drawing parallels with journalism or news writing also known as "plain nonfiction" (1). The writer postulates that in news writing, the writer assumes an impersonal stance by outlining the conventional journalistic principle of who-what-when-why-where and how (5W&H). Bassity likens this to feeding information into "a computer." Nonfictional writing keeps to facts. The critic emphasises that a good journalist writes with neutrality but she notes that synonyms of 'neutral' are "flat, bland, colorless-hardly, a recipe for telling an appealing story" (1). Creative nonfiction uses the same materials as nonfictional writing (except unlike fiction it does not undertake the task of inventing characters and scene). It does not bring anything extraneous to the story but conveys the story vividly and expressively. Rather than an arrangement of facts, figures, and quotes, creative nonfiction leans towards storytelling.

Essentially, a story "combines character and scenes to create drama" (1). In creative nonfiction, as outlined by Ronald Rodgers, minute details become important tools in the hands of the story teller to fuse, interlock and weave events, to create a story that comes alive. Bassit insists that in a masterful story, the mechanical presentation of names, facts, and figures" are not stressed but emphasis is placed on the "scenic details" that capture the attention of the reader. She agrees with Gutkind that creative nonfiction can exist in many forms the only rule to be observed is the principle of "truth" (3).

Druker explains that creative non-fiction is identified by its features. It is a "hybrid of literature and non-fiction" (1). It fuses the elements of literature with those of the real world. Haynsworth also argues that the presence of creative non-fiction brings dynamism to literature. It dominates what she calls "middlebrow" and "highbrow" literary reading lists (1). She describes creative non-fiction as journalism "under the influence of or infused by literature"at the same time it is a literary art that is "being transformed in notable ways by journalism." On the whole, creative nonfiction is different from other forms of factual writing like historical documents, sociology and journalism in its conventional or traditional form.

A literary critic, Barbara Lounsberry, outlines certain characteristics of the creative non-fictional genre. She insists that the subject matter must be "documentable…chosen from the real world as opposed to those 'invented' from the writer's mind' (xii). This means that the story told is true, it exists in the real world and can be verified. She also outlines another feature as exhaustive research by this the writer must be thoroughly conversant with his subject matter, only then will his story be credible. She includes scene or setting as an important characteristic of non-fiction. This quality differentiates it from typical journalistic style. Here, there is a similarity with new journalistic writing which highlights that, the scene is a major distinguishing factor between traditional journalism and its new form; literary or new journalism. Lounsberry outlines that the description of events must revolve around the

setting in a way that foregrounds the story. Lastly the story must be told in "fine writing: a literary prose style" (xv), told in a narrative technique that highlights the writer's artistry and mastery of language. In institutions where the genre is well established, students undertaking studies in creative writing are required to carry out empirical investigation to create and form a basis for creative writing. She also situates creative non-fictional writing within the ambit of literature.

Again, when creative non-fiction follows "a story-like trend," it is sometimes called "narrative non-fiction". Gutkind notes with dismay that there is little literary criticism on the genre. She insists that creative non-fiction is a "discourse grounded in fact but artful in execution." Therefore it can be called literary non-fiction. (qtd in Wikipedia 3) Chris Anderson, another writer, opines that due to the emergence of creative nonfiction in literary studies, literature is "no longer reified, mystified, (and) unavailable". He links Post Structuralism to literary non-fiction because the theory is "concerned with how we make meaning and secure authority for claims in meaning of language" (5) regardless of the status of the text, whether it is fact or fictional in nature. The creative nonfiction foundation sponsored by Lee and Richard Gutkind stipulate that it aims for high quality nonfictional writing. The ultimate aim of the foundation is to foreground the genre in literary studies.

Even though the foundation was incorporated in 1994, it is already making inroads and impact on literary studies by propagating itself. The term has gone beyond issues of conceptualization.Writers are exploring the various sub-genres of creative nonfiction. Writers like Donovan have described creative nonfiction as a wide area of study made up of many forms. She splits the genre into "memoir and biography, food and travel writing, personal essays and literary journalism" (2). Other writers like Anderson also agree with the catergorization. But he includes what he describes as "hybridized essays" (3). Anderson splits the form into "personal essay and journalistic essay" (3). He ignores the minute separations

that Donovan creates. Gutkind in her treatise distinguishes the genres of creative nonfiction by highlighting the characteristics of the genre. She exemplifies that, texts like Baldwin's *Notes of a Native Son* is a memoir. Ernest Herminway's *Death in the Afternoon* falls between a memoir and social commentary, while Tom Wolfe's *The Right Stuff* contains elements of reportage, presented in a dramatic way. Lee Gutkind refers to these as "parallel narratives of creative nonfiction" (2) that exist together as the genre of creative non-fiction. At the level of form, they are autobiographical/biographical, reportage, memoirs and letters, again levels of fact and imagination differ. The distinction outlined by Gutkind indicates that, the sub-genres of creative non-fiction are sometimes merged in writings. For instance, in one text, the biographical genre and memoirs may be merged and this is referred to as "hybridized essays."

All conceptualization of the term agree that creative nonfiction is the artful presentation of factual events. Still there are contentions about the degree or extent of truth in the writing of creative nonfiction. Anderson also expresses worry that the genre is "currently defined by its lack of conventions" ("Creative…" 3). This indicates that the practice established by Lounsberry in *The Art of Fact* is not strictly adhered to by writers. A very important rule reiterated by Lounsberry is that "topics and events discussed in the texts verifiably exist in the natural world" (qtd Wikipedia 3). Some writers of creative nonfiction have violated the limits of truth in their works by taking true events and mixing or filling in with imagination. For instance, Melaine McGrath admits that, while writing *Silvertown,* she had forgotten some of the facts of the story about her grandmother's life. And so she "reimagined scenes or reconstructed events in the minds …of the people who lived through it." She calls this "literary tinkering," a trifle of addition. She insists that, it does not distort the essence of the story (7-13). She also admits that there have been publicly acknowledged

incidences where “memoir writers” fabricated some facts in their stories. Gutkind also admits that James Frey’s *A Million Little Pieces* said to be a memoir contains fictional elements.

These instances raise questions about the place of time lag in recounting the stories. In telling a story that happened a long time ago, it becomes difficult to recount, or verify the accounts for many reasons. Memory is affected by time, scene may also be distorted overtime, because of structural developments. Witnesses may have moved from the environment where the events happened or even died. Again in some instances, writers state in the foreword that, the story is inspired by a particular event and they go on to write the encounter using actual names while describing event and scenes artistically. These examples of toying with the threshold of fact exhibit a combination of fact and artistry. It gives rise to redefinitions, and also establishes that, the last has not yet been written about defining the genre of creative nonfiction and its features. Another issue of contention is the one observed by Donovan. She notes that the line between nonfiction and creative nonfiction is “gray and hazy.” Some biographies can be classified as nonfiction while others are in the category of creative nonfiction (2). Again the artistic criteria may also be redefined. And like in literature, its appendages genres and sub-genres are bedeviled by the lack a streamlined delineation of subject matter, theme and form.

2.3 Literary Journalism

There is an emergence of several forms of writings that adopt the techniques used in literary writings to present issues, whether they are currently happening or they took place in the past. By a general consensus, writers have also classed varied factual writings of this nature under the broad name of creative nonfiction or literary nonfiction. Journalism shares historical ties with literature, therefore writers like Wolfe, Bassit; posit that another name for creative nonfiction is literary journalism. But Literary Journalism is still differentiated from other forms of creative writing in the sense that literary critics like Lounsberry accept that

creative non-fiction is a literary genre that adopts the format and narrative structure of the novel. Creative writing in journalism existed before Truman Capote's *In the Cold Blood*, which is a historic example of narrative journalism published in 1965. Features of literary journalism were found as early as the 1700s in Daniel Defoe's writings, the works of Mark Twain in the 19th century and Ernest Heminway's works during the Second World War period.

Literary journalism or new journalism has come to be journalism that appears in newspapers or magazines as news. From the foregoing discourse on creative nonfiction, literary journalism is one of the sub-genres of creative nonfiction. It occurs with memoirs and personal letters, travel and food writing, biography and the like, as what Gutkind calls the "parallel narratives of creative nonfiction" (2). They are alternate sub-genres of creative nonfiction, that all adopt literary styles. It is not strictly essential to differentiate literary journalism from creative nonfiction as some writers and researchers are wont to do. In a discussion on a blog post on the subject, Tom, a researcher points out that it is misplaced to attempt to draw differences between creative nonfiction and literary journalism because he views that, creative nonfiction is "an umbrella label for a range of nonfiction genres" of with literary journalism is inclusive (3). What he proposes should occupy researchers is to distinguish the subtle differences that exist amongst the sub-genres. But.a categorization of the sub-genres may also clarify issues and propose acceptable limits of mixing truth and falsehood in creative non-fictional writing.

Literary journalism is a prominent sub-genre of creative non-fiction. The value of literary journalism lies in the variety of ways that it has influenced and is influenced by techniques and styles of literature. Literary journalism first gained prominence under the name of New Journalism through Tom Wolfe's *The New Journalism* written in 1974. The terms, new journalism or literary journalism are used interchangeably. It is also called literary

news writing or narrative journalism. The various literary names journalism has acquired certainly links it with techniques deployed in literary studies. Wolfe declared that new journalism will "wipe out the novel as literature's main event" (Qtd in Gutkind 2). His assertion has not been established because literary journalism exists alongside the novel. It is also written using the craft that is employed to write the novel. Gay Talese, another writer of literary journalism draws, parallels when he observes that "new journalism reads like fiction but it is not fiction." (Qtd in Gutkind 2). New journalism sets itself apart from traditional journalism and aligns itself with literature. It elevates newspaper reportage by adopting literary techniques. It is not a novel but it adopts the devices of novel-writing. Talese establishes that the new genre uses techniques that were once the "unchallenged terrain of the novelist." In literary journalism, like in other forms of creative non-fiction, another writer, Esquire, notes that scene is a central element of the "sophisticated strategies of prose" (20). Writers of literary journalism contend that new journalism has introduced fresh approaches in writing, such that writers of conventional fiction adopt the styles of new journalism to create new forms of writing.

Sonja defines literary journalism as an aspect of journalism that shares similarities with the novel. "A literary journalist would use literary and narrative techniques that …make the story similar to a novel or short story. It would still be journalism though" (1). This means that the cardinal journalistic rule of factual presentation is not violated. In literary journalism, newspapers and magazines adopt the literary style of storytelling. The genre emerged as a reaction against what she describes as "factographic and objective journalism" (1). Literary journalism distances itself from the clichés that have come to be identified as a feature of writing in newspaper. The new genre adopts literary techniques, where attention is paid to the use of language in extraordinary ways. Its stock in trade are the deployment of expressive diction, immerse, description of events, and the use of metaphor to present news. In Sonja's

opinion, the genre intersects literature and journalism. It draws in equal measure from both disciplines combining the "best of both practices" (1). She also attempts to differentiate between literary journalism and a feature story. Again in literary journalism the stories sound like literature. This is achieved through the writer's power of description, his use of language and presentation of graphic images. In a feature story, which is a non-news article in a newspaper or magazine, the writing is purely journalistic in nature, characterised by clichés. It is formulaic in style and deploys the 5 W's and H.

Peggy a contributor to the blog discussion on creative nonfiction and literary journalism refers to New journalism as the "I" journalism because of the involvement of the writer with the story, but she still describes it as "fine story telling (that provides true and telling details) to create emotion and depth of response more commonly associated with fiction, theatre, art" (3). Peggy's description of the genre closely associates it with continuous writing that is characteristic of narration and the dramatic genre. Literary journalism depends on passionate expression and visual appeal, thus aligning it more with literature than journalism. Still distinguishing literary journalism, Suzy Fleming makes a distinction between a reporter and a writer. She argues that a reporter 'regurgitates information while a writer craftly'' assembles his information in a manner that sustains the reader's attention. (1)

Rodgers moves beyond differentiating between traditional and new journalism. He insists that certain elements must be contained in a writing of literary journalism. He quotes Wolfe who posits that it is necessary for the writer to witness the dramatic scenes that he writes about because he is the one who "recreate them for the reader" (3). It is consequent upon first hand information that "specificity of concrete detail" is to be recorded (3). The implication of this characteristic is that a piece of literary journalism must be news; an event that happened freshly. It is established that journalism, whether it is in its traditional form or adopting literary artistry, must be about current happenings.Wolfe's *New Journalism* and

Capote's *In the Cold* are still classed as literary journalism though they were written in the mid-1970s and early 1980s. The issue arises as to whether they fulfill the criteria that, literary journalism must be news. Peggy concludes that the texts were written "concurrent(ly)" with the events or topics of their time (3). In other words, at the time they were written they occurred as news. In the treatise outlining the elements of literary journalism, the genre has been described as a story that "is…expressive and out lives the moment when it is news" (Rodgers 4). There is no contradiction because news, written in the style of literary journalism, can still be read after its initial publishing, because it transcends traditional journalism into an all-time story, because it adopts literary narrativity.

Another crucial element that distinguishes literary journalism is the style that a writer adopts, to narrate his story. The writer is not just a reporter, but he is engaged in defining the narration. He adopts a third person narrative so that the characters are treated like those in a novel. Details about setting and environment are as "important as characters and events" (4). There is a subjective arrangement of information to achieve an effect because "the artist sees not so much what is there as what he can make of it" (Charles Horton Cooley qtd in Rodgers 3). Rogers adds that "the exploration of inner experience" lies in the writer's involvement with the story especially when he recounts human experience. Above all there must be careful and precise word selection to achieve a literary effect (3).

There are several strands of creativity that are imbedded in literary journalism. These are narrative journalism, investigative journalism, immersion journalism, new new journalism. All these forms rely on the art of literature to relate a story that is imprinted on the reader's mind long after the news is gone. Any thing that is literary thrives on creativity. Any discourse that utilizes creativity, innovation and imagination and uses language to achieve certain effects is a literary discourse. A form of literary journalism known as narrative journalism has been defined by Chip Scalan as:

> a story that features character rather than sources, communicates experience through the five sense … and, most importantly, a sense of drama; has a beginning that graps the reader's attention; a midlle that keeps the reader engaged, and an ending that lingers in the reader's mind like the reverberations of a gong (wikipedia, 1).

Narrative journalism is also called immersion journalism. Here, the writer follows the subject or object of the story for a long time to be able to write in detail about personal experiences. The Nieman foundation describes it as a "complex genre with multiple layers and contexts" that can transform newspaper writing (1). Mark Kramer of the Nieman foundation observes that narrative journalism, is journalism that recognises that the reader is an active participant in the story, while it "explores the scene, describes characters in details, engages in a gradual unfolding of the action and relates with the readers by immersing them in the story through artistic flair," without flaunting the rules of journalism (qtd in Wikipedia narrative… 1). Boo also adds that narrative journalism cannot "be soft and explanatory" (1). The journalist cannot make excuses for the gory nature of the subject matter. She insists that "destitute characters, complicated wrongs" must be presented. The "details don't have to be pretty." (Narrative…1) Capote's *In the Cold* is often cited as a historic example of narrative journalism. Narrative journalism is written in the format of a novel. Its long and continuous nature is not favourable for newspaper publishing, so it cannot be practiced in every setting. Investigative Journalism, also another form of literary journalism, takes up a single topic of interest, especially crime, politics, corruption and the like. In this form the journalist often spends months or years researching and preparing the materials for his story. It has been earlier noted that the practice of mixing journalistic techniques with those of literature is an old one. Alexander observes that, the writings of poets like W.H Auden who wrote in the

early to middle 1900s used a style that was characteristic of an ‘‘open journalistic verse’’ which Alexander calls ‘‘journalistic poetry’’ (363-364).

2.4 Macro Linguistic Association between Literature and Journalism

In literature and journalism words are the major fort through which meaning is conveyed. In the two disciplines, words are examined for their grammatical uses as well as the social and cultural significance of their import. The literary artist, like the journalist, pays close attention to language and the ends that it may be made to achieve. Consequently, the research examines the presence of the macro linguistic attributes of semiology, pragmatics and rhethoric as tools that both studies deploy especially as these reinforce their association. Microlinguistic properties of language are studied by core linguists who are interested in grammatical structures and the scientific explanantion for their organization into minute but meaningful units of language. Beyond micro linguistics however, expanded linguistic studies became prominent in the early 1970s. These moved language from the grammatical units that make-up a sentence to the text and its surrounding circumstances. In multi and interdisplinary studies, macrolinguistics is applied to literature, stylistics, psychology, history and journalism. Literature and journalism draw from the resources of language to create writing that distinquishes itself from mainstream language studies. Literature formulates its own motifs through relying on and reinventing language. This results in what is known as literary language.

Both disciplines share language’s arbitrary attributes. Semiotics generally known as the theory of signs gained prominence through the works of Saussaure (1916-1965) In his famous work *Course in General Linguistics* published in 1917, the concept was later expanded in other semiotic studies by Levi-Strauss (1958/1968); Umberto Eco 1976/1984) C.S. Pierce and others. These extended that language can be expressed through non-verbal and written means using signs which are arbitrary as well as symbolic. For example a picture

of a child in dirty and tattered clothes on a newspaper page is as much a sign of poverty as is a description of a decrepit building. In the pool of language, literature and journalism share similar yet divergent relationships. The same language resource may be used to achieve different aims. The mass appeal that journalism attracts is out of reach of the literary writer. A pictorial representation of poverty can be captured at one glance. But a text has to be perused by a reader. The readesr's conscience has to be sensitive to social injustice. This way, he does not view the description of an inhabitable building as a normal environmental feature. Zelizer remarks that: ''language studies provide a wide-ranging rubric in which to examine language in different often competing contexts.'' (111-112). In language the journalistic ethic that reality must mirror reality or truth becomes controversial. Language's quality of arbitrariness renders it problematic in the bid to pin words to particular meanings. Within semiosis meaning is reinterpreted as different from the stance of ''what you see is what you get.'' In semiotics what you see is a representation of something deeper. The indispensability of words and their arbitrariness places journalism with literature in the realm of multiple interpretation that is evident in the inability to portray a 'reality' that can truly reflect society.

In pragmatics, contextual analysis is at the centre of language. A pragmatic relationship of both disciplines arises from the same historical base. This again interrogates journalism's claim to 'objectitivity or truth' (Zelizer, 128). Both disciplines draw from Aristotle's *Poetics.* He creates a relationship between story telling and rhetoric and how they are combined in a 'coherent sequencing of events across time and space' to achieve specific effects (128). Narrativity and storytelling are foremost building blocks of literature and journalism. Central to narration is the "what'' of the narrative (the story) and the "way" of narrative (the discourse or the style and technique through which a story is transmitted) (Seymour Chatman, qtd in Zelizer 129). Journalism exhibits resemblances to literature by

using traditional literary techniques. Zelizer remarks that these literay-derived practices raise controversies and tension within journalism.

Among journalists there is a need to separate those for whom journalism is "information" and those who practice journalism as "producing stories" (129). The focus on information rather than the narrative aspects of news emphasize "the cause of events rather than their meaning" which highlights experience and how it is relayed (129). The growing prominence of narrative and literary journalism indicates that newer attributes of writing are gaining ground, although journalism still insisits on its core attributes. Unlike in literature where imagination is at play, the journalist uses "hard news" as his raw material for building a story. There is also the insistence on formulaic narratives, i e, repetitive use of some words or ideas and narrative codes. Zelizer exemplifies some of journalism's stylistic nuances as: "bereavement quotes for bereavement stories" stereotypes and cliches (133); ethical markers, that seperate journalism from literature. Adams (33-34 qtd in Zelizer, 133) adds that, narrativity in journalism is a "plain style" that is "uniform and consistent," although the writer is faithful to the devices of story telling in the form of "plot, characterization, action dialogue and sequencing also dramatization, causation, myth, metaphor and explanation." Again, as different from literature the art of story telling moves journalists from reporting events to interepreting them. The literary artist makes no interpretation, he is not a critic. As a novelist, poet or playwright, his is a tacit portrayal of events.

Rhetoric provides another meeting point for literature and journalism. It is an indispensible tool in communication. Proceeding from the functionalist approach of language, language's utility value is imbedded in communication. Zelizer also draws from Plato and Aristotle the processes adopted to achieve persuasive arguement. These are invention (collecting and conceptualizing subject matter); disposito (structuring a speech) locution (giving a speech/ linguistic articulation); memoria (meomorizing the speech) and action

(performing the speech) (139). Rhethoric is an ancient tool in communication that persisits up to present day. It continues to be used in aspects of communication. It is fine tuned and artfully presented by oratora and writers through the art of persuation.

Before the 19th century, most writing about man and his social and political existence was termed literature. This meant that literature and journalism had filial relationships with disciplines like history, philosophy, politics et cetera. They operated as non-specific forms, forms of communication, rhetoric and avenues of expressing ideas. It is the educational specialization, that, created minute distinctions amongst previously non-distinguished forms of speech acts, that thrive on rhetorics and narrativity to portray human existence and experience. Literature and journalism have circumvented the conventions that put them apart to interact in forms that sometimes de-emphasise definite distinctions. Many literary texts are written in journalistic style, while writers, writing for newspapers and other non-fictional writings, deploy metaphor, imagery, and a forced attention to the properties of language. These developments invariably question the concept of literature as a category. Literature as a concept has been under strain for redefinition in the era of cultural studies which became prominent in the 1970s. This also accounts for the numerous and continuous approaches to the study of literature, an exercise that results in new theoretical formulations.

2.5 Questions of Literature

Various attempts have been made in the bid to postulate about the nature of literature. Before the 19th century the term ‘‘novel’’ was used to refer to both fictional and true stories as well as news. Eagleton, (1-2) and Bennet (6) remark that, literature is generally referred to as “all forms of writing from belles lettres to graffiti.” The etymology of literature from the word “litera” suggests that literature is any written or printed material. A historical trace as chronicled by Culler indicates that, for more than twenty-five centuries before 1800, literature meant “writing or book knowledge” (21). He observes that even in the present times

reference to literature does not always mean a remark on poems, novels or plays. He exemplifies that a scientist who says "literature on evolution is immense" is not alluding to works studied within the designated field of literature. Culler extends that on the reverse, works that are studied as literature today were classed together with "speeches…history and philosophy" as outstanding examples of "the use of language and rhetoric" (22). These were not studied as literary material by students. Hunter et al also note that sometimes the definition of literature is stretched to include "any kind of organized human expression from ballet to advertising" that is analysed or "read like a story or poem" (xxix). Another complexity to delineating the subject is that, literature and letters have common roots. Indeed the word itself is an invention that was used to refer to the habit of reading or writing. In modern literary theory, oral forms are also categoried as literature, especially in cultures that combine the oral tradition with the written one.

After 1850, literature emerged as a distinct category. It came to be conceptualized as: "Fictional imaginative or creative writing including both serious and popular genre as distinct from …philosophy or scientific texts"(Bennet, 6). The inclusion of serious and popular writing still raises arguments. Eagleton observes that, the famous comic, superman and romance series, Mills and Boons et cetera are fictional and imaginative yet they are not regarded as literature. He concludes that the "fictional" and "imaginative" yardstick that is used to define literature is inadequate. Culler also points out that: " Works of literature come in all shapes and sizes and most of them seem to have more in common with works that aren't usually called literature than do with those recognized as literature" (21).

This still takes one back to the task of clarifying literature as a category. Bennet's further attempts at conceptualizing literature lead him to posit that literature is distinguished within literary criticism. He skews literature's space by defining that: "It exhibits certain specific properties that require special methods of analysis" (6). He posits that it is criticism that

establishes the criteria for those literary qualities that distinguish literatı re from other forms of writing and also sets out the methodology for its study. Consequently literature is defined as a concept that studies certain texts that are set apart for study "witnin the discourse of literary criticism" (6). This seeming solution to defining literature poses another challenge. If the category of literature is defined within the culture of practical criticism, then it means that, the texts that the culture of criticism accepts as worthy of study bear a distinctive quality of literariness. The matter goes round to an earlier reference that literary texts sometimes bear close relationship to texts that are considered non-literary. Eagleton (8-9) explains that some of the writings that are studied as literature were actually written as philosophy or history. He acknowledges with Bennet, though, that there are still texts that were originally written to be read and studied in literature within the specialised category. He summarizes this aspect of the discussion by saying that, "some texts are born literary, some achieve literariness and some have literariness thrust upon them" (7). Concerning the comprehension of literariness in texts, Bennet (7) insists that written texts do not organise themselves into the literary and non-literary. They are termed so by the culture of criticism. From the fore going, it is obvious that there is an established institution that defines what is to be studied as literature. Owing to this, Eagleton contends that: "There is no essence of literature whatsoever" (8). This declaration is foregrounded by writers like John M. Ellis (qtd in Eagleton 9) and Culler (22) who liken literature to weed. They elaborate that: ''weeds are not particular kinds of plants, but plants that for (certain) reasons the gardener does not want to have growing in their gardens." Culler insists that literature like weeds do not have a particular nature, or peculiar attributes that make them what they are. Instead, one will need to depend on extrinsic factors that are brought to bear on texts to be able to set them apart as literary. He reshapes the argument that instead of seeking to know what literature is, we should address the problem by examining the attributes that make us treat something as literature. It is important to note that

the culture of literary criticism has tried to contain the dissenting voices within literary studies. Its role is clearly set out.

Eagleton (203) outlines that: "literary criticism selects, processes, corrects and re-writes texts in accordance with certain institutional norms of the literary." He critiques that these norms cannot be described as objective or be accepted as universal standards, because they are amenable to time and other historical circumstances within a particular context. Literary criticism is not homogenous. It is the lack of agreement amongst literary critics as to the methods of investigating literature that has given rise to the many schools of thought within literary theory. This is compounded by the yet to be resolved matter of 'literary' and 'non- literary' texts. The evolution of theory attests to the unending attempts by critics and writers of various times to define the subject of literature. Alexander also confronts the all-time contention of distinquishing literature. Like most other writers, when he admits that, there is no agreement on what can be defined as literature, he evades confronting the issue head-on by reminding readers that his is a treatise of the history of literature and "not an introduction to literary studies, not a history of literary thought," he sticks with what he describes as a "kitchen definition"…that the merit of a piece of writing lies in its combination of literary art and human interest" (4). A work of art which lacks human interest dies. For its human interest to last–and human interests change-the language of a work has to have life, and its form has to please. He qualifies that the qualities of language and the form that a literary work must take are "easier to recognize than to define." Even this can be contested because the examples of texts that he chooses to compare can be said to be subjective. He confirms his subjectivity by admitting that "it is necessary to discriminate" (4), because the concept of literature varies amongs cultures and times.

Attempts to define literature as a distinct category began since the 1800s. A book published by Madame de Stael, a French baroness titled: *On literature Considered in its*

Relations with social Institutions turned attention to literature as a distinct enterprise. More emphasis on distinguishing literature from other forms of writing is traced to the German Romantic theorists of the late 1890s. Similarly, after the 19th century, the category of literature has continued to be narrowed. It is designated as "a special set of imaginative writing associated with a language and a nation" (Hunter et al, xxx). This again defeats the universality thesis. Since then difficulties have arisen from distinguishing the category of literature, whether it is to define literature or to provide explanations on why a text is treated as 'literary.' The inability to arrive at a consensus definition on the nature of literature and how it should be studied justifies the statement by theorist that: "there are many different ways of studying literature, not all of which are compatible with one another" (Goring, Hawthorn and Mitchel 65).

