MARXIST TENDENCIES IN THE POETRY OF ABUBAKAR GIMBA: *INNER RUMBLINGS* AND *THIS LAND OF OURS*

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation entitled **Marxist Tendencies in the Poetry of Abubakar Gimba: Inner Rumblings and This Land of Ours** 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.

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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled **MARXIST TENDENCIES IN THE POETRY OF ABUBAKAR GIMBA: *INNER RUMBLINGS AND THIS LAND OF OURS*** by JONATHAN OGBU meets the regulations governing the award of Masters in English Literature of the Ahmadu Bello University, zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Mrs Roseline Ogbu for her fervent support and ever loving stance in seeing to the end of this work. I always say and mean it that, “Mama is my greatest love of all…”

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ABSTRACT

Writers, world over, have ideas or phenomenon that influences their works in one way or the other. The phenomenon might not be mentioned or directly stated. At some point in time, these writers might even be unconscious or rather, oblivious of the influence(s) inherent in their works.This work takes a look at the Marxist theory as a tool, with a view to understanding the works of Abubakar Gimba. Gimba has published two poetry collections titled; Inner Rumblings and This Land of Ours. This research work examines Inner Rumblings and This Land of Ours from a Marxist perspective through an analysis of themes, form and all other poetic devices. This work looks at Inner Rumblings and This Land of Ours by identifying the Marxist ideas of the writer under study. This is done through the contents of the writer's published poems. The poetry collections of Abubakar Gimba, are examined, thereby, exploring the Marxist ideas observed in the lines of the poems. This study measures the poems of Abubakar Gimba and establish how Marxist inclined, the poems are. The research finds out those Marxist ideas in the diction and contents of the poems.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This work takes a look at the Marxist theory as a tool, with a view to understanding the works of Abubakar Gimba in a better way. Gimba has published two poetry collections titled; *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land Of Ours*.The first collection titled *Inner Rumblings* published in the year 2000 by Delta Publishers in Enugu; Nigeria has a total of sixty-eight (68) pages. The collection won the delta poetry prize and has been held in high esteem by many Nigerians and people in other parts of the world. On the other hand, *This Land of Ours* is his second published poetry collection; published a year after the first poetry publication in 2001. This time, a different publishing company known as Kraft Books Limited in Ibadan, published the collection. It is composed of ninety-seven pages, and is a great success as the earlier production. This study examines *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of ours* from a Marxist perspective, through an analysis of themes, form and other poetic devices.This research work looks at *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of Ours* by identifying the Marxist ideas of the writer under study, through the contents of his published poems mentioned earlier on. This require that we look at Marxism as it relates to literature in general, and poetry, in particular, by tracing the emergence of, and development of Marxist critical theory and how it relates to literature and poetry in particular and how that is reflected in Gimba's poetry.

To understand Marxism, we must first set it in its historical context. We must understand when it was born and how it arose. We must explain its emergence and development by the interaction of social forces: their economic nature, their material interest, their ideology, and the people

whoformulated their aspirations.

It becomes pertinent that a brief discourse, through the history of Marxism, as a theory, is presented here, so as to fully intimate us on the discourse at hand.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND Marxist theory has a long and complicated history. Although it is often thought of as a twentieth century phenomenon, partly because it was the basis of the Soviet Union's socialist system. It actually goes back to the thinking of Karl Hienrich Marx (1818-1883), a nineteenth century German philosopher and economist. The first announcement of his traditional way of seeing things appeared in the *German Ideology* in 1845. In it, Marx argue that the means of production governs a society's institution and beliefs, and contended that history is progressing towards the eventual triumph of communism. He introduced the concept of *Dialectical Materialism*, the theory that history develops as a struggle between contradictions that are eventually synthesized (Dobie 2009:86).

Marxism is a materialist philosophy, one which insists on the primacy of material living conditions rather than ideas or beliefs in the lives of human beings. It sees History as, (in Marx's words), "history of class struggle"- the history of struggle for control of the material conditions upon which life rests (Gorin et al 2010:186).

When Marx met the political economist, Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) in Paris in 1844 and they discovered that they had arrived at similar views independent of one another, they decided to collaborate to explain the principles of communism (latter called Marxism) and to organize an international movement. These ideas were expounded in the *Communist manifesto* (1848), in which they identified class struggle as the driving force behind history and anticipated it would lead to a revolution, in which the workers would overturn the capitalist, take control of

means of economic production, and abolish private property by turning it over to the government to distribute fairly. With these events, class distinctions would disappear. In the three-volume work; *Das Capital* (1867), Marx argued that history is determined by economic conditions and he urged an end to private ownership of public utilities, transportation and means of production. Despite the variations and additions that occurred in the century that followed, on the whole, Marx's writings still provide the theory of economics, sociology, history and politics called Marxism.Although, Marxism was not designed as a method of literary analysis, its principles were applied to literature early on. Even in Russia where literature was sometimes accepted as a means of productive critical dialogue and at other times viewed as a threat, if it did not promote party ideology, literature was linked to the philosophical principles set down by Marx and Engels. It was apparent that Marxism provided a new way of reading and understanding Literature (Dobie 2009:87).

Marx, himself was extremely well read in classical and contemporary literature, and literary allusions as references abound in his writtings. A number of early Marxists sought to apply Marx ideas to Literature: both in terms of interpretation and evaluations of existing literary works, and also in terms of advice to writers and those with (or seeking) political power about what sort of Literature should be encouraged. The active and interventionist nature of Marxism has recurrently led to attempts to use literature for social political ends; some of these have gained a bad press in the reviews of history, as in the case of socialist realism: others have received a more positive response as in the case of Bertolt Brecht's attempt to use the political theatre in the interest of social revolution (Gorin et al 2010:186).

The first major Marxist critic appeared outside Russia. George Lukacs (1885-1971), a Hungarian critic, who is responsible for what has become known as 'Reflectionism.'

Named for the assumption that a text will reflect the society that has produced it, the theory is based on the kind of close reading advocated by Formalists. But it is practiced by the reflectionist for the purpose of discovering how characters and their relationship typify and reveal class conflict, the socio-economic system or the politics of the time and place. The system is also known as 'Vulgar Marxism.'

Another important figure in the evolution of Marxism is the Algerian-born French philosopher, Louis Althusser (1819-1990), whose views were not entirely consonant with those of Lukacs. Whereas Lukacs saw literature as a reflection of a society's consciousness, Althusser asserted that the process can go the other way. In short, Literature and art can affect society, even lead to revolution. Building on Anthonio Gramsci's idea that the dominant class controls the views of the people by many means, one of which is the arts, Althusser agreed that the working class is manipulated to accept the ideology of the dominant class, a process he called interpellation.Marxism established itself as part of the American literary scene with the economic depression of the 1930s. Writers and critics alike began to use Marxist interpretations and evaluations of society in their work. Eventually, the movement grew strong enough to bring pressures to bear on writers to conform to the vision, resulting in a backlash of objection to such absolutism from such critics as Edmund Wilson in "Marxism and literature, in 1938".

Currently, two of thebest-known Marxist critics are Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton. In some ways, Jameson and Eagleton are typical of mixtures of schools in literary criticism today (Dobie2009). This does not mean that these two (the duo of Jameson and Eagleton) are basically the only or major writers or critics of Marxism known today. There are many more others that have not been mentioned in the course of this research as this work is also an attempt at lending a voice to the established principles (of Marxism).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Abdullahi Isamil (2008:6), "Gimba's writings indubitably reside in the domain of critical discourse, and are thus open to various interpretations and understanding." In the course of reading through the poetry collections of Abubakar Gimba, the idea of Marxism is inherently observed. The question becomes how Marxist inclined or related are the poems, and in extension, how Marxist is the author. This becomes the central question/problem this research wants to explore.

This work tries to measure the poems of Abubakar Gimba in the Marxist tradition. Marxism as a theory of literature has been selected due to the fact that Marxist ideas run through the rendition of most of the poems in his collections. This research tends to find out those Marxist ideas inherent in the words and ideas of Gimba's poems. Through the poems, one suspects that though Gimba has never openly declared himself a Marxist thinker, that there are tendencies of Marxism in his poems which in turn informs us of his Marxist orientation.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

A number of critical works have been carried out on Abubakar Gimba and his works by different scholars in the past. The aim of this present study is to attempt a further scholarly examination on the analysis and interpretations of Gimba's works, with a view to expanding the frontiers of knowledge on the works of the writer under consideration.

Objectives of this study are;

(i) Examine Marxism as a literary theory.

(ii) Identify the Marxist tendencies (ideas) in the poems of Abubakar Gimba

(iii) Examine the established Marxist tendencies (ideas) in the poems of Abubakar Gimba

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Most African writers regard themselves as social critics rather than just entertainers. Gimba, as a writer has contributed immensely to the development of world Literature; especially, in Africa and Nigeria where his works are more sought. It is very necessary that this great writer is studied in view of the relevance of his contributions to the development of humanity, especially, in Nigeria. In recent times, focus has been enormously placed on his prose works. This could be because he first started with this particular genre (prose) in establishing his name. Most times, some people hardly know Gimba ever have any poem to his credit. It is against this background that studies are supposed to be carried out, extensively, on the poetry aspect, so as to make a balance on both sides. This thesis bases its concern on the poetry of Gimba in looking into a particular perspective to his writing. In our case of study, the perspective being looked on is Marxism.

Critics have written a lot on Gimba's works. Common among these critics have always been on the novels and other publications of Gimba (none poetry publications). In recent times, not much has been said and (or) written about Abubakar Gimba's poems. There are some critical and more detailed studies here and there in small volumes about the poem collections but none so far has categorized Gimba in the Marxist tradition as expected to be done in this study, especially, in the area of his poetry. This study becomes relevant and gets justification by this fact. A new way to look at the poems of Gimba becomes necessary through the Marxist stand point rooted in the Lukacsian Reflectionist Model.

1.6 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is primarily concerned with the poetry collections of Abubakar Gimba as contained in the two distinct collections, titled: *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of Ours*. The concern of this study is focused on the contents of these poetry collections. A number of poems are picked up sequentially and in some places, randomly, to be analyzed or looked up in the Marxist theory, dependent on Lukacs reflection model.

1.7 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study uses the qualitative research method. The qualitative research method is a multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that the qualitative researcher study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of data. This study, basically, is library based. The researcher attempts detailed assemblage, sorting, reading and analysis of materials for this study as well as the primary texts; *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of Ours*.

The objective here is to adequately look at the poetry of Abubakar Gimba and weigh the poems in the two collections of study in the Marxist perspectiveas highlighted earlier on. Reading of secondary sources which includes critical works on the subject of discussion becomes very necessary as this will explicitly help this study to unravel set objectives.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

According to Lessa (2015:45), quoting Cherama (2004),he sees theoretical framework as established vantage point, a perspective, a set of lenses through which the research views research problem. It is known as the selection of logical framework, this is done by picking or relating a suitable theory that is connected to the subject matter.

In the course of introducing this study, it has been mentioned, how important and relevant literary theory is to literature. For the study at hand as stated earlier, Marxism has been emphatically stated to be the theory through which this study proceeds. According to the assumption of Webster (1999), as paraphrased, literary theory as an area of study does not propose any easy or water tight solution to what literature is or how it should be studied. It denotes further that the necessity of theory cannot be over emphasized. Theory according to the teachings of Ibrahim Bello-Kano (2012), is the broad discipline of humanistic study which intrudes between the text and the reader. As such, theory helps in the conceptualization of the texts by making the works open to as many interpretations as possible. In other words, literary theory serves as a critical tool which involves the reading, interpretation and commentary of texts which have been designated as literature.

However, Marxist principles and attitudes and modes of thought and inquiry have been adapted to create a Marxist theory of literature: what it has been, and what it might and, perhaps, should be. The Marxist critic (who tends to be primarily interested in content) writes from the definite standpoint of Marx's philosophical ideas, and from his view of history in which the class struggle is fundamental, or in terms of socio-historical factors. Marxist writers are to be committed to the working class.

In Marxist criticism,social class and class relations function as central instruments of analysis. Marxist theory argues that the way we think and the way we experience the world around us is either wholly or largely conditioned by the way the economy is organized.

Then writers will not have all that much freedom in their creative efforts. They will inevitably work within the framework dictated by the economic 'base' and will have much in common with other writers living and writing under the same economic dispensation. The masses are not free at all as; they only think they are. Capitalism, Marxism tells us, thrives on exploiting its labourers. Simply put, capitalists grow rich and shareholders do well because the labourers that work for them and actually produce goods (including services) get less –and often a good deal less – for their efforts than their labour is actually worth. Labourers have known this for a long time and have organized themselves in labour unions to get fairer deals. What they do not know, however, is how capitalism *alienates* them from themselves by seeing them in terms of production – as production units, as objects rather than human.

For Marxism, we are blind to our own condition because of the effects of what it calls *ideology*. We should not confuse the Marxist use of 'ideology' with the way we often use the term: as referring to a set of beliefs that people *consciously* hold – beliefs of which they are aware and which they can articulate. We can for instance speak of the ideology of the free market - referring to a series of arguments that defend free enterprise against state intervention – and also of the communistic ideology that gave the state total control over production. For Marxists, however, the term is much more encompassing.The term IDEOLOGY, according to the *Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory* (2007:110);

> Refers to ideas and believes that guide and organize the social and cultural elements of the superstructure. Ideology is typically associated with the ideas

> and believes of the ruling class, which controls the means of production; this is the sense in which Marx himself used the term.

A key figure is the first major Marxist critic, namely the Hungarian Georg Lukacs (1885-1971). He developed the critical theory of 'reflection', seeing literary works as reflections of a kind of system that was gradually unfolding. In his view, the novel, for instance (and he had much to say about this genre), revealed or ought to reveal underlying patterns in the social order and provide a sense of the wholeness of existence with all its inherent contradictions, tensions and conflicts. Like many Marxist critics, he was mainly concerned with content. Lukacs argues in, *History of Class Consciousness* (1923), that materialist analysis must concern itself with the "relation of society as a whole" by which he meant "*Society as a concrete totality*, the system of production at a given point in history and the resulting division of society into classes." Only when this relation to a social totality is established, does the consciousness of their existence that men have at any given time emerge in all its essential characteristics" (50). Ideology for Lukacs, is a form of *false consciousness* that arises whenever the subjective consciousness of a specific class (typically, the ruling class) is taken to be the objective consciousness of society at large (Gregory Castle; 2007:110).

Indeed, Marxist writers such as Raymond Williams and Terry Eagleton have argued that art began to perceive and represent itself as `outside'of society only in the late eighteenth century, the very time in which art wasbecoming increasingly commodified. At the level of the producer of art - thenovelist, folksinger, cartoonist - art is also already social, since the artwork iscreated by an individual with a class, gender and racial identity, and whosefashioning of the artwork is determined by such factors as education andaffluence (Julian Wolfreys; 2001:69).

The Lukacsian Reflection model is seen as the most ideal selected model which tends to correspond best to this study. This model is what this work is muchly relied on. Detailed and

thorough discussion of this model, as well as the concept of Marxism is squarely discussed in the succeeding sections of this study. Through the postulations of key Marxist critics in the next section, a clearer view of the choice of the chosen model is explicated.

This research, seeks to advance and articulate arguments on the poetry of Abubakar Gimba from the Marxist literary theory with special emphasis on the Lukacsian Reflectionist model.

1.9 THE CONCEPT OF MARXISM

Introduction to the major ideas that form this study is expected to be made clearer. This becomes the mainstay of this section. The major concepts forming this study is explicated and further discussed so as to make clearer the idea of the thesis. Discussions of these key areas, when explained, will help to shape this study.

Marxism is an economic and socio-political world view that is embedded within a political ideology. It was conceived in the mid19th century by two German émigré scholars living in Britain. Marxism is based upon the materialist interpretation of history. Marx did not see history as a struggle between the rich and the poor, or the powerful and the powerless; he thought that such struggle differ quantitatively depending on what particular historical class emerge at a given stage in history. In other words, history was shaped by class struggle; the struggle of contemporary proletariat against their capitalist task-masters to ensure that class struggle will thus come to an end. Marx and Engels were two German philosophers who addressed the matter of alienation and exploitation of working class, the capitalist mode of production and materialism. They were famous in analyzing history in terms of class struggle. Their ideas were influential in their time, and it was greatly expanded by Bolshevik October revolution in 1917 in imperial Russia.

Marx is known for saying that ‘Religion is the opiate of the people (masses),’ so he was aware of the problem that Lenin later dwelt on. Lenin was convinced that workers remain largely unaware of their own oppression since they are convinced by the state to be selfless. One might point out many ‘opiate of the people’ under the most political system-diversion that prevents real consideration of trying to change unjust economic condition. Marx thought that ‘historical materialism’ was the ultimate driving force, a notion involving the distribution of resources, gain production, and such matters. The supposedly ‘natural’ political evolution involved (and would in the future involve) ‘feudalism’ leading to ‘bourgeois capitalism,’ leading to ‘socialism’ and finally to utopian communism. In bourgeois capitalism, the privilege bourgeois rely on the proletariat; the labour force responsible for survival. Marx theorized that when profit is not reinvested in the workers but in creating more factories, the workers will grow poorer and poorer until no short-term patching is possible or successful. At a crisis point, revolt will lead to a restricting of the system. Marx in the late 1840 and early 1850s has asserted that only a violent revolutionary over throw of bourgeois rule, the emergence of the dictatorship of the proletariat would lead to the emancipation of the working class. By the late 1850s, this views had considerably mellowed. Marx (1976:26) defined ‘’communism’’ as the classless, egalitarian and stateless society. To Marx, the notion of a communist state would have seemed an oxymoron, as he defined communism as the state reached when class society and state had already been abolished. To correct and bridge the gap between, the bourgeoisie who are wealthy minority and the proletariat, who are poorer majority, Marxism advocates and believes in the historical proletarian revolution to take control of government, and implement reforms to the benefit of their class, namely the confiscation of private property which is taken under state control and then run for the benefit of all rather than for private interests. Such a system is socialism,

although Marxists believes that socialist society would develop into an entirely classless system, which is known as communism in Marxist thought.

According to the Marxist theoretician and revolutionary, Vladimir Lenin, the principal content of Marxism was Marx's economic doctrine. He believes that the capitalist bourgeois and their economist were promoting what he saw as the lie that the interest and those of the workers are…one and the same. He believed that they did this by purporting the concept that the fastest possible growth of productive capital'' was best not only for the wealthy capitalist but also for the workers because it provided them with employment. Marxists believes that the transition to socialism is an inevitable part of the development of human society. As Lenin stated in *The German ideology*(1976: 15), it is evident of the transformation of capitalist society (into a socialist) wholly and exclusively from the economic law of motion of contemporary society. ''For instance, prior to the Russian revolution of (1971), Lenin wrote that socialization of production bound to lead to conversation of the means of production into a proper society… This conversion will directly result in an immense increase in productivity of labour, and at the same time, Lenin consistently complained in the German Ideology (1976:18)''. The elementary truth of Marxism is that the victory of socialism requires the joint efforts of workers of advanced countries''. It is against this background that some of these countries of World War II, adopted Marxist ideology, often with soviet military backing spawned to rise in revolutionary communist parties all over the world. Some of these parties were eventually able to gain power and established their own version of Marxist state. Such nations include, the republic of China, Romania, East Germany, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Cuba and others. In some cases, these nations did not get along. The most notable example where rifts occurred was between the Soviet Union and

Yugoslavia (in 1940). Marxism and how it should be implemented in the society became an issue (Jacob 2007:18).

Similarly, Trotskyism in the ‘’Theory of Marxism’’. Trotsky considered himself as a Bolshevik, arguing the establishment of a vanguard party. He, also considered himself as advocate of orthodox Marxism, with Edward Bernstein (1850- 1937). Trotsky politics differs from that of Stalin or Mao, most importantly in deadening the need for an international ‘permanent revolution’. Numerous groups around the world continued to describe themselves as Trotskyist and see themselves as standing in this tradition, although they have diverse interpretation of revolution. On the other hand, he advocated proletarian revolution as set out in his theory of ‘permanent revolution’ and he argued that in the countries where the bourgeois-democratic revolution had not triumphed already. In other words, in places that had not yet implemented a capitalist democracy as Russia (1917), it was necessary that the proletariat make it permanent by carrying out the task of the social revolution (the socialist of communist revolution) at the same in an uninterrupted process. Critics of Marxism speculated that Marxist ideology itself was blamed for the nations various problems.

Marx and Engel’s postulation of the concept of Marxism, generally viewed literature not as works created in accordance with timeless artistic criteria but as ‘products’ of economic ideology determinants of specific to the era (Abrams 2005). Literature reflects the idealism of Marxism, portraying the ideology of class stratification, culture and socio-economic tendencies which pervades human society. Therefore, Literature seeks to integrate and explicate these class fractions, to show equality between human beings or how members of the society have been able to cope. This goes on to mean that, Marxism and literature are very well interpolated concepts.

1.10LUKACSIAN REFLECTION MODEL

The concrete pronouncement of Lukacs that earned him recognition as the foremost proponent of the reflection model of Marxist criticism is the following postulate;

> The more artless a work of art, the more it gives the effect of life and nature, the more clearly it exemplifies an actual concentrated reflection of the time and the more clearly it demonstrates that the only function of its form is the expression of life in the greatest concreteness and clarity and with all its motivating contradictions (1971:52).

The critical temper is either directly or indirectly expressed in several of Lukacs' contribution to literature and Marxism. For Lukacs, literary form is that which reflects reality in 'the most objective ways'. Consequently, literary 'well-formedness,' is perceived within this model as the most accurate portrayal of the external reality that Marx himself is reflected in the mind of man and translated into forms of thought' (1976:102). Forgas tells us that Lukacs' idea of reflection transcends that simplistic mirror-object relationship popularized by the mimetic model. This idea shows us that Lukacs' belief is that 'Literature, is a knowledge of reality' and knowledge is not a matter of making one-to-one correspondence between things in the world and outside or ideas in the head' (Forgas 1985:139). Through this perspective, we understand that literature subjects reality to creative and form-giving process that converts 'it to realism. We are informed that 'it is this model which Lenin used when he wrote about Tolstoy as the mirror of the Russian revolution' (Forgas 1985:139). Lukacs who was an international figure in the communist movement until his death in 1971, patterned his critical thoughts after Marx's presumptions towards creativity. Marx opined that external reality is prior to ideas in the mind, as the material world is 'reflected in the mind of man and translated into forms of thought' (Marx 1976; 102). The procedures of translation into thought are inevitably complex, as Lukacs believes that the

correspondence between the knowledge in literature and that outside world of it is arbitrary. Forgas explains Lukacs' idea further when he asserts that,

> To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through a correctly formed work of the writer. The result in the case of a correctly formed work will be that the form of the literary work reflects the form of the real world (1985:139).

Lukac's perception of form indicates his distaste for the formalists' simplistic portrayal of the concept as the sum of the device in a text. In fact, his idea of form is that the concept in itself is not to be looked at as either technical or linguistic, as it appears to the formalist. Lukacs will have us believe that form is nothing but the aesthetic shape given to literary content, manifested through the physical technicalities of narrative features, the relation to characters and situation in a literary work. In his analysis of Barzac's *Les Paysans* in studies in *European Realism* (1972), Lukacs attempts a 'triangular configuration that follows the trajectories of three social classes – the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry – perhaps in an attempt at fashioning a definitive correspondence between character situation and form'. Luckacs believes that in the modern era of writing, literary pieces manifested in a 'complete dissolution of all content and all form.' Such dissolution is the content of the God-forsaken nature of modern cosmology whose setting is so complicated in its tendency to evoke more questions and answers (1977). In Lukacs' terms, as Forgas reflects,

> What is being reflected in a correct work and failing to be reflected in a unmediated one is a whole objective form of reality, something which is far less or immediate and tangible. A work which appears to be like life will thus not necessarily be realistic…, and a work which manifests distorts in appearance will not necessarily be unrealistic (114).

Forgas is of the opinion that the reflection model has a fundamental fault that lie in the fact that it is not a theory of literature in general but of a realist literature.

Notwithstanding its shortcomings, the model appears appropriate for our scheme of analysis in this study, as most African writings have the outlook of the realist literature. We shall therefore consider the poems of Abubakar Gimba as the reflection of the author's perceived society emanating from their experiential words. A reading, through the poetry collections of study brings one to the perception and very inherent Marxist ideas, especially in the Lukacian reflection model.

In Gimba's actual words from an interview conducted at a point in time, it seemed to be as if he had everything spelt out from the standpoint of the thesis of this research. His response to the question posed to him, about his literary works elicited the following answer which precipitated the quest of this research. Gimba spoke like one who has been influenced directly by Marxism of the Lukacs' model (type). This chapter shall be concluded on the assumption made by Gimba and after this; we delve into the actual contents of the poem in study so as to unearth the Marxist tendencies inherent in them. The response is, as presented below from Gimba's actual words as captured by Onookome Okome (1992) in the publication of Ezekiel Fajenyo (2008:15).

> One was interested in reading diverse writings, books from different parts of the world… First and foremost, I was interested in the milieu in which I lived at some points in my life. Invariably, this has influenced me greatly and has found its way into my writings-especially the novels. Essentially, I belong to this class- I feel them and so I am bound to reflect on this milieu in which this class of people play their lives. In terms of style, I do not write difficult kinds of Literature-certainly, not the Soyinka type, principally, because I have this class of people I have lived with in mind as my readership when I write. Besides, I feel that since literature is for communication, the more people who can read my novel [as well as other of his works] and understand their worlds, the happier I will be. Literature is sharing with other people ideas about things. That is my general position on literature; make people have ideas about things…to provide some form of mirror in which these people see themselves as they have not done before. This is the way I see literature.

Most of what to come out in the analysis of the poetry of Gimba tends to have a very close relation with the Marxist idea of Lukacs' Reflectionist model as observed in the above words of

the writer. The next chapter therefore forms review of related literatures to this study. Then the main area of this study as the analysis of the poems are presented in chapters three and four follows. This study is made possible as those Marxist tendencies present in the poems are brought out. References to be made will always extract from the tenets of Marxism throughout the analysis to be done.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is primarily concerned with postulations and discussions of matters surrounding the writer in question and his works, especially the poetry collections. Marxism is conceptualized as well as related to Literature; especially, African Literature. Matters such as how Marxism is viewed in the African context, postulations on Gimba and his works generally and his poetry in particular amongst other things are discussed in this section of the study.

2.2 MARXISM AND LITERATURE

> Literature cannot escape from the class power structures that shape our daily life. A writer has no choice. Whether or not he is aware of it, his works reflect one or more socio-economic, political, cultural, ideological struggle in a society…the side of the people or the side of those social forces and classes that try to keep the people down, what he or she cannot do is to remain neutral (Ngugi 1981: 11).

Writers are concerned with the issues in their societies. Literature is a medium by which writers express themselves and make commentaries on those issues that are prevalent in their society. It has been said that writers have not only interpreted the world, but also that their aim is to change it.

According to Wales (1991: 288), Marxism is defined as a view of world events based on the work of Karl Marx (1818-83), and Friedrich Engels (1820- 95) in which they see man's history as a natural process rooted in his material needs. The historical evolution of man is seen as the outcome of the mode of production which determines the nature of each historical epoch, and specific forms of property prevailing in its class structure.

The problem of Marxist theory is that it divides the society into two: the non-working owners (the haves) and the workers (the have not). It also provides impetus for change and all the history that is of class struggle. Therefore, what Marxist writers do, is to expose the oppressors and its mechanism of oppression. The interest of Marxist Literature is to defend the cause of the oppressed. The Marxist critics believe that the achievement of this goal is by evolving an egalitarian society where the ideal is stressed. However, to achieve this, they explore society and situate sources of oppression.

Literature, as earlier stated is a medium by which writers try to change the world. However, Literature is the possibility for any utterance, notion to be iterated in many context and to function in the identifiable speaker, context and reference or hearer and reader. Art and Literature which have always possessed some autonomy were brought into war effort. They have to exemplify and instruct. Entertainment could only be escapism and divert the proletariat from their task.

Furthermore, critics have argued that literature cannot be subjected to a single definition, and it cannot exist as an autonomous entity without a theory. Thus, Marxism is a form of criticism that uses elements of Marxist ideology to the interpretation of a text. Therefore, literature is broad and richly diversified; Marxism is a restricted socialist ideology. Marxist writers were avowed adversary of oppression in whatever form. They joined the proletariat (working class) to advocate for the abolition of class oppression. The philosophy of Marxism is rooted in what is known as dialectical materialism, which stresses economic determinism (economic survival) as an index of social struggle. Marxism has taken shape by scrutinizing and sharpening itself not only on the real world, and not only on its own contexts but also against the non-Marxist thinking. The art of the Marxist is revolutionary because, he takes a step to choose the right from the wrong. He is the voice of the masses. His (Karl Marx) writings as contained in the publication; *Communist manifesto*(1848) are a critique of corruption embedded in the human society. This notion is but one of the major mainstay of Gimba's texts to be studied in this research as the study proceeds. Marxism and literature in my own opinion, becomes like the oil with which yam is eaten, according to Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things fall apart.*

2. 3 AFRICAN LITERATURE (POETRY) AND MARXISM

The Marxian theory started as a theory of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engel. Marxism is a historical, economic and political theory. The Marxian school is of the opinion that the human society is structured into two layers which are: the bourgeoisie and the proletariats. The two layers which make up the society contend with each other for the control of power and distribution of resources. This fight for the distribution of wealth is referred to as class struggle. However, the notion of class struggle transcends the Marxian school. Marxian theoreticians posit that the human society is characterized with "dialectical materialism." Dialectical materialism is the

Marxian philosophy which asserts that human history does not evolve in a linear form but rather as a result of class conflicts between the "haves" and the "have-not."Based on this structural dichotomy and its aim to create a classless society, Marxism views poetry as an ideological tool that mirror social reality. As a result of this ideological perception, the Marxist African Poets critique the capitalist notion of means of production by the privileged few that are in charge of the means of production. Marxism also refutes ideology; the Marxist African Poets posits that ideology which is illusory and subservient keeps the human mind in perpetual subjugation; shielding us from the true state of our materialist existence in a world structured on binary opposites. The ideological tools used in reconstructing the human mind, are education, law, arts and religion. This prompts Karl Marx to refer to religion as the opium of the people.

Brentens(2001); posits that:

> In Marxist usage, ideology is what causes us to misrepresent the world to ourselves. As I have just said, for Marxism, the basis of any society is its economic organization, which then gives rise to certain social relations – for instance, the class relations between capitalists and workers in nineteenth-century capitalist economies. This socio-economic base then conditions the cultural superstructure. However, there are forces at work that prevent us from seeing this: for instance, the liberal humanist idea that we are essentially free and can remain free as long as we can think. For Marxists, ideology is not so much a set of beliefs or assumptions that we are aware of, but it is that which makes terribly delude ourselves.

Through the use of ideological paraphernalia (religion, education, culture and laws) the masses of a society are alienated-thus growing up with the idea that the "have not" need to look up to the "haves" for their survival. Overtime, Modern African Poetry has been written from a materialist perspective. They bring to the fore issue and principles of the Marxian school. Imre Szeman (2009) posits that:

> Literature(poetry) always has a truth value of some kind. Even if it is slow marginalization as a social practice has made it tempting to insist more strongly on it class basis and social untruth, it would be a mistake for Marxism to think it is done with it once and for all. Literature still provides cognitive, utopian, or aesthetic insights, and writing itself remains a political practice.

Modern African poems provide cognitive insight into Marxist literary theory. Since all creative process are products of political practice characterized by social inclination. Aspects of Marxist theory represented in each poem can be defined in relation to the material class of the poet. Right from the onset of what we today refer to as Modern African Poetry, the African Marxist poets have come to terms with grabbling with the struggle of class structure; first it was against the colonialists and latter it turned to the struggle of blacks against blacks "in the age of post-colonial" disillusionment. However, class struggle against upper class dominance also varies from one region of Africa to the other. In South Africa, the struggle was against apartheid which ended in the year 1994. In East Africa, it was against the land grabbing Germans and in Central Africa it was a war mongering protest against the Portuguese. Thus, at one period or the other,

the African poets have always been the voice of the oppressed. Just as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o puts it in his essay, "Writing Against Neo-colonialism" that:

> …but the struggle continues and intensifies, the lot of the writer in a neo-colonial state will become harder and not easier. His choice? It seems to me that the African writers of the eighties, the ones who opt for the integral part of the African revolution, has no choice but aligning himself with the people: their economic, political and cultural struggles for survival (1998)

Modern African poetry is poetry of commitment, and therefore, it has utilitarian value. It began as an intellectualresponse to the denigration of Africa and Africans by the white colonizers. From this point, there has been no going back, as African poetry has continued to be pressed into the service of the politics of the continent with a view to changing the prevailing poor conditions of the masses who suffer neglect at the hands of their ruling elite.

However, in the current globalized world driven by ICT, focus has shifted to mirroring the degradation of the environment as a way of galvanizing political action towards preserving the ecosystem for the survival of man.

Modern African Poems provide cognitive insight into the Marxist literary theory. Since all creative process are products of political practice characterized by social inclination. Aspects of the Marxist theory represented in each poem can be defined in relations to the material class of the poet. Thus, an important feature of Marxism is to liberate the oppressed and free them from all subjugations.

It will be very correct to say that Abubakar Gimba falls into the category of modern African poets originating from the dichotomy of northern Nigeria. This is very evident with the content and message of his poetry as seen in the third and fourth chapters of this study.

Central to Marxist criticism of African Literature has been the definition of literature as essentially a vehicle for class struggle.

The Marxist criticism in African Letters has gone well beyond the criticism of African literature itself. Its purview has included state-citizen relations, the relation between hegemonic knowledge that percolate through the agencies of local elitists and the dialectical interplay between society as-context and literature as-product. Also significant in this area has been explications of the role of African writers as the vanguard in the revolutionary effort towards a better society. (Tejumola and Ato; 2011:461)

The appeal of Marxism to African literature, in particular and world literature in general, is contained in its origin from political economy. Man, is viewed by a Marxist as a social, economic and political being. Since African literature has essentially evolved out of the writer's mandate to reflect socio-political and economic experiences, the postulates of Marxism may assist in its interpretation. Eagleton illuminates this in his explanation:

> Marxist criticism is part of a larger body of theoretical analysis which aims to understand ideologies - the ideas, the values and feelings by which men experiences the society at various times. And certain of those ideas, values and feelings are available to us only in Literature (1996:12).

African Marxist criticism has thus far to a very large extent concentrated on the ideological critic of the Literature. The critique of the social-world outlook of African writers as represented in their concrete texts is found on the firm sociology of the exploiting capitalist essence of the colonial order. The critique of the history of the new literature reveals that it is the colonial social order that constituted its concrete parameters. Marxist criticism is therefore predicated on the practical necessity of anti-colonial revolution which is anti-imperialist and prospectively socialist. As Eagleton, has identified, it is a body of theoretical foundation that further explicates the complex nature and formation of men in society. In sum, therefore, as Forgas suggests:

> Marxist theorists do not constitute a school like Moscow and Petersburg exponents of formalism, the Prague structuralists or the Tel Quel theorist in Paris… Marxism is a living body of thought and a set of real political practices (Jefferson and Robey 1985:12).

Marxist criticism operates on the assumption that literature can be properly understood only within a larger framework of social reality. Because it seems the African writer is given to the portrayal of social reality, which evinces the realistic socio-political situations of the third world. Marxism has much to offer the modern African Literature. Forgas identifies five theoretical models that form the perspective horizons for a Marxist critic. These models are as follows:

(i) Lukacs reflection model

(ii) Macherey's production model

(iii) Goldman's genetic model

(iv) Adorno's Negative knowledge model

(v) Language-centered model.

Apart from Adorno's model which is deconstructive in nature by having evolved from a negative response to Lukacs' models, the other four elements have some commonalities. For instance, they all agree that literature is a process and that it results from composition within the socio-cultural properties of the societal order. To corroborate this, D. Yanni (2000:2089) says that the Marxist critic often views the literary works as 'a product in relation to the actual economic and social conditions that exists in the time of the composition or the time and place of the action it describes'. Though all four models will substantially assist us in understanding the fictive states in African Literature, which are often created as pseudonymous fictive nations that are semblances of the dystopian (post) colonial Africa, this work exhibits much preference for Lucaks' model which identifies literature as a reflection of a reality outside it.

2. 4 NIGERIAN POETRY AND THE PLACE OF ABUBAKAR GIMBA

Percy B. Shelley in his essay, "A Defense of Poetry" affirms that ". . .poetry, in a general sense, maybe defined to be the expression of the imagination: and poetry is connate with the origin of man . . ." (Kermode et al [Eds] 1973:746); and at its birth, poetry was evidently an expressive imperative, a verbal representation of experience. However, with the development of what should be regarded as the totality of human culture, poetry assumed immense social significance, manifesting in its relationship with dance, songs etc.

According to poetry.org, poetry is defined as an art form in which human language is used for its aesthetic qualities in addition to, or instead of, its notional and semantic content. It consists largely of oral literary works in which language is used in a manner that it is felt by its user and audience to differ from ordinary prose.

It may use condensed or compressed form to convey emotion or ideas to the reader or listener's mind or ear; it may also use devises such as assonance and repetition to achieve musical or incantatory effects. Poems frequently rely on their effect on imagery, word association, and the musical qualities of the language used. The interactive layering of all these effects to generate meaning is what marks poetry.

It is worthy of note that poetry means a whole lot to different people. William Wordswoth, defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". Emily Dickinson sees it as a very powerful feeling derived from books or writing marked as poetry. In his actual words; "if I read a book and it makes my body so cold no fire ever can warm me, I know that is poetry" and Daylan Thomas defined poetry this way; "poetry is what makes me cry or laugh or yawn, what

makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this or do that or nothing." In essence, poetry is more than can be defined easily because it has so great wonderful effect on great scholars as these mentioned. One can say that poetry is literature in verse form. It is a patterned structured writing in condensed and intensified language put into a form. Nonetheless, a poem could have a rhythmic pattern, rhyme, or just be a blank verse. A blank verse is a structure which is known as form in poetry, that does not follow a definite pattern of appearance. Most modern poetry, in Africa and other parts of the world always appear in the blank verse form as in most of the poems of Abubakar Gimba.

If we exclude the oral renditions in various Nigerianlanguages and the early phase of Nigerian poetry in English (represented by the works of Epelle, Enitan Brown, Dennis Osadebay, Adeboye Babalola and Olumbe Bassir, etc., asrecognised by critics to constitute the first generation, there would be two clearly defined phases in Nigerian poetry in English. Generally, we refer to the remaining two generations simply as the first and the second. The first generation is represented by such names as Wole Soyinka, Christopher Okigbo, Gabriel Okara and J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, while Odia Ofeimun, Niyi Osundare, Tanure Ojaide, Onuora, Ossie Enekwe, Catherine Acholonu and Harry Garuba are the major voices of the second generation. There is,then, the third and emerging group whose artistic features constitute a hitherto uncharted terrain in Nigerian poetry studies.

Members of the first generation had come into the limelight in the days of Nigeria's struggle for independence in the late 1950s, including the period of the country's first attempt at civil rule. As such, they "...participated side by side with the politicians in the fight for independence"(Osofisan, 1996: 15). In *Towards the Decolonizationof African Literature* (Vol.

I,1980: 163), Chinweizu and others identify three categories common to these early poets. These are:

(1) the euro modernists, "who assiduously aped the practices of 20th century European poetry";

(2) "the traditionalists, who sought to model their English language poetry on elements from traditional African poetry"; and

(3) "a miscellany of individual voices of the middle ground who...share no strongly distinguishing

characteristics".

Essentially, what appeared to be the foremost preoccupation of these poets was what their novelist contemporary, Chinua Achebe,pointed out to be the need "to teach [their] readers that their past - with all its imperfections - was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them" (Morning Yet 45). Asein aptly describes the character of the writing of this era thus:

> ... we can conveniently affirm that there was no seriousdiscussion of the social responsibilities of the writer in the Nigerian society before 1965. For many Nigerian writersbefore that date, social/political commitment in so far as it related to literature was generally suspect: and literature of commitment was understandably looked upon as second-rate and irrelevant to the immediate needs of the...society at that particular stage of national development. Greater emphasis was placed on the needto restore the past, and 'commitment' for most Nigerian writers meant cultural commitment which did not necessarily involve the writer in partisan politics and social programmes. (Nwoga 98)

Asein substantiates this trend among the first-generation Nigerian poets with testimonies from two of the major members of this period; Christopher Okigbo and Clark-Bekederemo (J.P. Clark).Okigbo asserts as follows:

> ... the writer in Africa doesn't have any function. That is,personally I can only say what I conceive as my own function. I have no function as a writer; I think I merely express myself, and the public can use these things for anything they like.... I don't, in fact, think that it is necessary for the writer to assume a particular function as the Messiah or anything like that. As an

> individual, he could assume this sort of role, but I don't think that the fact that he's a writer should entitle him to assume a particular role as an educator (105).

The second testimony of Clark as cited by Asein, goes thus:

> ... it seems to me that people are creating for the writer an almost superstitious role which I find unbearable, as if he were a special kind of human being who has certain duties, functions, privileges mystically set apart from other human beings. I don't at all assume that kind of romantic position. I'm not impressed with the social or political life a poet leads outside of his profession if he doesn't produce poems (107).

In sum, while conceding that the poetry of this generation generally needed to be made less opaque,it cannot be fair to these writers to assert that they were characteristically indifferent to the social and political issues of their time. Besides, in assessing them as poets, it is necessary to note that the nation's economic woes which gained prominence in the post-war years and, hence whetted the sensitivities of the succeeding generation, were not yet pronounced in the Okigbo-Clark-Soyinka days. Thus, it seems more appropriate to see the posture of these earlier poets, relative to that of their successors, as an index of the relationship between the nature of society's problems at a given time and the degree of militancy of the arts.