The text may hold the answers to the category of literature but from the forgoing discussion ambiguity trails the concept. Ambiguity itself is a verbal or discursive material that gives room to alternative or different interpretation of a piece of language. The emphasis is on the multiple meanings that can be gleaned from a text and not on the individual interpretation that readers proffer. Therefore, terms such as "polysemy" and "plurisignification" become alternative ambiguities, because they address the reader, language and the rules constituting literariness. The constant signification that a literary text embodies makes it yield fresh interpretation even for the same reader. Wellek and Warren also use the text as the standard for answers when distinguishing the concept of literature. They posit that literature is "a system of signs" that is governed by its own rules, insisting that the literariness of a text exist within its confines. Therefore a literary work should be judged based on its aesthetic value. They explain that through the concept of "perspectivism" a text is a combination of criticism, history and theory because all these put together afford a wider knowledge of the meanings that the text may convey. They also outline several ways

by which literature can be defined or its properties distinguished. Their study of literature is limited to 'great works' of any subject matter that has outstanding characteristics and is known for "notable literary form or expression." They postulate that in the genres of drama or poetry, works are selected for their aesthetic value, sublimity and intellectual qualities, "style, composition and general force of presentation" (1). The critics (Wellek and Warren) point out that if these works are not literature then we are guilty of value judgment. In the same way, if we take books on history or philosophy to be included as literature, the same accusation will be made. Wellek and Warren insist that the nature of literature cannot be limited to certain texts designated as 'literary.' Literary historians study works of philosophers, historians, theologians even those of some scientists. It explains why literary theory is made up of an array of approaches.

Taylor builds on the 19th century definition and insists that literature is an ''imaginative creation whose medium of transmission is words'' (1). He upholds that literature is recognised by certain characteristics. It has a nature that is realised in both written and oral forms, the writer's preoccupation being form, style and social function. Language and in effect words are the distinguishing feature of literature. Taylor insists that words make meaning through their cumulative effect. It is words that set out the author's design, pattern and technique. A relevant criterion put forward by Taylor defines literature as communicative activity. In a communication chain, basic attributes must be in place. For example there must be cooperation between the communicators, thus literary narratives are communicative activity. First they "… are seen as members of a larger class of stories," their viability does not lie in the act of passing information alone but also in their "tellability" (Culler 25). What makes literary narrative different from news or a speech, for instance, is their ability to compel, excite and awaken the reader's intellect to become part of the imaginative world. The institution of literary studies also creates a hedge of protection around the discourse by

adopting certain procedural and methodological measures that select texts, review and publish them. Taylor adds that, literature "is a speech act or textual event that elicits certain kinds of attention. Literature contrasts with other sorts of speech activity such as impacting information, asking questions or making promises" (27). The form in which literature appears also steers the reader in the direction to go, for example, when it is found in a book of poems, a collection of stories, displayed in a library or bookstore, it is immediately recognised as literature. But the foregoing postulation does not distinguish literature from the other numerous communicative activities. It also leaves the position as an inadequate and narrow perspective.

Characteristically, literature is defined by many parameters that intersect and are continually allied with non-literary aspects. Culler assembles certain foremost features that have been touted by critics and theorists as distinguishing literature from related or similar fields. The Formalist perspective view, literature as the foregrounding of language. Literature's ability to make strange and unfamiliar daily language accounts for its literariness. In literary use, language draws attention to its properties. This is especially evident in poetry where linguistic patterns are reorganised to rhythmically cohere with sound patterns. But it has been argued that although prose-fiction is also a genre of literature, the rhyming scheme that is a prominent feature of poetry is not immediately noticeable in the continuous writing of prose. Unless particular prose writing by certain standards is classified as literature then attention is drawn to it. Culler elaborates that when a text is framed as literature, we are disposed to attend to sound patterning or other sorts of linguistic organisation that we generally ignore.

Closely tied to the above is the feature of literature as extending language. In literature, parts of speech, constituents of language, are brought together in a complex relationship to create meaning and the signification that arise from the relationship between

and amongst words. Disparate words and sounds are forced to coexist. As postulated by Structuralist approach, meaning arises by difference because something is one thing and not the other, also through the arbitrariness of the sign and its referent. Once more not all literature foregrounds language. This is because the language of advertisement has been consistently cited as an example of entrenching language, yet it is not identified as literature. It only highlights the ambiguity of categorising or distinguishing literature. It does not clarify it. Culler emphasizes the point that Jakobson does not cite his important example of poetic language from a poem, but from a political slogan. Culler summarises this part of the argument by stating that:

> it is not that the relations between different levels of language are relevant only in literature, but that in literature we are more likely to look for and exploit relations between form and meaning or between theme and grammar, and attempt to understand the contribution each element makes to the effect of the whole, integration, harmony, tension and dissonance. (30)

Consequently the attributes of language found in literary texts also occur in texts placed on the other divide as non-literary. Another characteristic put forward by theorists is that literature is a fictional creation. The world of the text is parallel to the real world. It has been observed that reality, especially in the form of everyday activities, cannot replicate itself like in literary narratives. Grammatically, utterances assume special functions in fictional works, the use of articles like “I” do not refer to the author, but the personae of the text. Still Culler argues that the multiple interpretations that occur in a literary text as well as the detailed life style of characters presented in texts, does not occur with more intensity than in real life. It is a situation of truth being stranger than fiction, but the fictional criterion alone, does not define literature.

Literature has also been described as aesthetic object. The theory of aesthetics is formulated by immanuel Kant. The ability of a literary work to indulge in its beauty, without necessarily assuming a social role, is what projects the aesthetic value of literature. In aesthetics also lie the potential of literary works to draw the readers' attention, to the dynamics that exist between form and content in a text. It is argued by writers that another distinguishing feature of literature is reinforced by the principle of intertexuality; "A work of art exists between and among other texts." Culler (34) and Eliot (47-59) expatiate that the tradition of writing that precedes the writer "does not lead him to a slavish imitation," but influences him so that there is a link with the past, through which new trends and practices are established. Before a text is written, other texts were already in existence and the present text makes reference to them, because succeeding authors read the wealth of knowledge in previous works. The culture of making reference to other literary texts extends literary activity. Literature in this instance becomes self-reflexive. Certain essays even provide instructions on how to write a literary term paper. This serves to reinvent and reinforce the tradition of the literary academy. Again like the other factors put forward, this one cannot stand the argument to its end. In other disciplines and discourses too references are made to already prevalent opinions. For instance, in the practice of law, cases are resolved on the basis of previous and famous judgments by citing cases that are Locu Classicus. Consequently, the above criteria fail to define literature. Each of the properties presented are also applicable to and in use in other situations and discourses, attempts to define literature by examining intrinsic properties of the texts does not resolve the matter.

Sartre defines literature as a phenomenon that is sustained by the art of writing. He contends that art includes painting, sculpture and writing. And all these forms of art pay attention to details. For instance, a rose flower is perceived beyond the fact that it is a flower to represent an abstraction, to do otherwise will be un-artistic. "For the artist, the colour, the

bouquet…are things in the highest form. He returns to it constantly and is enchanted with it" (2). Satre also views the artist as central to what ends up as a literary product. The artist shapes the material because he discusses a subject using a particular method, which is his technique. He is not neutral and cannot be, because he is part of the process of literary production. The writer cannot write aimlessly. He has the option to be mute, but if he chooses to write, he must aim "at targets (like a man) and not like a child, at random, by shutting his eyes and firing merely for the pleasure of hearing the shot go off" (14). That the writer addresses subject matter is not what makes him a writer. It is the combination of a subject matter and technique that sums up the aesthetics.

Satre dwells on the events of the 19th century when writers defined literature as a special category of writing. He posits that literature is a historical as well as political phenomenon. Literature at this time, by distinguishing its art from other forms of writing lost it mass audience, because writing for the masses will mean, giving up "some of the exquisite forms of narrative, poetry and reasoning" (91). Literature became the preserve of the social conservatives; the bourgeois class, who came to prominence on the capitalist ideology. The writers of this age were celebrated in the drawing rooms. Literature rose on bourgoise ideology which was the dominant social class practice at the time. It is thus difficult, to pin down the nature of literature to some specific definition. Literature is defined by the values of society and particular cultures of different times. Its nature is consistently tied up with world processes.

2.6 The Canon in Literature

It is established that certain texts are agreed upon by critics as deserving the attention of literary studies. They are fictional, imaginative and creative. Their use of language is distinctive in a manner that draws attention to language in the work. It is still argued that the classification of these texts as literary does not arise as a result of certain intrinsic values that

make them literary. But they fit into already laid down principles by an institution that defines what is studied as literature. This means that the institution may expand to include texts that did not previously meet the 'literary' standard. The major reason for the approval of some texts and the non-acceptability of others is that, the culture of literary criticism bestows on them certain values. This is captured by F.R. Leavis ''Literary Criticism and Philosophy'' (qtd in Bennet 10). In the work, he prescribes that the literary critics should put a text to test using these criteria:

> Where does this come? How does it stand in relation to…? How relatively important does it seem/And the organization into which it settle as a constituent in becoming placed is an organization of similarly placed things, things that have found their bearings with regard to one another, and not a theoretical system or systems determined by abstract considerations.

Texts that are considered literary then become products of convention. Literary texts fall in line with other texts that are 'similarly placed' in the culture that criticism has already set down. Leavis' position raises arguments about the validity of literature as a category. The organisation of similarly placed things which he talks about may include historical, cultural or psychological entities. It is an approach that criticism uses to determine what gets included in the canon.

The origin of the canon goes way back to ancient times when literature appeared in its antiquated form. The word is originally spelt Kanna in Greek; Kanna was used literally to refer to "useful types of reed," that were used for fencing, to make furniture and thatched roofs (Dean 11). Metaphorically, kanna came to mean "a straight rod," a standard of measurement or a measure of "correct proportion." The Romans appropriated the word and spelt it kanon. It became known as canon in Latin and has remained so to present times. (qtd in Dean 12). The meaning of the word was to apply to architecture, sculpture, mathematics

and the arts. In literature, the concept was narrowed by Plato. Plato in his treatise banished from his ideal state, artists and poets who were imitators, whose writings were "mere appearances." He was preoccupied with reality and truth in writing, so that citizens are not led astray by leisure and baser pleasures. The canon became the yard stick that he used to admit serious writers into his Republic. After Plato, the Epicureans as they were known opposed Plato's philosophy of ar, but, they agreed with him that the canon can be used a "standard measure of truth" that has universal application (Dean 15).

Consequently, in classical antiquity, the concept of the canon "combined artistic excellence with morality and truth and Ideology" (15). The canon became a measure for the preservation and reproduction of works of literature and philosophy. Dean chronicles that Alexadrian scholars devised lists of the most distinguished writers in various genres of poetry and philosophy. These compilations shaped early literary writings. The first real distinction of the literary canon "as a collected body of text" was done in the first century A.D.: these texts were classified as classical. Around the 4th century AD a comprehensive list of books for study were included in the canon of literature and grammar. E. R. (qtd in Dean, 11) explains that classical writers were also called ancient writers. Their position in the canon may change depending on the path of literary history or what he calls "different historical contexts." (Dean, 11)

From the 5th century AD the canon began having exclusive lists. The institution of the canon has survived from the middle ages to contemporary age. There exists the canon of antiquity, middle ages, early modern period and so on, thus the canon has been affected by changing times and historical contexts. For instance, the printing technology of the 1440s was to transform the content of literature and its mode of production. Alvin Kernan contends that in the era of printing, the definition of literature was narrowed to ''works of particular quality'' distinct from disciplines that had existed together without categorization. In

Kernan's words "other texts concerned more with facts than eloquence of expression" were excluded as literature (qtd in Dean, 20). At some time in the history of the evolution of the canon works by English writers came to be part of the literary canon. In the 18th Century, with the accomplishments of the industrial revolution, English became a powerful language. Around this time, English literature was also studied along with ancient classics. Accordingly, then, influences from English studies have shaped the formation of the canon.

The canon also has application in the Christian church. In church history, it originates in the attempts to separate the authentic Hebrew books (Old Testament) and those of the New Testament. The essence was to exclude heretical texts and those that contain "fundamental truths." These principles have also influenced the formation of the canon in literary studies. Rice and Waugh (398) also agree that the canon is "an instrument of measurement" a yardstick for setting standards or rules to regulate certain things. The canon in English studies assumed universal status because to make it provisional will render it amenable to changes. It will then be restricted it to the spiritual needs of "a particular group at a particular time and (consequently) undermine ecclesiastical authority and power" (398). Canonical rules are reinforced by"evaluation and interpretation" of literary works.

The secular canon became concretized during the mid-18th century when literature was first defined as a distinct category from other similar discursive and cultural practices like philosophy and history. Harold Bloom establishes the role of the canon in his text *The Western Canon.* He constitutes the literary canon into "a holy book or shrine" that excludes "the infidel and the heretic" (qtd in Rice & Waugh 400). In a secular sense, Bloom defines the canon as: "…a choice among texts struggling with one another for survival, whether you interprete the choice as being made by dominant social groups, institutions of education, traditions of criticism or….by late coming authors who see themselves chosen by particular ancestral figures" (Bloom qtd in Ashimole 3). Bloom posits that, the canon is the only entity

unique to the discipline of English literature. The canon is enacted when the reader and writer are engaged in the "preserved" text. In the exercise, it is not only the list of books required for study that are explored, but in the reader, a "literary art of memory" is preserved. Bloom highlights the place of the reader in entrenching the canon when he insists that:

> We need to teach more selectively, searching for the few who have the capacity to become highly individual readers and writers. The others, who are amenable to a politicized curriculum, can be abandoned to it. (qtd in Rice and Waugh 401)

In Bloom's view, the canon not only consists of a selection of "great works of literature" but her readers too should be a chosen minority with the intellectual abilities to appreciate the aesthetic value of canonized works (401). He aims to protect what he considers the study of great literature against denigration. Bloom argues against accusations that canonicity is a function of ideology instituted by a cultural system to reinforce certain value systems. Eghagba elucidates the concept when he defines canonization as the: Critical tradition that accepts works and writers into the pantheon, (a temple sacred to gods), and discard works that are perceived to be lacking in the grandeur or spirit and letter of socio-cultural development (497)."

He views, that canonization ensures continuity of the literary tradition, it "appreciates the sublime…" and the standards, which the rest of humanity must aspire to"(438). It creates room for the recognition of writing that is profound and arrives on the literary scene markedly and timely like Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in the wake of nationalist activities, Niyi Osundare in the mid 1980s, Ben Okri and Chimamanda Adichie in the era of the global trends that create complexities for semi urban and rural African societies still grappling with issues of delayed development. Conversely and in contradictory terms, it denounces and tags as non-literary discourses in the form of environmental factors, social conditions and cultural motifs that influence and are reflected in the finished text.

Consequently, the writer postulates that canonization that is too rigid will harm literary development. In universities situated in Nigeria, most researches revolve around Achebe, Soyinka, Clark and Okigbo. A trip down the path of history reminds one that emerging African literature has had to contend with challenges from an existing canon; the English canon, which insisted that the study of literature is synonymous with texts written by Shakespeare, Yeats, Eliot et cetera, until Achebe's classic, *Things Fall Apart* was published in 1958. In this instant, canonization assumes negative proportions. The claim that rigid canonization is negativity and will harm the literary institution is backed by Ashimole's assertion. She asserts that "a network of interests, have been brought to bear on what has been accepted or excluded from the notion of literature" (15). Canon formation involves intricate historical and social factors. Therefore, Eagleton (11) adds that the "so called literary canons, unquestioned great traditions and national literatures, are actually constructs fashioned by particular people for specific reasons at a certain time."

Canonicity and the timing of events suggest that our views correspond to contemporary social realities. Following this trend, Longhurst declares that "Shakespeare is no more than a writer of a specific age; 17th century English society" (qtd in Ashimole). Still within the realm of timing and social relevance, Tutuola whose work has been decried by some Nigerian writers (Achebe, 1975; Nnolim, 1989) as whimsical, still has those who view him as beginning a style of fictional writing in English, described by Darah as "magical realism" (7). Works like Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991); ''Converging City'' (1992) and Adebayo Williams' *The Remains of the last Emperor* (1994) have both made extensively use of magical folklore. Innes acknowledges that Okri's stories which merge the "fantastic or phantasmagoric and the mundane" follow in the tradition of pre-colonial writing of which Tutuola is one of the early practitioners (5).

In the 19th century when literature emerged as a special category, was also the age of enlightenment. It became a tool of instruction in the colonies of the British. In industrialised Britain, it countered the values of capitalism by uplifting the working class. The working class' appreciation of self worth and individualism was to replace religious dogma. Therefore, to remain relevant to humanity, the canon is faced with the option of becoming flexibile to accommodate changes in time, culture and social formations in which it operates. An enduring value of art and literature is its "ability to renew itself"; not only that, art is ambivalent and at once prolific and dynamic (Egbagha, 480). It moves with times and situation, this it consistently does to ensure its survival and relevance. The canon continues to occupy a connoisseur status, but he insists that: "the modus operandi of literature continues to change. Literature accommodates new artists or writers, new ideas and thoughts and this expands the canvas of literary experience" (481). Literature continues to strive to maintain its functional value of meeting the needs of its readers and audience through theatrical appreciation, but it has also kept pace with globalization and technological advancement.For instance, characters are able to bridge space and time through faster travelling means and communication air waves To avoid the risk of tossing the argument about the canon and literary criticism back and forth, it is established that the institution of the canon and literary criticism exist together. The canon legitimizes criticism while the culture of criticism reinforces the canon.

Alexander in a recent book details the history of English writing. In the course of his explanations and historical narrative, he also clarifies long held beliefs and views about literature. He distinguishes between tradition and the canon. "A canon is a selection from the larger literary tradition, and the tradition consists of more than a set of canonical texts" (2). His explanation implies, that the canon cannot be dispensed with, it is part of and imbedded in tradition. Tradition "… grows and fades, changing its aspects every few generations." It is

gleamed that since the canon is a selection of texts from a literary tradition, it is also subject and amenable to the inevitable changes that a literary tradition undergoes, especially that it has to "contend with research interest"(2). The writer acknowledges the ongoing diversity that exists in literature in the form of cultural studies, along with writing that is sociological or psychological, that includes "magazines (newspapers) stories, advertising and the unwritten 'texts' of film and television"(2). Another issue of importance, especially in contemporary times, is the lack of emphasis on the hierarchy of the literary genres which Alexander refers to as "kinds" of literature (3). Literary history has it that in medieval times, drama and performance was the foremost and widely practiced kind of literature. And by the 19th century, the novel overtook all other genres, but in the present times-the 20th century onwards, literature intermingles in a multi-cultural and interdisplinary relationship with other communicative studies and the humanities.

Alvin Kernan in *Death of Literature* (1990) views that literature has become "... one the many... modes, print, television, radio, VCR cassette, record and CD by which information is assembled, organized and transmitted effectively" (qtd in Hunter et al, xxx). Hunter et al also make the point that "a song lyric, a screen play, a supermarket romance (as well as) a novel by Toni Morrison... and a poem by Walt Whitman may each be interpreted *in a literary way*" (Hunter et al, xxx). The continuing expansion and transformation of literature means a crumbling of the walls built around it. By the mid 20th century, literature had come to encompass oral as well as visual forms like films and cinemas; these are closely related to the dramatic genre. Literature has held on to a tradition of writing that upholds the "beauty of language and form... the joy of stirring up theme and action" but it still expands its horizons to include new and exciting writing. The writers (Hunter et al) liken literary studies to a garden where in it: "…historically authenticated varieties (Keats' 'Ode on Melancholy') are

planted next to new hybrids, the ancient and exquisite bonzai tree next to that beautiful intruder some might call weed." (xxx)

The classics still exist but literature is opened to fresh and new voices (a combination of tradition and experimentation). Arguments continue to rage on, creating a divide between Structuralists and Post Modern critics. Mathew Arnold earlier insisted that "only the best that is known and taught in the world can lead (men) to be better readers, thinkers and writers" (qtd in Hunter et al xxx). There is a call for an enlargement of the canon or its outright abandonment. An absolute concern with 'traditional' texts neglects many other works that are influential in their time and environment. Another position argues that a basis in traditional forms of literature enhances understanding of emerging forms and varieties. As to who to include or leave out, writers suggest this may be arrived at by experiences gathered in consistent reading; identifying and applying existing standards for judging texts; defining approaches of interpretation, these will even aid one to create a personal "canon."

There will always be contentions about the role of the canon, but it is evident that the value of those texts that influenced the evolution of literature cannot be diminished, even though "some alien weeds have turned out to be lovely additions to the literary traditions" (Hunter et al xxxiv). Alien weeds encompass the literary cultures outside the Western world. Eagleton likens the literary academy to "a laboratory in which some of the staff are seated in white coats at control panels, while others are throwing sticks in the air or spinning coins" (199). The imagery signifies that literary works can be classified into categories, works of classical and universal value, those works that gain instantanous admission into the canon and those hoping to be admitted or existing at the fringes. In literary criticism anything is possible, going from the hard core literatis of the Formalist and New Criticism schools to those who insist that there is no category of literature. Those who contend writing that is at

once historical, sociological and also political depending on the subject matter or concerns of the work at any one time.

These developments are evident in the increase of Post Structualist theories. The approaches diffuse literary texts as one of the many discourse in a pool of cultural, linguistic and historical environments that other discourse operate. The institution of the Western canon still complicates the terrain by its insistence on the universality of art. The institution classifies literatures produced in its former colonies as 'Commonwealth Literature'and links national literatures written in English as continuation of the Western canon and as such judge them using Western parameters. Countries are classified as the older Commonwealth and the newer Commonwealth. These are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, English speaking part of South Africa and India, Pakistan, Sri-lanka, Malaysia. The newer Commonwealth are, other Asian countries; Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Black South Africa, others are Jamaica, Guyanan and other Caribbean Countries. These countries have also reacted by formulating Post Colonial discourse to interrogate their histories, culture and politics. The discourse expresses a disavowal of applying Western critical standards to the judgment of African literature. Edwards, an English writer conforms to new trends when he argues that, while the canon of English literature is made up of Milton, Bryon, Yeats, Joyce, Eliot and others not mentioned "similar lists can…be easily assembled for all national literatures" (171). By this he agrees that there is no universal canon.

Eagleton argues extensively that the endless methods involved in literary criticism make it impossible to harmonize literary studies. A theory can stand firm only if "it can define itself in terms of the particular object that is being inquired into" (197). This has not bern the situation of literary studies. In literature, there is no pure or uncontaminated theory. What is often touted as literary theory has more links with other disciplines, for instance, structuralism is rooted in linguistics, post colonialism in concretised in political science and

history, reception theory and psychoanalysis have their bases in psychology et cetera. In literature, therefore it is the object and not the method that distinguishes and delimits the discourse, even the object is unstability. It is subject to external factors. In one of the attempts to define literature, Roland Barthes remarks that literature "is what gets taught." Literature has no specificity (qtd in Eagleton, 197). Consequently, the multiplicity of critical methods in the discipline offers literature freedom to be out of a straitjacket. But again there is hardly any similarity amongst the different methods of critical analysis such as structuralism, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, ecocriticism et cetera. It is concluded that literary discourse carries no single or definite signified. It is a "network of signifiers able to envelope a whole field of meanings, objects and practices" (Eagleton 201). Some works are selected as fitting into these maxims and they become known as existing in the canon of literature, that is why it is contradictory that the canon insits on remaining "fixed …eternal and immutable" (201).This comment applies to the various canons that are instituted in the wake of existing national literatures. The canon needs to be amenable to change, to be able to correspond with its object which has no definite signified or signifying properties.

Literary theory exists as a branch of social ideologies without unity. It is also not completely distinguished from other fields. Thus, Eagleton advances that literature is a name "which people give from time to time for different reasons to certain kinds of writing within a whole field of what Michel Foucault has calls 'discursive practices'. Eagleton proposes that rather than the continued attempts to set out the distinguishing features of literature, literary studies should revert to traditional methods of analysis before the subject was named literature. A historical analysis links the category of literature to rhetoric and certain 'signifying practices' which existed in the past and which literary criticism used as the basis for analysis. Rhetoric was a form of critical analysis from the early times to the 18th century. It exemplified the composition and construction of discourse meant to invoke or produce

certain effects. Its objects of inquiry ranged from religious speeches to writing. It examined the power of persuasion and "truth-value" of the discourses and the effects they produced on the readers, listeners and audience. Speaking and writing were not "textual objects to be aesthetically contemplated or endlessly deconstructed" (Eagleton 206). They were forms that involved readers and writers, performers, orators and audiences within specific social purposes and conditions. Rhetoric shares with structuralism, semiotics and formalism their common interest in the formal attributes of language, but like reader response approach it is subject to the readers' interpretation.

The nature and function of literature has metamorphosized along historical, cultural and political developments. The various movements and approaches that make up literary theory attest to the unending perceptions, about the nature of literature. Since the 19th century literature has continued to expand and be reformulated. The Western canon previously viewed as the fortress of literary enterprise has transformed from a universal canon into several canons depending on the literature of the region. Critics argue that, literature as a concept is held together by an institutionalized apparatus of academics, producers and publishers. Persistent arguments against the universality of the canon, diffuses the concept of literature in the pool of cultural studies, so that it becomes one of the many expressions of culture. The pressure that is exerted on literature as a concept literature to be redefined since the 1960s is reflected in the new way that Abubakar represents the word as: Literature, literature or "literature" to capture literature's unstable and transforming nature (9). Abubakar argues that literature's changing mode is influenced by human life which is constantly transforming. And the search by writers to portray these changes leads to equally changing modes of expression that capture life in particular times. Ashcroft argues that "what continues to hold concepts like Literature in place is a massive structure of cultural power directed in educational, publishing and economic institutions" (15). These ensure that inspite of the

redefinitions and transformation that literature is undergoing it still remains a distinct field of study.

CHAPTER THREE

NEWSPAPERS AND LITERARY SPACE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

3.1 Preamble

Publishing structures like the African Writers Series instituted by Heinemann publicised the works of early African writers, especially those of the southern part of Nigeria. These publishing structures were the first casualities of the collapsing national economy, thus they were severely under funded. The universities too were unable to fund and sustain literary journals of repute. Literature found its way into the print media through historical and political circumstances. In the 1980s military dictatorship dealt a blow to the publishing industry. By the 1990s publishing houses like the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company and Heinemann that nurtured older Nigerian writers were no longer effective. The combination of these factors made literary activities to move outside the academic environment. Literary manucrpts found expression and production in the press centres. University scholars also served on the editorial boards of these newspapers as editors and gate keepers. Some newspaper columnists, writers and editors like Abubakar Imam, Saada Zungur, latter writers like Ibrahim Malumfashi, Ibrahim Sheme, Sumaila Umaisha, and several others, have also made their mark on the literary scene by publishing works that address issues affecting the literary terrain of Nigeria and more specifically, Northern Nigeria.

In the Southern part of Nigeria the Western educated elite established literary magazines to encourage creative production. These were; the *Black Orpheus, The Horn* The *Nigerian Magazine*. In the South of Nigeria, literary matters were first published in the *Daily Times* which began publishing in 1926. Literature was published in the paper under the "Times Review of Books'' alongside other texts in the field of economics, science and technology. The column featured forth-nightly on Wednesdays or Thursdays. Although the

paper is not the fore runner of *The Guardian,* it is possible to regard it as beginning a tradition that may have influenced *The Guardian. The Guardian* newspaper was established on july 4th 1983. It is published in Lagos and circulated to other parts of the Nigeria. The first edition of the paper states the objective of establishing the newspaper. The purpose statement says:

> *The Guardian* is an independent newspaper established for the purpose of presenting balanced coverage of events and of promoting the best interest of Nigeria (1)

The paper goes on to expatiate that it upholds the ideals of fundamental human rights, free enterprise and democracy with some measure of state conrol. These principles of liberal demcracy are influenced from the United States of America. The paper chose the date of its establishment to concide with the day the United States of America got her independence.

The Guardian also has a logo. It is taken from an ancient Egyptian symbol that represents truth. Under the logo is an inscription which reads "conscience, nurtured by truth." The saying is inspired by Usman Dan Fodio's saying that; Conscience is an open wound; only truth can heal it." *The Guardian* publishes for the attention of a readership that is intellectual and informed. On its fifth anniversary on july 4th 1988 The newspaper sought the opinion of intellectual minds like Tai Solarin. Solarin recommended the paper as a daily literature to be read. He also recommended the paper as an important supplement to class room instructions. Ray Ekpu and Segun Oduko, The Head of Department of mass Communication University of Lagos commented, the paper "maintained a consistently high quality, raised the standard of journalism..." (6) *The Guardian* concerns itself with issues of politics, economy, health, in addition to literature and art. Its early attention to literature is captured in its first edition.The paper descrbes its role in the nation by a symbolic image. It is

captured in the picture of the bright sky over a palm tree with its leaves spread out. The words beneath the picture explain the symbolism:

> From Today, the light of the Guardian daily rises over the nation...may the rays of its investigative reporting cast light on hidden corners of the nation's affairs. (1)

From an early identification with literary matters *The Guardian* Newspaper went on to consistently feature literature. Particular attention is paid to *The Guardian* when discussing literature in Northern Nigeria, because its literary series has acted as a projector of the literature of this region. When the paper began publishing in July 1983 its literary column was tagged "The Arts" and it appeared sometimes weekly or forthnightly on Wednesday on pages seven or nine. This continued until 1985 when The "Guardian Literary Series" (GLS) began as a consistent feature for about two years. In this paper, primary texts, reviews and criticism of literary materials spanning the genres and sub-genres of literature (poetry, prose, fiction, drama, women writing, children's literature et cetera) were published on a weekly basis. Literary features of the "Guardian Literary Series'' are collected and published as texts titled *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature. 1700-the Present.* Volumes l and 2. Apart from these texts, *The Guardian* continued to publish literary materials well into the 1900s.

In 1939, *Gaskiya Ta Fi kwabo,* a Hausa newspaper, was established in the institution of the Literature Bureau. Abubakar Imam, who was already with the bureau, became its first indigenous Hausa editor. The first edition of the paper posited that a foremost reason for the publication of the paper was to eradicate ignorance among the people, by making reading materials available to a large number of people. In the bid to achieve its objectives, the newspaper made literature a consistent feature of its subject of publications. Journalistic production was to benefit from the creative prowess of those appointed to manage the affairs of the newspaper. Thus, very early in the paper's history, literary minds shaped the

development of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. Abubakar Imam and other prominent writers of Hausa literature influenced the featuring of literature in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.* Furniss has it on record that "much of poetry saw the light of day in the paper's column" (13). He opines that, literary endeavour like newspaper publication is communicative media. People were encouraged to write literary materials for the paper, but works to be published had to attain a certain standard of acceptability in terms of literary creativity. Furniss observes this of the editorial board of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* that: "In selecting poetry for publication in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* the one time editor, Abubakar Imam once told me he was primarily concerned to determine whether a poet was clear and comprehensive and whether what he was saying was useful and the right thing" (13). The establishment of newspapers in tne Northern part of Nigeria can be linked with the activities of *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo* as the first Hausa newspaper, along with it the newsletters that were published in the indigenous languages. *Nigerian Citizen* is the first newspaper to be published in the English Language in Norther Nigheria, its publication was late in coming, still it was short-lived. The paper did not exert the desired impact on indigenous publishing of literary materials. The Northern Nigerian Publishing Company, emphasisied the translation of books written in Hausa into English. The Northern Nigerian writers were stifled by the British colonial apparatus that was often in stiff competition with them. Nortern Nigerian literary terrain was dominated by Muslim writers whose world view was at variance with British values. The writers of the Southern part of Nigeria were more favoured in publishihng by Heinemann. Able (180) notes with dismay that "no Northern Nigeria novelist has appeared under the title of the African Writers Series of the Heinemann educational books." The Northern writer has had to resort to the limited newspapers as a publicity outlet for his creative products. Some of them also worked as editors and columnist of the newspapers that published their works.

The *New Nigerian*, a newspaper of note superseded the *Nigerian Citizen*. The *Nigerian Citizen* started featuring in January 1964 but the paper remained a twice weekly publication. It was published twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays, its literary column was known as "Talking of Books."The section featured literature, politics, economy, science and technology. Very early in its inception, it featured a fictional historical work titled "Of Emirs and Pagans.''The paper's literary column in addition to those of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* demonstrates the efforts of the Northern Nigerian print media to make literature a constant feature of its publications. The *Nigerian Citizen* published for two years and was replaced by the *New Nigerian*. The *New Nigerian* was first published on 1st January 1966. The paper came into existence as a medium to meet the political and nationalist needs of the people of Northern Nigeria. They needed a paper that was regionally based to portray the values and aspirations of the people of the area. The paper sought to make up for the limitations of *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo* and the *Nigerian Citizen* that were published by the colonial government. Thefore one of the reasons fro setting up the newspaper was to break with the colonial influences on newspaper publishing in Northern Nigeria. To emphasise the point the paper's location was movedaria to Kaduna. Another purpose of publishing the *New Nigerian* was to counter the propaganda of southern newspapers, which became intense in the period of intense political activities in the mid 1960s. These were the *Daily Times, Tribune, West African Pilot Daily, Express* and *Nigeria Outlook.* The Northern People's Congress (NPC) which was situated in the North needed a regional based newspaper to propagate its activities.

Before March 1995, the literary column of the *New Nigerian* which appeared weekly came under the title "culture." It was published on every Thursday. Later, "The Write-stuff" became the newspaper's tag for literary features. This change in nomenclature in the *New Nigerian*, was effected in 1995. The initial title of "culture'' incorporated all artistic expressions, but under "The Write-Stuff" literature enjoys exclusive coverage and attention.

The Column is featured in the *Sunday New Nigerian* of every week, usually on pages 11-14. The feature covers all the genres of literature; poetry, prose and drama. "The write-stuff," has become a consistent literary feature to date, it serializes novels, poems, reviews and critical texts of writers and their ideas, from Northern Nigeria and other parts of the country. The column also establishes a literary lineage that dates back from the time of Abubakar Imam Kagara to the present. In the *New Nigerian* of November 14, 1997 (12) for instance "The Write-Stuff" featured an interview with Imam, the first editor of *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo,* who lived from 1911-1981. The interaction was conducted on June 28, 1976, and reproduced in the year cited above (November 14, 1997). It contains autobiographical information about a writer whose works are important study materials in literary scholarship.

The association between literature and the print medium in northern Nigeria was made unstable by the vagaries of colonial interest. Even though the free rein of imagination and creativity of writers was stifled and there was tardy but continued association of literature and the print media. The print media courages continuous writing, Newell (2) remarks that newspapers provide "open spaces that attract a wide range of contributors from different sectors of the literate community." In Newspapers writers from all fields use the columns and features pages to "experiment with genres, with narrative styles, with voices and identities…" Apart from the *New Nigerian* there are other newspapers publishing literary pieces on a regular bases, these are: *Weekly Trust* with its literary column "Bookshelf," *Leadership* has "Bookarts" *The Nation,* also features a literary centre-spread on Sundays.

3.2 New Historicism as Framework of Analysis

Many approaches to literary theory have influenced studies in literature. Famous and ground breaking among them is Formalism. The Formalist theory found expression through the Moscow Linguistic Circle and Opayaz (Society for the study of poetic Language). Prominent proponents are the Russian Formalists, Viktor Shklovsky, Boris Eichenbaum, Yuri

Tynyanov and Roman Jakobson. Formalism used to describe a theory of literature that de-emphasises social, historical or ideological factors in the interpretation of literary texts. The approach views the text as a closed entity, studied through the highlights of its formal features. Formalist adherents concentrate their analyses of texts on the relationship between texts and their phonic or grammatical elements. Form to the formalists connotes anything from the genre to grammar, stylistic or technical features and even issues like themes or the interpretation of meaning.

Formalist analysis seeks to be scientific and objective, its concern is with the work; it eschews factors that are extrinsic to a literary work, like historical events or and politics that is operational in the environment where the work is written, as well as ideological concerns or the life of the author. The theory's concern is to ''Secure autonomy and concreteness for the discipline of literary studies'' (Eichenbaum (qtd in Goring et al, 144). Their aim is also to distinguish literature from other related disciplines of history, philosophy and the like. The formalists insist that art needs to be paid close attention to by examining the facts of a text. Formalism argues that every day language which serves the purpose of communication has become commonplace, thus the extraordinary use of language which deploys images, technical and stylistic elements removes staleness and revitalises language. Peculiar uses of language enable the reader to experience language in fresh ways. And because language conveys experience, the reader encounters the world around anew. The strange use to which already familiar language is put gave birth to Jakobson's famous thesis that the ''object of study in literary science is not literature but literariness'' (qtd in Goring et al 145).

Formalism, Structuralism and New Criticism are approaches of the Modernist period that came into prominence, from around the 1920 and 1930 and to the 1940s and 1950s. The formalists are not concerned with the value of individual text but the general system that

governs how literature is studied. New Criticism, the newest of the Modernist theories, is influenced by the ideas of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). In Kant's philosophy, art, is centred on aestheticism and not concepts that can be can be grasped by rational reasoning. A major influence on New Criticism is T.S. Eliot. In his famous article "Tradition and the Individual Talent" Eliot provides a bridge for the arguments of Post Structuralist Theories. He attacks the claim to individual creativity. He argues that the writer harnesses a wealth of materials from resources that exised before him. As such criticism should not dwell on the life of a writer or the influences that cause him to write but on the "particular medium…" in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways "(Lodge 75). During Post Modernism, the plurality of art and and the questioning of original artistic production flourished.

New Historicism arose as a reaction to New Criticism's emphasis that a literary work is complete in itself. The new theory challenged the contention that literature is an isolated creation that should be analysed without reference to historical or social circumstances. New Historicism is one of the theories housed in Cultural studies. Interest in Cultural studies began in about the late 1960s to early 1970s. Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart initially contributed to the explosion of cultural approaches to literary studies. Current strands in cultural studies have imbibed a lot of the ideas of Derrida and Foucault. In the new dispensation, culture is not viewed as a set of conventional values but as the "end product of an endless series of interactions and exchanges" arising from values (Berterns, 175).

Cultural studies embodiy many theories that operate by similar interests. These are: Marxism, Post-Structuralism, Feminism, Post-Colonialism, Cultural Materialism, et cetera. Dobie posits that cultural studies address an "unthinkably broad body of knowledge: language, customs, legal systems, literature and more" (173). In cultural studies, historical, social and economic perspectives are treated alike, with no one gaining privilege over the

other. Discourses in cultural studies are unending and continue to evolve as they are affected by new trends. In cultural discourse, minority ideologies that are often suppressed are exposed and upgraded, and studied alongside dominant ones. Adherents of Cultural Studies argue that groups of people or values are socially constructed, not given and absolute. Similarly, Dobie contends that Cultural Studies is "highly politicized" may be because value systems are the focal point (174). In cultural studies, some critics question the establishment of dominant ideologies. Theories that came into being after structuralism reject the philosophy of great literature and "masterpieces." The theorists contend that there are no hierarchies of importance, no division between "fine art" and "popular art" (174). Literature becomes one of the many manifestations of culture co-existing with and using the resources of other cultural disciplines. Cultural Studies challenge dominant ideologies "whether 'the powerful' is a literary canon or discriminatory institutions." The practitioners use resources acquired from "non–literary" fields to effect changes in rigid literary practices (Dobie, 174-175). Consequently, New Historicism takes on the features of cultural studies, so it is not limited to any field or area of study, its application is evident in several disciplines including literature.

The term New Historicism was first used by Wesley Morris in 1972 to describe a mode of literary discourse from German historicists, Leopold Von Ranke and Wilhelm Dilthey, and America historicists Vernon Parrington and Van Wyck Brooks (Goring et al, 187). The title is first gleaned from Harvey Pearce's *Historicism Once More*. But recently it has been attributed to Stephen Greenblatt because New Historicist study is made prominent by him. The theory gained attention in the 1980s through Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* a book that projects his ideas and those of other adherents like Louise Montrose. In the text, he coined the term New Historicism. Greenblatt insists that literary production is governed by multiple interests. The intention of the writer, the genre of the text

and historical situations must all be taken into consideration. He also describes new Historicism as "a poetics of culture," a situation where human consciousness which began in the 16th century has become a "manipulative artful process" (qtd in Bertens, 178). The increased awareness of the individual identity also fashions or conditions power relations because the self is a construction, it is not naturally given. Louis Montrose's uncollected essays on Shakespeare, especially *Fantasies* and *Representations*, and a journal published by the University of California Press all advanced the theory. Montrose argues that social relations are imbedded with power relations and these are reflected in texts. Goring et al (188) capture that New Historicism attempts to provide "more adequate answers to various problems associated with the tension between aesthetic, cultural and historical approaches to the study of a range of different sorts of texts".

New historicism is also used interchangeably with Cultural Poetics. Brannigan observes that Stephen Greenblatt alongside Veeser, Montrose, Kiernan and Ryan prefer their works to be called cultural poetics. Greenblatt specifically refers to his work, *Renaissance Self- Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* as ''a poetics of culture.'' He (Greenblatt) also states in another work that "the study of a genre is an exploration of the poetics of culture." The term is adopted from his discussion of the various forms through which power is manifested (qtd in Brannigan 84). Brannigan remarks that, more aesthetic or formalist interest is implied by the term: ''cultural poetics.'' Others have suggested that cultural poetics is a new phase in New Historicists practice, so it is fashionable. In the attempt to make distinctions, Greenblatt defines cultural poetics as the "study of collective making of distinct cultural practices and inquiry into the relations amongst these practices." He goes ahead to define New Historicism as a "critical practice which challenges the assumptions that guarantee a secure distinction between literary foregrounds and political background" (Brannigan 87). In the definition of New Historicism, it is established that different cultural

behaviour exists alongside one and the other. What remains is to examine how they relate and interact. The second definition (of cultural Poetics) posits that the theory calls into question established notions that literary materials exist and can be studied independently from political and social factors.

An analysis of the two definitions does not set out clear distinctions between them. In both instances, the practice sets out to examine the relationship that holds together different expressions, values and discourses that ultimately yield a multiplicity of perspectives on a particular subject in a given society. For instance a societal issue like governance can be analysed from a political, literary and historical, perspective especially of a given period. This multiplicity of perspectives is referred to in New Historicist practice as the ‘‘episteme of culture.’’ Here discourses continually draw from, inter-relate with, and are influenced by "linguistic, ideological and cultural constructs" in a manner that makes an absolute distinction difficult (Lye 103). The complex relationship that exists among the many aspects of culture and the attempts to explore their nuances is also known as the poetics of culture. In this framework, the literary text cannot stand alone. In the course of its making as a text, it has been influenced by what is eventually termed extra or non-literary materials, so it exists with these materials within an episteme of culture. Here parallel interpretations and also an intermingling of cultural texts occur, and they are examined from the perspective of "how they work with and against each other" (Lye 103). Despite the preferred use of "cultural poetics" by New Historicist Famous writer, Grenblatt, it has been observed that, his preference has not changed his commitment to New Historicism. He has continued to edit *Representations,* which publishes essays "examining the historicity of texts and the textuality of history" (Brannigan, 84). The theory continues to evolve. For instance, Greenblatt's contemporary essay "Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World of 1991" is a New Historicist document and also a material for Post Colonial discourse. It discusses issues

of appropriation and subversion by Western culture through the use of ideology as an "instrument of power" (Berstern, 184.) Brannigan also observes that, the term New Historicism is mostly favoured by commentators to refer to literary practice which revolves around criticism. Lye also interchanges the terms using ''cultural criticism'' sometimes in place of ''New Historicism'' (103).

The emphasis of New Historicism is on the interplay between the literary text and other historical contexts. From this angle, New Historicism is influenced by traditional historical criticism of the 1930s and 1940s, yet it seeks to modify it. In traditional Historical analysis literary processes are arranged in a systematic order "to link the past with the present and almost always in a cause-effect relationship…"(Nwabuwe 498). Historical discourse indulges in portraying the world processes as stable, linear and the issues presentated as factual. Nwabuwe calls it "a project of the metaphysics of the signified as a source of meaning." In this enterprise the signified is presented without the signifier which leads to futile conclusions (498). History traces the origin or sources of materials, which (sources) may be influenced by many factors that are not highlighted. The attention put on other sources leads to questioning the validity or truth value of linear narration, the chain whereby events are passed from person to person. This form of discourse denies multiple signification of meaning that can be derived from historical sources. Nwabuwe argues that the "historical project of periodization and establishment of continuity of literary movement is largely unsuccessful (because)…History after recognizing disparity still fails to account for it adequately" (498-499).

Historical discourse has its adherents as Edmund Wilson who places Shakespeare's works in historical perspective and argues that his writings reflect the barbaric behavior of the time. Hippolyte-Adolph Taine, in *The History of English Literature* (1863) argues that literature is influenced by three intermingling factors; 'the moment, the race and the milieu''

(qtd in Nwabuwe 500). A linear historical analysis of cause and effect as applied to literature creates a simplistic description of the relationship between literature and history. Eliot directs the historical perspective to literary texts, from the perspective of a straight one-thing-leads-to-the-other-view. He insists that:

> …the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his generation in his bone, but with a feeling that the whole of literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous effect. (qtd in Nwabuwe 500)

This historical sense which is a sense of the timelessness as well as the temporal is what makes a writer traditional. In Taine's factors of the moment, race and milieu is also predicated on this position. A literary work is not the sole product of the author's imagination and experiences but historical and social circumstances are the overriding influences on the text.

New historicism is opposed to traditional historicism, thus new Historicism appends the prefix "new" to differentiate it from traditional analysis. New historians "influenced by modern theories of language and literature" query what is projected by traditional historical proponents as historical truth and the use to which historical documents are put (Abcarian and Klotz, 929). Ancient historians view history as an overreaching event in society. Thus history is used to "articulate and reinforce the values and beliefs" of a dominant class which are projected as factual and objective for that time (929). New Historicists consistently view historical processes as the articulation of various discursive practices of a particular period that do not operate independent of the other. Abcarian and Klotz also agree with other writers that these values and processes "compete, contradict, overlap, and modifsy one another in the constant struggle of dominance" (929). New Historicists postulate that literary texts can only be understood by unraveling and expounding the historical situations or times in which the

texts were produced. In this context, literature belongs to the historian as well as the critic of literature. This angle of theory has been described as a "thick description of a literary work." by Abcarian and Klots (929). Information that relates to the text is explored in terms of the author's experience and interpretation, cultural situation et cetera, all acting upon and determining textual interpretation.

New Historicists do not treat 'facts' as sacrosant. The theory does not view history as proceeding in a linear and progressive order, as such historical events are not classified within specific historical periods. New historicists define history in broad terms as a historical phenomenon that coalesces with anthropology, sociology. Literature that exists with and is understood through these other discourses exhibits no dividing line with them. The theory adopts a neutral approach to history by exploring many perspectives. The proponents contend that there is no objectivity in history. No one narrator or writer of events knows the entire story of what happened. What is often told as the authentic story is the perspective of a dominant or ruling class. History is made from the perspectives not just of the aristocratic court, but also from the workers and attendants in the palaces, the cobblers and traders on the streets. Therefore, New Historicists' analyses encounter historical events by being "sensitive towards different cultures" especially the minority voices (Wikipedia New…1). In an Anthology of essays, *The New Historicism* (1989) H. Aram Veeser highlights that, in new Historicist discourse, all expressive behavior is embedded in a "network of material practices" that are the identity of every society. Fish adds that New Historicists' view of culture robs literature of its "special artistic status accorded it by formalism." These identities, values and expressions are continually being modified and changed thus "no discourse… expresses inalterable human nature" (1). Hudson foregrounds New Historicists' position when he states that:

> All acts of literature is a product of evolution: its history is a history of unceasing transformation; and thus the quest for permanent criteria is foredoomed to inevitable failure, since it postulates finality where in the very nature of things no finality will ever be found (27).

A theory that deploys similar methods of analysis as New Historicism is Cultural Materialism. New Historicism and Cultural Materialism emerged at the same time in the late 1970s and early 1980s respectively. New Historicism is prevalent in the United States of America while Cultural Materialism is dominant in Britain. Both are concerned with the use to which history is put in the interpretation of literary texts. New Historicists express skepticism about the objective role of historical narratives which are regarded as fact while Cultural Materialists are more radical in their approach. They view historical processes as playing to favour the ruling class with "literary texts… as well as historical texts taking part in that procession" (Brannigan 5). Cultural materialism is radically inclined towards Marxism, but both New Historicism and Cultural Materialism share common grounds against formalism and its other strand, New Criticism, which de-emphasise historical practices in textual interpretation. New Historicism and Cultural Materialism also concede that historical contexts and periods are linked to or mask the operations of power or the forms that power takes during these times. Progressively, Stephen Greenblatt and Alan Surfield argue that texts are, "vehicles of power," to be used to achieve particular purposes (qtd in Brannigan 6). Again Cultural Materialism which is Marxist inclined is more concerned with the role of institutions like churches, schools and the existence of ideologies in literary texts and how they further the gains of the elite or bourgoise class. Both theories argue that, because of the different uses to which literature is put, literary studies is not removed from the sphere of politics. Brannigan posits that, New Historicist practice is aimed at "exposing… the systems

and operations of power so that we are more readily equipped to recognise the interest and stakes of power when reading culture" (9).

A discussion of power relations in society within new Historicist study shows influences from Foucault. Foucault argues that history has no logical conclusion nor does it proceed as cause, giving rise to effects. In his concept of history, what operates as truth cannot be applicable for all times. Each period has its own values by which it is guided and controlled. It is in the control and propagation of certain ideologies that power operates, and certain values suppress others to become dominant such that, suppressed values are classified as out-norms. This creates an "episteme… the rules and constraints outside which individuals cannot think or speak without running the risk of being excluded or silenced" (Dobie, 182). It is in the exercise of power that certain things are considered as taboo and others are accepted. And these standards are set by those who operate the dominant ideology. Foucault's studies led him to examine those areas classified as taboo, such as "madness, prisons, and sexuality…these were subject to the rules of exclusion" (Dobie, 183). Foucault's notion of power and ideology is made up of seemingly unrelated ideas. Pieters notes this of "The History of Sexuality" and other posthumously published essays written by Foucault. He expresses that power relations are diffused as well as inherent in human relations but "not necessarily dialectic" (4). Foucault views power not as a repressive force but as a tool existing in a complex relationship with other forces that cause things to happen. The marginal and lower class is controlled using power and the ones without power also desire it.

Furthermore, Foucault uses ideology on a large scale to apply to the influence of the state on its citizenry. He adopts a technique of description developed by the English Philosopher, Jeremy Bentham. Bentham uses the physical and psychological design of the prison house with its major aim as repression and surveillance. Foucault defines the state as a "panopticon," the guard tower that overlooks prison cells and the entire environment. The

panopticon creates the impression that the prisoners are always watched so they remain in a state of submission. Foucault likens the state to this 'all-seeing' institutional structure. It regulates the behavior of its citizenry through no-repressive apparatuses that the literary text is part of (qtd byPieters 176). New Historicist study, like Foucault, posits that power does not refer to physical dominance or pressure, but the subtle influences that ideology projects in the texts and their play on the consciousness of readers. New Historicism advances the ideas of Foucault that, what is regarded as outcast by the powerful provides another or multiple perspectives to societal being, thus several discourses are generated to reflect human complexity. It sees power not "exclusively as class related but extending throughout society" (New Historicism 2). Again the theory is led to examine ways by which the dynamics of power operate through literary texts to marginalize or exclude a large number of people. Consistently New Historicism seeks to unearth silenced or excluded cultures.

The tenet posits that a particular ideology is projected through discursive practices. And ideology is "the political disposition, unknown to an author himself, (but which) governs his work" (New Historicism 2). The statement may not be entirely true but its thrust is to highlight that a text is subject to multiple interpretations. The text is part of its society and written in and about the happenings in society of a particular period. Texts are not written in a vacuum, they embody the ideology that is "a vehicle for power." (Bertens, 177). The literary text is a powerful instrument for constructing identities, affiliations and perspectives. In this sense literature is not only a product of history it also actively makes history. Literature is immersed with history. It exists and interacts with other texts of a period, sharing affinities and multiple narratives. There is, therefore, no difference or superiority between literary texts and those of religion, history or politics.

New Historicists are dissatisfied with the "text-centred" approach to literary studies. They disagree with the formalist concept of literature and the exclusion of political

interpretation to literary works. Myers posits that they are "impatient with the settled view that a poem is a self-contained object, a verbal icon, a logical core surrounded by a texture of irrelevance" as projected by New Critics (1). Barry provides that a:

> Simple definition of new Historicism is that it is a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts usually of the same historical period. It does not consider literary texts as superior to non-literary ones but situates them all as influencing each other within the same socio-historical circumstances. (172)

New Historicism argues against the notion that literature is an autonomous area of discourse with its forms and principles of study. The theory insists that literary works are the products of history and are not essentially the "record of one mind's attempt to solve certain formal problems." Literary works are social and cultural products that are shaped by certain value systems. Literature does not exist as a distinct category of human endeavour but as part of a "particular vision of history" (Myers 3). And the works of literature and the men that produce them are social constructs whose nature does not transcend the historical processes of their time. Writers too are shaped and influenced by social and political forces. Myers exemplifies that "renaissance man belongs inescapably and irretrievably to the renaissance." In this sense history is seen as a "series of ruptures between ages and men," such that writers of particular periods cannot but write about the issues of their age (3).

New Historicism coalesces with Deconstruction as one the strands in Cultural Studies; as such they share similar ideas. Deconstruction demonstrates that texts have "irreconcilably contradictory meanings" (VirtuaLit 1). The author does not create or achieve a unity of purpose in a text. J. Hills Miller argues in an essay": "Stevens Rock and Criticism as Cure" that it is not the application of deconstructionist criticism that disintegrates a text, the discourse merely demonstrates that the text has already dismantled itself (Qtd in Virtual Lit

1). Jacques Derrida formulated and coined the name deconstruction. He critiqued the strait jacket thinking prevalent in Western culture. Derrida argues that people think in terms of "binary oppositions," something is one thing and not the other, for instance masculine and not feminine. Contrasting elements also imply a superiority of one over the other (1). He sought to erase the boundaries created between things by first challenging their suggested hierarchical structure. Derrida also questioned formalists' and structuralism's belief in a system of signs where everything is organised and compartmentalized and serves a definite purpose. Deconstructionists insist that texts are a heterogeneous collection of meaning strewn together. Therefore, texts are undecided about the meanings they convey. Ambiguity which is the hallmark of literary texts generates multiple signification and inhibit the existence of a single centre around which meaning evolves.

Similarly in New Historicism, hierarchical structures and singlarity are leveled to a uniform status. In New Historicist study, society consists of texts relating to other texts in an inter-texual relationship where literary and non-literary texts circulate without distinction. The variety of texts within a cultural milieu also makes for a multiplicity of meaning. The text or several of them are open entities. "The reader is free to enter the text from any direction" (Selden 75). This idea is explored in Roland Barthes' essays ''Death of the Author'' (1968) and ''The Pleasure of the Text'' (1975). The role of the reader in textual interpretation or meaning formation is subject to a multiplicity or plurality of perspectives. The historical pivot which forms the foreground of new historicists' analysis is subject to several interpretations. New Historicists remind us that historical analysis is contingent on and constructed by the reader. What is indispensible to New Historicism from Reader Response discourse is that the reader does not depend solely on the text to generate meaning, he contributes to meaning in the texts. He is influenced by his life and the experiences which he has gained elsewhere and brings these to bear on the intrinsic material of the text.