One thing that has emerged is the fact that the first generation of Nigerian poets did adjust their scope to accommodate the crisis that led to the civil war and did, in fact, write poems on the war. But the effect of the war on Nigerian poetry went beyond this. The war combined with two external influences to give birth to a new generation of voices commonly recognised as the second generation of Nigerian poets. According to Garuba (Okunoye 267), "The civil war is important as 'historical context' because it... saw the beginning of a civil war in Nigerian literature in the 'textual context' of poems". How the war contributed to the emergence of this second generation is more vividly presented byAiyejina:

> The mangled limbs and dismembered bowels of thevictims of the crises and the frustrated hopes of the people have metamorphosed into images of death,

> aridity, decay,putrefaction, betrayal and hypocrisy. The mournful tone of the dirge has thus become the dominant mood of the poetry by the post-Okigbo "Nsukka poets". (115).

In addition to the civil war, two external influences also contributed to the emergence and artistic characteristics of this second group. These influences were the exposure of the new voices to Marxism and the decolonization of African literature that had begun in East Africa. On the role of Marxism, for instance, a leading member of the generation, Niyi Osundare, states thus:

> We read the works of Marx, the works of Lenin, and many of the speeches of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro and, of course, the works of Fanon, particularly Fanon.... These were works that we read and we discovered that they were saying things that were true about our position, and of course, these things influenced what we wrote eventually (Adagbonyin: 79)

Leading names of this group include Chinweizu, Niyi Osundare, Odia Ofeimun, Tanure Ojaide, Onuora Ossie Enekwe, Femi Oyebode, Harry Garuba, Catherine Acholonu, Femi Fatoba and Femi Osofisan (who is more known as a playwright than as a poet). Osofisan further expatiates on the mission of this generation as follows: ...

> our focus was on the present state of our society, on unmasking the class forces at play within it, revealing the material sources of exploitation and injustices, demonstrating how the masses could liberate themselves [and] of greater pertinence now as the collective struggle, fought by the hero with a thousand faces, a thousand hands(16).

Since the poetry of this era was now focussed on the condition of the ordinary people, the peasants and workers, what were the implications of this change in concerns for the language and style of the group? Would they, for instance, achieve this goal if their poetry remained as opaque as that of their predecessors? Or would it be necessary to make their work more accessible to the public through a radical departure from the style of the preceding group? These are the questions which Osundare's definitional statement in *Songs ofthe Marketplace* seems to address when he sees poetry, not as "the esoteric whisper/of an excluding tongue", but as "man/meaning/to man" (3-4). Elsewhere, he further explains:

> The thematic preoccupation remains the desperate situation of Africa, the stylistic hallmarks are clarity and directness of expression, formal experimentation, and a deliberate incorporation of African oral literary modes(27)

One specific aspect in which this was put into practice in the language of this generation is in the conscious introduction of the proverb because of its "capacity... to drive home populist expressions" (Nwachukwu-Agbada, in Jones, eds, 168-169). Nwachukwu-Agbada also notes that the poets of this time returned ...to the local speech pattern so that, whether the poet is Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Urhobo or Nupe, there are linguistic models in his poetic afflation which every member of a Nigerian, if not African, audience can relate to. In sum, members of the second generation of Nigerian poets had their sensibility sharpened by the country'scivil war as well as the exposure to Marxism, but they turned to their African roots in matters in style and language as a response to the trend in East Africa. In a way, the stylistic posture of the group tended to conform to the prescription by Chinweizu, et al, that "All that the poet has to is open his ears, and listen to his contemporaries who have not lost touch with tradition and write the way they speak" (170).

In concluding our examination of this second generation of Nigerian poets, it is necessary to take another look at Nwachukwu- Agbada's statement that in the work of the poets of this era, whether

"Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Urhobo or Nupe, there are linguistic models in [their] poetic afflation which every member of a Nigerian, if not anAfrican, audience can relate to".

While the distinguishing features of the first and second generations of Nigerian poetsare established, these older writershaving benefited from critical attention, the thematic and stylistic trends of the rising voices are yet not characterised. In terms ofcontent, Osofisan (1996) observes that "as far as theme and tone of political commitment are concerned, there is really not much distinction any longer between the younger or older writers, in the works produced from the

early 80s onwards". But when he lists representative poets of his (second) generation, only Olu Oguibe and Afam Akeh are included from the younger group. However, that Osofisan identifies only "theme and tone of political commitment" asa feature common to "works produced from the early 80s onwards" suggests that in other aspects of the poetry, there could be differences among these writers of the early eighties and beyond.

Tanure Ojaide presents more lucidly the phases in modern African-and hence Nigerian-poetry thus, "... the Soyinka-Clark-Awoonor-Peters older group, the middle group of Anyidoho-Chipasula-Ojaide-Osundare group, and the very young group represented in *Voices from the Fringe*" (88).

Niyi Osundare, however, offers a more comprehensive picture of these rising voices than any other observer of the literary trend.He introduces them as those "...born around Nigeria's independence (1960), Nigeria's midnight children, as it were, who have spent the first three decades of their lives confronting the nightmare that the country has become" (20). He further describes their poetic temperament as ranging "from angry through desperate to despondent" (40). Some of the new poets include Femi Oyebode, Olu Oguibe, Afam Akeh, Ogaga Ifowodo, Esiaba Irobi, Onookome Okome, Uche Nduka, Chiedu Ezeanah, Chin Ce, Usman Shehu, Kemi Atanda-Ilori, Idzia Ahmad, Sesan Ajayi, Remi Raji, Sola Osofisan, Nnimmo Bassey, Toyin Adewale-Nduka, Obu Udeozo, Eddie Aderinokun, Kayode Aderinokun, Joe Ushie, Maik Nwosu, Epaphras Osondu, Obi Nwakanma, Asodionye Ejiofor, Tunde Olusunie, Isidore Diala and Ogechi Ironmantu.

Although this list appears long, it does not exhaust the names in this generation, hence Osundare's description of the group as "the poets' generation [since] close to three quarters of its publications belong to the poetic genre" (21). Nevertheless, what seems clear thus far is that

Nigeria's poetic works of the earlyeighties and beyond are not one homogenous entity, even if the dividing line among them is only form and language to the exclusion of "theme and tone of political commitment".

What, then, are the defining characteristics of this emerging group? So far, descriptions of the work of these rising voices have been few and sketchy. Osundare, for instance, refers to them as"less ideologically conscious than the second generation"(21) while Olu Oguibe, himself a member of this phase, comments on them as follows in his Introduction to the poetry collection: *Poets in theirYouth, An Anthology of New Nigerian Poetry.*

One among the major feature of the Nigerian contemporary poetry is the clear thematic space it maps out for itself, namely a concern with the travails and triumphs of the ordinary people in the society. Since the 1970s, Nigerian poets writing in English have consciously sought to make poetry less confined, less accessible and less understandable by only a small number of more enlightened or educationally advanced people;they subject it to the service of the society, and regard it as an artistic arm of cultural struggles in a nation always embroiled in socio-political uncertainties. They have sought to use their poetry to (re)situate themselves and those they consider victims of a repressive establishment, in what they see as a better subject position for a proactive stance in a narrative of nationhood. This is the major and fitting category and exact place of Abubakar Gimba in the scene of Nigerian poetry and (or) Africa as a whole, especially when the messages of his poetry are considered as seen in the chapters three and four of this research. Fagenyo (2008:128) buttresses this assertion of Gimba's place in African (Nigerian) poetry thus;

> Gimba displays a high level of sensitivity, innovative understanding and creative focus in his poetry. His poems in both collections shows the extent of this commitment to the socio-political health of the African world, as seen also in the poems of Olafioye, Osundare, Ofeimun, Enekwe, Aiyejina,Ohaeto, Launko and Ojaide among others.

2.5A BRIEF ON ABUBAKAR GIMBA'S LIFE

Abdullahi Samaila in his book on Abubakar Gimba, quotes a very remarkable stand on the writer. Abubakar Gimba as an individual can be accessed from three discernable perspectives, which are his private life; his public life; and his life as a writer (2008:6). This study is primarily concerned more on and about Gimba's works as a writer with focus, pointed at his poetry collections. Abubakar Gimba is a household name known far beyond the confines of the African continent and beyond. His life,more than any other thing, is characterized of his writings. These writings made him popular that we can draw out studies from works credited to him. Abdullahi Samaila, on further writings about Gimba has this to say;

> As a writer, the concern is with the strings of ideas he embodies, and the ways and means by which he functions within the writing establishment (2008:16).

The major concern of this work still, is to emphasize the Marxist ideas inherent in Abubaker Gimba's poetry collections which informs most of his writings as being postulated by this work. For this reason, much about his personal life will not be dwelled upon too much in the course of this study. It is still possible to encounter or find traces of both the private and public life in the creative process of this great Northern Nigerian writer of our time.

Born on March 10th, 1952 in Nassarawa, an ancient Nupe speaking community in Lapai Local Government Area of Niger state, Nigeria, Abubakar Gimba received his education at Gulu Junior Primary School (1959-62), Lapai Senior primary school (1963-64) and Government College, Keffi (1965-69), where he sat for his West African School Certificate Examination.

Between 1970-71, he was at the school of Basic Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria after which he proceeded to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Economics in the same institution (1971-74). For a Maters of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Economics he was at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA between 1976-77.

Shortly before going for his Masters Degree Programme, in America, he had done the National Youth Service (NYSC) at the South Eastern state (as it was then called) as a teacher in Salvation Army Secondary School, Akai Ubium, after which he joined the North-Western Nigerian Civil Service in the department of Finance and Economic Planning. But immediately after obtaining the M.Sc degree, he rejoined the Economic Planning Department of the newly created Niger state. In the service, he performed in different categories with excellent brilliance and attested dedication. He was Planning officer, Ministry of Finance and Economic development, Niger State (1975-76); Economic Planner, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Niger state and latter, Chief Planning Officer between 1977 and 1979.

Between 1979 -80, he was Director of Planning, Governor's office, Niger state and later Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development, 1983 during which time he attended the Bradford's project planning course. As permanent secretary, he served in the department of planning and budget, Office of the Military Governor, Niger state (1983-87) and the cabinet office, Niger state (January- March, 1987).

Between 1980 to date, Gimba has effectively participated in a number of programmes and projects aimed at adding spice to national development. In 1990, he was a member of the Nigerian delegation led by the Federal minister of finance; Alhaji Ahmadu Abubakar Muye, that toured Malaysia and Indonesia in two weeks. Between 1991 and 1995, he was a board member,

Niger State Trust Fund. In October, 1991, he was elected national vice president Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) and in April 1994, he was made a member of the Board of Trustees, Nigerian Book Foundation (NBF). In 1996 he became a member of the Assessment and Implementation Committee of the Ahmadu Bello University, (A.B.U) Zaria, as well as chairman University Disciplinary Committee, ABU, Zaria.

In 1997, Abubakar Gimba became National President, Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA). Between July, 1998 and May, 29, 1999, he was a member of Programmes Implementation Monitoring Committee; an advisory body to the then head of state, General Abdulsalami Alhaji Abubakar. He was also National President ABU Alumni Association.

In the area of creative and general writing, Gimba has carved a niche for himself. For instance, Trial of Sacrifice was published in 1985 by Delta Publications (Nig) Limited, Enugu, which also published some of his fictional works, namely; *Witnesses to Tears (1986), Innocent Victims* (1988), as well as *Inner Rumblings* (2000) which won the Delta poetry prize for that year and *This Land of Ours* (2001). The last two are poetry and they are the only poetic works by this distinguished author. In 1991, the novel, *Sunset for a Mandarin* was published by the West African Publishers, while in 1996, the novel, *Sacred Apples* was published by Evans Brothers (Nig) limited. In 1998, *Footprints* was published by Malthouse Press Limited. The collection of four short stories;*A Toast in the Cemetery* was published by Delta Publication limited (2003) as another creative work. In 1999, *Once upon a Reed*, a collection of essays was published by Nayee Press and Publishers, while *Letter to the Muslim Fundamentalist* was produced in 2004 by Evan Brothers (Nig) Ltd. In 2007, Kraft Books Limited Published*Why Am I Doing This?* A collection of journalistic pieces in the Nigerian Tribune, a leading daily newspaper where he was a columnist for a while. This growing publishing company also reissued the following books:

Innocent Victims, This Land of Ours, Trail of Sacrifice, A Toast in the Cemetery, Witnesses to Tears and also produced the epistolary, *Letters to My Children* (two journalistic pieces extracted from *Once Upon a Reed*).

Some other books were also reproduced: *Golden Apples* (from *Sacred Apples*) by Vantage Press Inc., New York (1997); *Footprints* by Evans Brothers (Nig) Ltd; *Once Upon a Reed* by Caltop publications (Nig) Ltd. This engagingly sensitive writer, well-travelled author, administrator, banker and economist have certainly done greatly well in his art. He attended the year 2000 session of the international programme of the University of Iowa, Iowa city in the USA, where he interacted and exchanged functional ideas with many world figures in the creative arts.

He has equally successfully steered the ship of the Ibrahim Badamasi (IBB) University as chairman, Evaluation and Implementation Committee. His books are read all over Nigeria and his versatility and creativity keep being applauded by all those, highly interested in works of creative and critical value.

Gimba is one of the leading writers in Nigeria for obvious reasons: he has produced captivating and creatively energetic works. In Northern Nigeria for instance, where he is a major writer, he has made such impressive outing that he is generally regarded as a prolific writer. All Gimba's books have been produced within 22 years (1985-2007), and they are touchingly rich in experimentation and diversity. In Nigeria, the fiction and poetry of Gimba rank among the most popular.

Marxism is a theory of class divide; so therefore, everyone of a particular society belongs to a particular class of either bourgeoisie or the proletariat as the case may be. This, by extension

includes Abubakar Gimba whom we see from his profile as one of a higher placement in the society he exists in. The question now is how does he write and for who and on what?

There are traits that points to Gimba, as one writing, as being influenced, by Marxism, through his diction and other attributes. A writer as Gimba, being so proficient in his art must have developed, through concepts and schools of thoughts hinged on many other studies. It is a known fact that Abubakar Gimba, having passed through the process of education in his development age and stages in life, has come in contact with the concept and precepts of Marxism. This assumption is easily related from the fact that his first degree has come from economics. And economics has Marxism as a very vital area in her study. The poems contained in the two collections on study in this research portend the Marxist concept when read thoroughly. This trait informs this study so as to ascertain the claim that Gimba has Marxist tendencies or is Marxist bent in his poetry publications.

2.6 DISCUSSIONS ON GIMBA'S WORKS

Abubakar Gimba has never pronounced himself to be a Marxist writer, despite instances of Marxist tendencies in his poetry which is what this study intends to ascertain. When such question was even put through to Gimba in an interview, his response, as seen below, did not in any way categorize him as a writer of a particular ideology of influence; I don't have a specific ideology, I admire a human society, a just society, whatever ideology garb that one wears.(Abubakar Gimba, 1992interview with Fajenyo and Osunde)

Despite this statement by Gimba, his quest through his works is concerned with morality, justice, honour, peace, equity and equality. He is also concerned about the steady decline of these values, which he always believes in a nation as Nigeria if it is to become a developed nation. To a very

large extent, these values are serious postulates of the Marxist ideology. One major end of Marxism is on the aspect of equity and equality. As we see in Marxism that the idea is to have a classless society where everyone is equal and fairly treated, accordingly in all they do. Marxism frowns at the oppression and domination of the bourgeois against the proletariat. And for this, Marx envisions an over throw of the bourgeois through struggle of conflicts by the proletariat. This brings about a change in the ideological and political class. Literature therefore attempts to liberate the people from political, social repression as well as economic exploitation. Literature does this by educating the people through the educated elites of their predicament and the need and method of bringing about that, envisaged change.

It is believed, at least, from the literary circle. that literary practice cannot be divorced from and be properly assessed outside its socio-political context. Consequently, every literary text as posited by Lawan (1990), reflects within its structural and thematic considerations the contradictions existing during the epochal moments of its production. Achebe (1975) believes that the writer's task is to explore in depth, the human conditions, with a proper sense of history. The writer, according to this reputed scholar, cannot expect to be excused from the task of regeneration that must be done. He is in fact expected to lead in the march towards a better society. Against this background, Gimba(2000) himself is quoted to have remarked thus:

> I set out to be a novelist with a cause. With a mission. Not a literary expedition in the spirit of art for arts' sake. Mine was a literary adventure in advocacy. To get the society in which I live to be a better place for our generation and progeny.

Gimba's works collectively, looks at the culmination of the writer's ideological and thematic development evident in the search for a new social order in a society bogged by tensions and opposing ideologies between and amongst its citizen. The choice of this area of discourse therefore, is largely informed by the need to assess Abubakar Gimba's efforts at the exploitation

of the ‘human condition’ prevalent at the ‘epochal moment’ of the gestation of his works which underscore their contribution to the betterment of the society they reflect.

Literature is a reflection of man’s experiences in society. It cannot extricate itself from the political and economic features of the society that forms its background. That reflection of the society as being seen by the Marxist critic and writer; Lukacs, is exemplified through the works of literature as with this present case of study.

Mohammed (1998), interprets Gimba’s works as one that concentrates on the writer’s rejection of art for art’s sake view of literature, demonstrating in the process, that creative writing should have some social relevance by portraying social realities and positing some morals for improvement. This brings us to the Marxist bent of Gimba, who takes a form in his works, one of critical protest and demonstration against those practices he considers as social vices and injustices with a call for retributive visitations on the perpetrators of such evil deeds and acts. This very voice is observed in almost all of Gimba’s works especially, in the poetry aspects.

Sani and Ibrahim (1997) holds it that Gimba’s works are directed at different segments of the society. These academics sees Gimba’s works as ‘basically a criticism at the excesses of stupidity of the urban middle class and some elements of the armed forces of the country. This view is as demonstrated in the works of the writer in question;Gimba himself. This is evidently so because, for Gimba, as for any well-meaning writer, literature is a “mirror of life” and this position is vividly reflected in his attempts to discuss different aspects of his complex society.

Fejenyo and Oladeinde (2002) describes Abubakar Gimba as “a man of strong conviction about justice and truth” and one may add, with a serious commitment to the cause of social order and a better society. This is further stressed in one of Gimbas comments as presented in the book of

Ismail and Fejenyo (2008), saying of the person of Gimba,as being a writer with a 'cause'. Cause in this sense is a great Marxist term that makes a writer to be associated easily with Marxism.

Khan (1992) sees Gimba as a social critic for whom art is seen to be an honest expression of the writer's sensibility and its relations through rhetoric as quite natural. He submits that Gimba is inspired by emotional power and intellectual vigour with expression in his sensibilities to the nagging problems of the social situation. Gimba is bothered by a series of problems which beset the society and his perception and interpretation of these realities appear to be contemporaneous. His works are a collective testimony to his versatility in the study of modern man.

Ezekiel Fajenyo (2008) observes that:

> Gimba, like Okigbo does place himself in the position of a spokesman for Africa and Africans. Through this encounter, he brings up a visual image of the agonies, pains, and frustrations which Africans have experienced through time.

What Obiechina says to Okigbo simply applies to Gimba at this point:

> "he is not only a sharer of the people's aspirations, a prophet and spokesman to them in time, but a carrier of their burden in the last resort when they are overwhelmed by calamity and driven backward through dissolution and chaos". (S.O Asin, 1988).

In furtherance of this position, Ngugi shares this same perception as he remarked thus:

> What is important is not only the writer's honesty and faithfulness in capturing and reflecting the struggles around him, but also his attitude to those big social political issues. It is not simply a matter of a writer's heroic stand as a social individual- though this is crucial and significant- but the attitudes and the world view embodied in his work and with which he is persuading us to identify vis-à-vis the historical drama his community is undergoing.

Fajenyo describes Gimba as a sensitive writer but does not condemn so out rightly. He believes that every situation must be properly and deeply analyzed to yield better understanding and provoke easy solutions (1999). Fajenyo further discovered that Gimba plays a high level

sensitivity, innovative understanding of his commitment to the socio political health of the African world, as seen also in the poems of Olafioye, Osundare, Ofeimun, Enekwe, Aiyejina, Ohaito, Launko and Ojaide amongs many others.

In one of Gimba's prominent works titled;*Once upon a Reed*, the author describes what writing meant to him and the main purpose for it. Gimba sees writing, as advocacy. Just as stated earlier, that he regards himself to be the voice or the mouthpiece of the common and down trodden in the human society. This feature is a very serious Marxist idea of Literature. Literature must be centered on the common man in the society. To Gimba, for a writer to be relevant, he or she must advocate for the promotion of the positive values in his society. A good writer should appreciate the weakness of his society, particularly the leadership as well as his own weaknesses. He states thus:

> The writer must hold the mirror to the larger society to take a more sobering look at itself. The writer must make his society acknowledge and appreciate that for every thieving, oppressive arrogant, deceitful, visionless, pretentious, parochial, selfish and colourless leadership we ever had, we each have it with ourselves. This the writer must do to be more relevant…(pg.66).