New Historicism disagree with the view that literary texts are cut off from their cultural environment and also that the texts are products of the author's sole imagination. They posit that the author is conditioned by the happenings around him and the experiences he encounters. In New Historical studies then, critics seek to "de-mythologize the creative process by re-examining the lives and times of canonical writers" (New Historicism 2). The adherents of the appoach posit that the writers' writing and reading of text is influenced by perspectives that are non-literary. The eventual 'literary' text is a continuation or product of somebody's account as a result of living in society. The approach suspends the author in the sense that his perspective is diffused among or within several other interpretations in the text. Foucault in an article "What is an author" (1969) questions the place of the author in a work. Marquez posits that the objective of New Historicism "…is to detect the overriding network of institutional ideologies within literary texts and to discard authorial individualism and intentions (2). Texts mask class structures and ideologies that are not unavailable or hidden to the critic. A study of multiple textual voices reveals dominant ideologies and suppressed classes, wthin this context the author's voice is absorbed amist multiple perspectives that are stylisitically incorporated in the text. If the author is a "dynamic participant in ideological shifts that occur during a given historical period" then his product will also reflect this paradigm shift (Marquez, 2). And as highlighted by Barthes: "The pleasure of the text does not prefer one ideology to another. *However:* this impertinence does not proceed from liberalism but from perversion: the text, its reading, are split" (31). The text much like its writer leads itself to and is a bundle of ambiquities, so are the readers' interpretations.

New Historicists argue that the conventional separation of texts into literary texts, 'great' literature and popular literature need not exist. The theory asserts that:

> expressions are embedded in the material conditions of a culture. Texts are examined with an eye for how they reveal the economic and social realities especially as they produce ideology and represent power or subversion" (Foucault qtd in Brewton, 17).

All texts circulate as the many manifestations of cultural identity and practices. For example, New Historicist, Stephen Orgel, illustrates that some of Shakespeare's plays were both political and historical in nature and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth was done with dramatic fanfare as occur in plays. He views Shakespeare "less as an autonomous great author …than as a clue to the conjunction of the world of renaissance theatre" (1). Ultimately sub-texts, non-literary texts and literary texts are read as historical documents. Louis Montrose also describes New Historicists' ideas as the "textuality of history and the historicity of texts." Literature is also involved in the process of making history and history can be read like literature when the reader pays attention to narratives, subject matter and theme. Montrose in his article, "Shaping Fantasies: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture" (1980) uses a wide range of texts. These are "autobiographical, travel writing and a Shakespearian play" to examine how the representation of Queen Elizabeth 1 aids in the entrenchment of the idea of the virgin queen. By this Montrose, a proponent of the theory puts to test his postulations that all texts of the same historical period interrelate.

The concept of intertexuality as used in New Historicism subverts the claims to originality of 'Great books' and their universality. Willette posits that intertexual relations between discourses are appropriate to sustsining 'great literature' within the context of their societies. This means that different socities have their great literature He also attacks Bloom's position that "art comes out of art" (qtd in Willette, 4). Willette argues that: "no cultural object can ever be created out of a space of purified ontology or untouched origins and to create and in order to be understood, all objects are dependent upon other objects" (4).

A literary text cannot escape its era or the period that influenced its reading. It is not disputed that Shakespeare was a great writer, but he did not exist in space neither was he oblivious or untouched by the political and social circumstances of his society. His works are culturally indicative of his times. What is referred to as Shakespaerian language is the English language usage that was dominant in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The discourse involves a reading of literary and non-literary texts intertextually. Montrose agrees with Myers that history provides material for literary creation and literary texts project history. Inter-texuality is linked to "recreation and interpretation" (Bloor and Bloor 54). It reinforces a speaker's beliefs and ideas. Newton refers to it as "standing on the shoulders of a giant". In essence, it means building on existing works of a tradition (qtd in Bloor & Bloor 55). The influences from the works of other writers introduce'other voices' into the current work. This results in new and fresh ideas that enrich the current text. The writers (Bloor & Bloor) are of the opinion that "every text carries resonances of all the texts" (55). A style of writing or a way of speaking is often influenced by ones' past or the influences that are around him. For example, in the *Waste Land* (1922) Eliot draws from past historical periods. He provides numerous pages of notes as background to enlighten the reader. The emphasisies of New Historicism is not only to interpret literary texts. The theory also examines the original ideology that gives rise to the text and which helps to disseminate it through a culture. Bloor and Bloor (58) again make the point that intertextuality in texts mirrors "generic conventions,…and aspects of culture." The relations between texts reflect the historical and general features that they share.

New Historicists challenge the 'institution of literary criticism,' breaking loose from what is described as the narrow confines that the literary academy creates for itself. It seeks to extend the frontiers of literature by redefining literary study. Their emphasis is on the nature of literary studies and not the actual study of texts. The theory examines the institution

that defines what should be studied as literature or canonical texts. It dors not reject the existence of a canon; what it questions its universal application. Along side the canon there are texts considered as sub-literary. These are historical documents, religious books and philosophical materials. These have important bearing on texts included in the exclusive list. Other resources when analysed in relation to literary texts enrich analysis by providing complex and multilayered exercise. Reading literary text: from a New Historicist's perspective means arriving at some unique and different interpretation, that yields multiple signification. The text and the reader are influenced by cultural practices and values that affect their interpretation of the text. In New Historicism, literature like other cultural manifestation is dynamic, carried along with other disciplines with which it projects, reflects and gives an identity to society. Literature is then viewed as an agent for change in societal reformation, as such it can restructure ideology and re-direct power bases whereby "marginalized or suppressed peoples or ideas" are given attention (Bestern 180).

Barry points out that in spite of the emphasis on the word 'historicism', it represents a "significant extension of the empire of literary studies…it entails extensive 'close reading,' in the literary-critical manner of non-literary text" (117). Within New Historicists study such materials are still treated as literary, of equal weight with those published in journals that are institutionally acknowledged such as "the prestigious international journal of African literature, *African Literature Today,"* to quote the words of a newspaper writer, or the reputable *Research in African Literatures* (Nwachukwu 47).

3.3 The Application of New Historicism to the Study

The study combines pieces of empirical evidences andf theoretical formulations. The research views these as multiple narratives. There is a privildeging of many perspectives in the attempts to grasp the ever changing form of literature. The study presents an analysis by thematic discussion. It also engages in the tabular presentation of data through the use of

figures. This methodological path is unconventional to literary analysis and is traditionally classified as non-literary or un-literary. But when situated in New Historicism they become the mutiple strands of a discourse. The multiple narratives of the study are what is reffered to by Foucault as the "epistemes of a culture" that interact within the environment of the study. The New Historicist critic examines the power structure or hierarchy with a view to giving attention to subservient groups. From an ideological position this view is influenced by Foucault. There is an overriding powerful ideology about the procedure for research in literary studies. The writing of continuous essay, exposition of theory and textual analyses of literary texts are the norm in the academy. In New Historicist fashion, the study combines the over riding form which is continous writing with the minority dicosurse which is realized in empirical research through the distribution of questionnaire and its analyses.

At the level of newspaper publishing, editors publish their literary pieces and those of their contemporaries. These are writers who also work as newspapermen or academics, teaching and researching in different fields in higher institutions in Nigeria. Newspapers' consistent feature of literary materials is not just one of the criteria for newspaper publishing but a social-cultural situation that operates in a particular ideology, Whose essence is to ensure the continued growth of a culture of literacy that is sustained by writers and journalists who are society's educated elite. The period around the 1960s and the 1980s gave rise to literarature in the newspaper, as exemplified by the *New Nigerian* and the *Guardian.* During these historical periods edittorical boards of these newspapers were made up of writers of creative works. These were also the formative and grounding years of the the papers. The objectives were to entrench an elevated culture of writing. Barry also posits literary essays published in newspapers ''... look and feel different from those produced by any other critical approach, and immediately give the student, the feel that new territory is being entered" (117). Literary materials in newspapers have some journalistic flair about them. The works

also appear as news, because the essence of newspapers is to provide the public with daily, weekly or monthly news. An example is *Perspective on Nigerian Literature* volumes 1 and 2. Even though the articles are collected as bond texts they do not have the dense style of documentation that is found in the *African Literature Today* series. He maintains that the "uncultured 'paired-down' feel of the essays which result from not citing previous discussions of the literary work, gives them a stark and dramatic air" (178). Their form is certainly different from the typical literary text but they have made serious contributions to literary criticism.

In Cultural studies, which New Historicism is part of, texts are reconceptualized as forms of discourses. These operate as inter-texts drawing from a common pool of knowledge and from each other. For instance in the plan of a newspaper for publication the editor may publish a feature article along side a collection of poems that address a persistent subject matter like corruption. Texts are examined as parts of a whole that when pieced together provide a comprehensiveness and multiple perspective on a subject matter. A New Historicist reading of literature situates it within the complex social matrix of culture. The author and text are located within the complex.

In reading as a New Historicist, Dobie outlines stages of practical criticism that a new Historicist should adopt that begins with a pre-writng, in the actual sense it is a pre reading about the author. Dobie states that "reading a biography can provide insights into the writer's concern… '' (190). The study uses as an example Sani's article "The Beginning of Literature in Nigeria: Examples from Pre-Colonial Kanem-Bornu and Hausa land." The article was published in *The Guardian*. To adopt Dobie's suggestions: there may be no biographical writing about the author but what is of importance is that the critic has personal information about the writer. In the above case study, the author is a Muslim of northern Nigerian origin. He is also an academic and an authority on literature in Northern Nigeria. The biographical

information also includes the "cultural moment" of the work (Dobie 191). And the cultural moment is also a historical moment, when the need for an exposition of literature in northern Nigeria especially from foundational times. In the text, the writier explores the deep origin and evolution of a literary culture that predates colonial literary activities. It chronicles a unique literary creativity that was sustained by Muslim clerics, which Sani calls "manuscrpting" (13). The information is important to African scholars because it adds to the body of rewriting African's literary history. Beyond this obvious reason a new historicist analysis also seeks to unearth the other motives of writing the paper. Biographical information yields that the author is an academic who must write papers to advance in his career. Consequetly the paper lends itself to multiple meanings. The medium of expression is also an attribute of the text, other technical features like the style of writing is also examined. A new historicist analyses is a "thick description" (Abcarian and Klotz 929), because it weaves many strands of interrelated narratives generated from a discourse.

New Historicist methodology redirects the reader's attention from a unitary and authoritative view of a literary text. All texts in society have ideologies embedded in them and they can be used as instruments of social change, they also serve multiple purposes. Adopting New Historicist approach, it is possible to write a literary term paper with research materials that have been assessed only in newspapers if they are all relevant and germane to the topic. In literary studies, theory is a continuous development, its practice exhibits distinct varieties. The inability of scholars to agree on any one definition of literature has continued to extend literary theory. The continued relationship between literature and journalism may well be on its way to influencing literary evolution beyond its present state. Consequently, the study of literature at the theoretical level alone is inadequate. Post Structuralism which has influenced New Historicism indulges in theory while it pays "insufficient attention to the actual detail of literary works" (*English Language and…* Jowitt, 350). The combination of

empirical studies and theroritical postulations is appropriate. From an empirical angle, literature is situated within society and the cultures from which it is derived. The discipline seeks to portray that the attitude of its readers, audience and practitioners all influence literary interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Section on Data Analysis of the Questionnaire and Interviews

The research opens the section on data analysis by first outlining the various challenges encountered in empirical studies in literature in English. In the course of field work, theoretical assumptions did not match real life situations. Research indicates that literature draws a lot of resources from other fields seemingly unrelated to it. In the historical evolution of literature there are pieces of evidence that there has been an exclusion and entrance of certain texts. A continual shifting and adjustment by the literary institution that guards its subject matter and accepts its packaging or production in particular forms. It is worrying that in the course of field work many respondents were turned off by the mention of a newspaper research. The general notion being that, newspapers are studied in mass communication or media studies, while the forte of literature is in literary textbooks and journals. There is an apprehension about research in literature involving newspapers when there are so many literary textbooks in their primary and critical form that can be explored by scholars.

Newspapers take a back bench against the well published literary texts that appear in hard cover or bookform. No matter how highly rated news in the format of a newspaper is, it soon finds its way into the trash can. Newspapers are also used as a utility product; to wrap things, it is a substitute for tissue paper. As for preservation, newspapers are not convenient or tidy things to keep. They take up space unnecessaryly. They provide an easy hiding place for household pests, gather mould and staleness. Newspapers do not stand dignified like books on a self. Inspite of these disadvantages when matched with conventional literary texts, the research contends that, newspapers provide scholarly literary materials that are like a tributary that feeds to the main course. It is against the backdrop of the above perspectives

that the research explores the readership attitudes of literary scholars with regards to literary works featured in newspapers. The aim is to situate the influence that newspapers exert on literary development.

The research presents and analyses information obtained through the distribution of questionnaire to students and lecturers of five Nigerian Universities situated in the Northern part of Nigeria. These tertiary institutions are: University of Abuja, University of Jos, Bayero University Kano, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Maiduguri. A total number of three hundred and thirty four (334) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the sample population of the above universities. Two hundred and sixty-eight (268) copies of questionnaires were returned from the Universities of Abuja, Jos, Bayero and Zaria. In Maiduguri, the researcher used a research assistant, but she was unable to retrieve all forty (40) copies of the questionnaire she distributed to the respondents. No questionnaire is registered against the University of Maiduguri. The insurgence in the area created internally displaced persons (IDPs), that is, those who are lucky to be alive. Consequently, 59% representing one hundred and fifty seven copies (157) were got from the University of Abuja. Another 9%, Twenty-three (23), responded from the University of Jos. In Jos, twenty copies (20) were left at the school for distribution to post graduate students and lecturers who could not be reached at short notice especially that the school had just resumed for the 2010/2011 session. Again, the researcher was unable to travel back to Jos to retrieve them because of the recurrent crises in Jos. These along with forty (40) copies sent to University of Maiduguri and three (3) copies that were not returned from Bayero University, Kano fall in the category of lost data making a total of sixty-six (66) copies not returned to the researcher. At Bayero University, Kano, 15%, thirty nine (39) copies of the questionnaires were retrieved out of the forty two (42) copies distributed while three copies were lost. Progressively, at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 18% making up forty nine (49) copies of

the questionnaire were distributed and the same number was filled and returned to the researcher by the sample population. The table below illustrates the universities sampled.

Table 4.1 Patterns at Universities Sampled

Universities

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Abuja	157	58.5	58.6	58.6
Jos	23	8.6	8.6	67.2
Kano	39	14.6	14.6	81.7
Zaria	49	18.3	18.3	100.0
Maiduguri	00			
Total	268	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	66			
Total	268	100.0		

In the methodology of the study, the research envisaged, that it will distribute two hundred copies of questionnaires each to the selected Universities, but practically that target could be not attained, what the study encountered at the field was to the contrary. Empirical situations show that there is no homogeneity about the Universities sampled. The number of students admitted to study English and Literary studies vary from one University to the other. Again, University policy on curriculum is not uniform in the various schools. For instance, at Ahmadu Bello University, students of English and Literary Studies are segregated at the beginning of their studies into specialising in English Language or Literary Studies in English. Therefore, the distribution of questionnaires was limited to students admitted to specialise in literary studies. Another factor which acts as a drawback on the research's target is timing. Students who had just been admitted into one hundred level (100L) were not sampled because a new session had just began, that is the 2011/2012. The researcher reasoned that the new students had not undergone enough academic work to

understand the issues put before them in the questionnaire. At Bayero University, Kano, studies in English and French languages are merged as one department with both disciplines running con-currently. It was hardly possible to reach the intended target of two hundred respondents, especially because the research is aimed at students of English literary studies. On the other hand, Universities of Jos and Abuja adopt a method whereby language and literature courses of English are studied together without specialisation for undergraduate students. At the University of Jos, the erratic nature of life there reflected in students' instability and minimal presence on campus in the Faculty of Arts complex. It was only at the University of Abuja, that the researcher came near the target of two hundred copies. In Abuja, the researcher used an assistant who lives in Abuja, so she distributed the questionnaire piecemeal over several months.

Again, field research indicates that it is not possible to get the sample population in one designated situation or place, like in lecture halls where lectures were due to take place. In some instances, when respondents were got in reasonable number, some of them either denied being students of literature or blatantly refused to fill the questionnaire. In some positive situations the target population reluctantly attended to the questionnaire after some persuasion. Some even requested that money be paid to them after their 'services' of filing the questionnaire were rendered. On the whole, the questionnaire distribution yielded two hundred and sixty eight (268) copies from four universities. The actual data available for presentation and analysis begins with the assemblage of personal information from respondents. These are particular, otherwise intimate inquires about age, sex, marital status, income, nationality and religion. The positioning of personal information affects one's life endeavours like values, experience as well as readership attitudes.

4.2 Age of Respondents

The first personal data presents the age of respondents. The age range of 18-29 has the highest number of respondents. This is represented as 195 attaining a frequency of 74%. The age of respondents in this bracket correlates with their academic status which is undergraduate studies. People undergoing undergraduate studies also make up the highest number of respondents when academic status is examined. It is explained that those in this bracket known as the young age group are in the early stages of University education and so correspondingly, they are the youngest when age is considered.

The age group ranked 30-39 years records a regressive percentage of 16; standing for 43 people. In this category as well, a relationship can be drawn between educational level and age. Post graduate students are the bulk of respondents in this group representing 59 respondents, accounted for by 22%. It is also of note that the number of post graduate students is greater than those in the age bracket 30-39 by 16 people. This means that some postgraduate students belong to the youngest group as respondents of the questionnaire. The number of respondents continues to decline as the age bracket increases in number. The age group 40-49 has a frequency distribution of 7%, represented by 17 people. The 50-59 class has a minimal of 5 people represented by 2% and the group of 60 and above records 2 people; 8% as reflected in percentages in the table. Unlike in the age groups, 18-29 and 30-39, it is observed that there is no corresponding relationship between the age bracket from 40-49; 50-59 to 60 and above and academic attainment. These other categories of academic status begin classification from junior academic to the senior ones accounting for the ranks of /Graduate Assistant to Lecturer II, and lecture I to the professoral position. The following tables illustrate both age and academic status of the sampled population.

Table 4.2 Patterns of Age of Respondents

Age of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
18-29	195	74.4	74.4	74.4
30-39	43	16.4	16.4	90.8
40-49	17	6.4	6.5	97.3
50-59	5	1.9	1.9	99.2
60 and above	2	0.8	8	100.0
Total	262	97.4	100.0	
Missing system	6	2.2		
Total	268	102.0		

Table 4.3 Patterns of Academic Status of Respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Undergraduate	183	70.7	70.7	70.7
Post graduate	59	22.8	22.8	93.4
Junior academic	5	1.9	1.9	95.4
Senior academic	12	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total	259	100	100.0	
Missing system	9	3.5		
Total	268	100.0		

4.3 Sex of Respondents

Another personal data, Sex is illustrated by frequency distribution. It is observed by the research that the category of sex is a personal as well a social one. The questionnaire research yields that 134 or 51.1% of the respondents are male and 128 or 48.9%; are female as indicated their by biological make up while 6 or 2.3% did not disclose on which divide of the gender they belong. The data indicate that there is no obvious gender bias in the admission policies of Nigerian universities. The disparity in the figures is not significant to

insinuate that gender inequality exists. Therefore men and women are engaged in English literary education. They can make notable contributions to research and studies in the field without institutional inhibitions as regards their gender.

4.4 Marital Status

The marital status of respondents may be a variable that influences or is influenced by academic status. In the table the greatest number of respondents, 204 making 77.9% are unmarried, while 58 of the people are married, translating into 22.1% The missing data has only 6 people making 2.2%. When the level of studies of the target population is considered, a significant group of 183 people or 70.7% also belong to the undergraduate bracket. It is possible to conclude that marriage may interfere with university education therefore a major percentage of respondents would rather remain single until they have at least completed undergraduate studies. Empirical studies elsewhere, indicates that, marriage and its attendant responsibilities and obligation affect academic performance of students and readership habits have a direct bearing on academics. .

Table 4.4 Patterns of Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status.

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Single	204	77.9	77.9	77.9
Married	58	22.1	22.1	100.0
Total	262	100	100.0	
Missing system	6	2.2		
Total	268	100.0		

4.5 Income

Income is a particular sum paid to someone for the services he has rendered or delivered. Income is also known as wages, earnings or salary. It is money or cash that

someone receives after having done some work. The study inquired about the income of its respondents because financial earnings or remunerations are a variable that affects accessibility to newspapers by readers. In the research conducted, up to two hundred and twenty 220 (82.4%), out of the two hundred and sixty-eight (268) people who filled the questionnaire did not have an income. It is not surprising that the majority of people, indeed an overwhelming percentage of 82.4 people are without a salary or means of livelihood. A minor 47 people, indicated by17.6%, earn an income. It is deduced that people undergoing undergraduate studies are mostly financially dependent, on parents, guardians or benefactors. And even when the first degree is completed, income statistics indicate that a teeming number of Nigerian youths or tertiary school-leavers are unemployed or do not earn a stable income.

Table 4.5 Patterns of Income of Respondents

Income

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No income	220	82.4	82.4	82.4
Earning income	47	17.6	17.6	100.0
Total	267	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	1	0.37		
Total	268	100.0		

A correlation between income and academic status of respondents provide these figures. The seventeen respondents 17 (6.57%), who make up Junior and Senior academics are part of the forty-seven people (47), 17.6% who answered that they have an income. A close look at both tables, almost side by side explains that a significant number of researchers earn no income, when the income table and academic status of respondents is closely examined.

Table 4.6 Academic status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undergraduate	183	70.7	70.7	70.7
	Post graduate	59	22.8	22.8	93.4
	Junior academic	5	1.9	1.9	95.4
	Senior academic	12	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total		259	100.0	100.0	
Missing system		9	3.5		
Total		268	100.0		

4.6 Nationality

Furthermore, the research has its interest on the relationship between literature and the print media in Nigeria, thus its emphasis is on universities situated in Nigeria. Respondents were required to indicate their nationalities or countries. Nationality will further the purposes of the research. Nigerians, it is expected, will be more interested in issues that bother on academic research and development in their country, because literary education is one of the major ways to increase literacy and eradicate ignorance. In the field research, 253 respondents, (99.6%) are Nigerians, while 1; 0.4 (less than 1%), falls in the category of non-Nigerians, missing data has 14, (5.5) people. This shows that, the student population in Nigerian Universities is made up mostly of those of indigenous origin engaging with literature in forms that are not foreign to them, because African literature expresses content, techniques and styles from familiar cultures. The emphasis of the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* is also to promote Nigerian and African literatures so students and researchers of African and especially Nigerian origin must be part of the efforts to develop and secure relevance for literature.

4.7 Religion

On the spiritual plane, 195 (76.1%), indicated they are Christians, another 55, (21.8%) respondents are Muslims. Those who belong to religions other than Christianity and Islam account for 2 respondents, making 0.75%, while 16, (6.3%) people did not indicate their religious affiliation. Again, the aim is to know if religious beliefs affect newspaper readership. When the two variables; religion and newspaper readership are matched, there is no indication that religion discourages the reading of newspapers. The number of people that responded affirmatively, to newspaper readership, amount to 245,(92.5%). The figure almost matches the number of Christians and Muslims that adds up to 250, (99.2%) as indicated by the table on religious distribution.

4.8 Readership of Newspapers

Studies provide that more than sixty-five percent (65%) of the country's population fall below literacy levels. The already compromised situation is worsened by the activities of the electronic and other cable media that pose serious challenges to the reading culture in Nigeria. It is against these circumstances that the study conducts a research into newspaper readership of literary features. The emphasis of the research is on two Nigerian newspapers: the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian*. The research seeks to first establish if the population sampled read the newspapers that are the subject of analysis by the following question.

Table 4.7 Patterns of number of people reading newspapers

Do you Read Newspapers?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	20	7.5	7.5	7.5
Yes	245	92.5	91.7	99.2
Total	265			100.0
Missing system	3	100.0	100.0	
Total	268	1.1		

The preceding question seeks information about the readership status and inclinations of her sample population. The question is derived from the understanding that, it is an established reading habit that prompts one to read widely. A culture of newspaper readership means that, the reader reads or collects a variety of newspapers without specific preferences. The frequency and percentage analysis reveals that a singular category made of up of 100 people, (40.2%), read both the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspapers Another number of 104, (43.7%) read *The Guardian* only, while a minimal number of people, 20 (8.4%) read only the *New Nigerian*. 14 people, a percentage of 5.9, answered that, the papers they read were not listed. When the number of those who read the two newspapers is put together, it adds up to 224, (94.1%). It has been documented in a study by Best (2003) that, *The Guardian* newspaper reaches most parts of the country. It also attends to a wide range of issues and interests to cater to the multi-ethnic complexity of a country like Nigerian. This explains why even though the study is situated in universities in Northern Nigerian states, *The Guardian* still commands a wide readership which is sometimes outside the vicinity of students' academic structures and also away from where the paper is published. It also substantiates that the lack of inclusion of other newspapers does not affect the research's

summation, because only 14 people in the sample population do not read the newspapers that are the target of the research.

Table 4.8 Readership Patterns of *The Guardian* and *New Nigerian* Newspapers

Newspaper Readership

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
None of the listed	14	5.9	5.9	5.9
New Nigerian	20	8.4	8.4	14.3
The Guardian	104	43.7	43.7	58.0
Both	100	42.0	42.0	100.0
Total	238	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	30	12.6		
Total	268			

The research examines the interaction between readers and the newspapers that they read. The aim is to establish if there is a consistent closeness between readers and the materials they read. The response to the questionnaire shows that there is an affinity between newspapers and the readership of those papers. This is evident in the response to the general inquiry on newspaper readership. The greatest number of 164, (64.1%) answered that they read newspapers sometimes. Another set of people 76, (29.6%) agreed that they always read newspapers; a minimal 16 people, (6.3%) admitted that they never read newspapers. For the purpose of analysis, responding in the affirmative to ‘sometimes’ and ‘always’ demonstrates that there is regular preoccupation with these newspapers. The table below the discussion explains graphically.

Table 4.9 Patterns of Reading Frequency

Reading frequency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	16	6.3	6.3	6.3
Sometimes	164	64.1	64.1	70.3
Always	76	29.6	29.6	98.8
Total	256	100.0	100.0	100.0
Missing system	12	4.6		
Total	268			

Apart from the reading frequency, the time of newspapers-reading is spread out in years. This not only establishes the consistency of reading. It also reveals the length of time that respondents have invested in newspaper readership. The group 1 – 5 years, records 123 respondents, (53.7%), those who say they have read the papers from 6-10 years are 54 people this amounts to 23.6%. The bracket of 10-15 years has 23 people (10%) and the last group of 15-20 years has 29 respondents, (12.7%). A significant number, 39 (17%) ends up as non-respondents, appearing in the length of reading time. There exists a wide gap between the first two categories with the bracket of 1-5 years recording the highest number of people. Here too, the number of respondents decreases as the number of years that they have read the papers increase. Except that readers in the last bracket 15-20 years are slightly more (29 people) than those who have read for 10-15 years recording 23 people. It is also worrying that the percentage of missing data is noticeably higher than the last two categories, singularly. These are people who have not read for the length of time listed, and since those who have never read the newspapers are 16 people less than the 39 who did not respond, it suggests that these people (39 of them) may have engaged with newspapers for less than a year. It is observed that the age of respondents does not correspond with the number of years the sampled group has read the newspapers. Because, while the youngest age group has195

(74.4%), those who have read for the minimum number of years (1-5) are 123 people (53.7%). There is no absolute reason to conclude that age correlates with the length of time of reading newspapers. It may be that length of reading in terms of years is due to interest and not necessarily the number of years that one has lived.

When asked if respondents have libraries available to them, more than half of the respondents making up 154, (62.0%) answered positively, 94 of the respondents (38.0%) had no institutional reading facilities close to them, the remaining number 20 (8.1%) are non-respondents to the question. The study observes that even the presence of a library does not automatically mean newspapers will be available for academic uses. Consequently, people were again asked how they got their supply of newspapers. Surprisingly, 103 people, (46.4%) said they bought newspapers. Another 37 of them; 16.7% said they got from the library. Another group, 82 people (36.9%) answered that they got their supply of newspapers from friends and colleagues. A significant number of 46 (20.7%) did not respond to the inquiry. Only a negligible number of 37 (16.7%) people occurring even less than the missing data (46; 20.7%) got newspapers from libraries. This means that most of readers do not depend on libraries for their supply of newspapers even though they have access to libraries.

An enormous 185 respondents, translating into 83.3% make independent arrangements for their supply of newspapers without depending on libraries. What is of importance, is the willingness of the readers to purchase newspapers from vendors, even those who can get newspapers from their associates to read are able to do so because someone has bought the paper. In the ensuing discussion the researcher also becomes a respondent when external examiner, Abubakar Abdul Rasheed asked how she gets her supply of newspapers. The researcher belongs to the category of those who get their newspapers from associates. Newspapers can be read any time without the restrictions that occur when it is a library copy because it is freely transferred from person to person. Income is also

matched with the source of newspapers supply, thus when the respondents who bought their newspapers and those who got them from friends or colleagues are put together, the figure of 185 (83%) is close to the number of people without an income who are 220 (82.4%). It is concluded that the lack of gainful employment does not significantly affect the ability to buy or get newspapers to read for pleasure, research or general knowledge. The study postulates that, the literary researcher that consistently consults newspapers may overcome the academic hurdles of time, space and the conventional notion that intense studies can only be successfully done within the confines of a library or reading room.

Table 4.10 Patterns of Supply of Newspapers

Supply of Newspapers

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Buy	103	46.4	46.4	46.6
Library	37	16.7	16.7	63.2
Friends/Colleagues	82	36.9	36.9	100.0
Total	223	82.9	100.0	
Missing system	46	20.7		
Total	268	100.0		

4.8 1 Reasons for Reading Newspaper

Newspapers along with other forms of the media like magazines, the electronic media; radio and television have the public as their target. Their aim is to get information to the public in the shortest possible time and at the same time meet the different needs of their readers, hearers and viewers. Based on the above notion, this section of empirical research seeks to know from the end of the readers, the various reasons that prompt them to be preoccupied with newspapers. An overwhelming percentage of 224 people, representing 89.2% agree that they read newspapers essentially to gain knowledge. Another whopping number 195, (78%) insisted that they did not read newspapers just for pleasure or to while

away time. On the contrary, when asked if they read newspapers for research purposes, a minimal 79 people, (31.7%) answered that they were engaged with papers for research purposes while a huge number of 170 (68.2%) answered that they did not consult newspapers to meet research needs. These three detailed inquiries arising from one question seeks to explore the readers' attitude to newspapers. The term knowledge embraces research, but it is generally understood that gaining knowledge of something is not as demanding as researching into an area of study. Illustrations from the three tables indicate that those who answered in the affirmative 'to reading to be knowledgeable,' 'not reading for pleasure' and 'reading for research purpose' are all encased within seeking information for specific purposes. Gathering information from newspapers for research indicates that the singular importance of perusing newspapers to get information will ultimately also serve study purposes. From the table, responses in the first and last table, show that the greatest number of people, rely on newspapers for education.

The concept of education includes teaching, training and studying or reading. Synonyms to the word education are knowledge, guidance, instruction and improvement. The process of teaching and learning is at the core of what education entails. Therefore when an overwhelming number of people, who are engaged in a specialised area of study like literary studies, admit that they do not consult newspapers to meet research needs, then it spells danger for literary studies. Because the literary artist undergoing teaching and training needs to be interested in and pursue literature in any form that it appears. It is gleamed from observation that students of literature, especially those in the category of early university education, study literature for the purposes of passing examinations or earning a leaving.

The research has not found specifically documented examples of the reading attitudes of students studying English and literary studies. But Habila collaborates that the Nigerian society is made up of people who are now reading essentially to pass exams: "we are reading

simply to pass one exam or the other" (226). He traces the remote cause of Africa, indeed Nigerian's, poor reading culture to historical events. Africa's progress to attaining a useful reading culture was truncated by Western education. It was the colonial school system that encouraged reading for the purposes of passing exams. This negative intervention created a literate class that separated itself from the illiterate people. People no longer converged as an audience to be informed and entertained by the oral artist who is replaced by today's modern writers and historians. Habila documents that Nigerian's reading culture in the early 1980s was vibrant. Habila calls it the "'golden moment' in our reading and writing culture" (228). The 1980s witnessed a burgeoning culture of literacy in Nigeria. The period is recorded as the height of interest by Nigeria's citizenry to attain civilization and modernity through writing and its corresponding attribute, reading. The factors responsible for the colossal decline of reading and literacy in the 1990s and 2000s are beyond the narrow confines of colonialists' activities. Many other factors are responsible for the dwindling culture of reading in Nigeria. They are evident in the highhandedness of military regimes in the 1980s, stringent economic policies from financial institutions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the wide spread and almost instantenous effects of globalization. International capital bred a materialist culture and the fast-paced life that views sitting down for several hours to read as a waste of time.

Lyndon in a foreign study documents that:

> However reluctant we may be to recognize it or however distasteful it is to write… a majority of college graduates in North America-after …14-20 years of education are still corralled between the fences of consumer magazines… (8)

The North American study foregrounds that the challenges facing reading as an activity are global in nature. Even in societies that are considered to be highly literate, reading is an

unpopular and declining activity. This universal trend portends a dismal situation in developing nations where a significant percentage of the population cannot read and write properly.Lyndon insists that the "death of literature as a potential demotic force," and a popular or likable medium of communication predates the radio and television because, literature operates dominantly as a written document with certain aesthetic properties that must be learned through training, thus it cannot appeal to the general public (9). The discipline admits a select audience or readership.

Best has engaged in an extensive research on readership in a sub-title, 'literary images in the media.' In her study, newspapers featured highest as the medium that projects arts/literary works. The study also measured the influence of 'arts and literary' columns on socio-political issues. Most of the respondents acknowledged that sometimes literary features influenced their perception of government and society. Similarly in terms of influencing users' language positively, newspapers top the media list followed by the television, magazines and the radio in that order (Best 183-186 & 223-224). Newspapers relay information and issues to cater to the different needs of people. These are in the form of editorials, politics, economy, sports, and others are arts and literary corners, entertainment, advertisement and others.

Table 4.11a Patterns of those who Read Newspapers for Knowledge

Reading for knowledge.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	27	10.8	10.8	10.7
Yes	224	89.2	88.2	99.6
				100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	17	6.8		
Total	268			

Table 4.11b Patterns of those who Read Newspapers for Leisure

Reading for leisure

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	195	78.0	78.0	98.0
Yes	55	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	250	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	19	7.6		
Total	268			

Table 4.11c Patterns of those who Read Newspapers for Research Purposes

Reading for Research

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	170	68.3	68.3	68.3
Yes	79	31.7	31.7	100.0
Total	249	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	19	7.6		
Total	268	100.0		

It is general knowledge that newspapers feature varied number of issues and topics that border on public interest, politics, the economy, foreign news and health matters. Literary features and book reviews, sports, fashion, graffiti et cetera are the many areas that newspapers' publishing dwell on. The research inquired from respondents if they read a variety of newspaper features. Almost all the respondents 95.7%; two hundred and forty-six (246) answered affirmatively, while negligible 11 people, 4.3% answered in the negative, the figure also equals the missing data (11; 4.3%). The study did not seek to know the specific features or issues that interest readers in newspapers, because it may cause a deviation from the ultimate purpose of the study. The aim is to eventually skew the study to the attention readers invest in the literary matters that appear in newspapers. It can be argued that a specific response may offer information about the interest of readers in newspaper features other than literature. That has not been done but enough data exists to arrive at viable conclusions about readers' preferences. The above figure also tallies with the majority of people who answered that, newspapers provide them a reservoir for acquiring knowledge on the numerous issues that affect man in society. Again, it is projected that readers of newspaper features will include literary features in their reading repertoire. It can be deduced from the answers given that, newspapers stand as the single medium that provides information and educates readers on diverse subjects as well. Evidences from the analysis of data shows that, most newspaper readers do not put their sole attention on literary matters and so do not treat them as specialised documents, but regard them as any other news item.

4.9 Newspapers and other Media

Subsequently, the study sought to test the rating of newspapers among other media. The respondents were asked which medium they found both informative and at the same time entertaining. The television is the singular medium that meets the respondents' needs. Television viewing provides entertainment and knowledge in one instance. Television

viewing records the highest response of 140 people (60%), Newspapers trail behind with 42 respondents (18.0%), magazines have 26, (11.1%) as well as the radio with 25 (10.7%). The radio records the lowest figures while missing data takes up 36 (15.0%). It is deduced that the visual appeal that the television provides, gives it an edge over other forms of communication. A lopsided preoccupation with television poses a threat to the already declining reading culture, and hinders the progression of literacy rates in Nigeria. The recent government campaign in 2012 by the administration of Goodluck Jonathan tagged "Bring back the Book" is an acknowledgement that the reading culture in Nigeria which has hardly taken off faces a near extinction, if the downward trend continues. In his treatise''Homage to the Book,'' Niyi Osundare remarks that the campaign by the presidency is contradictory. The book never went anywhere, it has merely been neglected and pushed underground by a "stifling economy (that) has reduced its importance among the populace" (24). He asserts that: "the book is too important as a tool of advancement to be left out of national planning" (23).

An abysmal situation exists where generations of a nation has no interest in reading it by-passes a vital stage and aspect of educational development which is reading. The populace hinge their interest on a medium that hardly stimulates the intellect but remains popular because it has the advantage of visual attraction. Literature has an evolving nature therefore it has been able to adapt to the changing technological climate through dramatization of literary texts on television. A key example in this regard, is the serialization of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and several others in the course of time. But Volumes of literary materials cannot be read on television. Even there, literature will still have to compete with news, sports, politics, business, music and fashion. Reading is an essentially private activity. It also requires patience and dedication. The television is not structured for extensive reading. News is not done for more than an hour, it is observed that even with news, the viewer is not

the one who engages in the concentrative and mentally- tasking job of relaying the news, he only watches and assimilates the information. Obiechina's remark that "for a large number of people, newspapers remain the only reading material" is not substantiated by the study (274). Evidences from the research show that newspapers do not match the television when the purpose is both to get information and entertainment in one instance.

4.10 Reading other Newspapers

The Guardian and *New Nigerian* newspapers are the dailies on which the research basis its study. But the study acknowledges that other newspapers exist and publish literary features alongside these two newspapers. A brief mention of some of them will run thus: *Daily Times, Tribune, Vanguard, Leadership, The Sun, This Day, The Nation* and several others. The responses from the questionnaire illustrate that a large number of literary researchers read newspapers other than *The Guardian* and *New Nigerian* newspapers. Nearly all the people questioned acknowledge that they read other newspapers. The figure account for 237 (92.2%) only a meager 20 people (7.8%) answered negatively, while 11 (4.2%) people did not respond. The response to this inquiry does not present an optimistic situation because a reading of other newspapers does not correspondingly mean a preoccupation with literary features.

4.11 Literature in the Newspapers

It has earlier been established that literature and newspaper publishing share a long history. In Northern Nigerian the relationship dates back to the late 1930s. Literary texts and newspapers were not only published by the same agencies they were both used to enhance literacy and educate people. The set of questions on numbers eighteen to twenty-nine of the questionnaire concentrates on exploring the relationship between literature and newspapers. Empirical studies in a field like literature shifts attention from the literary texts to focus on an important part of literary studies; the readers, and those who bring the text to realization by

the interpretation and inscribtion of meaning. This ensures the text's existence and relevance to society.

4.12 Recognition of Literary Features in Newspapers

This section of the questionnaire opens by asking the very basic but fundamental question; whether those engaged in literary research are aware that these newspapers, the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* publish literary news. It has been demonstrated that a significant number of the respondents, 193 (76.3%) are cognizant, while 60 (23.7%0 literary scholars are ignorant of the existence of literary features in these Newspapers. The remaining 15 (5%) are non-respondents accounting for those who answered neither way. Below is the table for graphic presentation. It also means that this category of people do not read newspapers. When asked if respondents read newspapers, twenty people (20) responded negatively. When the number is matched against those who are not aware of literary texts and criticism in newspapers, it can be concluded that some literary researchers are not cognizant of literature in newspaper format. The readers are more interested in other features when they peruse newspapers, such that literary features escape their attention or they are downright not interested in the literary works published in newspapers

Table 4.12 Patterns of Recognition of Literary Features

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No	60	23.7	23.7	23.7
Yes	193	76.3	76.3	100.0
Total	253	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	15	5		
Total	268	100.0		

4.13 Type of Research Undertaking

The research had earlier sought to know from respondents their academic status; that is the level that they have attained in their studies in the University, but the question is reiterated in another form by requesting to know the nature of research or studies that researchers are engaged in. Responses from the data yield that 138 people are undertaking tutorial/(class) assignment. This figure is close to the number of people (183) who fall into the undergraduate category. It is observed with dismay that 50 people account for a significant figure of those questioned who did not provide answers to the question on the nature of study they are undertaking. The results from field research draw a correlation that earlier missing data for academic level of respondents is 9 people (3.5%). This then infers that most of the people who did not indicate the type of research they are undertaking belong to the undergraduate category. The next set of people are those undergoing post graduate research, they account for 21% (46) people. The group of people who are involved with presenting seminars and conferences amount to 14% (31) while a insignificant percentage of less than one, 09% (2) indicated they did not fall into any of the above classification.

4.14 Literary Features in Newspapers and Textbooks

When asked if literary scholars are aware that the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* published literary materials, large number of people 193 (76.3%) the highest for the entry answered affirmatively. But their response to the present inquiry; "if literary features in newspapers provide literary materials that are comparable to those found in textbooks on criticisms," has the number of 127 people (54.7%) answering affirmatively. Another considerable number; 105 (45.3%), a group whose opinion is central to the summation of the empirical study insist that, newspaper features cannot match with traditional textbooks of literary criticism. The figures 127 and 105 stand neck to neck. There is a strong view which insists that literature in newspapers and textbooks do not have equal standing. The above

response confirms the hypothesis that: “literary materials in newspapers are not adequately used by researchers.” It also answers the looming question of why a great percentage of data is consistently unaccounted for as missing data. For a good number of literary scholars, writings in newspapers cannot be categorised as Belles lettres, they belong to the pool of popular culture items along with the mass media, graffiti and other popular forms that exist to cater to the less cognitively-tasked population in which is found the lower class, semi-illiterate and illiterate minds. It is observed that some of the newspapers texts are written by renowned writers and critics, still those who underrate newspapers do not consider that.

Table 4.13 Patterns of those who Rate Newspaper Features equal to those in Textbooks.

a

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No	105	45.3	45.3	45.3
Yes	127	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	232	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	36	15.5		
Total	268			

4.15 Publishing in Newspapers

Historically, literature and Journalism share a long interraction, from early times until the 19th century when they were both referred to as rhetoric which is the art of persuasion in writing and speaking. They both existed as literature which included all forms of writing. Even after the categories came to be defined, newspapers continue to publish literary write ups in the form of novels, poems and other critical works. For a good number of writers, newspapers provide the first source of exposure for their creative materials. Based on this relationship, the research asked the sample population if they have published any literary piece, in the newspapers, a whopping percentage of (87.1%), 222;people responded that they

had not published in newspapers. This number includes mostly undergraduate students, some of whom are still grappling with the rudiments of University studies, then a smattering of post graduate students and also lecturers especially in the category of graduate assistants. Few people 33; 12.9% admitted to publishing in newspapers. The rest 13 (5.1%) in number is missing data.

Research into the relationship between literature and newspapers reveal that, canonical writers and their works are influenced by non-literary aspects. It is established that writers of both literary texts and journalism, transverse the world of both disciplines. They are first members of a society before they become writers. Ultimately, they are influenced by the environment and the experiences that they encounter. An example to cite is Yusuf Adamu. He is trained as a geographer, and he is also actively engaged in creative writing. He admits that his discipline by training influences his subject matter. In quote he says: "I …deliberately sometimes write on geographical issues…" (1). He also maintains a literary column in the *Daily Trust* newspaper where he publishes poems. Consequently, Adamu is a geographer, a literary artist and a journalist by reason of his association with the newspaper. Similarly, the writer is influenced by the social and physical environment. His creative products are also drawn from the environment which in canonical terms is described as non literary. Literary works cannot be separated from the environments in which they are produced. Oaks remarks that, "literary works are the portrayals of the thinking patterns and social norms prevalent in society. They are a depiction of the different facets of common man's life" (1). When written and published, he adds that "exposing an individual to good literary works is the equivalent of providing him with the finest educational opportunities" (Oaks, 1). The bible alongside the works of Plato, Horace and Shakespeare are cited as examples of some of the great literary works. Others are W.B.Yeats, John Keats, Wordsworth. In Africa, works of prominent writers like Soyinka, Okigbo, Achebe, Imam and

Armah represent early writing on the African continent. Other prolific voices in latter times are Osundare, Gimba, Alkali, Okri, Adichie, Habila, Attah and a host of others. Literature is studied as a discipline but it is difficult to confine literature to an educational curriculum. All the genres of literature portray, trail and are influenced by history, philosophy, religion, culture et cetera. One of the functions of literature is to educate and inform about life, literature is a part of the society in which it exists. The writer of a literary text is not bound by the institutional inhibitions of certain disciplines. He views himself as a relevant instrument of enlightenment to other people in society. Ngugi, Osundare, Ojaide and a host of others are self- professed socialist, who view their art as catalyst for change in society.

The study still sought information on writing by asking respondents what motivates them to write? This question corresponds to Sartre's "Why Write?" (26-47). Sartre's expounds that, the writer who hopes to impact on his society cannot achieve much as a writer if his works are not read by other people rather "he will be confronted with his own subjectivity." (29). He makes the point that there is a correlation between writing and reading. In essence, the writer must have a particular audience or readership that he addresses and his audience and subject matter both determine why he writes. In the survey, 48 people only of the 268 people that constitute the responsive sample responded to the question of why one would write. 220 respondents did not respond to the question. The explanation is that most of the respondents fall in the undergraduate category. They are mostly engaged with continuous assessments and are preoccupied with moving from one level of the academic ladder to the next. Again writing is a craft that must be mastered. For 20 (41.7%) of the respondents the reasons for writing were essentially personal, ranging from the desire to be famous, to demonstrating or practicing their artistic skills. The other 28 (58.3%) acknowledged that the objective of writing is to address issues that affect humanity. Others were specially touched by the existence of social inequalities, prevalent ignorance and the

lack of knowledge, by members of the society who fall within the literate and literary circles. Samples from respondents are quoted as such: “to educate the populace,” “a sense of responsibility to society,” and “to make social commentary.”

4.16 Newspapers and Academic Advancement

A significant percentage of the sampled population reaffirms the assertion that writings in the field of literature share a vibrant relationship with journalism especially when newspapers project the cause of literature. These respondents, 169 (77.5%) admit that they will use their publications in newspapers to advance their careers. A minimal 49 (22.5%) said they will not use articles that they have published in newspapers to advance their professional status. From the fore going, it is concluded that the number of people (169) who would use newspaper materials for academic advancement are more than those who use newspapers for critical and academic studies. This latter group, that is, those who consult newspapers for research stands at 127. It is also of note that the group of people that will use their publications in newspapers to push for promotions and other professional achievements clearly out-strip those who rate literary materials in textbooks higher than those featured in newspapers; the number of people who will use or read only textbooks is recorded to be 105 (45.3). Consequently, the issue that arises is: whether literary scholars are bothered with extending and broadening literature through its readership or if literature serves purely subjective and personal ends. Again the figure (50 people) that represents non-respondents is enormous.

Table 4.14: Patterns of those who will use Newspapers for Academic Advancement

Newspaper Publication for Academic Advancement

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	49	22.5	22.5	22.5
Yes	169	77.5	77.5	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	50	22.9		
Total	268	100.0		

4.17 Readership of *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature* 1700 to Date Volumes 1 & 2.

In the following inquiry, more than 156 (61.7%) people admitted their ignorance of the existence of *Perspective on Nigerian Literature 1700 to the Present* volumes 1 & 2. These are collection of essays that were the singular effort of consistent engagement of newspapers with literature featured for two years in the ‘‘Guardian Literary Series’’ of *The Guardian* Newspaper. The narrow knowledge base of readers concerning their response to the above inquiry paints a gloomy picture for the discipline. Literature may be facing a suicidal situation when its readers do not read its products widely. The lack of knowledge of *Perspectives on Nigerian literature* presents a situation whereby newspapers’ efforts at projecting literature in different forms remain unacknowledged from the literary end. The next question that seeks to know if scholars have read the two volumes of critical texts becomes a hypothetical one, because respondents already admitted a lack of knowledge that the texts exist. Correspondingly, the people who have not read the texts are significantly more than those who have read them. 97 (38.3%) people admitted they know of the textbooks put together from The Guardian Literary Series, 15 (5.9%) represents missing data. Further more only 59 (23.5) people have read the textbooks. The initial inquiry from 97 respondents affirmed that they know of the text, thus when 97 (those aware of the texts) is subtracted from

59 (those who have read them) it reveals that 38 people who are acquainted with the texts have not read or consulted them.

The following tables simultaneously present in graphic form the responses concerning knowledge and readership of *Perspectives on Nigerian literature.*

Table 4.15a: Patterns on knowledge or other wise of *Perspective on Nigerian Literature*

Awareness of *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature*

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No	156	61.7	61.7	61.7
Yes	97	38.3	38.3	100.0
Total	253	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	15	5.9		
Total	268	100.0		

Table 4. 15b: Patterns on Readership of *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature*

Have you read the texts

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
No	192	76.5	76.5	76.5
Yes	59	23.5	23.5	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	17	6.8		
Total	268	100.0		

Concluding responses from the field research indicates that newspapers have retained their readership. Of the readers, 202 (80.8%) still read the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspapers only 48 (19.2%) respondents have stopped reading these papers. Missing data is in number of 18 (7.2%). The respondents were asked why most of them have stopped reading the newspapers that are the subject of research. The following responses ensued; 51 people making 55.4% answered that they did not get regular supply, 33 people (35.9%) said the newspapers did not feature news that interests them, an insignificant percentage of 8 (8.7%) people fell into the category marked as reasons other than those supplied by the questionnaire, an over whelming number of 176 accounts for missing data. In the circumstances what is recorded as missing data is valid. It account for those to whom the question is irrelevant because they have continued to read the newspapers.

The study further probed the sampled population by asking if literary materials in newspapers meet the research needs of scholars where textbooks were not available, the response remains discouraging. 135 respondents (55.1%) answered that newspapers fill in gaps in research where textbooks cannot be got. The submission affirms that for a significant number of researchers in literature, newspapers are second-rate. This adds up to the negative responses of 110 (44.9%) who will never use newspapers even when textbooks are scare or

cannot be found. Consequently for 245 people who on their own can form a sample population, newspapers are at best an inadequate alternative or not suitable for studies in literature. In the concluding inquiries of the questionnaire, readership of the newspapers under study, the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* have not dropped significantly, 202 respondents still read the papers. In the preceding sections, responses indicate that newspapers generally command a wide readership amounting to a huge number of 238.

Table 4.16: Newspapers Meeting Research Needs of Readers

Meeting Research Needs

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No	110	44.9	44.9	44.9
Yes	135	55.1	55.1	100.0
Total	245	100.0	100.0	
Missing system	23	9.4		
Total	268	100.0		

The continual engagement of most respondents with newspapers indicates that newspapers are always read, they intermingle with other reading materials like magazines that provide general information and news on politics and sports. But newspapers are not necessarily perused for more serious purposes like academics.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

The following propositions are tested in the course of the research:

1. Literary works appear in a new light when linked with journalism and this blurs the traditional separation between literary and non-literary materials. In newspapers format, literary works appear differently from how they are in textbooks. A major distinction of Literature is the combination of subject matter and form. In newspapers, form is stretched beyond the technical features of literature like language and imagery. Literature in newspaper format is adapted to the space of newspapers' specifications of physical representation of materials. The same writer, writing the same material for publication in a newspaper and journal adopts different methods. Articles in journals abide by citation standards of the particular journals but in newspapers, documentation and citation are dispensed with. Thus, here, literary articles are type-set with other newspapers features like economy, politics, sports et cetera. In newspapers literature becomes part of media products. The articles are news just like other news items. The hypothesis is substantiated by examining samples of literary materials that appear in newspapers. Again from questionnaire analysis, for a significant number of 105 people literary features in newspapers are journalistic materials. Consequently, literature linked and occurring with journalism is no longer literature. In this sense, the traditional separation between literary and non-literary products is blurred because they are all classed as communicative media and not strictly literary and non-literary texts.

2 Another proposition is again tested: Literary materials published in newspapers are not adequately used by literary researchers. In the analysis of data generated from questionnaire distribution, most respondents are aware that newspapers consistently publish

literary materials but a significant group of respondents do not accept complementary roles for newspaper features and textbooks/journals as contributing to research in literary studies. The position is reinforced by the ensuing response. When asked if newspapers meet the research needs of scholars where textbooks cannot be got still a significant 110 people insist that they would rather do without newspapers even in the face of scarcity of literary textbooks.

3. A third proposition is also tested by the study; Research into newspapers reveals certain aspects about canonical writers and their works and the non-literary aspects that influence them. Consistent engagement with newspapers, reveal that the writer included in the canon of literature are influenced by social, historical or environmental factors that shape their literary works. In a recent perusal of the *Nation* newspapers there is an announcement of the launching of a new collection of poetry, written by Niyi Osundare. The text is informed by his horrific experience of the hurricane named Katrina. A lot of writers (Achebe, Adamu, Osofisan, Osundare and several others) initially started their careers as journalists before they became novelists. Again it is established that, several writers consistently straddle the worlds of literature and journalism. They also reveal that their experiences of both disciplines enrich their writings in these areas that overlap, interact but are still separated by matters of ethics. Writers acknowledge that they draw the raw materials for their texts from the society which they are a part of and which molds them. Yusuf Adamu for instance informs that he uses his training as an environmentalist as motifs for some of his fictional works.

Apart from testing the hypothesis the research also has other findings. It is established that literary scholars rate textbooks and journals higher than the materials that are published in newspapers. The research is hinged on readership attitudes of researchers, scholars or students of English literary studies thus it was important to ask them if they read

newspapers. Newspapers enjoy a wide readership among the sampled population. Almost all the respondents answered that they read newspapers. Of this number a significant number still answered that the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspapers are among their favourite papers, but literary development is still confronted with low readership. The research surmises that when newspapers are not competing with the electronic media they are a famous reading material. Newspapers' popularity is explained by the extent to which people go to get their regular supply. The frequency of reading also corraborates that newspapers provide regular reading material and are indeed popular with readers. Empirical evidence yields that most of the respondents 220, are unemployed yet 103 of them are able to buy newspapers. The popularity of newspapers and their affordable rates make them a viable avenue where literary materials will thrive as well as reach its target population quickly. Unfortunately, an overwhelming number of people are willing to read newspapers to get informed on topical issues but when narrowed to specifics like academics, researchers use of newspapers and their attitude to literary materials in newspapers is negative.

The research also finds that, while a significant number of students are aware of the presence of literature in the newspaper, some of the respondents are not bothered with these literary features. Their attitude indicates that, researchers may not be bothered with literary features published in newspapers. They are not committed to reading textbooks, although in theory they cringe when journalism is equalled with literature. This is exemplified by their response to crucial inquiries. *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature 1900 to the Present* Volumes 1&2 is a collection of literary features from the "Guardian Literary Series" into textbooks, but most respondents are not aware of the existence of a text that documents Nigeria's literary history and has been published for almost thirty years. An even greater number have not read the volumes. Consequently, the reading habit of students of literaure during the foundation years of their higher education lacks seriousness. The study reveals

that most students/scholars do not read materials in their discipline in whatever form they appear, but because they are in training in a prestigious discipline, they quickly fall into already established patterns of discrimination without understanding the background, histories or reasons for those ideas.