Literature is viewed to be a vehicle for transformation of the society. The proletariat who happens to represent the higher population in the human society are seen to be oppressed by the bourgeoisie minority. This idea is clearly highlighted by Abrams and Harpham;

> The reigning ideology incorporates the interest of the dominant exploitative class, the "bourgeoisie" who own the means of production and distribution as opposed to the "proletariat," or wage earning working class…literary works as in such work as in direct correlation with the present stage of the class struggle and then be replaced by social "realism" that would represent the true reality and the progressive forces of our time; in practice, this usually turn out to be the demand that literature conform to an official party line (2009:182).

Gimba sees himself too as a teacher in a sense. Teaching, as an art, is one through which Gimba educates the populace or his peopleto an extent through his works. He is seen responding to Okome(1992;6) as one with "the desire to teach" being his primary aim and motivation as a writer. This idea too is a very serious Marxist tenet as literature or art in general serves as medium of change as the people become aware of their predicament. This idea affects Gimba's language and diction in his works. This sets him to deliberately make use of down to earth language for easy comprehension to all class of people. This makes it easier for a message to be passed across in a more efficient manner.

> I want to teach, I want a situation where somebody who has just graduated from the S.S class, for instance, can pick my novel, read and understand. This informs to a great extent, what I write and how I write… (Okome, 1992:16).

His target audience according to him is not the intellectual community, particularly the university. This is because, people from the university as he feels relish and prefers 'difficult' literature, such as the Soyinka's type. As a writer, he is more concerned with content than with style or form. He therefore is not happy with the general tendency in academic circle where people go for works that are very complex and difficult in comprehension. Gimba expresses this idea in his own words, thus;

> I do not write for those in the university. I mean not the generality of the people in the university. There is the tendency for instance for university people to think that literature ought to be difficult. Perhaps, they think it is worthwhile looking closely at the type and they seem to think the more obscure a work, the better it is… (Okome 1992:16).

To Gimba, literature is sharing with people one's believes, feelings and observations on issues the society is saddled with. His primary audience is the common man and lowly in the society. This makes it very possible then to say that Gimba shares an ideology that creates an affinity with the poor, ordinary, common man in the society whom when looked up in the light of

Marxism are regarded as the proletariat or working oppressed class of the society. If the ordinary man could read and comprehend well in good understanding, he (Gimba) would be quite satisfied. Marxism too, in a very clear straight sense has an affinity with the ordinary, common, oppressed class of the society. This is a very serious concern of the Marxist ideology.

Gimba's works in general has contributed immensely in the ongoing social discourses in his immediate society; Nigeria. His works mostly, is concerned with the moral conduct and behavioral standard of the people in the society. In the process of appraising the moral conduct of the people, he often takes a critical look at their social and political institutions. According to him;

> In order to bring out the level of morality in society, you have to take critical swipe at some political and social institutions. Morality is understood from such practical terms.

Gimba's works generally, are most times on contemporary Nigeria. He writes about events as they happen. His poems, especially, *This Land of Ours* collection examines critically, the social fabric of a nation in transition. The transition has been painful and full of many pitfalls. The worst casualty is the moral and spiritual conduct of the Nigerian populace. Gimba captures vividly, the near total and absolute degeneracy of the present-day Nigeria and possibly, other parts of the world. He deplores with bitter sarcasm, Nigerians lack of vision and sense of direction. He satirizes both the leaders and the followers. The recurrent messages in all his works are clear and straightly put.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 MARXIST TENDENCIES IN*INNER RUMBLINGS*

The chapter is concerned basically, with the analysis of the poems in question in relation to the Marxist ideology. From the title of the collection, we come to look at the upsurge of emotions being bottled up, now erupting in the writing of the poems. Ideas, feelings, emotions etc., all bottled up in the mind and is only now bursting in the pages of the poems of study here, especially in the*Inner Rumblings* text.A really captivating but very directional statement to the work is seen in the blurb of the collection (Inner Rumblings) itself as;

> To have opened the door to the deceptive snares of international politics, the manifold faces of racial intolerance, the domestic woes of marriage and divorce, the subtleties of love and hate, good and evil, justice and injustice, war and peace, life and death (book blurb)

All of these aspects looks into the concept at hand so closely that one could easily draw her conclusions forthwith. The major ideas of Marxism is but put here so categorically. The major

focus of this chapter as earlier put, is to analyze the poetry collection so as to extract the Marxist ideas rooted or buried in the poems.

The text is divided into two broad parts, with titles for each of the parts. The whole content in the collection amounts to forty-two distinct poems. Each section has its own focus and idea, just as the title suggests. The first part of the text is titled 'Freedom and Reality' while the second part which is indicated as part two, is titled,'I am therefore, I am'. All of these titles are idea specific in a sense of what the author wishes to express. The title of part one is very much suggestive of a Marxist idea. Freedom in a sense is seen to be the end point or achievement of Marxism at the end of the day. The whole purpose and aim of Marxism is for a classless society where the proletariat is salvaged from their plight and live in a better society. It means that Marxism is hinged on the idea of freedom for all in a better society. This idea of 'freedom' which Marxism denotes is seen from Karl Marx's idea contained in The Communist Manifesto as quoted by Dobie (2009:90) thus; "let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletariat have nothing to lose but their chains." This statement indicates that the proletariat have never been free except a change takes place. That the proletariat have nothing to lose but their chains, suggests that they, (proletariat) have been under bondage. Chains in the real literary sense denotes straight ahead, bondage or some sort of slavery. The argument here is that the part one title of *Inner Rumblings* has a Marxist implication. There is a tendency that this idea could have been influenced by the Marxist idea in the author. Even through the poems, lots and more Marxist tendencies are discovered through analysis.

On the other hand, the word Reality has a Marxist connotation which is hinged on what Lukacs defines as art. The reality of life and people in the society, cohabiting is a depiction arts signifies.

Bringing it back home from the postulation of Chinua Achebe, we see it clarified as he supports reality thus;

> No writer of imaginative literature from the very best to the moderately significant can avoid the big issues of the day, for literature, to the extent that it is a mirror unto man's nature, must reflect social reality or certain aspects of social reality (Olaniyan and Quayson (eds) 2011:478).

This, in essence, means that literature as an art is concerned basically with the reflection of social reality or realities of man's society.

In the second part of the text, titled,'I am, therefore I am', another connotation is met with. The idea is clearly different from the first part which according to Ezekiel (2008:90), "is some biblical allusion". It is not a new thing anymore that Gimba has a serious affiliation to the spiritual, Godly or religious institution. Religion too, is a very serious aspect of the Marxist discourse, but the question is on how and what religion means to the both sides. To Gimba,he has a very strong root in religion, especially the Islamic religion. As a matter of fact, religion forms a great part of Gimba's ideology. In series of interviews with Gimba on this issue, Okome (1992; 19-21) reports thus from Gimba's works that; "most of our cultural background is influenced by religion more than anything." The bulk of Gimba's work is dominated by religious thoughts. In the vast and very educative study done by Tanimu Abubakar, this aspect of religion to Gimba is critically looked at. The sum of his argument is captured better in one of his (Tanimu) statements thus;

> The creative works of AbubakarGimba are in general, influenced by a very powerful moral force which is subsumed in a world view that is dominated by a deep spiritual paradigm (1992:106).

The influence of religion, specifically, the Islamic religion, is the major focus of Tanimu Abubakar's work as contained in the work with title;*The religious paradigm in*

AbubakarGimba's Trial of Sacrifice. According to Tanimu Abubakar, Gimba's view of man and his social conduct is deeply rooted in religion. In all of this, Tanimu quickly submits that Gimba is not to be seen as a religious fundamentalist in the gap of a writer or an artist. Gimba's attitude to religion, as posited by Tanimu in furtherance of the assertion, is both liberal and moderate (1992:106). Abdulahi Ismail also gave an insight to the issue of religion as it concerns Gimba through his book titled; *Gimba: The man and His Books* (1998). Ismail presents a very graphic framework of Gimba's unique sense of commitment in furtherance to the religious stand of Gimba. According to Ismail, you just go on to know and understand Gimba from a first time reading of any of his works.

Coming to the other person of Karl Marx's belief system, a vague difference is noticed as summarily summed up by Dobie (2009:91-92) thus:

> Marx maintained that reality is material, not spiritual. Our culture, he said is not based on some divine essence or the Platonic forms or on contemplation of timeless abstractions. It is not our philosophical or religious beliefs that makes us who we are, for we are not spiritual beings but socially constructed ones. We are not products of divine design but creations of our own cultural and social circumstances.

It becomes very clear as to how Marx views religion which Gimba takes to be the most defining obligation of man on earth as earlier pointed out. From Dobie's assertion of Karl Marx idea of religion, it becomes very clear that Marx sees religion (the belief in God) as a mere thing which is not too significant. The term used in expressing this, in the above quote is to an extent blasphemous. The term, 'abstractions', is but a degrading term which translates to the idea of false assumption of the believers in religion. Abstractions in essence, means conjured ideas which are not worth believing or worthy for anyone to ascribe to. In other articles, Marx views religion to operate as an ideological weapon used by the ruling class to justify the sufferings of

the poor as something inevitable and God-given. Religion deceives the poor into believing that suffering is virtuous and that they will be favoured in the afterlife. Such believes creates a false consciousness. Marxism sees religion as a feature only of class divided society, as such there will be no need for religion in classless society, (which the Marxists envisage) and it will disappear.

For the fact that this study is not primarily concerned with just religion, the explanations above will suffice the stance of religious beliefs of the respective individuals and their postulations. This study is not one that will dwell on the concept of religion or religious believes even though comments and clarifications is necessary once in a while as the work progresses.

The first part of the poetry collection which is being studied (FREEDOM AND REALITY) have numerous poems with different themes, tones, mood, image and symbols. There are themes of domination or oppression which is one very serious derivative of Marxism. Looking at the collection from the Marxist point of view, the collection transcends limitation and peculiarities of the age it was compiled or written in. The collection speaks of the human nature, the human experiences, societal matters and issues which borders much on the society which man exists in. Particularly, Gimba tries to capture vividly, the African experiences and her relation with the outside world. Most of the issues present in the collection tells much of what Marxists believe in. For instance, in the first poem, titled, "The World Policeman," Gimba looks at a more powerful or superior power, which does all to subjugate the other lower class. In essence, the higher entity that Gimba describes her is America. He personifies the country, America as a self-imposed monitor, regulator who imposes to the third world it has claimed leadership of. He pictures America as a policeman to the rest of the world. They have this self-created mythic image. They brag in superiority thereby dominating and dictating to the rest of the world. The poet persona

makes his opening statement in a language full of mocking rhetorics in the description of America:

From atop your mountain
Or is it your watch-tower?
For your self-appointed role
Of protector of law and order
Guarantor of justice
You could detect from afar
With revolting sense of righteousness
The stinking stench of crimes
That engulfs the world like flames
Signaling our self destruction

'Atop', as used in the poem indicates a position, stand or level, which when translated in the Marxist perspective tells of a class position higher than others. This idea, connotes the class divide in the world that the poet persona describes or speaks about. The concept of Marxism is summarized as an entity where classes exists, and that, one of the classes is the leading one while the other is the led. The leading class, who are always referred to as the bourgeoisies always have the tendency of exploiting the led, who are commonly referred to as the proletariats as they always represent the working class of the society and (or) the pheasants.

The poet persona informs us through the third line of the poem that this class divide is a planned order by the bourgeoisie to dominate or subjugate the rest of the world. The inhabitants from atop are sarcastically criticized. The successive lines go on to relate the paradox of the situation at hand, in this capitalist state. The state being described at the end of the day is doomed as seen from the acts of the oppressive class of bourgeoisie, as reeled out in the line ten (10) of the poem,

thus; “signaling our self-destruction”. This same idea runs through the rest of the lines that follows. The opposite of the expected is what obtains in the society as seen below;

“Human Rights” you cried
With solemn saintly command.

Another sarcastic statement is observed to have been made in the above lines again. This is done through the use of the quotation marks enclosing the words, “Human Rights”. In this context, the actual meaning of the words is emphasized on, to be a different type or kind of human rights, branded and created by the bourgeoisie. The actual meaning of the two words with inverted commas, is altered a little, to make the author’s intended meaning.

Religious allegory runs through the succeeding lines as a religious guise is presented then.

With solemn saintly command
As if relaying God’s commandment.

The poet likens the mode and style of operation of this top class of individuals to be staunch in passing across messages that are self-created. The swift and easy style is made to look like a religious or divine command from God, above. They impose on themselves, the works and ways of prophets who are really supposed to relay God’s commandments to man. On, goes the poem in describing the scenario at play here.

Urged the rest of the erring world
Towards violations’ rectification.

The rest of the world is being seen as going astray as they have always followed the principles and patterns of America which is being referred to in this poem. This is a poem that really exemplifies and present, the class differentia and subjugation of the rest of the world, by the

more powerful nation(s), which in this case, is America. Up to the end of this poem, the poet goes on with the message as of an adviser referring to the world power in the poem.

> Recognize that you stink
> Safe face and follow the adage
> That charity begins at home.
> And let the world police itself.

Like a divine message, the poet, advises America on what to do and let the rest of the world govern and mind their affairs. The poet as an advocate of the people is seen here, doing his work, to a very great extent in the eye of duty to humanity.

The next poem on consideration of this study, which comes next immediately after 'The World's Policeman' is "Freedom Amok". From the title of the poem, what comes to the mind of anyone who knows the history of Nigeria is the popular song of Fela AnikulakpoKuti titled; 'Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense'. From the expression of the main words of the title of this poem, we see a clear juxtaposition of opposite words. This poem could even be said to be a sequel to the first one analyzed here in this study. This time though, the subject is focused on a central idea from the other poem. The central idea of this poem is on Press freedom or freedom of speech and sovereignty of nations. Ezekiel Fajenyo describes the poem thus;

> The second poem, titled "Freedom amok" is another effort of the poet in exposing the crude contradictions in the social beliefs of the west, especially in its relationship with Africa. The poet directly addresses the culprit:
>
> Parading the world with pride
> That nothing hideous you've got to hide
> Your press freedom is of a type
> Distinct in class and in style

As the world's best, it has no tie

Unique press of the West (12)

The referent, no doubt again, in this poem is the western world, especially, America. That arrogance, and their super imposing nature is described here too, just like in the first poem. A class divide is also presented, which in Marxist terms, is the Bourgeois and the Proletariat. The Marxist idea in this poem again, is early stated by the poet. That tone of sarcastic exposure is witnessed in this very poem, again. In essence, it is seen, to be that the West has lots of dark secrets of skeletons in her cupboard. The poet goes further on, to describe the kind of freedom which the west propagates. The type or manner of freedom which the poet sees, is but of a very different type and distinct in all ramifications, just as described in the poem. The poem is very expository as it attempts to open the eyes of the readers or the people (who in most cases happen to be the common man in the society), thereby forming the Marxist term and claim of conscientization as this is one of the major aims of Marxism. *The Advanced Learners Dictionary* (AED) defines this Marxist term thus;

> (Sociology, education) A social concept, grounded in Marxist critical theory that focuses on achieving an in-depth understanding of the world, allowing for the perception and exposure of perceived social and political contradictions.

As a matter of fact, this is what the poem stands to achieve in reality of today's situation of our present predicament. Gimba's Marxist tendencies is but glaringly seen and observed as a Marxist thinker or one who has the Marxist idea in him. The poem furthers its expository argument;

But alas! The world knows you lie

Even your style, the world contests,

In objectivity, you've no taste

And misinformation is now your best

Your press cannot stand the test

Of the stuff a free press is made.

The poet persona now injects a truth and reality that is so obvious to all. All the cover-ups are but a charade and play to the gallery. The world or other nations even disagree and dispute the stand of the big nation. The language of the poem is one, so plain that nearly no explanation or explication is necessary. But for clarity, further explanation becomes necessary. The poet sees the deceptions of the big nation as becoming stale and without any glamour over time. This is seen in the expression in line nine (9) of the poem on study; "in objectivity, you've no taste". The poet lambasts the subject of discussion so much that he even sees nothing good about their deceptive administration. The attack on the media outfits of the west is put into context here again. The poet describes the freedom of expression they propagate is not being adhered to or observed by them. This assertion by the poet persona, is in tandem with the tenets of Marxism on her reports of the media. Right from time even, Marxist critics of the likes of Omafume N. Onoge, writes thus as he quotes aspects of Terry Eagleton's statuses.

> I refer here to what Terry Eagleton, in a negative context, has referred to as the 'means of literary production, distribution and exchange in a particular society – how books are published, the social composition of their authors and audiences, level of literacy, the social determinants of "taste" '

It could even be argued that Gimba meant the same use as he did use the word; "Taste" in the ninth line of this poem of study. Taste, to the Marxist symbolizes value or worth of a thing. And we see same usage here. To an extent, it wouldn't be out of context to argue that Gimba might have been influenced by this very quotation above. Gimbas argument though is not only on literature and her production and dissemination of information through the pen on paper, but talks about the Mass media generally. This includes even the film and internet as well as other

innovative means of today's world. Gimba is being very confrontational and doing justice to truth as he points to their (western world) face, the reality on ground about the ills and deceptions. This very stance of Gimba puts him into a particular class of Marxist poets as described by ChidiAmuta in his prominent book on African literature, titled, *The theory of African literature*(1989:177);

> …the poet as a man of culture devotes his life and art to the pursuit of justice and freedom has become part of the very legitimacy of the poetic undertaking. To be a significant poet in Africa at a time like this is to stand up and be counted in the struggle against foreign domination and class and racial injustice. This historical imperative constitute also the sore point of much of critical and polemical conflicts in discourse on African poetry at the present time. That the issue of the poet's political commitment should be controversial is in itself evidence of the critical place of ideology even in matters of poetry. Over the ages, two "tribes" of poets have emerged: those who use their art to legitimize, uphold and advance the cause of the status quo and those who use their talents to challenge the ruling class and thus champion the cause of those who bear the burden of oppression.

Gimba as an African poet is seen clearly to belong or fall in the second tribe, as described by ChidiAmuta above, through the stand of the poem in study among other poems of Gimba.

News distortion is where you excel

Destructive criticism is all you sell

In the name of freedom of expression.

The poet persona in the quest for exposing the truth, now tries to describe and let the people know the type of press freedom that the west propagates.it is also observed that in the lines of the poems as seen above, that almost all the last words of the lines do rhyme. This could also be a deliberate effect the poet has scheduled to achieve. Mere hypocrisy is all but what the west

specializes in. The succeeding lines after these, goes further in presenting the facts of reality in the poem.

Other nations you always smear
Cause your faults, points to you they dare
The weak you tend to scare
Cries of the poor you do not hear
Their faults your pleasure to magnify
Their beauty you drum up as beastly
With valour yourself you glorify
To portray that you are the most
Mighty, wise, and in all spheres foremost.

The hypocrisy and self-glorification the west specializes in, is explained in the poem. That their always trying to be above all others syndrome,always known of the west is, being described here. Gimba tries to tell how the west subjugates other parts of the world. In essence, they make themselves more glorious and standard that all the others, by virtue of impositions and distortions of facts, looks or appear to be ordinary. The fear factor is even put to use in most cases, maybe in the form of sanctions or military might or any other necessary propaganda at play. The persona questions, and goes on to accuse and still describe the processes of this subjugation meted by the west to other nations of the world.

But why, the facts we know you falsify.
Your crimes you love to justify
Shortcoming of others you pretend
To be horrified
All in an attempt to vilify.

Questions upon questions are being reeled out successively by the poet persona, rhetorical questions though. These questions are pointing and directed at the west, in relation to their acts and deeds of exploitation, subjugation, distortion and other propaganda gamesbeing played by the western world over smaller nations. The tone of the poet here, is not just accusatory but also angry, to an extent. The questions run on again, through the rest of the lines;

> Why abuse the saying of the old
> That the pen is mightier than the sword
> To push your opponents to the wall.

In the explication of the above lines according to Ezekiel Fajenyo (2008:83);

> The diction is straight and unpretentious. The poet persona is angry, disappointed, and wonders on the callousness of the west that uses the media to protect its sense of ruthlessness, inhumanity and hatred to others. What is thus at play is high hypocrisy and wickedness. The poet questions American sense of self-dignity, pride and arrogance before the rest of the world.

Simply put, it is observable, the high Marxist view of this poem, especially in the place of class, hierarchy and ideology. The poem, just like many others in the collection, takes a form of end rhymes as the last words in the lines typify.