Again the dismal readership attitude of respondents can be linked with their age and level of studies. Most of the respondents fall in the age bracket of 18-29 years, the group of young people who still depend largely on parents, guardians and benefactors. Because of their dependent status they are shielded from most of life's harsh experiences that sometimes instill discipline and commitment to a serious pursuit like academics in individuals. The research asked students to indicate their academic levels in the university, while filling the questionnaire, but in the course of the analysis of data, respondents were not segregated into levels because no significant information will be gained from the categorisation. Respondents in the undergraduate category are of a high number, they are also the group that is wont to gloss over academic materials, not committing to long hours of study. Empirical study also finds out that overwhelmingly, newspapers cannot compete with the electronic media. Responses from the question ground the assertion. Although cell phones were not listed, the responses on electronic media show that the mobile electronic gadgets enjoy a monopoly that is comparable only to what the printing technology enjoyed in the 19th century. With such continual advances in the electronic world, the art of reading faces a major that challenge that is difficult to surmount.

The reading culture faces daunting challenges in an electronically dominant environment, in this situation both literature and journalism come under threat. Reading is a cumulative activity as well as a cognitive one. Obanya contends that for reading to be meaningful it must be internalized as a habit and a tool for continuous self-improvement (2). Reading is also a beneficial activity. It causes one to think and consequently develop "one's

intellectual powers." Reading also "contributes to the growth of a civilization" (Obanya, 2). Ansa et al extend that for reading to be beneficial one must graduate from the stage of "learning to reading" to "reading to learn."At this stage knowledge becomes expansive (107). Research yields that respondents do not read textbooks neither do the read literary materials in newspapers. Botswana is a country with higher literacy rates than Nigeria. The country also has "a well-organized literacy programme," but, in a study involving high school students it is reported that many students are not interested in developing reading skills which are contigent on forming a habit of reading (Arua and Lederer, 26). Responses obtained from the fieldwork undertaken in this work indicate that, readers only pay lip service or superficial respect for the literary text.

It is contended by some writers that, the dearth of reading materials is a major hurdle to the attainment of literacy, and to inculcate the culture of reading in people. This is contestable newspapers and magazines are reading materials that are easily passed around. In the empirical study, a significant percentage consented that they got their supply of newspapers from friends. Ansa et al corraborates that: "newspapers and magazines are readily available from government offices, private corporations, news stands, or vendors and even some homes" (107). Newspapers unlike other activities have no exceptional days of sales, even on weekends or Sundays, vendors are seen hovering around places of worship to make their sales. The writers (Ansa et al,) reinterate that, "these material can be used to facilitate extensive reading" (107). A major advantage of the newspaper is that it can be read almost anywhere and at any time. It is unlike a borrowed book, from a library, with restrictions about time limit or where it can be taken for fear of being stolen or seized by another library. The newspaper can be easily tucked under the arm or in a hand bag. It is light weight and easy to carry around.

The contemporary threat that reading and writing are confronted with is more serious than typical distinctions between literature and pop culture. Bersten contends that pop fiction before 1945 shared some values with literature because there was a relationship "between the publisher and writer on the one hand and the audience on the other" (174). Also Hoggart, a literary critic quoted by Bersten posits that, pop culture before the 1950s was more serious than the "cheap sensationalism" of the new magazines. This portends that, confronted with contemporary realities literary studies may now embrace the traditional magazines and newspapers with which it shares some values. And again begin to redefine its relationship with the new culture-that is incoherent and directionless-as core literatis term it. The new trend lends credence to the position that the concept of a universal culture with standard values of civilization, enlightenment and modernity that other cultures should aspire to attain does not exist and cannot be attained. Approaches to cultural studies mirror new arguments of cultural relativism- where there is no superiority of any one culture only difference.

Literature and journalism are faced with the daunting task of raising literatcy levels among the populace and fostering reading that is directed towards the development of the individual and society. It is acknowledged that "daily newspaper or magazine reading is a ritual in many households…" (Goodman, 115). This is amongst other reading activities like bible-reading, school work, shopping lists, invitation cards, phone massages, posters or signs. Goodman argues that these are multiple roads to literacy that are informal and "incidental." But there is a need to encourage such reading ventures in the bid to attain literacy. Newspapers are touted as ephemeral material because of their perishable nature. Newspapers often contain news of currently talked about issues as well as feature writings which are opinion-based, their other features are literary pieces/art, sports, health issues, the economy and many more. Consequently, newspapers can be kept for future reference. In a programme to develop literacy, the facilitators used old newspapers and magazines from

which they generated the following sample questions which they asked learners: “discuss in your group what you understand by facts and opinions. Then turn to your newspaper and identify stories that are (a) factual and (b) opinions. Where in the newspaper are these items usually located?” (107). It portends that the shelve life of newspapers goes beyond ephemeral status to permanence. Again it establishes that newspapers like books deserve to be preserved long after they are published and read for future references.

In the present study text is no longer a book but a metaphor for any discourse rendered in the form of speech written or a form of communication which can also be gestural. Barthes conceptualises a text as:”a network which issues from innumerable centres of culture” (qtd in Ashcroft 14). In literary discourse, some critics foreground the intextual concept. In this discourse every text can be ananlysed in relation to the other. Furthermore Barthes in *The Pleasure of the Text* liberates the confines of the text and diffuses it into multiple narratives in the form of written documents, musical instruments, speech acts, and the like. He contends that the multiplicity of interpretation that a text yields is what makes its reader encounter pleasure. The study contends that literature along with other cultural products like journalism relate within an intertexual context, that leads to a questioning of established notions of literary and non-literary texts.

Newspaper publishers create some attraction to get and retain the attention of their patronizers. In newspapers is found in the centre spread, fashion, celebrity news, and magazines produced with top quality glossy material containing the latest and valuable information, about fashion and health. Examples abound: an accompaniment to *The Guardian* is ‘‘Life’’ magazine, in *This Day* is the famous “Style” magazine. In the *Vanguard* ’’Allure’’ takes centre stage, newspapers like the *Nation,* the *New Nigerian* do not have attractive magazines accompanying them but their editions on Sundays are usually packed with elaborate fashion news. It must be admitted that people, educated or not, are captivated

by fashionable clothes, shoes and celebrity gossip and health tips. In this bid, the media hasve also been able to attract the female gender. For three hundred naira only, every Sunday, a reader gets more than the full benefit of his money, especially because valuable information can be preserved.

Literature, journalism, philosophy and other forms of writing constitute a culture of letters which is a mark of civilization, modernization and knowledge. Consequently, newspapers since the 18th century have acted as popularizers and sustainers of literature. Journalism in turn is a genre of literature. Journalists, editors and writers who straddle both worlds diffuse techniques from both genres so that it is sometimes difficult draw a line as to where journalism stops and literature begins. Again, a number of texts situated in the 'literary' category are filled with influences from the ethics of journalism. In a novel or play text when dialogue is suspended, it is reportage that stylistically fills in. For example, in a novel like *Oil On Water* by Helon Habila, the subject matter and narrativity are built around the methods adopted in the writing of journalism. The writer also builds his story in the fictional realm around the characters of a seasoned journalist and an amateur one. There is a craftly blending of journalism and prose writing by a practitioner of journalism first and then the novel. In the work the fusion of forms of writing become the correlative that sustains subject matter in the text.

The research submits that the form of literature is limitless and as such cannot be confined by institutional boundaries. Even in the format of newspaper there is still the traditional attention that literary materials enjoy. They are read with an emphasis on content, language and the technical devices that are used to draw attention to their properties. These features influence writing in journalism and have given rise to the genre of literary journalism. These feaures are also evident in other forms like creative non-fictional writing. Theories that came into prominence after Structuralism have interrogated the notion that

these techniques are 'literarture's property.' Literature in whatever form it appears is still literature. The lack of a universal definition to precisely define literature provides literature's attribute as a humanizing enterprise with the freedom of expression. Forms of literature and subject matter continually adapt to changing circumstances. Relatedly, the techniques of narrativity, imagery, description, tone, mood and the style that a writer adopts in literature are replicated in other forms of writing. As such the literary cannot claim autonomy or ownership of these technicalities of writing. A political manifesto for instance is anchored on persuation and propaganda which borders on hyperbolic use of language, the mounting of adjectives to emphasise or foreground ideas or points of view are all forms of discourses that operate as intertexts that draw from a common pool of knowledge or from each other.

5.1.1 Analysis of Interviews

The interview yields and confirms already existing data that literature and the media share common traits and have existed together as communicative agencies for a long time and very importantly, newspapers are committed to publishing literary works from especially new writers who are trying to overcome the writer's block. The newspapers do not have criteria for publishing a creative work. It is possible from the example of the literary editor of *New Nigerian* to grow from a budding writer to be established in literary analyses and matters. It is also of note that Umaisha is a creative writer, a literary critic whose writings appear on the world wide web as well as being the editor the *New Nigerian* literary features. This is one singular but overwhelming example of how literary development and expansion is enhanced by newspapers' positive attitude and encouragement through the nurturing of literary products. Consequently, in its dealings with literature, newspapers are undeniably an avenue of making literary texts public property. Newspapers also extend writing in the form of literature such that the universal and humanistic values found in literary texts impact on people in society.

The interview also reveals that through newspapers' attention, literary texts can become public property because unlike a book, newspapers are easily accessible to the public. Its readership cuts across all category of readers; i. e. the highly educated professor or high court judge, the university graduate, the secondary school leaver, the mechanic or plumber, the messenger or clerk in the office, who is teaching himself basic reading skills to meet the challenges of his white collar job. The Newspaper vendor is in most cases one who is not fully educated, he belongs to the lower rung of the social ladder, the group that promotes mass or popular culture. In newspapers, the academic who is the focus of the research is able to access materials for his work sometimes easily. Literature in the newspaper helps the scholar overcome the hurdle of searching for obscure textbooks. Because newspapers contain immense literary works, a sole preoccupation with textbooks will deny the researcher an expansive reservoir of materials buried in newspapers. Newspapers need not be looked at as literature's 'other' to use Said's term. Because as already established, by the adherents of post colonial discourse, the inscription of otherness on anybody or anything connotes discrimination and a superior complex.

The *New Nigerian* through her literary editor surmises that literature will have no function in society if it is limited to the academic world of writing in journals and researching for teaching and studying purposes. He insists that a lot of people are literary-minded, that is why they can write as well as appreciate and be influenced by literature. The academics' preoccupation with literary journals will create narrow confines for literature. A lot of writers have debunked the Kantian concept that art can exist for its sake. It will then be contradictory if such writers hold on to the canon and insist that there are already set methodological parameters for writing or studying literature. Newspapers have continued to publish literary pieces even where is is known that academics do not consult the materials. It is clear from the interview that literature is not the preserve of the academic. Newspapers'

interest and projection of literary materials takes literature out of the class rooms and locates in society from which it draws its materials. It stripes newspapers of the gab of elitism and makes it public and common property. This reminds one of Osundare's definition of poetry in 'poetry is' (p.3) where he describes poetry as "the hawker's ditty …and the lyric of the marketplace." and as the community's or peoples' property. It is also of note from an additional interview with Maiwada that, Muazu Maiwada's collection of poems: *State of the Anus* is serialized in the *New Nigerian*. Even though the Newspaper published his works, he pointedly stated that he is not interested in newspapers literature.

5.2 Summary

Literature and Journalism share a historical relationship that dates back to the 18th century and was projected by the technology of printing mass reading material. A new class of literate people emerged from the industrial revolution. The print technology rose to the challenge of providing quick and massive reading material for the newly formed and liberated elite eager for knowledge and news. The culture of reading demanded mass reading material. Literary figures who also worked as newspapers men published literary works as one of the features in newspapers. Printing was a major breakthrough over the era of hand writing during which time manuscripts were in limited numbers. Various forms of magazines, broad sheets, newsletters and pamphlets were circulated. Collins (qtd in Ruperty 5) tags this time the "age of periodicals." The massive out turn of reading materials was aimed at equaling the growing class of readers who took pride in reading. The materials published were "a complex cultural artifact." Varied issues of the culture and values of that time were published, ranging from news, poems, biographies, philosophical sayings, personal diaries, the activities and lives of royals, et cetera. Forms of writings were therefore undifferentiated one from the other; authorsip was also a corraboration amongst proprietors,

editors, advertisers. Within this set up, literature was undistinquished from other forms of writing.

An exploring of the ancient relationship amongst multiple disciplines that interrelate yields that, these disciplines lay claim to similar archival materials as their ontological basis. Again their mark of identity was not the features or genres they wrote, but the periodical or publishing houses they worked for. Consequently, many periodical and newspapers were published and edited by literary figures, i.e. Dickson, Hemingway, Twain, Defoe, Wordsworth, and several others. These writers were also to entrench the genre of the novel which came to be distinguished from other news publications in the 19th century. Before this time biography, epistolary and picaresque form and travel writing were all novels indeed they were not known by the current genre of the novel but were called fiction writing. Easley argues that rather than view journalism as an apprenticeship field to practice more serious writing which ends up as literature or the novel, journalism provides writers a wide field to "experiment with different personae and intellectual interest" (qtd in Rupert 12). Writers of literature have remained journalists or continued to be involved with journalism. The writers and their writing disrupt and blur the boundaries that came to separate literature from journalism in the the 19th century. The establishment of ties between the two disciplines is not only beginning. It is a continuation of a relationship that was stalled by historical circumstances. Ruperty sums up that: "the story of literature and journalism is a shared one" (16).

Literature and journalism came to evolve separate critical criteria for their study. The trend was initiated by literary writers; Eliot; Woolf; Arnold the Leavisites; Richards and other prominent 20th century novelists. The novel as a genre became the prominent instrument of severing the relationship between literature and journalism, especially as happened in the 19th century. Literary history is permiated with writing that thrives on the

fringes of fact and fiction. There never really exist in practical terms literary texts that are not closely or remotely influenced by the environment or social circumstances that give rise to them. Again there is hardly truth that is told without embellishment from the narrator, reporter or writer. That is why a factual incident that is being told or reported by different people yields several shades of meaning. Consequently, the claim by Tom Wolfe and Gay Talese that new journalism is a recent development can be contested by the events of time. The reawakened relationship between literature and journalism has been in existence in times past but it is more extensive in its range and influence in contemporary times.

Before the institutionalisation of Western writing and the print technology in Northern Nigeria, literary practices were part of the peoples' culture in the form of legends, epics, folktales, stories, proverbs, wise sayings, tongue twisters, dances, theatre and so on. The Northern part of Nigeria houses a rich linguistic multiplicity, cultural variety and complexity due to her contact with varied cultures. The value of English studies as established in the Western world are transported to Nigeria and Africa at large, the formulators of English studies contended that an acquittance with letters is a mark of civilization. Thus the wave of British influence that was first established in Southern Nigeria was spread to the North by colonial authorities. The indirect rule system of administration considered it advantageous to employ the use of already existing structures, while entrenching and combining the English language with the already existing Hausa and Arabic languages. Colonial information technology in the form of printing presses was to change the nature of information dissemination, so that while literature and journalism were published by the same medium the artist was still distinguished from the journalist.

In recent times, the continuing narrowing and interaction amongst disciplines in the humanities has called for an interrogation of the tradition that maintains separation amongst behavioural disciplines. In line with these developments literary studies come under strain to

redefine its categories of literary and non-literary classifications, because the mass media and literature are purveyors of cultural products. Bennet concedes that an artificial (separation between the study of literature) from adjacent areas of cultural practice is unable to stand the changes that continue to erode the concept of literature" (3). The print technology was transferred to the country as one of the many instrument of colonial administration. Again literature and journalism were published through the same medium, as reading materials they served the reading yearnings of the new elite and semi-educated populace. In the Northern part of Nigeria which is the emphasis of the study the print technology and western education mixed with and co-exists in complex and multiple socio-ethnic and religious situations because Northern Nigeria is a conglomerate of several languages, ethnic and religious affinities. Hausa was used by the colonial authorities as the major language of communication for indigenous peoples. The agenda to universalize the English language was to overtake Hausa especially in official matters. The establishment and dominance of the English language conditioned and determined how literature and journalism were to relate and continue to relate. Both communicative agencies have gone on to interact by influencing and modifying each other. Two Nigerian newspapers have been responsible for the entrenchment of literary material in the print media. It is acknowledged that early in the country's writing history *The Nigerian* magazine featured literary works, written by early Nigerian writers. The *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* are pioneer newspapers that have continued to be engaged with literature even in the face of the entrance of newer dailies like the *Vangaurd, Daily Trust, Leadership, The Nation*, and several others.

The interception by the English language in literature Nigerian produced a vibrant English tradition of literary writings that portray life in its entirety using the medium to express socio-cultural and religious experiences and values.These are couched in the dominant Islamic life and other cultural constellations prevalent in the area. From the early

beginnings of the Soyyaya (Romance series), literary activity in the North has burgeoned in the many creative genres. Writing in this region is influenced by and keeps pace with global trends and the evolutions that are redefining literature's relationship with journalism. Consequently, distinctions between these fields coalesce in fresh ways even if the relationship is not new. The engagement between literature and journalism transcends "popularizing our vibrant literature" (Ogunbiyi, ix) to also salvaging the book industry from the economic down turn of the 1980s that caused the decline in the publishing industry. Writing in literature and journalism transverse methodological terrains by adopting styles and techniques from both fields and merging them inro new forms of writing famous of which is literary journalism. New writing undermines the distinction between great writing and popular forms. Broad definitions of culture encase literature and journalism as manifestations of culture, providing multiple narratives and perspectives of societal values. Literature intersects with journalism to produce many genres within the ambit of creative non-fiction. The sub-genres of literary journalism narrative and literary news writing, biographical and travel writing, letters, memoirs and dairies are the many forms of writing that blur the distinction between literature and journalism.

Since the 19th century literature has been defined variously by its scholars, writers and critics. The non-homogeniety of the method of analyzing literary texts and what constitutes the object of inquiry in literature has given rise to many theories of literature and multiple and non-uniform methods of literary criticism. Early theories of literature; those constructed before the 1970s have tenaciously held on to a universal definition of literature. These theories instituted the canon of literature and insisted that some texts are literary while others are non-or sub-literary. The emergence of the canon is traced to ancient times, when Plato questioned the role and value of literature in society. The canon as a regulatory institution has remained subject to questioning since then: although it has come to provide a

yardstick of measurement for texts still, there is always pressure to redefine and expand the canon correspondingly as literature too undergoes redefinition. The rise of nation states and the national literatures of these coutries as critieria of identity, limit the tag of universality imposed by English studies on the varied artistic forms of non-English cultures. One of the new theories, Post Colonial discourse, is an assemblage of literary discourses that interrogate and redefine the interaction between colonial/settler powers and colonized peoples. Within its discourse literature is again defined. Chinweizu's definition is a sample of the many definitions of literature that deviate from English studies' 19th and 20th century concept of literature. He contends that:

> Our conception of literature is perhaps a little broader than is conventionally allowed. In our view, literature must include all the genres of publicly communicated written matter of society. Thus in addition to prose fiction, poetry and drama, we consider essays, biographies, addresses and orations vital part of literature. Now it should be borne in mind that poems, plays, stories, essays, speeches etc do exist in two models (1).

Literary theory is not universal, neither are literary texts or writings intrinsic as theories before Post-Structuralism insist. Literary theory has appropriated and naturalised discourses from, sociology, psychoanalysis, linguistics history and the like. Theories of literature have no unity. Eagleton argues that methodologically, literary criticism is a non-subject. What is often displayed as literary criticism and literary theory means "any kind of talk of a certain level of 'competence,' clearly enough about an object named literature" (172).

The 1970s witnessed a shift in theoretical approaches- structuralism gave birth to post- structuralism and an array of other theories; Feminism, New Historicism and Cultural Materialism and lately Queer and Ecocritical theory. The theories formulated after

modernism are united in their attempt to subvert the canon by interrogating established norms the define some writing as great literature. It is within the realm of re-examining the canon of literature and questioning the criteria for admission into it that the study adopts New Historicism from the many other post modern approaches with which it shares affinity. The theory is linked with traditional historical analysis but it does not view the relationship between historical events in terms of cause and effect. In New Historicist approach, history is subject to multiple narratives, none more important than the other. In Eagleton's language, there is "no firm distinction any longer between historical highways and minor footpaths, or indeed any hard-and-fast opposition between fact and fiction" (197). Historical narratives are not based on facts or truth but the oral narrative or textual document that is dominant. This privileging is achieved because there is a dominant ideology which has the power to override other minor ideologies.

The continual shifting of boundaries between interdisplinary studies, especially between literature and journalism, prompts a questioning of the conventional order that created those distinctions. Both communicative agencies have shared a relationship that is undiminished and is largely maintained by writers who are journalists as well as novelists. The unceasing interaction between these disciplines which is an affront to the canon prompts an empirical inquiry to examine the readership attitudes of literary scholars and how they rate journalistic literature pari pasu conventional literary texts in hard covers. Again references to estimated numbers expose the need for empirical studies to complement theoretical assumptions in literary studies. Abubakar's submission that: "…there is no empirical survey on the number of prose-fiction produced since the commencement of SAP"(Nigerian Prose-Fiction, Structural Adjustment,... 2) justifies the need for empirical studies in literature, because the discipline has for long depended on theoretical assumptions.

5.3 Conclusion

Interdisplinarity does not connote a merging of disciplines but a broadening of perspectives. Interdisplinary studies trace and explore that most disciplines in the humanities that are currently distinquished share histories of long relations and depend on the similar epistemological sources. Even though disciplines have been skewd and narrowed In contemporary times (from the 1970s) the concept of literature is undergoing redefinition along with its conventional attributes of writing, the text, reader and interpretation. The decontructionist strand of Post Structuralism dissolves the text previously viewed as a harmonius entity into a fissure of narratives. In liberal humanism great books are classical pieces. The status of the text as an amalgalm of narratives undermines the centre or institution that regulates the admittance of texts into a pantheon which qualifies them to be studied in the academy. The subscription that a literary text is subject to multiple interpretations is aligned with the principle of signification and plurality of meaning. Wilitte posits that, the "plural …destroys hierarchal difference and levels of the text" (3). Wellek & Warren contend that limiting literature to: "great books makes incomprensible the continuity of literary tradition, the development of literary genres, and indeed the very nature of the literary process, besides obscuring the background of social, linquistic, ideological and other conditioning circumstances." (2)

A literary institution that sticks with a tradition that defines its field to exclude its social environment obscures the means by which it is sustained. For example Wolfrey restates that what has come to be known as literary theory is foreign to literature crossing over "from other places" (7). Literature by its very nature invites interdisplinary anaylsis to be applied on it. Even as a concept, literature is an unstable entity, its theories are porous, thus its entities in the form of writing, writer, text, and reader are unfixed especially when put under scrutiny. Abubakar posits that literature changes as "a paradigmatic form of signifying

practice" (9). In this shift, it associates with other expressive modes of signifying practices like journalism, history and others with which it shares cultural space. As narratives of their societies, there is no ontological difference between as literary and non-literary discourses, and in their communicative medium which is language there is no separation into the fictional and non-fictional language. Fowler (qtd in Abubakar 10) remarks that: "there is no fictive realm in language or writing" all language is subject to semantic interpretation.

In this context, literature has no claim to a special intrepretive status that is inherent or particular to it. The concept of literature is redefined to include all forms of writing. This acceptance goes "beyond the paramenters of the received tradition"to include writing which "customarily goes under the heading of either 'mass' or ''popular culture' made up of a "range and variability of writing" (Bennet 133). The extention of the definition of writing to include letters, memoirs, diaries and biographies is as a result of the development of the genres of literature.especially as they are propagated into various forms of writing. In the interpretation of our world through writing there is a spillage beyond 'literary' boundaries that neutrlise the separation of writings or wrks into neat categories. As a humanizing enterprise literature as texts and a field of study is caught up and participates in non-literary processes of society. It draws its subject matter from the common pool of human life and experiences with other modes of narratives where the distinction between fiction and reality is fluid and and unstable to grasp and be delineated. It is in this realm that literature and journalism consistently interact. The association between literature and journalism repositions and redefines traditional concepts of fact, fiction and aesthetics. .

In the age of information technology, Post Strucuturalism finds its futurisic endeavour of endless signification of the literary product and meaning. Bathes (185) contends that in writing, originality is lost "the author enters his own death," the text becomes an open field subject to innumerable interpretations. On the computer, the literary empire comprised

of the author, text and writing is reinscribed, taken to sophisticated levels. The author is replaced by what Swirsky terms "computhors" a word formed from computers and authors. Literature moves from "literature" to biterature because it assumes a digital form (qtd in Abubakar, 15). Abubakar (15) acknowledges that Stanislaw Lem defines biterature as "any work of non-human origin-one whose real author is not a human being." In biterature, the computer as a "species of literature" is imbued with "internal states" like "creative intention." On the computer the human writer/author disappears his imaginative and creative properties are replaced by an automated instrument which is the computer. In traditional literary discourses imaginative and creative consciousness are the innate properties of the author. The state of literature is "uncanny" but inevitable (Abubakar, 18).

Another realm that literature assumes on the computer is the presence of e-books. In e-form literature and journalism no longer interact in the material form newspapers or magazines. The digital world changes traditional notions of books, libraries and reading. Botwey, representative of the *Worldreader* highlights the advantages of e-books thus: "e-books are mobile, save pupils the hard task of carrying stacks of books around, do not give in to wear and tear and provide a source of library for pupils (students ans scholars)" (39). Thousands of books and other reading materials can be carried around without the restriction of space and the heaviness of weight. Again historical and technological determinants reposition literature, journalism and other forms of writing as agents of literacy, though they continually interact through the linguistic and semiotic tropes that they share. As writers, the separation into journalists and authors becomes only normative because their imbricating roles obliterate strict differentiation. In the array of Post Structulalist discourses literature is denied the "solace of a stable form" (Abubakar 24). Abubakar's concluding remarks reaffirm the nature of literature when he postulates that, in the "unceasing …law of transformation and

development…literature as a category of writing cannot come to a stand still." because its boundaries are continually pushed (25).

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APPENDIXES

INTERVIEWS

The research conducted an interview with Muazu Maiwada, a writer and a Lecturer of the Department of English and Literary Studies, Ahamadu Bello University Zaria. His works are published by the *New Nigerian* Newspaper's literary page the; "Write Stuff." The interview was carried out on the 14th of July 2011. The author was asked the pertinent question; why his books were published in the *New Nigerian*. He expressed that he did not consciously seek a relationship with the newspaper, but the *New Nigerian* consistently asked for his manuscripts and this he obliges them. Another interview was carried out on the 14th of May 2012 this time with the editor of the *New Nigerian* literary pages below is a lay out of the interaction with Sumaila Umaisha:

Question 1

Researcher: Good Afternoon sir, Am here to talk with you about the relationship between literature and journalism. I have observed in my research that the newspapers feature literary materials, I'll like to know your comments concerning that. I'll like to know why newspapers have consistently featured literary materials

Response: Really, well especially now at the age of the computer, the relationship between literature and journalism is closer more than before. This does not mean that the relationship between literature and the media just started. Way back in 1984 when I started writing creative works and short stories. I used to send them to newspapers in the north especially the *New Nigerian* and they were published, that is where I gained the courage to go on with writing. Eventually when I was employed in 1997 I was solely assigned to take care of the literary pages. Today I have four pages which I edit. One on the Sunday edition, like I saidbefore my publication was accepted. So newspapers publish literary materials to encourage budding writers who never knew they could write, to bring forward their works

for publication. Again newspapers cater to the needs of the public, not everybody has the time or opportunity to buy a book on poetry.

Question 2

Researcher: I still have another question or something I want you to throw more light on. In the course of my research, I distributed questionnaire to those studying or teaching literature, from my analysis the results on readership are not encouraging. I observe that literary scholars do not use newspapers the way they should. Some of them do not even realize that the materials are there. They prefer to use the already familiar textbooks that they know. In causes me to wonder, Are newspapers aware of this? Do they realize that their efforts are not complemented from the literary end?

Response: Well you were asking, if eh why is it that literary pages are not popular with the academics?

Researcher: Yes, yet the newspapers continue to publish

Response: Yah you know there is a thing, the thing about the newspaper is that, is for the public. It is not only directed at the academics. Now for the academics, we also have journals like the universities, they produce journals and literary organizations and I think academics are more interested in that. In fact, some of them even believe the literature in newspapers are not 'good' literature since they are contributions from people that are not 'real' writers but people who are trying to express themselves. You know like I told you, I started when I did not know much about literature, but it is when I started seeing in it in print that I was encouraged. I started to learn it more. Now that is the attitude of the academics. They believe that this one is just for public, is just for the common man but what interests them is the journal literary journals. Like I've said before that does not mean that those writing for the newspapers do not have their own place, they have their own place even though are reffered as the common men, they are still literary minds. Many people are literary minded, I think

you understand? Many people are literary minded in fact there are even people who are writers but because they have not discovered themselves they don't even know that they are writers. In fact some live their entire lives without knowing they are writers. But with the literary pages in the newspaper people are encouraged. Those who are… the market people, the traders, academics and everybody has what they want. Even in the literary pages we still have experts who contribute, so the academics can also get from there and then we have novices who d'not know much, who are also contributing. The ordinary person on the street can also enjoy literature not only the academic that enjoy literature or poems or short stories, everybody enjoys short stories everybody enjoys poetry so the newspaper still has its place in the development of literature.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent

The questionnaire seeks information concerning the involvement of respondents with newspapers as source materials for literary research purposes. Please tick the appropriate one(s).

Personal Data

1. Age----------

   A 18-29

   B 30-39

   C 40-49

   D 50-59-

   E 60 and above

2. Sex: Male Female

3. Marital Status: Married Single

4. Income

5. Nationality

6. Religion

Research Status

7. A. Undergradute Student (Indicate Level)

   B. Post Graduate Student

   I. Undergoing Course Work

   11. Writing Thesis/Dissertation

   C. Gradfuate Assitant –Lecturer 2

   D. Lecturer 1 and above

Readership Status

8. Do you read newspapers?

   A Yes

   B No

9 Do You Read these newspapers?

   A The *New Nigerian*

   B *The Guardian*

   C Both

10. How often do you read the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspaper?

   A. Always

   B. Sometimes

   C. Never

11. For how long have you read the *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspapers?

   A. 1-5 years

   B. 6-10 years

   C. 10-15 years

   D. 15-20 years

12. In your research vicinity do you have a library that documents newspapers?

   A. Yes

   B. No

13. How do you get your supply of newspapers

   A. Buy

   B. From the library

   C. From friends /colleagues

Reasons for Readership

14. Why do you read newspapers? (More than one reason can be chosen)

    A. To be Knowledgeable on issues in society

    B. To while away time

    C. For research Purposes

15. Do you read other features in newspapers alongside literary features?

    A. Yes

    B. No

16. Which medium do you find both informative and entertaining

    A. Newspapers

    B. Magazines

    C. Radio

    D. Television

17. Do you read newspapers other than The *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian?*

    A. Yes

    B. No

Recognition of Literary Features in Newspapers

18. Are you aware of the literary feature in these newspapers (*New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* Newspapers)?

    A. yes

    B. No

19. Do you refer to them for research purposes?

    A. Yes

    B. No

20. What type of research are you undertaking?

    A. Tutorials presentation/class assignment

    B. Seminar/ Conference paper presentation

    C. Post Graduate research

21. Do literary write-ups in these two newspapers provide you a rich source of data like textbooks on criticism?

    A. Yes

    B. No

22. Have you published primary or critical texts in a newspaper?

    A. Yes

    B. No

23. What is it that motivates you to write primary texts/

24. Have you or will you use newspaper publication for academic advancement?

    A. Yes

    B. No

25. Are you aware of the existence of *Perspectives on Nigerian Literature* Volumes 1&2?

    A. Yes

    B. No

26. Have you read them?

    A. Yes

    B. No

27. Have you had reason to stop reading *New Nigerian* and *The Guardian* newspapers?

    A. Yes

    B. No

28. Why?

    A. Because they did not feature news that interests me

    B. Did not get regular supply

29. Did literary materials in newspapers meet your research needs where textbooks imn the form of critical materials wer not available to you?

    A. Yes

    B. No

The *Write* Stuff

A Review of Books, Writers & Ideas

Edited by Ibrahim Sheme

Quote, Unquote

Camerado, this is no book,
Who touches this, touches a man, ...
–WALT WHITMAN, *So Long*

Potshots from a woman's cookery

Voice from the Kitchen, by Nana Aishatu Ahmad, Informart Publishers, Kaduna, 1998, 94 pages

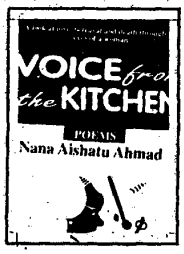
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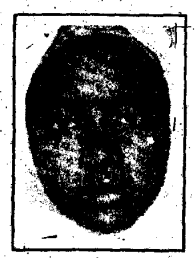
By
PROF. ADEREMI BAMIKUNLE

THERE are two ways in which the collection, *Voice from the Kitchen*, is very significant. It has come at a time when the paucity of female poetic voices in Nigeria is becoming increasingly embarrassing. After the pioneering voice of Mabel Segun collected in *Con*[illegible]*ict and Other Poems* [1986] and the more academic poems of Catherine Acholonu, *The Last Spring's Drop* [1985] and the more clearly defined feminist stand and well-crafted poetry of Omolara Ogundipe Leslie's *Sew the Old Days and Other Poems* [1985], there was an ignominious silence in Nigerian female poetry. This was broken by the appearance of Maria Ajima's *Cycles* at the 1996 Conference of the Association of Nigerian Authors [ANA] held in Kaduna eleven years later. This latter event makes Nana Aishatu Ahmad's voice the second serious female poet in the Northern states and the first serious Hausa-Fulani poetess.

The second significance of her appearance becomes striking when we relate her to the practices of poetry that have dominated Nigerian poetry. After the pioneering works of Soyinka, Okigbo, and Echeruo, written in the "avant garde" traditions of Western modernist poetry, there has loomed large the tendency to define good poetry as structurally complex in terms of diction, and obviously academic in terms of attempting multiplicity of meaning by conscious structuring that suggests many meanings simultaneously. Ahmad's collection demonstrates the possibilities of writing simple poetry without compromising standards.

The essence of good poetry does not consist in difficult words and syntactic structures, ambiguity of phrasing, and over-abundance of figures of speech. The essence of good poetry is the conscious use of rhythm, subjecting the words of the poem to predetermined metric beat, in monolithic pattern or variations of beats even within the single poem. The importance of rhythmic beat in the poem is what makes the ideal poem a song. The perfect lyric is a sonorous song which employs both a predetermined beat, independent of the words but also the organisation of the sound qualities of words into patterns of rhythmic, musical movements. The ability of poetry to do this is the basic difference between poetry and ordinary speech and ordinary prose. The difference between poetry and prose is in the use of rhythmic flow of words. It is for this reason that William Wordsworth, who revolted against imposed conventions of poetry in the nineteenth century, says – and poetry lovers agree with him – that the best kind of poetry is rhythmic prose. No matter how simple the language of a piece of writing is, conscious rhythm sustains it as poetry.





The book, *Voices...* and author Nana A. Ahmad

The first striking indicator of the good quality poetry in this book is the control of the lines, usually short lines, hardly ever longer than eight syllables to the line, often shorter for good control, and the usually short and neat stanza forms. The poems in this book are mostly short, compact, concise pieces with very precise, never superfluous images. Only in a few instances do we have a poem that is longer than a page; most do not fall out of the page. This is a conscious technique that ascertains rhythmic line and stanza control.

This line and stanza control, coupled with a deft repetition of certain structural components in the form of parallelism, makes sure that the poems [not all, but most] are not far from the song rhythm. For example, in "Meditation," the first two stanzas follow the same structure of conditional clauses built around the repetition of "if" and "why." In the poem, "My World," each of the first lines of the four stanzas begins with "'neath the earth." So also do we have in "Down Here" where each of the eight stanzas is introduced by the same phrase, "Down here." This creates an impression that we are going through stanzas of a song. This is a recognisable structural technique of many poems ["Vivid Azure," "I Wish You Were Here," "Who Are You?"]. Many times this effect is achieved through a repetition of the first stanza of a poem at the end of the poem ["Hero in the Grave," "Gone," "I Pray"]. All these techniques demonstrate the writer's mastery of the poetic form. And to show for this mastery, the poetess has a poem, "Fatima Raji [My Love]," in which the sixteen lines of the poem represent each a line beginning with a letter of the words of the title.

The simple diction and language use of this poetry is a great advantage. The generally "difficult" nature of Nigerian poetry in English means poetry is limited to the literary students and teachers in tertiary institutions. There is no poetry reading public. Nana Aishatu Ahmad's poetry, along with recent developments in the poetry of Nnimmo Bassey and Olu Oguibe, will hopefully open Nigerian poetry to the public and destroy the myth that poetry is always difficult or must be difficult to be good.

Voice from the Kitchen will help to open our eyes to the rich artistic possibilities in simple poetry. Without straining to be figurative and without burdening her short poems with too many figures of speech, Ahmad's figures of speech when they come are not only precise, expressing what they want to convey exactly, but they stand as pearls to the body of the poems or, using her own expression, as star beauties in the sky. One is often taken by surprise by how she makes simple everyday words turn out powerful images; "treks the skies," "commune with stars" [in "Wizardry"], images that describe human technological mastery of the cosmos; "where oceans of milk flow" [in "Fallen Star"] to describe visions of abundance in heaven; "to fly me to the moon" [in "I Wish You Were Here"] to describe a wish for emotional upliftment in love. This collection is replete with such "apparently" simple but artistically ingenious images. And particularly the writer has an abundance of images for describing emotions of love experiences.

The title of the book may suggest a limited vision of life from feminist perspectives and concerns but the concerns are larger than that and include political concern for the nation, the poor, for friends, some dead, some alive, love relations and, of course, womanhood. Yet in every direction of her poetic venture, Nana Aishatu Ahmad's collection makes positive contributions to Nigerian poetry.

Professor Bamikunle is of the Department of English, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Nana Aishatu Ahmad graduated from the University of Maiduguri, Borno State, with a degree in English Literature and obtained a M.Ed. [English] from the University of Jos. She taught at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, and now teaches at the Federal College of Education, Gombe. Her poems have appeared in news publications and journals, as well as in the Association of Nigerian Authors' anthology, *Voices from the Fringe*. Her first collection of poems, *Vision of the Jewel*, was published in 1997.

Update

Die a Little for launch April 18

A NOVEL, titled, *Die a Little*, will be launched in the morning at the Arewa House, Kaduna, next Saturday. It was written by Kris Obodumu, a lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Defence Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna.

According to the schedule of the event, Alhaji Dauda Birmah, the Minister of Education, will chair the occasion while the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Lt. Gen. Jeremiah Useni, is the special guest of honour.

The Kaduna State Military Administrator, Col. Hameed Ibrahim Ali, will be the guest of honour and will be supported by his counterparts from Benue, Nassarawa, Lagos and Zamfara States, while the chief host is the Commandant of the NDA, AVM A.M. Daggash.

A speech will be specially presented by Dr. Ali T. Adamu, Executive Secretary of the National Primary Education Commission.

Die a Little (Spectrum, 1997) is co-winner, with Zaynab Alkali's *Cobwebs and Other Stories*, of the 1997 ANA/Spectrum Prize for prose, making it the best written creative work in the country in the prose genre last year.

The novel, according to Mr. Obodumu, is an attempt to draw attention to the dangers of certain foreign influences and concepts. "These foreign concepts may be in the areas of governance or economic policy," he said, adding that the book "attempts to examine those influences' impact on society, especially at the grassroots."

"It also examines how various individuals devise survival mechanisms in the face of their condition," the author said.

Mr. Obodumu has written many poems and short drama for television and the stage. He is a founding secretary of Creative Writers Forum based in the Department of English, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, which still exists.

Die a Little is his first book published.

Books Critics Circle prize for Penelope Fitzgerald

PENELOPE Fitzgerald, the 81-year old veteran English writer, has won the American National Book Critics Circle award for her historical novel, *The Blue Flower*.

Fitzgerald's work about the birth of romanticism in Germany beat out weighty American tomes like *Cold Mountain* by Charles Frazier and *Underworld* by Don DeLillo to capture the 21st annual fiction prize.

– *Time*.

Nuruddin Farah wins the Neustadt prize

NURUDDIN Farah, the Somali author best known for his three novels, *Sweet and Sour Milk*, *Sardines* and *Close Sesame*, has been awarded the Neusadt International Literature Prize for this year, becoming the first African to have won it.

The prize, described as the most prestigious after the Nobel Prize, is conferred every two years by the University of Oklahoma and its international journal, *World Literature Today*. Farah was honoured for his famous three novels, also known as the Dictatorship Trilogy.

Farah, a professor of literature, has been living in Nigeria for the past six years. He told the *Weekly Trust* newspaper that he was happy to have been awarded the Neusdt prize. "I am very proud for the continent that this award has been won by an African," he said.

Professor Farah is author of several novels, plays and non-fiction works. His first novel is *From a Crooked Rib*.

For the Record

'Government and ANA must be natural allies'

Speech delivered recently by Abubakar Gimba, President of Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), on the final day of the 4th Annual Schools Carnival of Arts and Festival of Songs at the U.K. Bello Arts Theatre, Minna, Niger State.



ALHAJI ABUBAKAR GIMBA

THIS year's Annual Schools Carnival of Arts Festival of Songs (ASCAFS) is very unique, just as it is the most joyous to me from among the series we have had these past four years. Both as an ordinary citizen of the state, who has keenly been following the untiring, selfless and admirable efforts of the members of the state chapter of ANA to actualise this event, and as the national President of ANA, today's occasion gives me tremendous happiness for many reasons.

Of the significant reasons are, first, the first time the Schools' Festival has received the recognition and support of the state government, thanks to the Honourable Commissioner for Education, Hajiya Jummai Agwai, and the Military Administrator of the State, His Excellency Police Commissioner Simeon O. Oduoye. Hajiya Jummai Agwai, a teacher by profession, has actively supported the state ANA-related activities. She it was who brought the case of ANA and the Schools Festival to the military administrator who responded promptly and admirably by donating a giant trophy for the overall winner of the Schools Festival competition. And as an added pep-up spice, he readily accepted to be the Special Guest of Honour for today's finals. His wife too was no less enthusiastic to be present this day. I am quite elated, for, my modest expectation from the Government House have been surpassed.

Then, the presence of members of the national executive of the Association of Nigerian Authors. Not since the 1991 ANA Annual Convention held here in Minna, when the late Ken Saro-Wiwa was the ANA President, did the state witness the gathering of top officers of Nigeria's topmost writers organisation. The presence of these officers, as well as other notable members of the writers fraternity, is an honour to the efforts of the state ANA members who have laboured to ensure that this event holds. It is an honour that gladdens my heart.

But our most unique honour of all has come to us from a far off land. Professor Charles Henry Rowell, a Professor of English at the University of Virginia, USA, has honoured us with his presence today, thanks largely to the cooperative spirit of the United States Information Service (USIS). We are very happy to have Charles Henry Rowell here with us today not because he is a professor of English or creative writer not only in the US but to us here in Nigeria. Professor Rowell is very distinct not only because he has been teaching English for well overthree decades but, importantly, he has been actively engaged in establishing outlets for the literature and literary studies of Africa and its diaspora for over two decades.

In 1976, Professor Rowell, in addition to his teaching load, founded and began editing *Callaloo: An African-American and African Journal of Arts and Letters.* Professor Rowell's *Callaloo* is a quarterly journal devoted to literature, visual art, and other cultural forms of the peoples of Africa and the African diaspora. What is of particular interest to us is that Professor Rowell was motivated by what he saw as lack of publication outlets for African American writers, developing or established in the USA's Black South. As a lecturer in one of the Southern universities in the US, he discovered that various students were interested in writing poetry and fiction. He realised that an ever growing number of young Black writers in the South had no publication outlets that would either nurture or assist in the development of their talents. Hence, he took the brave step to start *Callaloo.*

And as a result of Professor Rowell's excellent work and commitment, *Callaloo* soon achieved recognition as "the premiere journal" in African-American literary and cultural studies. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. of Harvard University says that *"Callaloo* is, without doubt, the most elegantly edited journal of African and African-American literature being published today..." while James Olney, Editor of *The Southern Review* praised *Callaloo* as playing a central role" in encouraging black writers and in promoting the best in Afro-American poetry, fiction and criticism, it has been and remains the liveliest and most exciting publication in the liveliest of literatures." And given the success of the *Callaloo* journal, Professor Rowell launched The Callaloo Poetry Series and The Callaloo Fiction series, two book series projects which publish the work of established and new writers.

Such is Professor Rowell whose presence here today has so enamoured us. He symbolises the dreams of ANA. I am not aware, of anyone that encapsulates ANA's dreams, hopes, required determination and needed perseverance more than Professor Rowell. He represents an inspiring inspiration to those of us in ANA striving to promote the development of creative writing in Nigeria. We have a lot to learn from him, a lot to share with him. His excellent literary credentials and our common historical bond place him in a uniquely vantage position whence ANA assuredly would be all the more the richer.

ANA is resolved to remain relentless in its efforts for the good of our society, for we are acutely aware that at the end of the day, all our individual life's endeavours will either make life better for others or make it worse.

Thanks to the supportive interest of USIS, ANA is enthusiastic about its interaction with Professor Rowell quite appropriately, as there is now a renewed resolve by ANA to promote creative writing to new heights of excellence throughout the country. However, we are too aware that in the pursuit of our goal, we are faced with problems quite similar to the ones that challenged Professor Rowell into taking brave steps into *Callaloo.* Our interactions with him, and hopefully with others of similar persuasion, would put ANA on a fruitful learning curve.

Writing in Nigeria faces a myriad of problems and obstacles, which make the task facing ANA quite formidable. Promoting writing in Nigeria, perhaps unlike in the US, requires promoting a lasting reading culture as well. This is what informs the objectives of the annual Schools Carnival of Arts in Niger State by the ANA state chapter. While there is abundant latent creative talent among our people, there is a growing apathy – a dangerous indifference – to reading engulfing our society. Such an appalling reading habit is inimical to the development and growth of education; and any country with a stunted growth of education, while yet proclaiming a desire for greatness, is only engaging in a game of self-delusion, and would have nothing but progressive degeneration.

The current state of education in Nigeria is disturbing, very, very disturbing. We in ANA, however, are happy to note that the Federal Government quite appreciates this and has made an unusual budgetary allocation to the sector in the 1998 Budget. It is both a good sign and a good beginning. We in ANA wish to strongly advise that this must not be a one-off effort; it must be unrelenting for at least the next ten years or the entire period of Vision 2010 or whichever is longer. The problems are quite daunting, no doubt, but we are hopeful that if we rise up to the challenge by devoting an even greater commitment than the financial allocation, we shall overcome and realise our dreams of a great nation.

Tackling the problems of our educational decline, wich threatens to stultify our writing and creative efforts, requires a multi-pronged approach. One such approach is the one adopted by ANA, Niger State chapter, through the Schools Carnival which we are witnessing now. The focus is on our school children because members of the association are anxious that the *future* of our society must not be allowed to decline as your own *today* stares us on its downhill slide. Preparations for our *desired tomorrow* must start *today*. Hence the school carnival is designed to stimulate reading culture in our school children and promote, nurture creativity among them. This way, we hope, the future of literature and literary growth as well as creative arts would not be endangered

ANA at the national level is already mapping out its strategies and programmes to promote literature, literary development and creativity not only for the future, but for the present. We are committed to the salvaging of our present devastated educational development. We are convinced that, besides that Ministries of Education, ANA is the foremost body outside government that has the greatest commitment and appropriate human resources for the advance of education in Nigeria. We are greatly handicapped though by lack of financial resources. We need financial assisting for grants from governments to assist the very governments to carry out their responsibility of helping the society to develop and grow. Government and ANA must be natural allies in tackling the problems of this all-important strategic education sector. It is a call to duty for the society.

Private individuals and institutions should also come to the aid of the ANA for our own collective salvation. Hitherto, there has been a discouraging reluctance to come to ANA's aid. Such indifference often-times frustrates the spirit of sacrifice and dampens the morale of ANA members that have set themselves the noble goal of promoting education in the society.

Lest we forget, ANA is a non-profit making, voluntary organisation. Its members, to put it generously are far from rich. Yes I know you would say, "But they earn royalties!"

The truth is, they earn nothing, only a pittance. Nigerian writers are caught in a vicious circle: though they write, due to the appalling reading habit, their books don't sell (except those that are lucky to have their books as recommended texts for schools), and so they get not royalties as publishers, being businessmen, cannot keep on investing in ventures that yield no returns.

So writers here remain poor. Yet we have not, and will not, give up writing and the cause of literary development. We are even prepared to do the unusual: go begging, for we know that we are not doing it for our personal needs but for the society. We are prepared to go borrowing, with frustrations, to save the larger society from a harrowing from its own self-neglect. For, such private frustrations as some of us in ANA now face are a small price to pay for a bright tomorrow for all of us.

ANA is convinced that there is a bright tomorrow. Our hope is borne out by the encouraging supportive response from Niger State Government, as well as the moral and financial support from some few individuals. Alhaji Abdulkadir I. Gudugi, the Secretary to the State Government, Alhaji Ibrahim Aliyu, *Sardauna* Minna, Hajiya Dije Bala, the Honourable Commissioner for Finance, Alhaji Aliyu Umar, the Sole Administrator of the Arts Council, the Management of the U.K. Bello Arts Theatre, the General Manager, NTA, Minna, the Principals of the Women Teachers College, Minna, and the Hill-Top Model School which all gave their financial, material and moral support when we most needed such help. We are encouraged by these signals, though few, as confirming the selflessness of our determination and the nobleness of our goal.

ANA is resolved to remain relentless in its efforts for the good of our society, for we are acutely aware that at the end of the day, all our individual life's endeavours will either make life better for others or make it worse. There is not third option and ANA is committed to being counted among all those whose determination is to make life better for others. We are committed to a self-respecting and a respected society.

The Arts (2)

Death and the King's Horseman: Two views on New York production

Theatre

By Frank Rich

THERE's a lot of reading material available to those unsuspecting theategoers who stumble into Wole Soyinka's *"Death and the King's Horseman"* at the Vivian Beaumont. The Lincoln Center Theater management has seen fit to provide not only a plot synopsis in the Playbill but also a handbill containing a second synopsis (longer but still unilluminating), descriptions of the leading characters and historical background and, finally, an author's note in which the playwright gives his own work a rave review. Is somebody trying to tell us something? I'm afraid so. Even with the elaborate documentation, *"Death and the King's Horseman"* is frequently baffling in this production, and even when it's coherent, it's stupefying. During the first half, one hears the constant sound of Playbills rustling, as the audience tries to figure out what's going on. After intermission comes a kind of resigned hush, most of the survivors having given up.

As anyone who has read Mr. Soyinka's childhood memoir, *"Ake,"* knows, he is one of the world's outstanding writers — that rare recent Nobel laureate (1986) whose prize did not prompt widespread critical dispute. What Mr. Soyinka does not seem to be is a stage director, at least when working with largely American casts. In 1984 at Yale, he mounted his brilliant, savage satire about African dictators, *"A Play of Giants,"* with all the comic verve of a window dresser arranging a department-store display of mannequins. Mr. Soyinka's staging of *"Death and the King's Horseman"* — nearly as static and more incompetently performed — eviscerates a work that could well offer some of the "threnodic essence" the author's note describes.

Written in the mid-1970's, the play was inspired by an actual incident in the Nigeria of 1946. The King's Horseman, a chief in the ancient city of Oyo, prepares to commit suicide so he may join his recently deceased King in the next world. Before this Yoruba ritual is carried out, however, a Colonial District Officer intervenes in the name of British notions of "civilization." The inexorably tragic results of this interference, like Mr. Soyinka's use of a five-act structure, lend *"Death and the King's Horseman"* a classical shape.

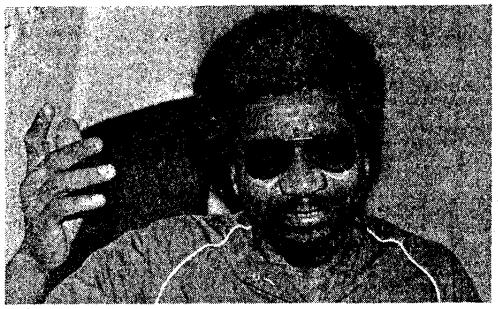
In his program note, the playwright argues that it would be "facile," "prejudicial" and "reductionist" to say this work is about a "clash of cultures." Yet that's the way the drama comes across here. Much of the evening is lavished on detailed illustration and explanation of Yoruba cultural traditions — which stand in stark contrast to the behaviour of the English twits, who are seen preparing for a decadent costume ball even as they decry the Africans' "barbaric," "savage" and "feudalistic" ways. In a similar vein, the chief's honorable ritual suicide is set in didactic opposition to the white man's "mass suicide" of World War 11 — this, in spite of Mr. Soyinka's claim that he changed the story's timeframe from postwar 1946 to 1944 only "for minor reasons of dramaturgy."

Because of the poor acting, the virtues of the play's political arguments, metaphysical ambition and rich language alike are rendered moot. The lead actors — Earle Hyman (the King's Horseman), Ben Halley Jr. (the village "Praise Singer" or "griot") and Trazana Beverley (leader of the women's chorus) — do Yoruban culture no favour by mangling their poetic speeches with odd phrasings, absurdly clipped final consonants and unintentional lapses into broad American Accents. The bright Judy Dearing costumes aside, the singing, dancing and chanting inhabitants of the Oyo marketplace seem equally unconvincing. Whether laughing in studied unison or engaging in mock flirtations during scene transitions, these are patronizingly presented "natives" reminiscent of the unspontaneous extras in Dino De Laurentis film epics like "Hurricane" and the remake of *King Kong."*

The English fare even worse. (Mr. Soyinka wrote the play while at Cambridge University) Their dialogue is standard B-movie colonialese — "You're just a savage like all the rest! shrieks the District Officer's wife to an educated, outspoken African — and they spend too much time cocking their ears toward the ominous beat of distant village drums. In the roles of the colony's most burdened white couple, Alan Coates and Jill Larson are so caricatured that even Rudyard Kipling might find their upper lips a bit stiff.

Whatever, the other faults of the production, the much-maligned Beaumont auditorium itself is not to blame.

Culled from The New York Times Monday, March 2, 1987.



• *Professor Wole Soyinka, authored and directed the play.*

TOTING their wares, the market people converge from the aisles orto the blazingly lit stage of the Vivian Beaumont Theater. Their

By John Beaufort

convergence, with drums and singing, establishes the extraordinary pulse and teeming human presence of *"Death and the King's Horseman,* Wole Soyinka's poetic drama set in 1944 Nigeria. The play in having its New York premiere at Lincoln Center. This prelude of color and motion transports the spectator to the scene of the events that follow.

The marketplace hubbub climaxes with the arrival of Elesin, Horseman of the King Earle Hyman). Elesin is about to meet the ritual, self-imposed death which will, according to tribal superstition, join him with the king, whose demise occurred a month previously. (No one will kill him. He will simply die") The scene includes the first of the flights of eloquence in which Mr. Soyinka establishes the flamboyantly nobel character of the king's horseman. It is left to Olohun-iyo, the Praise Singer (Ben Halley Jr) to express the crowd's fervent admiration of this legendary warrior, the late king's closest friend.