In the next poem in sequence of appearance of the collection, a little diversification is observed. The first and second poems are western world centered. But this one is not really, or categorically West centered in the context of the first two poems analyzed earlier. Gimba went on to specify a sub topic for this particular poem, so as to give it his intended focus of direction, of what the poem should translate into. Never the less, a poem is open to the readers' interpretation and thus this poem could be translated differently. The idea in this supposed poem, as tagged by Gimba, is; (African lion in a U.S zoo). This lion could be taken for an individual when translated, unforeseen. Gimba could have specified the subtopic because it is the direction

he wants the poem to be interpreted in. But on a whole, it is commonly interpreted as African immigrants abroad, seeking and hoping to find succor at the reality of life and humanity in a strange land. A major theme is even, Africans sojourn in the western world. Degraded and treated like second fiddles, close to beasts. They are so dehumanized and traumatized by their foreign abode.

Silent recognition it was
But no less a silent union
On that bright sunny day.
Those majestic eyes of yours
Never losing their magnificent
Beauty.

These lines try to create a scenario where a strange meeting is experienced on a good day. The poet persona, emotionally recognizes his own. Possibly, someone of his origin. The dumbfounded nature of the incident made for a very silent stare; a stare that reveals more of what really is, of his own, so beautiful. The poet persona points to the ever-radiating beauty, which possibly is of colour and nature of this real, true separated kinsman of worth he came across to, in the poem.

A cloud of magic spell
They did cast on my being
As our eyes make four

That fixed look of yours
Pierces my body like arrows;
Rays of sensation I did feel
Through my blood.

The poet persona captures the feeling of the incident, deep inside him, as he thinks, wander and ponder in the wonder of his thoughts. The words in these lines are really visibly clear to any observer of the poem.

Those eyes of yours
To me among many
They did mean to say:
"Here I am, the object
Of your long search"
But I couldn't understand
How you did understand
Such bond of place and feelings
That had made prisoner of my thoughts.

On and on goes the persona in this poem in enacting his experience and feeling of this strange but re-enacting moment. These lines, makes one to understand that there are a number of other individuals, present in this location of meeting. This is seen precisely, in line fourteen to fifteen (14-15). The persona was able, amongst many individuals, to identify with his own and blood, who is possibly a great kinsman of repute from his side of the world. The poet is surprised too, at the ability of this long-wandered fellow in recognizing with him through some very obvious acts of acceptance demonstrated. The looks of the subject of this poem is even but very inviting and responsive to the understanding of the persona in the poem. We see the looks from the subject's eyes, beckoning on the poet persona, "Here I am, the object/of your long search." This attitude of

straight recognition from the subject of the poem left the persona in more thought of the surprise of the subject's recognition and identifying with him.

Your kingly posture still and unconcerned
Or so someone did say
As I leave the Royal Highness
In faraway captivity
Not knowing whether to cry
Or to give a smile of joy
As those eyes of yours
Gave me a royal escort
Away from your doubly unusual abode,
In faraway captivity in the footsteps of my grand fathers

From this point, it becomes very obvious that the subject in this poem is in captivity of some sort. Could be the captivity of a prison in a foreign land or the persecution of not being in one's original home. The agony of the poet persona on the subject in the poem is very much emphasized through the last lines of this poem. The treatment meted on the subject is one of a lower class of being. Possibly, it is taken to be the reason why the imagery of a beast is used in the context of this poem.

The best concluding explanation to this poem is summed thus, as in the writings of Ezekiel Fajenyo (2008:85);

> What may be said is that Gimba, like Okigbo, does place himself on the position of a spokesman for Africa and Africans. Through this encounter, he brings up a visual image of the agonies, pains and frustration which Africans have experienced through time. What Obeichina says of Okigbo easily applies to Gimba at this point: "he is not only a sharer of his people's aspirations, a prophet and spokesman for them in time, but a carrier of their burden in the last resort when they are overwhelmed by calamity and driven backward towards dissolution and chaos" (16). Still on the credentials of every poet of destiny", Obeichina notes that

> "the least that can be expected of the aspirating spokesman of the people and humanity is a sign that his inspiration inclines him to high seriousness to understanding of the inner springs of himself as a prophet-aspirant." To such poet, "no experience is too trivial, no action too inconsequential, each experience, action, speech or gesture helps to provide the emotional scaffolding that sustains the communal world from which the artist draws to enrich his sensibilities and the texture of his work" (18). These characteristics are quite illustrated in Gimba'spoems,particularly "Those eyes of yours"

From this quote, it becomes spelt out clearly, the Marxist stand point of not just the poem but also of the poet.

The next poem in line, in the collection being treated is, "A race besieged". This poem appears as the fourth poem in the collection of this study. From the major word of this poem, a class divide has been created with the word; RACE. Race is a very strong term which still causes dissentions even today. The poem is noted to have opened, characteristically, directly on its theme of racism according to Ezekiel (2008:86).

> Why ask where we are moving,
> This direction is not our choosing,
> Ask them why they are pushing
> Us towards destinations of sure extinction (16).

A striking element that runs through this poem, is the type of rhetorical questions, the poet employs in giving details and making emphasis. These questions are structured as direct questions but are never accompanied with a question mark. In essence, they become a rhetoric not meant to be answered, but the question gets pondered upon in the mind of the reader, that we end up answering them within us. These opening three line of the poem, creates that effect of a people in a fate they had not planned for themselves. In reality, according to Ezekiel;

> The obvious reference is to Africa in particular and the Third world in general. The direction of her growth is obviously faulty

> and questionable but it is all because the west has succeeded over the years in imposing such a dysfunctional development on her, particularly, through slave trade, colonialism and neocolonialism.

Really, these three lines, introduces us to it all. The subsequent lines give details to the introduction already done earlier.

> History's current we all had followed

> The world, arms folded, like a spectator
> Without hello.

These lines give a picture of the world's response or reaction at the plight of what Africans go through. In this sense, the world did nothing but just looked on as a passerby, having no business and response to the sight on ground.

> No sorrow for the source of sorrow
> Herd-like to foreign strange harbours
> In an arduous long journey
> A journey that seems without an end
> Centuries of blood and chain we bore
> The world content that we can't be bold
> To stand strong and have them told,
> Chained to our oars we dared say "Stop"
> The enemy frightens and seeks to make
> The chains tight.

The above lines, gives a very vivid illustrator view of the process of slavery and transportation of slaves under the worst cruel manner befitting for just beasts. Goes on to tell of the startling and rising protest of the slaves. The slave masters now made stronger fortresses around the slaves, so as to shut them down. But unrelenting in the quest for freedom, the slaves had to keep on acting;

Out of fright and our certain fight'
"Enough", he knows we said not in mere threat,
In blood, we wrote our rights.
Our enemies did perceive defeat
In strategy, they did retreat.

More and serious agitations and protest from the slaves, scares the slave masters, who now fear a possible turn around, if matters are not resolved. The resolve, they strategize, is what we see in the successive lines;

Strong, with smiles to have us deceived.

Unwary, we took the bait.
Now victims we all are, to wit
Of history's most deadly trick
On a time-bomb the world does sit
Yet deafness it pretends to its tick.

The strategy the western slave masters took was one of a deceived friendliness which is coated with more hidden agenda to continue subjugating the people. The slaves, foolishly accepted the proposal of the west. A proposal that still kept the people subjugated, cheated and still being exploited. As a prophet, in the style of Gimba, the persona warns of a very dangerous looming catastrophe, ahead. A time-bomb, the world does sit on. An accident so bad, waiting to happen in the new order of things. This is like the kind of revolution Karl Marx envision in the postulation of his theory. Revolution in which the table is turned upside down against the bourgeoisie. The persona sees the dubious nature of the whims and caprices of the west and her effects which are negative to Africa as a whole and the rest of the world. The poet advances in the prophetic style;

So, my most noble people hear,

We have little time to spare.

Adrift, destiny must carry us no further

Action now our honour to deliver

Inaction, our fate to auction forever,

Enriched we all have become, and

Only bloody battle will see us as men

Or in history's ashes shall be our names.

This is a very serious Marxist point of view by Gimba here. His advocacy to the people, to a large extent involves a call to arms against a perceived enemy. Failure to act thus, becomes a shame and disgrace to the so called subjugated Africans. He calls for a liberation from this strange strangling order, charted by the colonial masters, or the west, specifically. Being so courageous, the persona goes on, reeling out his call and message as he spurs the people on to fight. A must fight as that is the solution to the slaving order set by the western world over Africans. This is a type easily obtained in vulgar Marxism. According to Fajenyo;

> It is obvious that one of the key features of Gimba's poetry is a call to arms; an appeal to Africans to wake up from their complacency and change their destiny for good. Here, Gimba, assumes "the full responsibility of a poet of destiny who would not stand aside from the cataclysmal waves threatening the survival of his people. He recognizes the revolutionary nature of the event sweeping through the land, as well as the risks that formed part and parcel of such events…" (2008:19)

The advocacy goes on as the poet preaches thus, to the end of the poem. With the end rhyme scheme of a,a,a,b,b,b almost through the whole lines of the poem, a musical effect is achieved to a large extent.

Let's now brave the flames
Not in search of fame
But our enemies to shame,
Racism is the name of the game
Its aim is to have us maimed
But its coffin, it's our duty to nail!

A call to a selflessness is made, as the poet go on. A necessary battle to fight, so as to exterminate, forever, racism and all forms of oppression from the face of earth, buried in the coffin we must be the ones as Africans 'to nail.'

The blatant nature of the poem gives it a repute as one of the most Marxist inclined poems written by Abubakar Gimba. The message of the poem is best summarized by Ezekiel Fajenyo (2008:87).

> Africans do have a common enemy: the west. Through history, the situation has been so bad. Slave trade had affected Africans in many ways. Colonialism promoted the evil effects of slavery. But colonialism has not proved any different. Gimba performs the work of a cultural evangelist; he preaches the revivalism of culture and tradition to replace the ignominious effect of white intrusion into the land. He preaches a reassessment of our collective values, and inspires us to be our own messiah. His call to arms is, therefore, many edged physically; we should fight to preserve our independence and put up a good struggle to retain our sanity (politically, economically, culturally and spiritually).

Next poem to study in this work is the one titled; 'Dear Lagos'. The poem as the title denotes, is directed at the city of Lagos in Nigeria. Lagos, a very vast expanse, habited by a large swelling population as described in the poem. This poem is like John Pepper Clark's poem titled, 'Ibadan'. Just as that poem is directed at the ancient city of Ibadan in Nigeria, so did Gimba attempt doing with Lagos. A land of unequal opportunities and individuals of various types and all that. The poem opens with what is seen as a conviction of what the poet tries to talk about.

I knew you not
Now I know you well
The details you can deny
But you in summary I've got.

The poet is even overwhelmed by the enormous nature of the city that it is almost impossible to capture all about it. It becomes an attempt to summarize the vast details of this land of unequal opportunities.

Under the night's dark blanket
Your beauty beholds my eyes
Patternless like a starry sky

These above lines give a picture, of a from, an above view of the city, as houses and structures are scattered all over, haphazardly. The persona sees a beauty in this arrangement and testifies that fact still. The persona goes on still in attempting to give a picture, a true picture even if not with all details, in describing the place.

"Welcome", your lights seem to say
Your flyovers as told, I saw
Beneath some for sure I drove
And now me thinks I know you well
In summary, not your details

It should still be noted that the poet keeps repeating, "In summary, not your details". This, to our thinking is for nothing much, but for emphasis and a reminder that, all can never be known or said of this very vast magnificent expanse.

The taste for which I have lost.
Now I know why forgotten
We are in want,
I know where petro-naira went
For your cosmetics shopping
You need not deny
Beneath your make-up, I can see
When the morning sin defies your might,
In perfect succession to your beauty the night
Shinning to expose your slums
An eyesore for sure not for smiles.

The very sarcastic humorous nature of Gimba is but really well noted in this poem. The persona speaks as one, though, not too sure of what he or she says and thinks the next hour. A transformation of scenery is expressed here as Gimba tries to personify the night as an agent or worker responsible for presenting the city at night to look so beautiful, when in reality, the city is exposed the next day as sun rises to expose, a not too, beautiful environment. The persona goes on the thought of what really obtains in the day. The poet to a very large extent, lampoons the image of a city, as fake in looks and appearance of deceit, as observed by the poet persona. The use of words like ‘make up’, ‘cosmetics’, ‘beautician’ etc., really tells the fake projection of this place and, or, so called great looking city, which the poet satirizes. The last words from the above presented lines in this particular poem, tries very much, to debase the city or place, in reference of the poem. The poet goes on in its ridicule, all directed at the city or place called Lagos as the next lines suggests.

Did I say I know you well?

In summary, not in detail
That's the truth, I'm telling no tales

From this, we see the poet starting with this rhetorical question, this rhetorical question, he goes on, almost immediately, to answer. It is made certain, here, that the poet is trying everything possible to enact what he sees and know of Lagos from his personal experience and firsthand account and observation. His main candid opinion is what he expresses in the lines of this poem.

Your traffic is no mean hell
The chaos drives sane men to yell
Your air pregnant with fumes
Poisonous no doubt you know
Chocking the weak, killing the sick.

That repudiating and pungent nature of the hazardous air polluted wretched environment, is seen here. The rhyming couplet of lines twenty-eight (28) and twenty-nine (29)tells of a very chaotic, catastrophic traffic and environmental situation in the city of Lagos. This situation is so serious that even the feeble and not very strong individuals could not stand to, and cope with. The reality of this very city of many tales by people all around is presented here. The nature, appearance and form of the city of Lagos is vividly relayed through this poem; thereby, giving the reader an insight to the vast city of Lagos. The poet persona has tried, immensely, to present the true perceived nature of this city which tales have so magnified from the true reality of her state. The truth value is set out in the lines of this expository poem of Gimba. The poem persona ends the poem with a very humourous sarcastic irony directed at the city of Lagos, thus;

Oh, dear Lagos
Did I say I know you?
You are beautiful!

The poet persona has succeeded greatly in presenting the true and just nature of the city of Lagos. Justice and equity are very serious tenets of Marxism. Lagos is made to be almost equal like other places by this poem. That super imposing nature of Lagosians and their long tales of the magnificence of Lagos is repudiated by this poem. And the true real value of the reality is put up at the end. Only then is fairness achieved as the poem has immensely done.

As has been established from the start of this study. Gimba is not just a poet but as he says, he is a poet with a 'cause'. This statement to a very large extent has qualified Gimba as a Marxist thinker. Marxist writers are always empathizing with the down trodden and oppressed class in the society. It is a common goal of the Marxist to always speak for the people in the lower class or the masses in a society who are always the working class in the society. The poor, the old, down trodden, oppressed, subjugated and the uncared for in the society are the kinds of people Marxist writers tries to associate themselves with. This trend is seen in the poem, with title; 'Children of Soweto'. The poet sees this Godforsaken area of the society as a ghetto, where people that live in this space are neglected and uncared for. One very Marxist nature is seen in Gimba, through this poem. Courage, to dare the powers that be, or the oppressors of the masses in their society. The idea is what the poet presents in the poem as seen below:

Bursting forth from your world
Of barbed wires, electrified,
Of dilapidated houses,
Of leaking roofs and roaches,

You have guts to say "enough!"
How dare you challenge
That which Mum has succumbed
And Dad has been cowed?

This is a real great challenge on the current generation, which the poet presents in this poem. This generation, that has decided to stand up against all what their parents have given up fighting. A generation that has refused to resign to fate, as their parents have done. The poet persona uses this poem, not only to praise or eulogize, but also to spur them on, to the continuous fight and struggles for the plight they suffer in their land. The poet goes on to reel out all the inhumane treatments these people have always been subjected to:

Your world of police slaughter,
Police raids, police dogs,
Of frightening injustices.

The very traumatizing situation is one that draws pity and horror to the eyes of anyone that cares. It is apparent, that this poem is like a response of Gimba, on the apartheid era, in South Africa. It is also a pointer, to all those inhabitants of the world slums, which is easily referred to as 'ghetto'. The abandoned and relegated citizens of the world, could also be referents of this poem. It reminds one of the courage of the likes of Nelson Mandela and his cohorts, who stood against all forms of intimidation and oppression from the oppressive white government in place then. The poem goes on to present, still, the daring and very unrelenting courage of this generation, which the poet addresses in the poem.

How dare you, how dare you
Children of Soweto
Children of the ghetto,

Confront single-handed
That which has turned
The strongest of your men
And the noblest of your women
Into living corpses,
To whom death itself
Is a beautiful queen?

The poet persona has in a great way, extoled the virtue, strength, might and guts of the generation of people being addressed in this poem. The scenario painted of the situation is so horrible and so powerfully daunting, that all the people, of the previous generations, have failed and refused to fight. The previous generation is so suppressed and subjugated to the inhumane injustice and degradation going on in the society that they have become living dreads close to being dead. They are so abandoned and uncared for. They have become a shadow of a being. As the poet puts it, they have become 'living corpses'. The courage of these dare-devil children of the generation the poet eulogizes and spur on goes on through the lines of this poem. Their very high spirited courage in their quest is being praised to high heavens by the poet persona.

Yet fear you showed not,
Challenging the oppressor to a duel
Braving bullets, bombs and death,
Making spectator of the whole world.

This very challenging spirit is so glamorous, not only to the eyes of the poet persona, but as well as to the whole wide world. Reactions from all corners of the earth is one that sees and applaud the courage and high spirited stance of the generation in reference. The greatest spurring aspect of this poem is towards the last lines.

Your undaunted courage gives
Joy and pride to your people
For whose freedom you fight
With bold bravery and blood
Fight on children of Soweto!
Chivalrous children of Soweto!
Fight on, men and martyrs of Soweto!
Whom history shall not call children
But giant warriors
Of salvation.

This is a great incitement and praise of these great children of the generation. The poet persona showers the generation with praises and great commendations for the quest they front and fight. The poet persona, on behalf of the people of the society, being fought for, appreciates and commiserate with them for fighting their battles for them. The poet persona too, towards the very end of the poem incites the generation more, by even telling them the great significance of what they do today. Posterity will always remember them, as more and much appreciation keeps coming in, for their works and efforts. The efforts of the poet persona,is seen greatly, and the impact, felt very much in this poem. All through the lines of the poem, we see a bravery that the poet persona extols, thereby revolutionizing and (re)energizing the people addressed in the poem (Children of Soweto). These features in the poem, points it very much to Marxism in all of its ramifications.

The second part of the collection, titled, "I am therefore I am", according to Fajenyo (2008:90), 'is some biblical allusion'. Fajenyo, still sees this as a suggestion that the poems to be analyzed will show some levels of intimacy and this is seen closely in the first poem of this part. The first

linein the first poem is marked with the first same word of the title of this part. This first poem of the second part is titled, “Mama.”

I am
But was not
When you knew I was
Nobody knew
I was when you carried me.
Carried me you did
Day and night
For nine continuous months,
With patience and love
When I know not myself
Nor the world.
How you suffered
In silent love.

The poem is a very heroic praise of the love, care, dedication and concerns of the mother. The poem, by extension is referring to womanhood as a whole. Womanhood is celebrated and made to look great. Marxist are of the belief, that it is the story of the common man that needs to be told and not that of the ruling class and the mighty in the society. Gimba has done this yet again, through the writing of this poem. The mother is always relegated to the back stage but the poet has succeeded in bringing her and presenting her to the whole world in a most glamorous way. The strength of the mother is extoled, her patience and perseverance through thick and thin and all she has to go through. The mother is a celebrated figure through this poem. The poem is synonymous to ‘mother is Gold’; a poem by another different poet still dwelling on the same

theme of womanhood. The most important part of the poem is the dedication and allegiance being pledged to the mother. This is seen towards the last lines of this poem:

Reward you receive not.
But oh Mama know,
Dedicated to you I have
The whole of my being
Until I am not.

This is a real great pledge and reward to the person of the mother as the poet points out in this poem. His pledge is one that is eternal. A pledge of a lifetime, to the mother. This shows how much he cares and appreciates the mother. It is like immortalizing her in his lifetime. And this, he is able to have done, through the writing of this poem. Just like Shakespeare, through his poem, 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's Day?' In this poem, Shakespeare, seeks to immortalize the referent of the poem, through the contents of the poem. As long as the poem lives, the referent is remembered. It seems as to be an immortalizing agent to the referent and so Gimba attempts with the mother poem.

Another poem in this part of the collection, that is a real great enthronement, to the woman race is, "A prologue to Passion". Just like the mother and motherhood was enthroned and eulogized by the poet persona, so is the woman in her entirety being enthroned in this poem, (A Prologue to Passion)

This endeavor is not for trouble
Rather, it is a venture that seeks to ennoble
A half of mankind, its most notable
Man's sanctuary, our house of marble
To acknowledge any less, an act ignoble,

For, without them life would be a rubble.

The metaphors which the poet persona use in extoling the woman is but very greatly, superfluous. It goes on in the lines of this poem, even in greater measures.

Mine's a tribute, not a swansong,
A view in furnace, held so long,
Now forged into a belief so strong.
Not a show to the gallery or a throng
Of course being human, I could be wrong
But to the truth, I cannot hold my tongue.

The poet persona in this second stanza, is very much in the support of the pride of the woman. He mentioned it, that he seeks to pay a tribute to the woman race as a whole. The poet persona really goes into detailed praise of the woman specie.