Elesin (pronounced El-ee-shin) responds in a variety of ways to the general adulation. After briefly teasing his admirers, he delivers an ironic commentary on the "Not I" behind which the frightened hide when death approaches. Finally he selects a beautiful young girl, already betrothed, to be his "bride" before he ends his life.

Soyinka quickly shifts the scene to the bungalow veranda where British District Officer Simon Pilkings (Alan Coates) and his wife, Jane (Jill Larson), are tangoing in anticipation of the evening's fancy-dress ball at the British residency. They are interrupted by Sergeant Amusa (Ernest Perry Jr.) who is appalled and terrified to discover them wearing "death" costumes confiscated from some recently arrested cultists. when Pilkings is apprised of



• *Earle Hayman in "Death and The King Horseman*

Elesin's intention, he begins trying to avert the fatal ritual.

"Death and the King's Horseman" chronicles the tragic effects of his blundering efforts. (The play is based on an actual incident). The situation is complicated by the arrival of Elesin's eldest son, Olunde (Eriq La Salle), who has been studying medicine in England. To the dismay of the naively well-meaning Jane, Olunde accepts his father's forthcoming self-sacrifice.

Nobel laureate Soyinka dramatizes the complex of countercurrents in a variety of ways. Such intense confrontations as those between the Pilkings and Olunde contrast with tl ilarious free-for-a in which some obstreperous schoolgirls make fools of three black policemen. Underneath it all lie the irreconcilables of a situation in which obtuse occupiers run roughshod over a native population. Apart, however, from his contempt for the contemptuous British, the author gives no indication of whether he condemns or condones Elesin's death-willing act.

Notwithstanding four pages of back ground notes, some of the play's more extended poetic and mystical passages may create difficulties of understanding for the uninitiated spectator. But *"Death and the King's Horseman"* is nevertheless a fascinatingly rich tapestry in dramatic form. As his own director, Soyinka has staged a performance that blends individual elements with the populous pageant that embraces the plot's unfoldment.

Mr. Hyman brings exceptional strength, authority, and eloquence to the central role of Elesin. This magnificant actor is equal to every demand of the role, whether Elesin is glorying in his warriorship or physically diminishing into an almost wraithlike figure. Besides those already mentioned, the fine cast includes Trazana Beverley as the "Mother" of the Market, Sylvia Best as the silent Bride, Abdoulaye N'Gom as the Pilkings's Christian houseboy, and Dillon Evans as the British Resident.

The large enamble contributes to the sense of ritual, rhythmic movement, and atmosphere, as do the accompanying drummers (Kimati Dinizulu, Yomi Obileye, Tunji Oyelana, Edwina Lee Tyler).

Judy Dearing's resplendent costumes set the visual tone. The production (which runs through April 5) is equally well served by David Gropman's scenery and Pat Collins's lighting.

Culled from The Christian Science Monitor Wednesday, March 4, 1987.

Anansa woos student audience

Dili Ezughah

ONE school of thought holds that the dearth of audience for Theatre-In-English in Nigeria, is the problem of English as a medium of communication amongst peoples with living first languages.

But there are thousands of educated Nigerians who are proficient in English guage. Why do plays in English most times play to less than 10 people at the National Theatre, Lagos?

On this, a crop of practicing theatre-In-English enthusiasts adjudge that the majority of educated Nigerians are not schooled in the theatre. As a result they often get amused at the least when they are asked to leave the beer parlour to see plays at the theatre. The message is lost on them.

Theatre enthusiasts say that the way to get out of this melee therefore is to catch them young for the theatre, with a view to cultivating an audience for the Theatre-In-English for the future.

The think-tanks behind the Anansa Playhouse in Lagos subscribe to this reasoning. From the 23rd to the 26th of this month, playhouse will mount Wole Soyinka's *'The Lion and the Jewel'* on stage at the Mainbowl of the National theatre with school children as the target audience in mind.

This playhouse is not new at this. The butt of its production since 1983 has been school children. *'The gods Are Not To Blame,' 'Eafa,' 'The Marriage Of Anansewa'* amongst others have rolled out of its repertoire since it realised soon after take off in 1983, that the secondary school, and even the primary school is where the foundation for theatre needs to be laid. all the plays are recommended texts for the School CErtificate examinations.

For Wole Soyinka's *'The Lion and the Jewel,'* Anansa has everything going for it to make the production a huge success and to have a record audience. Archibald Etikerentse, a founding member of Anansa told *The Guardian* on Thursday that the the playhouse has the full backing of the Lagos State Schools Management Board for the production. The board will liaise with schools to let the students know about the coming of *'The Lion'*. Principals are expected to ensure that students see the play in production. It will cost them ₦1 only.

The National Theatre and the National Council For Arts and Culture are co-sponsoring the production. As a result, Anansa will not pay for use of the mainhall. The production is counted as a service to education. Also the Council's *Art Centre* is open to the playhouse for free rehearsals.

Unlike the past when Anansa hurries publicity for its productions in just two days or thereabout, it has over two weeks to work on publicity for *'the Lion.'*

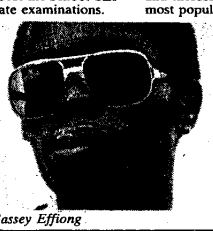
The 8-show performance will kick off 2 p.m. Tuesday the 23rd with a command performance.

Colonel Tunde Akogun, the Federal sole Administrator for Arts and Culture is expected to be the special guest of honour.

The style of production, *The Guardian* understands will be in the total theatre idiom for which the playhouse has come to be known.

Directed by Bassey Effiong and Lola Oluyile, the play packs a crop of Theatre Arts graduates and enthusiasts; a mixture of professionals and up and coming players.

'The Lion and the Jewel,' in one part a satire on falsehood, is one of Professor Soyinka's easily understood plays and therefore one of his most popular.



• *Bassey Effiong*

Save-a-Soul

STRIVING to contribute its own quota to the Save-A-Soul campaign for cancer inflicted Louis Obiakor, Xenon Disco Night Club in the heart of Lagos will on Saturday March 28, host a concert in aid of Obiakor. The all night concert expects some prominent Lagos based artistes as guests. The money realized from the gathering according to its organizers will promptly be made available to help alleviate the patient's plight in far away Britain.

Of literary marxists and their critics

By Molara Ogundipe-Leslie

SOMETIMES you feel like saying may Heaven or Marx protect us from critics, depending on your cosmological view point. Critics, we know, are useful in publicising and interpreting works of creative literature. They bring such works to the purview of readers and citizens who do not have the time, the habit or the skill to read creative literature or read them closely. Some have an aversion to forms of writing such as poetry while others hate to read novels.

But some critics do the writers a disservice by the attention they bring to bear on his or her work. No wonder some or most writers despise critics. Some of our critics are initially handicapped by their elementary mastery of the English language. Not sensitive to the nuances, dept or spirit of the language they fail in the primary task of reading and grasping the text. Reading the text becomes particularly mandatory in the reading of poetry which necessitates almost a word-by-word progress in order to reach the meanings inhered therein. Close reading is more important for poetry because in that genre, words count more as they decide the imagistic content of the poem. Poetry criticism requires a special sensitivity to the metaphoric content of words for that content spins off different associations for different readers and listeners thereby piling up levels of meaning and aesthetic value for the poem.

But here we often have a cursoriness in the reading of the text combined with a tendency to read pre-conceived ideas and prejudices into the text. Some extrapolate from the writer's biography or character into the text. This may often be an error. Nothing should be assumed but what the text says. Extrapolations should be admitted. From the kinds of questions writers are sometime asked, one wonders whether the interviewer read the text at all. A writer once sarcastically said to a reviewer that he was pleasantly surprised that the reviewer had read the reviewed novel in the first place.

But equally serious are the problems which arise from theoretical and conceptual interpretations of literature. This is often where violence is done to the literary products of Marxist writers, particularly here in Nigeria. Some critics take on Marxists on the ideational level without the necessary familiarity with or knowledge of the ideas of Marxism. With this disability, they are hardly able to detect a "Marxist consciousness" expressed in a literary or artistic work.

What emerges is a vulgar expectation of what for them constitutes a "marxist consciousness," a jargonisation about "the class struggle;" "the masses," "the working class" whom they often understand as people who wake up in the morning and go to work in offices; or an obvious lament of poverty and deprivations. Perhaps they expect literary Marxists to write poems like this, (to do a take-off on Eddie Murphy)

- Kill the capitalists
- Kill the capitalists
- Kill the capitalists
- The capitalist's dog
- Do (sic) he bite?
- Kill the capitalists
- Kill the capitalists
- Kill the capitalists

Yes, they seem to expect such jargonistic claptrap and unfortunately sometimes, the worst political poets fulfill their expectations.

You can write a political poem without using a single political word. The political assumptions, vision and message inhere in what the poem says, what it values and the perspective on life from which the poem flows. And as is often insisted these days, even the personal is political. In addition, to re-cast Aristotle, all life is political for it deals with humankind in society, in their association with their fellow beings.

It is completely meaningless to say a poem is ideological but not Marxist if the kind of ideology implicit in the poem is not demonstrated. Marxism is one of the ideologies in the world, bodies of ideas at the base of specific systems geared to specific social objectives: like Christianity, Islam and liberalism which is the ideology of capitalism, all of which three, are foreign as many of us do not tend to admit in argument. Included of course, is our favourite friend, patriarchy's ideology of male supremacy.

A Marxist consciousness springs from a total world view which encompasses all areas of life. It sees history and society as the evolution of freedom in its movement towards a greater and greater control of nature and a just re-ordering of human society, the end of which is to provide for everyone a level of life higher than that of the beast. This progress of human liberation is achieved through contradictory movements of human action through time as classes conflict over their products, resist or insist on exploitation. The struggles over power, privilege and production on the personal and political levels yield social progressions or reversals whether we recognise them or not. Note that one is attempting to say very complex things in simple terms. A Marxist consciousness advocates a certain mode of life which guarantees humanity and dignity to every individual at all levels so he can among other things have the leisure to lead aesthetically rich and fulfilling lives. Marxism is not a vow to poverty or a romanticisation of it. It exists to move the poor away from their poverty.

Therefore you could be expressing a Marxist consciousness in writing about a flower or love; or panegyrising a baby because the Marxist view respects, even sacrilises all life while it struggles historically against exploitative classes and conditions to ensure that life is held sacred and lived sacred. This is to speak theoretically, not to argue that in all practice, these ideals of social engineering have been met. When you have that just society, all citizens will have the leisure and education to enjoy all aspects of an emotionally healthy life which is also defined by Marxist values.

You will say this sounds like a dream or like eschatology. But do human beings not live to dream and realise some of these dreams in their achievements like the pyramids of Egypt, the Laws of Moses, the inspirations of Mohammed, the Rights of Man, the decolonisation of Africa and Asia? If we fail to conceptualise and dream, can we ever act? And what are the dreams or objectives of capitalism? To accumulate private capital in order to own numberless houses in which you do not live; collect rents, travel with women to Acapulco and Las Vegas to gamble? In the Third World particularly, for at least the industrialised nations invest their wealth in their own countries unlike our crazed elites.

Critics of literary Marxists who have never read a word of Marxism or understood the arguments in that ideological universe knock writers about without realising that even within that universe, controversies about theory and practice exist which are in themselves legitimate and healthy. And there are different kinds of Marxists as is to be expected: atheistic Marxists; Islamic, Roman Catholic and revisionist Marxists among others.

The important thing for a critic is to be informed in general. To be aware of and able to take up and carry out intellectual debates and controversies at the deep level at which they are posed worldwide. This means reading a lot more, not picking up phrases, mauling them and throwing them at people. The best critics are the most erudite, like Abiola Irele, who are able to bring the breadth of their knowledge and awareness to the simplest word.

When it is said that all art is propaganda, something is being said more subtle than the obvious and surface meaning of the conscious promotion of doctrines or ideas by governments, organisations or persons. What is meant is that all art persuades you to a certain view of life implicit in itself; it recommends to you a certain perception of things. A poem about the beauty of a rose wants to persuade you that roses are beautiful. Some may hate roses. The beautiful novel *Thing Fall Apart* is a political statement, making "propaganda" to us about the beauty, order and coherence of traditional Igbo life. Each work recommends to you its own particular view of life, consciously or unconsciously. In this sense, all art is propaganda.

Burn the city!

By Adelani Ogunrinade

THERE is a game played in the old Italian immigrant ghetto of New York City. It is called "burn the city". It is a summer game played by Italian kids who, bored with the long summer holiday and fired by the summer heat, go out into the streets to set up little fires which they attempt to jump across. And each time they successfully jump across the fires, they shout triumphantly "burn the city! burn the city!! Heaven knows, these kids were not literally asking that the city of New York be put to the torch. On the contrary they, in their excitement, were merely basking in the warmth of fire and the allure of its glow. To these innocent kids, setting up a fire is some kind of game. But to any sane adult, setting up a fire cannot possibly be a game. As everyone knows, even before the Osibisa song, "Fire will burn you". Anyone who has attempted to put up a ramshackle structure, a garage, an uncompleted building must understand the effort that goes into putting up a structure and the harrowing ordeal of watching one's effort go up in flames. But arson which often accompanies riots and civil disturbances, sometimes arise out of genuine or mistaken heartfelt passions of the principals. It may be uncontrollable, irrational, often directionless, purposeless or as Dr. Stanley Macebuh says "lacking a focus". It is like a volcano which erupts leaving molten lava in its wake accompanied by a lot of hot air. So much is the effusion of hot air that accompanies this volcanic eruption, that it often leaves the actors deflated, perplexed and afterwords, wondering why it all happened as they survey the embers of their own deeds. But it can happen again and again because religious riots, soccer riots, political riots, food riots, tax riots, race riots, prison riots are the only bonds that prove to us the humanity of man, his universality and his beastly origins. It is not a battle. For in a battle, one at least recognises one's enemies. It is not cultural since all these forms of violence including the burning of effigies, books, self immolation, transcend cultural, racial and national boundries. Otherwise, why do students, lawyers, priests, soccer fans, peasants, soldiers, prisoners, black, white, the oriental resort to an occasional emotive orgy of violence in order to prove an often "pointless" point? How do we explain the muderous frenzy of hitherto normally caring people, loving mothers, doting fathers, dutiful wives and responsible husbands,friends—all seeking to vengefully destroy one another for purely sentimental reasons. But, riots are rarely directed at the animate rather the anger of the raging mobs in all riots seem to be vented principally on property-the inanimate. Thus, students may attack government property in a riot, soccer fans may attack a stadium, rampaging mobs may attack and burn police vehicles or fire trucks. Why do men do it? For, at the end of it all, civil disturbances rarely achieve its set objectives even if it had any. It is possible that a close examination of some famous (or infamous) riots may reveal why human beings resort to seemingly irrational and bestial acts.

It is not difficult to see that all form of human violence may be purgatory — an avenue to let off steam. Take the case of the Watts riot of 1965 in Chicago, United States which took precisely 35 lives. During the six-day orgy of violence between August 11 and 16, property estimated at a staggering 200 million dollars (about ₦1 billion) were totally destroyed. Stores were looted and for days the City of Chicago lay under a virtual siege. All because of what? It all started when a white police officer attempted to arrest a drunken black driver. Before the city policemen knew it, a full race riot was on. White merchants, white policemen, white social workers and anything which stood as symbols of white oppression were set upon by irate blacks. At that time, a number of reasons was proferred as remote causes of the riot — poverty among blacks, agitation for civil rights, police brutality, hot weather etc. But there was a social element which beclouded the simmering fire. Two-thirds of Watts residents had less than a high school education, one-eighth were illiterate and about three out of every 10 Watts children came from broken homes. In a way, the Bristol riots of 1985 were a complete action replay of the Watts riot of 1965. The Bristol riot was set off when police officers attempted to arrest some drug dealers in the predominantly black section of Bristol. That incident set off a sporadic violence which resulted in the severe wounding of nine police officers and the arrest and prosecution of 80 citizens. Similar incidents set off the Brixton riots and the Tottenham race riots which resulted in the death of a British bobby (policeman). How about the famous (or infamous) soccer riots?. One remembers the epic burning of the Ghanaian "Black Star" bus by disappointed Nigerian soccer fans, the Ethiopian attack on the Green Eagles at Addis, the 1985 Heysel Stadium riot in Belgium when British soccer fans set upon their Italian counterparts in a frenzy of violence, before television cameras, culminating in the death of 39 fans. One also remembers the prison riots at Attica and our own Kirikiri riots purportedly set off by overcrowding, poor feeding, poor facilities or lack of confidence in prison authorities. How about the student riots — the violent uprising in the Sorbonne in the sixties, the anti-Vietnam demonstrations culminating in the death of two students at Stanford, the loss of lives and damage to property in the "Ali must go" demonstrations? Were students trying to tell the authorities something or were they simply indulging in 'a crazy frenzy?

By far, the worst of these civil disturbances is the sectarian. It is so much easy to destroy a country through sectarian conflict. In Lebanon, Northern Ireland, Iraq — Iran, parts of Egypt, we see brothers rising against brothers "all in the name of God". In those places, it does not pay to be meek anymore, the meek in Lebanon inherit nothing. But as Ahmed Khalaf explains in his book (Lebanon's predicament), the genesis of sectarian violence is rooted in a "monolithic archetype") which is hostile to any kind of co-existence or free experimentation with other sects. As the intolerance worsens, stopping sectarian violence becomes as easy as "sewing an egg together'). Ironically, it is the same elements which account for cultural, religious or tribal awakening and solidarity that also weaken civic and national loyalties. Above all, we see an element of nihilism in all riots — a common trait in all men, a minor defect in some but a major defect in others. Man who, perhaps, appear in duality as the hero of Herman Hesse's ('Steppenwolf') — part humanoid and part beastly. The answer to civil unrest is really the task of taming the beast in man. In terms of minimising sectarian violence, Khalaf recommends the building of viable nations based on a 'restructuring of the way people define themselves as citizens' such that national and civil loyalties remain stronger than sectarian allegiance. That, I think, may be a way out for preventing the fanatics from burning the city.

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Michael J.C. Echeruo: The dignity of intellectual labour

• Professor Michael J.C. Echeruo is 50 years today. In an incisive and summative critique of the man and his works, Professor Isidore Okpewho pays tribute to a fine patriot and an academic of distinction.



• *Michael Echeruo*

By
Isidore Okpewho

IT is neither by chance nor by default that, in any roll call of literary scholars on the Nigerian scene, commentators are invariably moved to begin with the name of Michael Echeruo. The reason is not far to seek. He is one of the leading two of the very few literary scholars in this country — the other being Emmanuel Obiechina — who are willing to apply themselves with anything like sustained rigour to a significant concept until they have attained a defensible theoretical position. This means that, whereas most scholars are content to spin off a whole series of disconnected papers and the odd booklet that do not rise above the level of what may be called an "ethnography" of the subject, Echeruo gives a good deal more time to exploring an idea until he can come out with a solid book on it. He is inclined to examine various sides of an issue and come out with just as many books, and do so with such thoroughness that there is very little left to say on the issue. The difference in aims is clear. Those who write disconnected papers are quite often struggling to satisfy promotion criteria in their universities or at best stay in the public eye. The likes of Echeruo on the contrary, sees himself and his efforts as primarily beholden to intellectual history and a larger life of the mind.

Echeruo has the following sole-authored books to his credit so far: *Mortality* (1968), poetry; *Joyce Cary and the Novel of Africa* (1973), scholarship; *Victorian Lagos* (1977), scholarship; *The Conditioned Imagination from Shakespeare to Conrad* (1978), scholarship; *Joyce Cary and the Dimensions of Order* (1979), scholarship; and *Distanced and other poems* (1975), poetry. he has also edited three other books: (with Obiechina) *Igbo Traditional Life, Culture and Literature* (1971), a collection of papers by various scholars; Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* (1975), introduced and annotated for Longman's Heritage of Literature Series; and Shakespeare's *Tempest* (1980), a critical edition designed and adopted for the British Open University's literature programme. In addition, Echeruo has published articles in various periodicals inside and outside Africa.

In an interview with the American scholar Bernth Lindfors, published in a volume of interviews with African writers entitled *Dem Say* (1971), Echeruo would wish to be seen as a critic/teacher and a poet, in that order. The premium on criticism is certainly justified, given the burden of his published effort to date. But "critic" here goes well beyong the meaning frequently attached to it. In a recent article in the *Vanguard*, Sina Odugbemi called upon our literary critics to turn efforts towards a larger "criticism of culture." Echeruo has, in fact, been doing that from his very first book. Most students of African literature probably know him best by his first volume of poems, *Mortality*, and indeed in that volume we see Echeruo take a programmatic stand on various issues of literature and culture. In the poem "Sophia" he sees no profit in an unreflective embrace of foreign values and instead advocates a cultivation of the limitless potential of wisdom *(Sophia)*. In "Easter Penitence" he turns his sardonic mockery on the irrational ecstasy of Christian worship and the grotesque image of divinity advertised therein. And in the final poem "Daedalus," he sees the modern African poet as duty-bound to conjure the timeless though silent profundities of the race into an inspired flight. In their book, *Toward the decolonization of African literature*, Chinweizu and his friends rail at Echeruo's "euro-modernist obscurantism." Although the troika grossly oversimplify the oral tradition they seek so piously to defend, many of the poems in Echeruo's book are indeed unduly cerebral. But the volume is perhaps best seen in the light of Echeruo's general outlook on culture.

That outlook comes through strongly enough in his first schoarly book, *Joyce Cary and the Novel of Africa*. Echeruo had encountered Cary as an Honours English undergraduate at Ibadan. At a time when there was no such "mythical beast" (to borrow Soyinka's little guip at Cambridge) as AfricaN Literature at Ibadan, Cary and Conrad were the closest that Echeruo and his contemporaries came to seeing their culture as the subject of creative discourse. Molly Mahood, then Head of English, was later to do a book titled *Joyce Cary's Africa* (1964), and inspired an interest in the subject in not a few of her students. Curiously enough, when Echeruo went to do graduate studies at Cornell, it was poetry that tended to command his enthusiasm (he had written a few pieces and was soon, in 1963, to win the All-Africa poetry Competition) and drove him to start his doctoral research on the American poet Robert Frost. But the image of Cary continued to "insist," so to speak, fired perhaps by the reality of the racial and cultural confrontation (evident enough in *Mortality)* pervading the American of the sixties.

Even as a first book of scholarship, *Joyce Cary and the novel of Africa* is a work of nature and balanced judgement. Its purpose is to examine Cary's African-set fiction against the record of other British writers on Africa who, using the "dark continent" as a romantic backdrop, sought to set the "light" of European civilization against the "benighted" innocence of a "savage" people whose salvation was the sacred and benevolent burden of Queen Victoria's imperial adventure. The findings of Echeruo's study are far-reaching, and should perhaps have benefited those who made a habit of debtating, long after Echeruo's book had been published, whether the concept "African Literature" could be stretched to embrace writers like Cary. Echeruo presents Cary as poised between the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand he had no choice but to respect the climate of prejudice of his generation. On the other hand, during those years of retirement from colonial service when he settled down to write both fiction and essays, Cary had begun a deep study of certain ideas about life and art which "transcend race, place and time" and thus tended to guide him "away from the limited significances of the traditional foreign novel of Africa." Consequently, although Cary's African novels tried to resonate the biases and the hauteur of his age, they received rather cold treatment in the contemporary press because they did not seem to go far enough in providing the accustomed entertainment for the amphitheatre of the European mind.

Two relevant insights emerge from Echeruo's book. First, his verdict on whether Cary could be seen as an "African writer is clear: a non-African does not enter the canon of African writing simply by setting his work in Africa, when he does little more than echo "the same kind of self-satisfied comedy" and the "the same immense view of the African scene from a point outside and above it" that we see in the traditional European fiction of Africa. The second, and perhaps more deep-seated, insight reveals the basic thrust of Echeruo's scholarship: the rationalization of culture attitudes as manifested in literature and other arts. Having broached those existential idea that are thinly veild in Cary's African fiction, Echeruo concludes his book with these words: "It is the nature of the ideas about life and art with which he tried, belatedly, to transform his experience of Africa into works of art, that we have to look for an explanation of whatever distinction there is in his African novels." This is an attractive intellectual project. and Echeruo is hardly one to let such a challenge lie untackled.

But there was an even more pressing challenge which Echeruo's study of Cary's African fiction forced upon him. In the climate of prejudice against black people which, as I suggested above, pervaded America of the sixties, Echeruo must have felt his cultural pride considerably hurt especially by those who — to borrow a fitting vulgarity — *wouldn't qualify to shove his shit.* Deep thinker that he is, the following questions must have invaded his mind: Who, really, is the black or African man? What is the nature of his culture or, at any rate, what is the intellectual environment within which this culture has been and can be construed? And what is the function of the biases guiding a people's imaginative portrait of themselves and other peoples?.

These questions are, of course, at the bottom of Echeruo's assessment of Cary's African fiction within the context of Victorian expectations. They are even more to the force in his next two books, *Victorian Lagos* and *The conditioned Imagination*. Put simply, the thrust of *Victorian Lagos* is to take our minds on a historical trip to the sources of the intellectual culture that has come to characterize the contemporary Nigerian elite. What kind of African were they who started this culture: what did they think of themselves, and what were the constraints on their attempts — if we may borrow, as Echeruo did in *Mortality*, a phrase from James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* — "to forge in the smithy of their souls, the uncreated conscience of their race."?

The book is more an intellectual than a political history (Echeruo is careful to point out), designed "to reconstruct the patterns of life and thought in Lagos during the second half of the 19th century"; by plumbing the press of that period, he endeavours "to characterize the essential features fo what civilization in its human as well as its intellectual implications." In the six chapters of the book, Echeruo show the nineteenth century Lagos elite as they emerge through their newspaper articles and editorials: sophisticated immigrans (returned slaves and their descendants) who unfortunately, in their social, educational, cultural and religious lives and policies, could never make up thei minds whether they were African or Europeans but who certainly saw themselves as part of Britain's "civilizing" mission in black Africa. The conclusion to this study is a *well-modulated epitaph* to these disoriented men who stood at the crossroads of history and civilization: "To the extent that they had the privilege of education they seemed determined to save other Africans from the predicament of illiteracy and godlessness, to the extent, however, that they were black, they realised that they shared a common dilemma with everyone who was not just Africa, they felt a common racial obligation to it. What they lacked was not the sensibility of the condition of the African, the black man, but the sense of the ordinary, the indigenous African mind the experience... for all practical purposes, the major source of intellectual stimulation for this elite was Negro America; the main source of its social manners Victorian England."

To be continued.

News

Ministry now pays cash to Gongola teachers

THE Gongola State Ministry of Education has embarked on cash payment of primary school teachers' salaries for last month.

The ministry's permanent secretary, Mr. Obadia Ando, said the ministry decided on cash payments because of alleged fraudulent practices by some council education secretaries and accountants.

He said staff lists submitted by some council did not correspond with the names on the payroll and that in some cases, staff strength went down because of retrenchments but that the salary bills went up.

A statement issued by the ministry, said in some councils, where the staff strength was 720 in December, ₦151,000 was paid as salary but last month when the staff list was 698, salary payroll submitted was ₦159,000.

He said the councils involved in the "deal" did so because they learnt that the Ministry of Education was taking over payment of the primary school teachers' salary from the ministry of local government.

The Ministry of Education took over the running of primary schools last month and had directed councils to settle teachers' salaries for the month and send statement of bills to the ministry for reimbursement.

Navy refunds emergency savings

THE Navy has started paying its junior workers (ratings and civilians) the refunds of their contributions to the Economic Recovery Fund.

It is the last of the three armed forces to effect the refunds, directed by President Ibrahim Babangida five months ago.

About ₦404,000 has been voted for the payments.

Army and Air Force junior rates had earlier received their own reimbursements from a special government grant.

The Air Force was the first to pay, last December. The Army did last month.