Yet for daring, emotion I did arouse
From an august, her deep grouse
With command urged that I apologise
Yes, to the womanhood I was wont to eulogise
Their noble station, contribute to immortalise

The poet believes even that, this eulogy is a duty he should have done a very long time ago. The persona sees apology as a deserving thing that ought to be done to the woman race. The poet even makes mention of his move on apologizing in the poem.This he questions in the next stanza of the poem.

Apologise? Thought with my heroine sympathise
I hate to tread the path of cowardice.
Nor yet jump on warrior's garment of every size.

Humility I chose, joining force with the wise
Never to debase, nor passion to antagonize

Here, the poet, sees a sense in extoling the woman as counterparts. By implication, he dissociates himself from those who seizes every opportunity to pull down the woman with antagonizing prejudices. The debasement of the woman, is what the poet has decided to pull out of through this poem and others of its likes. This is what the poem really affirmed to in the succeeding stanza.

Unbowed with my tongue and pens
Fight in earnest, regardless of pains
With sincere sacrifice, and intention plain.
Woman's image and endowment to paint,
Her grace and nobility, shower praises like rain

This is a sort of pledge from the poet persona on the person of the woman. To the persona, he is not ever going to stop relenting, on the praise of the woman. With regards and respect, he seeks to accord the woman race, and also do so not minding what others say about his vow and quest. The last stanza sees this pledge to full.

Upholding her honour and glory the aim
A noble cause, the valour in us it should inflame.
Qualifying every warrior for a hall of fame
Where with pride, posterity should point to our name
For, this is a course for martyrdom, and I fear no shame.

The resolution of the poet, is a very strong one which seeks to go down in history through the times to come. He speaks and stands greatly for the fair treatment and regard for the woman race as a whole. This praise he vows to pour like rains on the woman is seen through many other

poems in this collection, especially in this section, or part of this collection. A very remarkable thing in the poem is the musical effect the poet creates in the lines of the poem. The poet achieved this musical effect by making sure all the last words in the stanzas rhyme very closely, as seen in the poem.

Another poem that celebrates and extols the woman race in this section is, "For a Jewel". A poem in which the poet persona symbolizes the woman as 'gem stones', such as 'diamonds' and other precious stones. From all these, we see the poet's stance on the woman as a whole. We see him recognizing and speaking for the woman race. He stands against all forms of oppressions, subjugation and ill treatment of women in the society. It goes to the extent as seen in the poems, where he fights in all ways, for their rights and quest. By this, the obligation of Marxist thinkers in regard to the feminine gender, is satisfied. Satisfaction, in the sense of recognizing and treating the feminine gender fairly. This is one major advocacy of Marxism. Marxism has this very close tie or affinity to feminism and this stand is easily demonstrated by these poems on the feminine world.

"Burning out", is another poem in consideration of this study. The poetic or creative process of the poet is presented in this poem.

Cannon balls inside me
Impatient for their target
Deny them
I need not,
Cause in number they multiply
By fission
Ready to impregnate me.

We see the burning desire of the poet to put to use, the avenue of his writing in addressing issues in his society. So many happenings in the society that needs to be addressed adds up every day and in their multiplicity, the poet have to let them emerge and address targets they ought to aim at. From the expressions in this poem, we see that desire, that altruistic nature of the poet to take on, matters that affects his society. The poet persona is impregnated with ideas in his brains that need to be let out like 'cannon balls' of fire onto 'their targets'. Targets, who in many sense is the oppressors in the society; possibly the ruling class. Through the lines of this poem, the poet sees this whole process of writing as a warfare, probably against the oppressors in his nation, as seen in the poem. These oppressors, he tags and refer to as, 'the adversary'.

In a war against the world
Dangers within
Outclass dangers without
Come out then truth
At their risk
Not mine.

The poet persona, is an upholder of truths, in a society where it is dangerous to embark on such quests he has chosen. The persona sees nothing to fear as the truth comes out to judge the lies, evils and negative happenings in the society as seen in the last lines of the poem.

Another poem in this part of this collection, that looks unto the kind of person the poet persona describes in the above poem is, 'History in December (for a friend)'. This poem is a eulogy to the friend the poet describes, therein. Through the lines of the poem, though, one discovers that the characteristics of this particular character being referred to, is one of like mind with the poet persona. The narrative nature of the poem makes it easy for the poet persona to relate in such a way the story, life and deeds of this friend in focus, is exemplary. It won't be out of place, if the

referent in this poem, is said to be one, who operates within the Marxist standpoint as seen in the poet persona; through all the poems being looked at in this study. The poem showers rains of praises on the referent as seen in the lines.

When the elements are hard and harsh
And selflessness to men a trash
New dimension to blood-water maxim
Your creation without ado.
Why, forgive the sceptic you must,
Witness you not world without prick
Undernourished emotions into starvation.

The attributes the poet persona gives the referent in the poem, are rare and hard to accomplish ones. These endearing attributes still goes on in even higher degrees, as the poem develops.

Raw, rough this friendship road
Pines and thorns lie the route.
Hurray! the world you confounded
With the courage of a knight
With the endurance of an ascetic
With all smiles and not a wince
Dedication unparalleled you exhibit.
Duty with solemnity pronounced
Executed with flawless exemplary
As betwixt beloved siblings.
The unknown you did brave
In self-sacrifice discomforts discounted,
Your action out-sounded your words
Characteristics of the few that are men.

Beyond reciprocity, this gift you gave

A gesture historic in nature

This shower of praise and selflessness in this friend that the poet persona refers to in this poem, is really a great man he values so much. The amount of praise for his dedication to humanity, his courage and altruistic nature, makes him to be a real friend of worth. In the succeeding lines, the poet wishes even, for a swap in him with this great friend of valour. The conqueror spirit in this man is so daring and endears him to the poet persona as seen in the poem.

But take my blood for yours

A drop greater than world's gold

Mine blood

In me forever your memory resides

Beyond doubt a friend in deed you are

Sure, a friend indeed.

The last two lines which forms a couplet, sums it all. The admiration the poet has for this figure knows no bound. The poet persona paints a very perfect picture of this friend through the lines of this poem. We see the qualities this referent in the poem has, and it makes us know immediately, the kind of attributes the poet persona, likes and associates himself with. The attributes, deeds and qualities, this friend of the poet persona possess, are very great Marxist like, as has been established in the course of this study.

Another poem in this part of the study, which shows one of the greatest tenets of Marxism, is the poem titled, "Poverty". In this poem, the major point in focus is the inequality of habitants in the society. This is more pronounced from lines eight down wards.

A powerful few to which the majority must slave

Living in bliss, unwary of threatening blizzard.

Ingenious mankind, the higher animals.
Ironies of nature indeed!
That amidst the mighty creator's abundance
Most of men should in dire deprivation
Be abandoned, in wealth and health
Unequal,

This is a real introduction to the general view of the Marxist. Inequality amongst people in the society is one thing in particular that Marxism stand on. Marxism hinges on the postulation of class divides, as has been discussed in this study, earlier on. The bourgeois is always the ruling class while the proletariats are the working class in the society. The bourgeois is seen to have subjugated the proletariats by making them earn little while the actual work, is the labour of, and handiwork of these working class. This idea is what Marxism frowns at greatly. Inequality is noticed in the way the society is stratified. This anomaly is what Marxists hope to fix. It becomes the sole aim of the Marxist, to seek a way of bridging the gap between these two class in the society, and make all equal, to the best level they can. All the ideas presented in this poem so far, all points to this basic tenet of Marxism.

While all other animals live as equals
A la Orwellian farm,
Without the dirty pigs' modification
Mankind's mighty self-delusion, self-deception
Hypocrisy of an ingenious creature
Architecturing a palatial pyramid of salt blocks
On a violent ocean,
A fervent effort for a soulless enterprise
Mankind's erected distinction

In a world of abundance;

The poet persona allegorizes the novel of the famous George Orwell, titled, *Animal Farm*. It is clear in the poem, that the poet persona, shares an idea from a co-Marxist. Orwell is one of the world-renowned Marxist as most ideas in almost all his work is Marxist inclined. It can be deduced from this study, that Gimba, associates himself with Marxism or Marxist thinkers. It is even clear that Gimba, is a Marxist, as this poem spells out clearly. Gimba could be said to share, or have the same ideology with George Orwell and many other Marxist thinkers. Almost all the whole ideas presented in this poem are drawn from the concept of George Orwell's *Animal farm* novel. The pigs and their changing of the laws is depicted. The hypocritical and tricky nature of the pigs are also not left out, as well as the idea of their subjugation of all other animals in the animal farm. The poet persona gives a closing remark in the poem, which is like one, lamenting what is on ground. The lamenting tone of this poem gives it that revolutionary and protest nature.

The rich, the poor, the haves, the have-nots
All subtle admission of heartless callousness.
Man's manifest epitome of failure

These words used here, are very serious Marxist words, contained in her registers of study as seen often times in textbooks on Marxism. Words like, 'the haves, and the have nots', are examples. Here, the poet makes a statement of the complaint of all classes of people in the society. All parties and classes of people in the society are seen as complainants of their various plight. It all owns to one fact though; the manipulative exploitations of the ruling class. The failure or success of the society is tied to the acts of the bourgeois ruling class of the society.

Before this second part of this poetry collection is wrapped up, it is necessary that a look, into the title poem of this collection, is done. The poem, with title; "Inner Rumblings," is taken, by the

poet, to be the title of this collection as a whole. A look into the poem will justify the stance or premise on this.

Unperturbed quietness your badge
Inland water, sea waters
Calmness without ripples.
The trees, the sun you mirror
Duplicating nature with perfection.
In serene stillness listening
To melodious songs of nature.
You, one eyed audience
Your theatre the universe,
The birds, the winds, the trees
All performers without age,
Artists without a class reign
And discordance in eternal banishment.
Yet beneath this harmonious quietude

The poet, started this poem by presenting an imagery of calmness on a very good day. The imagery created, is one, so unique. The scenery of peaceful nature of the universe is created. A peace and calmness almost perfect. Perfect without any trouble or conflicts in sight. Everything appears to be good and normal. But then, as the poem goes on, we see a rumble underneath. A rumble never noticed from the good and happy appearance of what is physically visible. The poet used very grave words to describe the kind of turbulence that goes on, in the inside.

Turbulence in veil.
Beyond your curtain of silence
Seething cauldron bubbles,
Teeming waters with fish.
Within your world-like bowel
Strange struggle dominates
Veiled battle, battlefield encased.

The poet persona is particular about the heart and mind of man. On the surface, everything seems to be stable, okay and normal, but right inside the heart, are reasoning and thoughts, so disturbing and alarmingly grave. The next two lines before the end of the first stanza, is a suggestive statement very peculiar of the Marxist standpoint in describing the world of man.

The stronger fishes swallowing the weak
The vanquished, nourishing the conquerors,

These lines start the Marxist presentation of the world. The Marxist thinkers are always concerned of the strong, mighty and ruling classes who are always oppressing the weak, poor and ordinary masses. This idea is seen more in the statement of Fajenyo (2008:97)

> In the world we live, there's a lot of tempest, troubles, uncertainty, conflicts and class divisions. It is a battlefield of people, ideas, and beliefs. The rich want to suppress the poor; a lot of abnormality and inhumanity against man take place

This is the standpoint of the Marxist thinkers and this is what they aim to fight. The poet persona goes on in presenting imageries of a world full of injustices and oppressions through the second stanza of the poem.

Each victor overgrown, prize of victory
Defeat of the weak hastens collision of victors

Farewell to victory, hail self-destruction
Grand explosion ripping off outer calmness,
Mighty waters of the sea,
Death within is death of your without
Your veil hence must have a vent

Success in today's world is being measured by the oppression of the poor, weak and ordinary people in the society. The persona, tells of the doom of the oppressive beings, and shows how destructive their path in life is, at the end of the day.

In the third and last stanza of the poem, the poet prescribes the way the world is supposed to be. A world at peace with itself and all.

An escape route, detonator
Life saver for the weak and strong
Hide not from the world, your backstage
Therefrom beautiful shows to hatch
Shows that enrich the world
Guardians of your innocence,
Your serene calmness
Perturbed only by melodious songs
Of birds, trees and winds.

The poet persona's suggestion, is one he believes and expects, to be of worth and favourable, for all men. A just and egalitarian society as Marxists, postulate, is envisioned in this poem. The state of the world after the revolution of the masses or proletariat takes place. The poet, through this poem, teaches and preaches the message of Marxism, as a whole. The poem is very much Marxist inclined in all of its facets. The 'rumblings' in this poem is likened to the revolutionary

thoughts in the mind of the masses who are suppressed in the society. Marxist ideas are very much present in the developments of the poems studied so far.

So far, a total of six poems have been analyzed from each section of this collection under study, which is titled *Inner Rumblings*. The grand total of all analyzed poems in this chapter amounts to twelve poems in all. The Marxist ideas established from the lines of the poems have been discussed thoroughly, through the analysis of the poems done. This leads us into the second poetry publication of Gimba as we go on to unearth the Marxist ideas in the second collection of poems, titled, *This Land Of Ours.*

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 MARXIST TENDENCIES IN*THIS LAND OF OURS*

The main focus of this chapter, is on the analysis of the poems, contained in the collection; *This Land of Ours*. Just as has been done in the previous chapter, so it is going to be applied in this chapter. The poems will be looked at, so as to point out the Marxist tendencies present in the poems, under study here. This particular collection is not like the first one treated in the previous chapter, in regards structure, and particularly demarcation of the contents of the collection. This particular one is straight and runs on, successively, in a single partition. There is no demarcation in the chapter partitioning as out lined in the content. The collection is made up of poems numbering up to fifty, in total. All poems have their own idea and focus, but all, almost pointing to one same thing, which is, man and his society.

The collection, *This Land of Ours*, was presented to the public when Nigeria had spent two years in democracy. Gimba tries to capture the political stagnation, economic exploitation, ideological stupor, social degeneration and the total neglect of the people. According to Fajenyo;

> The leaders in Africa have lost sense of direction, their governance is ruthless, suppressive, corruption endowed and stagnating; ideas are not allowed to grow, the land is one long stretch of waste, religious darkness, injustice, seaming poverty, starvation, immorality, class schism and neocolonialism, politics and politicians are a bundle of contradictions and meaninglessness (2008:99).

The poems further, in the same vein, treated and explored the themes of greed, selfishness, impatience, intolerance, arrogance, pride, corruption and oppression, as are all present in the poems.

The main idea of this study is to analyze and point out all those Marxist traits present in the poems of Abubakar Gimba. The collection in study after the first, in the previous chapter, is the collection of *This Land of Ours*, which forms the second poetry publication of AbubakarGimba. From the observation or rather the opinion of Fajenyo;

> When *This Land of Ours* (2001) was published as the second poetry collection by Gimba, there was every indication that the poetic voice and orientation had matured. If *Inner Rumblings* is experimental, especially in its artistic thrust, this new collection tells of a writer thoroughly conscious of what he seeks to achieve with his medium (2008:98)

The above statement is a fact, judging from the poems in the collection. Gimba is more and further ascertained not just a writer in other genres but also a poet.

In an interview that preluded the publication of *This Land of Ours*, Gimba made a pronouncement that is seen and observed to directly point to his Marxist prospects as below;

> Let's be first … to stand up for victims before they even stand up for themselves… let's learn from history: History does not repeat itself. But our follies do. Let's champion the cause of change of the Nigerian society…. All the corruption and oppression that dwarfed us are a manifestation of these devilish traits in us… (12).

This idea in Gimba as an advocate or preacher to the people is evident most in the first poem of this collection in study. We see Gimba, in the poem titled 'Key' admonishing and seeking to talk

to the hearts of the people in his society. The poem is like an admonition and a means to make the people conscious of life in their society.

Know you not
That in Expectation and Giving
Our lot's tied in a knot
In life's rough waters sailing

The poem reminds the people of the society, that man's fate is tied up by destiny. That no man can exist alone, and that man must be positive and programmatic so as to be able to make good impact in life. Life is seen to be characterized by strong emotion, and it is difficult to understand, it is a "rudderless boat". Man, needs to be really very courageous in life, as he lives through it. He has to be determined and confident on major assignment in life:

Let a shining star sit on your face

And be like the sun.

These run-on lines of different stanzas, explains, or tell of the confidence, we take on, when we have taken in, the message, as the poet admonishes. Being like the sun is a good fortune which establishes one, and sets them high above the world, just as the sun sits and shines on all, from above.

Expectation always repel
In giving always excel.
And that's the key
To this life…

This poem is a very serious moral lesson which is so obvious. It urges man to be courageous, be morally sound and conscious. Good neighborliness is extoled for man to be free and escape the difficulties in life. Abubakar Gimba is very much pronounced a Marxist through this poem. A Marxist, as established in the course of this study, is seen in the role of Gimba, becoming an advocate who speaks to the people and stands with them. Through the poem, the poet has been able to promote human values. The poem is a universal message to the entire human race. The poet reaches out to all the people in the society, as he preaches his message, to the populace.

The next poem in the line of analysis is the one titled, "A Vote for Stones". It is a poem that celebrates the personal friends of the poet for their endurance, understanding, as he launches his books. In essence, it could be said to be an appreciation to all fans, friends and well-wishers of the poet. His gratitude is ably extended to them as seen in the lines of the poem. The poet pledges to them, his goodness, fairness and just nature in reciprocation of their kind gestures towards him.

The next poem titled "Desperate Straits", is one commonly interpreted and taken to border on the historical recollection of a nation or the nation of the poet. A very straight unseen look at the poem relates a history, but not of a nation, but of the northern Nigeria tree planting revolution in relation to the agricultural expansion of the nation as a whole. Notwithstanding, the interpretation of the poem to be a historical recollection of the nation holds. The idea is that on a critical first look at the poem, the researcher easily relates the poem to the tree planting revolution of Northern Nigeria or the nation at large. The poem opens with its clear reference to the climate of a place. Words like "inclement clime" are but direct pointers to this fact, as seen in the poem.

Once upon an inclement clime
The elements, the sun in conjoint onslaught
And the plants, animals and man all victims in no time
Severe drought so unleashed across the land's lot
Thus a desert was born on once farmer's mines
But for a few cases that half-filled the kitchen pots
No leafy trees with generous shades, not even trees of pine
No respite from the scourging sun, a hellish stronghold
Only the gentle night provides succour and smiles

In my personal opinion, I think this poem, as the contribution of Gimba to the reality of climate change in the globe. The climate became a thing of concern recently, due to the pangs and effects of global warming. Discussions and researches world over, centered most on how to salvage the world from the threat of global warming and other climatic concerns. It is very possible that this poem is one of the reactions of the poet, that is, Gimba, to the change in clime and trend of the world. Promotions and campaigns arose all over, and suggestions like, plant a tree a day as well as others in that line, came up. Gimba, is not just addressing the change in clime but also enacting the happenings surrounding the matter as well as delving into matters of agricultural revolution. In the lines of stanza one, we see the poet persona make reference to the "once famer's mines". These farmers' mines denote the resources or produce gotten out of farming. The succeeding line, tells of the reduction in food supplies at home; "…few cases that half-filled the kitchen pots". All of these developments are really getting to the people as they have become so much affected by the recent development of things around them.

In self-realization, liberation with vow, the people resolved
That pangs of hunger and thirst they'd smite
Turning the scorched lands into gardens, treasure-troves

And canopy of forests, against the sun's infernal might
With warriors' spirit, the people day and night strove,
And gardens and forests sprout to all their delight
Not as they dreamt, but a just reward for their toil
But alas, for some, little respite from desperate straits
Succumbing to complacency, for very little they strove
Of majestic gardens, they had few, their forest shades scant
And to bounties of the diligent, in envy the smug drove

The whole of this second stanza tells of the decision and resolve of the people to take the bulls by the horns. The resolve is backed by action so serious, that the results of their hard work started taking effect and yielding good results over time. Their delight at the new results is greeted and celebrated as they admire their handiwork. Still, there are people among the population, who decided to fold hands and do almost little or nothing. At the end of the day, these people, who succumbed "to complacency", started feeling bad and full of envy for the bountiful who had worked hard to accomplish a vast result. The third stanza, which follows after the second, goes on describing the lament and ill-giving of the complacent. The poem is narrative in all forms that it flows easily and accessed by a reader who sees it for the first time. Meaning in the poem is easily reached.

But even for the generous, generosity has tolerance limits
The laggards cry foul, we were victims of sorts.
Victims indeed, but only for their dilatory self
For, know them not that integrity is a port
Into which sails not the expectant beneficiaries often times.
Know they not, that the stings of a miser's niggardliness
Hurts less than the stare of generous brethren.

And the pain wrought by the mild rejection of peers,
Far outweighs the humiliating the shots from detractors' jeers
Scorn and reproach for the niggard both fruitless pastime.
Aggrieved lamentation form sore hearts never would be cure.
Verily, the foremost guardian of one's fortunes for sure
None other than oneself a fulcrum forever

The narration goes into much details of the happenings that surrounds the lament and complaints of the lazy and none contributor to the change being sought in the society. The poet persona, or rather, narrator, ends this stanza by the witty sayings of the last couplet. This saying happens to be more of an advice to the complacent in the human society. Those who chose to do less in a collective task that should have involved all, are personally addressed here as seen below;

Verily, the foremost guardian of one's fortunes for sure
None other than oneself a fulcrum forever.

These lines are just like a replica of what was being expressed in the first poem of this collection. In the first poem, we see the poet persona proffering a solution to mankind; so also in this couplet. The idea is expressed as meaning, that the fortunes, or wealth we amass in life, is determined by how much work we put into the tasks ahead us. Not just wealth, but also fulfilment and self-gratification on works well done as when and at the same time every other person was doing same.

The last stanza sums it all up in a very conclusive admonition as has been started in the previous stanza.

One's fate, one's duty to bear with smiles of tears
An assurance for life's gardens and trees
Iroko, mahogany, nims, baobaobs, even gamji for shields

Sacrifice is the game in honour's name and grace

But first to arms, with intent true and sincere,

With purpose and resolve clear, selfless and strong

Thus are steps firm and sure

To the land of the great undoubted

And a beatitude dreamt of.

On the other hand, the main interpretation commonly associated with this poem is summarize by Ezekiel in the following way:

> In "Desperate Straits", the narrative tone takes on historical recollections. It is the story of a people who had once been reduced to a stagnant, immobile and unprogressive bunch in a society riddled with poverty, corruption and drought, but who eventually wake up some day to struggle for a better life; a life of progressive transformation (101,102).

Marxism, as a concept is characterized, mainly, of revolution, transformation and change in social order. This is seen in the both translations of this very poem in study here. That idea of waking up for transformation, for a better living standard is expressed thoroughly. The poet persona stands as an advocate who calls on the people in this society to stand up to the desired change needed. The example of the complacent or possibly, the lazy, is used, to draw on the repercussion of standing aloof when others work in harmony for a better and greater society.

Next poem in the line of analysis is the poem titled, "Desolate Stables". Desolate as a word, denotes and connotes a lot as there are diverse and other meanings relating to it. Contextually, in usage, the word centres on abandoned and scanty; though many other synonyms are derived out of it. Stable, on the other hand, has to do with the definition that borders on housing, or shelter for animals; especially, horses. Rodeos thrive on owners of stables as the case is. Large stables are owned by rich and affluent members of the society who are always out and ready to provide

the required services in the game of horses. This is a very common notation of the stable; business wise.

Coming to the poem at hand, with these in mind. An insight is given to this poem as we shall dissect to really get it right,in relation to the subject of discussion in this study.

> Once again into the cradle, a delivery,
> And to our horns, with lullaby in deliria
> With discordant notes the cradlesong' tunes
> Forced from our lips in confused hysteria
> In felicitations for a birth, while yet fearsome of death
> For the stable has long been desolate.

The imagery of the stables business is seen to be used here, to relate the idea, the poet wishes to express. The horses and processes in the world of the game is being expressed closely and this gives a good insight into the idea the poet need express. According to Ezekiel (2008:102), the poet tries to address the issue of journalism in the north of Nigeria;

> In "Desolate Stable", the poet-persona laments the unstable nature of journalism in northern Nigeria, the many publications which had emerged and disappeared from the scene. He is disappointed that despite the many efforts in the past, successes never came and the public was truly denied the opportunity of learning the true incidents which occurred in the north (dearth of communication).

The comment of the poet persona in these lines, are but serious complaints, rooted in laments of the statement of the order of journalism in the region as the case is. The persona sees prominent stables which are expected to grow and greatly impact the region, but along the way, they fade and phase out. To the persona, most of the stables around, are but just existing with nothing much tangible and reasonable to offer after they had emerged promisingly, assumed and pronounced great successes. All the expectations and hopes of the people over the

establishments, are disappointed and amounts to nothing any reasonable. The trend goes on and no one, not even the editors are satisfactorily pleased with themselves as no achievements are recorded over time.

In the fourth and sixth stanzas, the persona turns an advocate as has always been doing in other poems previously looked at. The advocacy of the poet, is seen again manifesting here and forming one of the basic tenets of Marxism, as this study tries to point out.

Phoenix-like in resolve our duty to rise
Against all hurdles with adeptness surmount
Lest to our peers we are made a laughing stock
And to our neighbours a derisive horse laugh
And from our enemies, spiteful harassment intimidation
For what else is the defenceless' fate.
Or a compulsive weaklings' price?
Little chance have we to survive in honour

The persona does not just only preach his message, but also,tell the people about the consequences and supposed setbacks of their attitude towards the trend at hand. The scorn and shame the act is going to elicit from the people around and neighbours of the region is presented by the poet to warn of the impediments and implications of the nonchalance of the people in the poet's society or environment.

In the final and concluding stanza of this poem, the poet points to a particular delivery of a new publication. He also points to the progress and trend of development of this new publishing company of newspaper and magazines. He has high hopes for this particular publishing firm and

urges all, to support and uphold the mantra. The developmental prospects of the publication is so bright and successful as he wishes and believes will stand the taste of time.

The Marxist bent of Gimba in most of the poems being looked up in this collection of study, is one, so much into advocacy, and messianic in nature.

The next poem in line of consideration in this study, is "The Honourable One". The sarcastic and satiric nature of Gimba sprouts out in this poem. A lampoon on the person of the average unreliable, corrupt Nigerian politician is presented in this poem. The poem is a long narrative which spans fourteen unequal stanzas. The narrative sense of this poem makes it very accessible to all and sundry. The mockery in the tone of the poet persona makes the poem an interesting one. Interesting in a sense of what reality of our present society holds on. Political power is sought, at all cost by the politicians, who use all possible means at their disposal, to woo the populace into voting them to power, and in turn, becomes a scorn of the highest order, to the common man who is supposed to benefit from good governance. A very clear and lucid picture is presented by the poet persona of the person of the political leaders of the land and society as a whole.

You will stand for me you vowed
You will stand for me you promised
And even with a rare humbleness you bowed
A giant pine-tree to dare a raging hurricane
Your face a host to a mesmerizing smile
As strange as a bright morning sun
Out of the petals of a thunderous dawn
An exaggerated smile?

The poet relates the appearance and gimmicks of the political leader who at all cost seems to be loyal, honest, submissive, enchanting and very concerned of the plight of the people. Only to assume power as most cases turns out to be, and renegade on all these acts put up in the beginning when votes were being sought. The second stanza continues with this play to the gallery as the politician comes in to power. The oath taking process, is, but a mere exercise as the politician thinks. It is easily seen and believed by many to be a fulfilment of all righteousness and never a thing taken any seriously by those administering the oaths or those it is being administered to. On, goes the persona in the prolific rendition of the political process which is the order of the day. Up to the fifth stanza, the poet concludes the process to electioneering process. Now all has been said and done as votes are sorted and counted and winners declared. Then the reality dawns on the common man;

And now yours….taunting silence
Where is my servant...?
The honourable one…!
There is no need for a search
It's not so princely

The seventh stanza of this poem answers the rhetorical question raised in the previous stanza, though, indirectly.

But there…there goes the honourable one!
On a horse, with condescension I'm honoured with a glance
To the castle, he rides with pageantry
A troupe of singers around the star in orbit
In regalia to cow a prince.
Dare I ask for his service?

The very scenario of politicians, when in power, especially in Nigeria, is given clearly here. The poet persona uses the historical looks of the past ages when the motorcade or convoy of our leaders are presented as horses and their abodes are castles set apart. The government houses then become a fortress of sorts, where no ordinary man trespasses. The only benefit the common man on the street gets, is when he is graced with this stretch of aesthetics, of the passing through town of this once lowly, humble honourable one. The pomp and pageantry that encompasses this leader is but a spectacle of interest to all onlooker as the 'honourable' one makes his passage on streets covered and surrounded by exotics of luxuries unexplainable. Through the succeeding stanza (8th), the persona talks of how vile and threatening it is, to raise issues of afore made promises, before this leader ascended the throne of power. Speaking out becomes a suicide attempt that the common man cannot risk. The common man then resigns to fate as he is rendered incommunicado.

The ninth stanza goes on as the commoner or masses now resigned to fate, hopes for a new and better leader in the next dispensation they now crave for. A religious allusion is noticed in the fourth line of this stanza. An allegory possibly drawn from the Holy Bible book of Ecclesiastes chapter ten (10). The idea is drawn closely from the verses five (5) through seven (7).

> There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place. I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth (Holy Bible; King James Version).

It is very possible that Gimba drew most of the ideas of this poem from the above Holy Bible passage quotes, because the whole of the idea in this bible passage, aligns with the idea in the poem.The remainder of the stanzas of this poem goes on and on in relating how busy the honourable one, that is, the political leader, is only but busy, concerning himself with matters of personal interests to benefits, of himself, family and friends in the circle or rather corridors of

power. The concluding stanza of the poem, surmises the continuous trend and order, that subjugates the common man in a society as this. Another circle comes up again, as new electoral season approaches, and on and on, goes the trend.

To the honourable again, my votes
My boat to the rocks
In bondage to row and row
My grave a trough of his ploy
My honourable, our monument of fire
From the horned one, goring threats.

In his analysis of this last stanza, Fajenyo submits thus;

> The image of 'monuments of fire' tells of the destructiveness, the power of damages, rekindled in the politicians. But such never work alone in desecrating the land with their excess; they do have paid fellow-liars and crippled thinkers who are used to carry out specific, damaging function. (106).

The Nigerian political terrain is vividly described, and the poet has been able to put this eye opener forth, so as to remind the common man of what goes on, politically, in the society. To a great extent, the idea in this poem, about the political class and the electorate is vaguely addressed in the poem; 'From the Rostrum'.

In the poem, the poet uses imageries of a sage, to tell a very lengthy tale of the political brouhaha in the society we live in. This very detailed treatment of the idea addressed in this poem, makes the latter poem, one of the longest if not the longest in this collection being treated. The poem is summarized completely well, by the statements of Ezekiel (2008; 119):

> "From the Rostrum," obviously the longest in the collection, is a reflection of the political insanity, meanness, megalomania, deceit and falsehood which have drenched Africa's landscape. It goes into history, which accounts for its narrative tone; it is

> suffused in images of political treachery, insincerity and visionlessness. The poet persona moves back in time, informing us of the griot-like function of his grandma ('the ocean of tales') and the 'wise old man' who 'talk of foxes or hares', stories which delighted him of past.

Gimba still proves his worth, through these great satires. The Marxist spirit is very much set in these poems as the class differentia and oppressive nature of the society is presented, first to the common man, and then, to the political class as well.

The town crier is seen to be an agent of the leaders, in information dissemination and communication of ideas of the leaders in a local setting. The leaders in this regard might be corrupt, selfish and witch hunting, as in the previous poem points out. The poet has not categorically specified, or made such statement on the matter at hand. The town crier is seen by the poet, to be an agent of the government or instituted authority, in discharge of her duties on a daily basis. The importance of this figure (town crier), is enormous as it borders on effective and smooth run of the government or leadership of the day. The town crier, to an extent is seen to be a prophet of sorts, in his discharge of duty.

Talking about the prophetic, the poem titled, "A Peace Zone", bears on this, a lot. The poem makes the saying that poets are more of prophets, true. The scenario created by Gimba in the poem is but a reality of today in northern Nigeria; especially, the north east. The spate of insurgency has made this region to pass for a war zone unlike it used to be. The poet did not hesitate to point out the pockets of clashes and bloodlettings, occasionally experienced in the (Nigerian) society. Clashes and crises is characterized of our existence as a nation but not a thing that has gone the scale of a full-blown war as we experience today in the north-eastern part of Nigeria and many parts of Africa today.

There are no artilleries here

No armoured vehicles, no war planes
Only a few dead bodies
For skirmishes over a trespass by an ant
A minor infraction on our sea of calm
Not a war zone.

The idea here, is that, there are undeniable clashes of communities over matters or issues bordering on trespass into other boundaries in dispute. This idea runs through the second stanza. The poet looks at the small arms and weapons used by locals in minor communal clashes where locals, battle each other for parcels of land to farm on. This idea is further discussed through the third and fourth stanzas of the poem. The last line of this fourth stanza presents an assonance that has much become a reality of our present-day Nigeria; especially, the north of the country; 'Where only guns and bombs boom'. This assonance which emphasis the vowel sound /o/, haunts us today as it seems to be the current state of the reality on ground in the present-day Nigeria. As at the year of this publication, insurgency in the north east as we have it today isn't a common thing. Incidents of suicide bombings and the Boko haram trend were not present at all in the polity. The poet, at the time of this publication was relating the way things really stood; the position of peace in the nation. In essence, all what we see today in the north-east of Nigeria points back now to what things used to be before the emergence of insurgency. The scenario the poet paints in this poem, as being absent, has come to be the reality on ground, today; especially, in the northeastern current Nigeria. This poem is seen by many to be an ironical one. In this commonly held interpretation of the poem, the poet persona is seen as presenting a war zone which the country is. The A.K riffles, bazookas, sticks, machetes, guns, etc. are all elements of war. Ironically, still, the country is a peace zone not a war zone.

The last but one stanza has a very prophetic or rather scathing effect on the reader, who knows of the day's happenings in the north east of the country. The last line in that stanza is where, to my thought, the poet unconsciously tells of what was to come: "not a war zone still". This saying has been fulfilled today, as we experience all what the poet said were absent in our nation. The nation has become a war zone as we see all what the poet persona said were not there, then. The last stanza tells it all. It tells, of how the state is, today.

Go to the cemetery for witnesses
An expanding city of peaceful skeletons
We still bury our dead
Not in mass graves, as in war zones.
The evident flow of blood? Ignore
To dead bodies and burnt houses be blind
Widows and orphans too happy to live
Ah, all evident zeal of a calm quick sand
See the bold footprints of peace-enforcers
So dutiful to keep this a peace zone.

Here we see the persona boasting that there are no mass graves as in the war zones of other places. Even the corpse buried have long decayed and become just bones now without arousals of frequent visiting and digging, all the time to deposit new bodies of victims of war. Widows and orphans are many these days in concentrated refugee camps scattered all over the nation. The soldiers are even extoled and commended for their efforts of making sure peace and order is maintained in the land. The soldiers are not just on guard these days as they used to be, but have become very engagingly involved, facing the insurgents and terrorist who have made the region to become a pronounced war zone today. The people shower praises on the soldiers for their

courage as they try in winning the battle and ridding the land of bad elements, possibly, insurgents and terrorist around. The poet could easily be pronounced a Marxist, through the contents of these poems. His messianic stance qualifies him as yet, a real advocate or mouth piece for the people in the society. The next poem that follows in line of the collection on study is, "The Battlefront". By this we see a successive ironic title from the previous poem analyzed. A title very opposite in meaning is presented here. In the poem, the poet just used the opportunity to talk about the spate of robberies and different method and means employed by these robbers. The poem could pass for an eye opener to anyone visiting the country or residing in it. Gimba is a good pointer to the ills of the society in so many ways. In the sixth stanza, the poet persona point to the economic hardship and the government being responsible or to be blamed for this menace in the society.

The accused is the government in truth
With poverty of the purse in a chronic defence
Ah, it is a poverty of reason
Poverty of will, poverty of trust
Poverty of… we are held in ransom.
Prisoners of war by gold-inspired deception
Prisoner to betrayal
Nourishments to the moving battle-fronts
Like sand-dunes yielding to the winds of greed

Reasons to the causes of the trend of many robberies in the polity, is given and seen by the poet persona, to be the government of the day, who have made things difficult for the common man in the society. All men in the society are now at the mercy of these molesters, as the government is doing little or almost nothing to salvage the situation at hand. Economy is at the centre of the

menace faced by members of the society. Economy is also a major stand of Marxism. The economy is seen by the Marxist to be the reason for any happenings and state of the society as discussed earlier in this study.

The last stanza reveals, yet another phase to the trend as seen from the seventh line, through the last line of the stanza.

> Yet our little mandarins who to our service vowed
> Have become deaf, dumbs and limp
> The monster invisible with intimidating presence
> And invincible!
> Ah, a battle front without resisting combatants
> A horrifying no-contest.

The poet persona addresses the position of the police and other security agencies, who are supposed to be the ones combating the robbers in the nation. The government agents have become no match to the sophistication and intimidating stance of the robbers. The poets tone, here, is one of resignation to fate. The robbers are left with no opposition and they have become more daring and operates freely with ease, all through. Gimba points an accusing finger to the government of the day through this poem. The inaction of the government and her agencies in charge of security of life and property are seriously bemoaned and exposed here. In essence, the poem is a call to action to the security agencies and the government of the day as a whole. This act, to a great extent is a Marxist act. The poet becomes a challenger to the power that be, or the ruling class, as well as advocates for the victims who are everyday being intimidated and oppressed by the dare devil robbers all around the society.

Looking at the security outfit of the nation or society, becomes the concern of a particular poem in this collection of study. Gimba beams his searchlight on the police force as a whole,

through the poem titled, “Need the Sheriff’ Pray!” The title of this poem even makes it a mockery at a first look. The poet uses punctuations to achieve this effect. The poet’s use of the question marks at the end of the word, ‘Sheriff?’ is succeeded by the word, ‘Pray!’ with and apostrophe, thereby, creating a humorous effect. The poem is a real great satire on the police force of possibly, Nigeria or Africa as a whole. The point of note for the poet is the inefficiency of the police in combating crimes and confronting criminals in the society. The police force is ridiculed through acts associated with them in a daily basis in their discharge of duty. There is almost no time the police is called or sought and they deliver by responding, adequately. Even when they are most needed and required, excuses and complaints of various forms emanates, and in the long run, the masses are left to their predicament, almost unattended to, even as a security outfit is in place. The poem is full of such instances and acts of callousness in the side of the police force, as seen in the presentation of the poem.

When in the middle of the night
And hoodlums break your door
You call the station in desperation for help
Pray there is petrol in the car.

When the dogs and your neighbor howls
And gunshots breaks the silence of the night
You call the station for the sheriff to come
Pray the batteries and tires are good.

These first two stanzas, give such instances where the police is called at, as emergencies arise. These masses are even afraid of any help of the police, as the poet persona suggests by his call for the people involved to wish for a quick or any response at all. Sometimes, the masses are left

with no options but try to help themselves out of the situation by actions the police should have carried out. They are still met with yet, troubles from the police after they had reported the incident.Not even a help by the people is appreciated by the corrupt police as seen in the succeeding stanzas; three, four and five:

When you dare play the hero
Out of the gangster's entrapment you escape
And you get to the station trembling in fright
Pray he doesn't ask you to write a statement.

When he is dutiful with sympathy for you
With neither excuses about his car nor statement
And in the bargain you offer your vehicle
Pray he doesn't say I won't leave the station empty

When you are lowly and report to him a crime
The demons at large without a trace
And you the solitary witness to the scene of crime
Pray the cell is not your home as a prime suspect.

These aspects of the poem are well illustratively explained to even the common man who reads through the poem. This poem could offer some sorts of entertainment and succor to the ordinary man when he sees the play of words about issues in his society. The sixth stanza, tells of the kind of leech the police have become. Extortion is the name of his game, when you are in his net or need his help. He will want to drain you to your last kobo and leave you empty and dry after having drained you of your resources.

When misfortune frowns at you

With an infraction of the law and you are a fish in a net
Owning silver and gold, in desperation for his help
Pray he doesn't feast on you like louse

The policemen, use the job, to extort the masses who have no option when they want to gain freedom from the police net. And this freedom the person gets, is at the expense of his possession and wealth to part. Bribery and corruption is being propagated and encouraged by the police through such acts of extortion and manipulations they engage in. Even in instances, one has not really broken any laws or committed any offence but just exercising their freedom of speech, they are taken into custody and left in detention. Once in the police net, a crime is labeled at you, and you have to part with a paltry sum to part with the cell and detention of the police, as seen in the last but one stanza of this poem.

When his mood drags him into murky waters
Daring him to the bull fighter's ring with your tongue
Even though you breached no laws
Pray he doesn't invite you to the station.

The last stanza of this poem, is where the pun comes to play in the poem. The poem ends in a tone of advice to the masses. They are warned, advised and told to avoid any incident that will make them have to call or need the services of the police. This is due to the reasons highlighted in the lines of the poem. And this becomes a word of advice and wisdom to the masses.

You need the sheriff
You will meet the sheriff
You will always need the sheriff
But pray you don't ever need to need the sheriff.

The last line of this last stanza is the real pun contained in the poem. It becomes an epigram of a paradox of sort. The judgment of the poet here is that, the people are almost helpless in their society, as the security to life, property and justice is but very absent and hopeless. In their hopeless and hapless situation, they have to just resign to fate.

Next in the line of analysis in this study is the poem, "The Identity Card". A poem of rage, I must say. Rage in the tone of the poet persona, who is on a dialogue with a fellow. It is a poem that tries to define race and the prestige people chose to attach to a particular race. In recent times, Africans, world over, tends to deny their race and place. This is most common with Nigerians, especially when abroad. People have come to associate themselves with a particular race due to a particular trait they feel gives them better representation and recognition. This, is what the poet persona in this poem frowns against.

I am amazed you asked
Who I am?
My mother a jewel
My father a pearl
Don't you know?

This first stanza is a response by a fellow on being asked of his identity. This fellow tries to claim a particular race or place he is not from, originally. In the sense of the poem, mother, being a jewel, denotes the superiority of her race or place just as the father is seen to be said to be a pearl. The pride and arrogance in the tone of the fellow is seen and felt as it flows right even into the second stanza:

I am from a gem of a lineage
Of deep blue blood
Of a chosen people

Illustrious without equal

Don't you know?

This second stanza makes it clearer, that it could be, that the respondent, claims to be a European, maybe of the American descent. This type of boastful arrogance is common in the Americans. The Americans always try and want placing themselves high above every other people of other regions. 'A chosen people' as they are always seeing themselves to be in most cases. This poem reminds one of 'The world policeman' treated in the previous chapter of this study. America, as a country sees all other parts of the world as unequal to them. The superiority America assumes, makes it easy for them to be arrogant, discriminative and selfish as they police the rest of the world, thereby making them saints against all other regions on earth. The listener reacts, but very harshly, in the third stanza of the poem:

Oh; insolent idiot

So what, if I am

From the ashes

A jewel from a thieving master

A phoney pearl

Reference is made here to black Americans who are seen to have been stolen from Africa during the trans-Atlantic slave trade era. The poet persona calls the colonial masters 'thieving master'. The black Americans are said to be a 'phoney pearl'. In essence, it means that the African-Americans are not regarded real illustrious sons of the soil of America.The persona goes on to rain more insults of abuses on the respondent in the fourth and fifth lines.

Rotten you

How dare you lie to me

Of the blood that flow

On the hands of my forefathers!

No, not a decadent lineage.

The poet is not happy with the denial of one's race as Africans do most times. Africans are not always proud of their race or origin, as the poem frowns in anger, on the trend, by lambasting the act of such denials done by such Africans. The poet concludes on the same note and tone of anger. The poet looks at the classifications done by history as we have been made to be degraded and branded all sorts of negative nomenclatures. The idea in the entire poem is that racism is still deep and real. The idea of what and how the racist thinks, feel and acts is related here. The African- American is rebuked and made to see the reality on ground. He is urged by the poet to be patriotic and proud of his race as an African and stop affiliating himself to the American race. Marxism is seen in the working of this poem, greatly. The major idea of Marxism is equality. This poem demonstrates a very high order of inequality in the race and place of individuals in the human society.

Next in the line of analysis, is the poem; "Gloves in the Ballot Box"; another very political poem like "The Honourable one". According to Ezekiel (2008:109).

> Another evidence of political meaningless, impotency, aridity, falsity and empty electioneering campaign is "Gloves in the Ballot Box". Though, democracy is highly respected, and cherished, it is not allowed to hold sway in the African society.

This gives us an insight into the poem at hand. The presence of the word, 'Ballot Box', easily tells us of the political nature of this poem. This is the message we shall see as we go into analysis of the poem at hand.

Not an ordinary box but a house of treasure

Fragile though holds more than you can measure

Therein entrusted with all pleasure

All we cherish from our past, for a future sure.

The poet persona attributes affluence, pleasures, and all other goodies to the ballot box. The box as an ordinary but mighty one, gives license to all the affluence and greatness the politicians amongst us enjoys, at liberty today. The results the box holds is inestimable and quantifiable to any amount tangible, since the benefits attached, are very plenty much.

But who holds the key to all we own?
He cannot be but strong and bold
With wisdom aplenty like Solomon of old
Seasoned to trusts, and all greed on hold.

The poet persona, just as he has been doing in all the other poems analyzed, now takes to the role of a sage; an adviser and proclaimer of wisdom on what is expected of the benefactor of the votes in the ballot box. The poet persona goes on in describing the political, or rather, democratic process as seen through the stanzas of the poem.

Not a few take our words for a song
So sweet that to the dance floor a throng
Of volunteers, with icings to offer in lists so long
It's an auction and the highest bidder won.

This third stanza goes into the idea of political parties and the manifestoes they present. Campaign slogans and other events that is aimed at wooing the masses to vote for the choice leader who must emerge from the majority of votes garnered, is described. The succeeding stanza goes on, almost in the same light as the poem; 'The Honourable one'. The ideas that runs through the remaining stanzas happen to be the same idea as expressed in that poem. The idea being expressed in the stanzas, are ones, that tries to look at the vaulting image of the politicians.

The political office seekers always ride on the electorate to assume power. After attaining power, nothing is heard or gotten from them by the common man who had voted them into office. Fake and unrealizable promises are made to the populace who in turn, in most cases, takes all, hook, line and sinker. The trend continues as the masses keeps getting exploited and rode upon by the political leaders. Up to the last stanza, the poet goes on and on stating the political or democratic process and her ills. The last stanza in this poem is one that comes as an advice. Such advices as seen in so many other poems discussed in the collections qualifies Gimba or rather the poet persona, as a sage or advocate for the common man. According to Fagenyo (2008; 109), in commenting on this poem;

> One of the greatest problems of African voters is the tendency to vote wrong political figures, out of their expression of greed, graft and lack of self-discipline. From Nigeria to Togo, from Central African Republic to Malawi, from Kenya to Zimbabwe, African leaders have had dictatorial, brutal, sectional, insensitive and corrupt leaders … This poem celebrates the tragedy of politics.

These tragedies, too, are reenacted in the poems; 'A Seat of Nails' and 'Hills Barbecue 2000'. In the first stated poem, the poet persona, looks into the sit tight syndrome of African leaders. The latter, is a comparison of two nations political stance; America and Africa as the case is. The major Marxist ideas in the previously analyzed poems, are also very much present in the two poems mentioned here, to a great extent.

Another poem that looks at the leadership problem in Nigeria and Africa as a whole, is the poem titled, "The Guardian". As the title of this poem suggests, the guardian is supposed to be the one who is responsible for the care of those under him. In this poem, it is possible the guardian is serving the purpose rightly or falling below expectation. Gimba uses the guardian to symbolize African leaders who are supposed to be the care taker of her citizen. The poem is best summarized by Ezekiel (2008:112) thus;

> "The Guardian" is a poem which treats, heavily, the salient problems of Africa: violence, insecurity, turbulence, helplessness, terrorism and political confusion. It is about lack of development and growth as typified by hunger, deprivation and hollow existence. 'The Guardian is supposed to be a symbol of good leadership and charismatic humane services, but he is ignoble, helpless and confused figure like every other person. The land is full of hatred and envy.

The first stanza illustrates this confused state of things in the polity.

When on each other's toes we step
Without remorse shown and tempers rises
When in our daily chemistry we are out of step
And we turn pugilist in pursuit of a prize.

The scenario of chaos is created here, in the first stanza, as the poem goes on, in the description of what is obtained on ground. Insecurity is evident in all places. Not even the street is safe, as well as, the homes.

When night falls and we can't walk the streets
Nor the children tell the position of the moon
And at a knock on the door abandon our sleep
In fright we may never see the morrow's noon

The situation is so bad that even when on our daily business, there is the fear of the unknown non-uniform wearing soldiers, as the poet described, in one of the previous poems earlier treated (The Battlefront).

When with our merchandise, hearts know no peace
Whether at home or on the road we are prey
At gun-point hounded to give up our every piece
And for our limbs and neck, in humiliation plead and pray.

The same scenario as in that poem is what is seen here in this third stanza. The next stanza in this poem is allegoric in

nature. We see the poet painting a picture as that of parables in the Holy Bible. The idea of the good shepherd is drawn from the Holy Scriptures as the poet puts this to a very great use in this poem as seen below:

Like a grazing sheep cornered by a leopard
No greater sight to behold than that of its shepherd.

This idea of the sheep and the shepherd supposed rescue from the attacker, runs through the lines as the poem reels on, through to the end. At the last stanza, which is formed of a couplet; we see the poet persona, demanding or asking for a eulogy in show of appreciation to the Guardian, who, according to the last line of this poem, is "standing between us and horror".

The poet persona in so many ways, through the poems in this collection reenacts the predicament the masses in the nation(s) get faced with. The advocate for the people is many times being played,through the lines, and messages are contained in the poems. Gimba, to a very high extent, stands as an altruist who not just observe things that takes place in his society, but also joins the people in educating and bringing to the notice of people, what is obtained in the society on a daily basis. Earlier on in this study, discussion on the stand of Gimba is elaborated and compared to the tenets of Marxism in relation to religion, as a whole. The idea of Gimba's religious ideology, was highlighted, but now, that highlight gets detail from the poem titled, 'The Fundamental'. This is a poem that elaborates all about Gimba's idea on religion and his faith as a whole. This poem is synonymous of the idea in the first poem in this collection being treated so far. The poem titled, 'the key' in the first poem of this collection, happens to be a general advise to man, but this time around, in this poem at hand, Gimba or the poet persona, tries to define his faith and believe in God, which is symbolized as the 'Ultimate' in the first stanza of this poem as seen below.

Nothing ever comes out of nothing
Flip your coin, if it is true and pure
Whatsoever it is, comes out of something
The source deserves all reverence
What, am I not to be overwhelmed?
The Ultimate is the fountainhead.
Logic is the child of hard reasoning
It's a fundamental I hold.

From the last line in this poem, the use of the pronoun 'I', tells us of the referent of this poem, who is no one else but the poet persona who in extension is Abubakar Gimba. The sixth line is where the poet makes the stand point in this poem as he attributes all and everything to God Almighty- 'the Ultimate'. The next stanza points to something from Gimba's book; in response to the aftermath of the September 2011 terrorist attack on the world trade centre and Pentagon in America. Details on his idea of fundamental, is the main content of the book; *The Fundamentalist*. We see Gimba in the second stanza, denying the fact of him not being a fundamentalist.

But I'm not a fundamentalist
Except for the blind, day and night differ
The twain no one can touch, smell or taste
With so much proof for the mind to see
It's a fundamental I respect
But think me not a fundamentalist

Even the last line of this stanza dissociates the poet from the fundamentalist. This is further described in the second line of this stanza with the imagery of 'daylight and night differ'. The idea of the poet's persona belief and faith, runs through the lines of the stanzas of this poem, to the last stanza.

> From the trunks of forest trees?
> Only the elephants' send you on your heels
> And so harmless is the way, like a large forest tree.
> It's a fundamental of old
> But am not a fundamentalist
> Just treading a well-beaten Pathway
> A road travelled by my forebears and yours
> Our torchbearers to the Ultimate Him.

The end of this poem is to describe the faith and manner of the faith of the poet persona as mentioned earlier in this analysis. This idea is buttressed and concluded on keeping the faith, just as has been received from those who have treaded the path in search and reverence to the 'Ultimate Him' who is God Almighty. The message of the poem is summed up by the comments of Ezekiel (2008:118), in his analysis of this very poem as quoted below:

> In a world seasoned with so much conflicts, poverty, helplessness and violence, man has to rely exclusively on God. The creator has a solution to every problem; man needs to only call on him for assistance. This is the message in the poem, "The Fundamental". Blunt, straightforward and religio-sociologically rich in substance, the poet persona insists that he is not a fundamentalist but holds on to some fundamental truths of life.

Injustice and inequality stands to be some of the most biting tenets of Marxism. The next poem in the line of analysis of this study, looks through the trend and the process of this very idea in a formal court room setting. From the poems treated so far, right from the beginning of this study,

it appears that Gimba is really out to address every part and corner of the society he calls ours. The idea of the title of this collection is one that looks at almost all and every part of 'This Land of Ours'. It is like there is almost everything in this land of ours. The poet now takes us into the walls of a court room and behold, all that transpires in it is presented, so glaringly to all. He beams his search light at the judicial system of the land as seen in the poem, titled 'In Proportion'.

> The defendant and the plaintiff are in profuse sweat
> The trial judge has never been this late
> The catfish, dog fish and octopus accuse the shark of murders
> And the fisherman blamed the electric fish for the electrified waters
> A thanksgiving by the hunter for escaping from the cannibal
> It's barbecue of chicken fit for a princess's wedding carnival.

Anxiety, exhaustion, desperation, and melancholy fills the air in the courtroom and there is confusion on the abnormal lateness of the judge who has always been late on other days. The lateness of the present day is an unusual one and it has thrown the whole atmosphere into a confused state. The poet goes on to narrate types, kinds and all manner of cases which are but very frustratingly and infuriatingly funny. The land is so full of this and that kind and manner of troubles. Troubles that causes blames, name calling and resignation to all the creatures of the land involved. Towards the last two lines of the second stanza, 'the judge finally arrived, wet like a blotting paper'. He too, blames his lateness on the rain which had always been expected and prayed for. He goes on 'Charging the rains for contempt of court, in justice fair and proper' the power of the judge is put to great use and exercised at a random wish as he decides. The next couplet which forms the next stanza, completely make the wish of the judge to be binding

without any room for cross examination. At the pronouncement of the judge, even before normal and due proceedings, he has passed his judgment that is irreversible.

Objections over-ruled

Every court has its rules.

The succeeding stanza goes on with the list and arrays of many cases just as from the first stanza of the poem. The third line in the stanza even attests to this fact; 'too many case files in the tray'. On and on goes the many cases as they are read out continuously to the presiding judge. At a point, the judge is feed up and declares, 'case adjourned'. Immediately he declares adjournment, a phone call comes from the doctor with a message, 'To the judge a child is born'. Shouting in high tones in excitement, 'The doctor disrupts the court on phone'. The next case to come up was automatically a 'case dismissed!' at this juncture, the poet persona makes her comment till the end of the poem and it closes on the following note.

Whichever way the court rules, justice is not diminished.

It's winter, and yet someone is in profuse sweat.

In this land thirsting for proportionate retribution.

Floods from the rains of justice.

This comment is one of resignation to fate, as seen in the poem. The whole judicial process ends in a quagmire as the sole principal officer of justice is almost a confused and unprincipled smart fellow. The volumes of matters at hand makes things more compounding and cumbersome. The expectation of the masses for justice is a mirage and more issues gets compounded for them, begging for justice. The poem is best summarized by the very short summary of Ezekiel (2008: 122) thus;

> The air of meaningless, erratic behavior and discordant mannerisms is packaged for presentation in the poem which

exposes the judiciary in the land as being dominated by clowns,
idiots and corrupt figures.

The poems that have so far been treated, have to a great extent, described Abubakar Gimba in so many ways to be a writer in line of the Marxist principle. It is still imperative that we take one or two more poems from the collection in establishing how Marxist inclined Gimba is, through the workings of his poetry collections. Another poem that treats the manner and art of the poet or writer (Abubakar Gimba), is the one titled, "In the Shadow'. This poem is refectory of Gimba and by extension, writers like him. Writers who fight for the cause of their society and heed to the cry of the oppressed masses of his land. Here we see the poet persona personifying the pen with which he writes his works in. The pen in this poem symbolizes the art of writing as a whole. The pen is attributed, characteristics of a living being. To the poem, the pen symbolizes a lot. It symbolizes a tool and qualifies for a voice or agent of righting the wrongs of the society. The first stanza goes thus;

To the shrieking cry of my pen I did wake
What is it? I know it was my pen's cry.
Its offal a guiding light even the blind would take
And the stars perhaps in fright ran away
Outside their tears formed a big lake
No, it's their sweat as they race into the sky

The poet goes into the process of his writing, through the poem. In this poem, we could see every reason and purpose of Gimba's work. All manner and sort of happenings in the society are reported and presented through his writings. Throughout the poem, this imagery is what is presented. The creative process and purpose is the central idea in this poem. The poet is seen to touch all happenings and events in the society. He gains friends and also have great number of enemies, who are affected by the contents of his writings. The writer, must, and, always stand for

justice, truth and high sense of moral. This is what makes him to stand out in the society as he goes on trying to correct her ills. The writer is a social critic and commentator as well as a reporter of events. That quest to write is seen to be expressed through the poem by the repetition of "where is my pen?" almost in all the lines of the poem. The writer has that zeal and passion in his art. He is a trust worthy being and an advocate for the people, especially, the poor and oppressed in the society. The writer is as a matter of fact, an ambassador of justice in the society. This art is what the poet holds dear and points clearly in the poem as well as others, related in theme to this. The succeeding poem, titled, 'The Book-Hunter' has the same theme as the previously discussed one. It is apparent that Gimba expresses same idea through different poems so as to fully engage the subject of discussion in more than one way. This could be, so that the message is adequately passed across and all areas of the matter or issue at hand is dealt with, adequately.Before concluding on the analysis of the poems in this collection, a very serious but funny poem has to be looked at. This poem is serious because of the kind of treatment that people of the land of Nigeria receive, when on transit, outside the shores of their country. The trend is so disheartening and very humiliating to a very high degree. Nigerian citizens get treatments that classify them as the others, of a different class of people. The dehumanizing treatment the poet experienced is what he shares and presents in the poem; "Where Are You From?" The poet satirizes the situation but have a very pressing message to pass across, even though it had been presented in a humorous manner. The poem is a narrative dialogue which involves the custom official on duty, in an international airport and other citizens, including the Nigerian. The scenario created in this poem is compared and is similar to the poem of Wole Soyinka, titled; "The Telephone Conversation". In this poem by Soyinka, we witness a telephone dialogue between an African; possibly, a Nigerian. This African, seeks an accommodation

abroad, but the treatment meted on him shows of the class and race differentia in the world of the day. The poem presented by Gimba here carries that same message as the poem of Soyinka. Racism is the name of the game and it keeps going on, in the world without any check, on the excesses of other nationals on the African or Nigerians, in particular. This is the issue Gimba tries to address in this poem as we see below:

where are you from?
From Australia
Pass. You are welcome. Next please…
Where are you from?
From Malaysia
Pass. Have a nice day. Next please…
Where are you from?
From South Africa. In transit to…
Pass. Have a nice trip. Next please…
Where are you from
From Bulgaria
Pass. Good day. Next please…
Where are you from?
From Nigeria.
Why are you here?
On business trip.
Are you alone?
Yes. But my brother is here
Where is your luggage?
Only this bag.
Open it.

From the above stretch of lines in stanza one, the point is established early enough. All the nationals, received, were treated cordially and asked to proceed so easily with a very warm welcome. Even nationals of other African countries are being accorded that warm regard and respect of a good befitting welcome. None ever get questioned apart from the country of origin. None was quizzed till the turn of the poet persona as we get to confirm from the poem. The poet persona was subjected to a session of arrays of questions upon questions, non-ending. Even his luggage was treated as a plague or a time bomb. Possibly, could be a drug filled bag of cocaine or other hard drugs. In the second stanza, the poet is under suspicion of being a woman. His pot belly probably could have given them an impression of him being a woman in disguise of a man. The poet is even almost placed under arrest just for being a Nigerian by origin. What a selective subjective treatment of one, in a foreign land, all in the name of interrogation? The persona is even stripped naked to his birthday suit of just flesh and skin. The fourth stanza sees the persona being forced to take a purgative, which will flush his system, in case of any ingested hard drugs. His human and fundamental rights are even disregarded as he is helpless and hapless without a voice to complain or protest this inhumane treatment he is being subjected to. He is not just stripped of his rights but also his personal respect and dignity as a man. The last stanza, shows that nothing was found on the persona, in the poem. He gets a light apology which is equal to nothing, as to what he had gone through in the process of his examination and scrupulous x-raying. This has become a trend that Nigerians experience, daily, in their international trips. It is a pity on us, as the poet goes through all the process, resigning to fate.

The last poem to be treated in this collection, before concluding, is the title poem of this collection of study. It is clear that Gimba has been relating events, happenings and

nature of practices in "This land of Ours", but yet the title poem is specific of the travails of the society of the poet. The poem is summarized in a very gripping wholesome manner by Ezekiel (2008: 125) with his comment on the poem:

> "This land of ours" (the title poem of the collection) is a poem of complaint on our collective sense of erratic and impotent leadership, poverty and aimlessness of the people.

The above statement is what the whole of the poem translates into. 'This land of ours' is a poem that really deals with the very issues confronting a nation as ours. The poet uses the title to denote the communal spirit he shares with the people of his nation. It is not an individualistic quest, but one that is collective and collaborative. The poet is a true messiah to the land. This has been demonstrated in all the poems treated so far. It has been demonstrated too, that Gimba is Marxist inclined in some way, through the contents of his poetry.

In all, a total of about twenty poems have been selected and analyzed in this section or chapter of this study. The Marxist tendencies in these poems after being established, gets discussed and elaborated on, to achieve clarifications as done throughout the poems contained in this second treated collection of Gimba poems.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This research work is concerned with the poetry of Abubakar Gimba. The idea of Marxism as it concerns the poetry collection is considered. The concept of Marxism has been elaborated and discussed in its details, so as to explicate the idea, therein. Through the body of this study, the major ideas related to this work has been presented for clarification and easy access. The first chapter of this study deals with the general introduction of this work. Sections such as background to the study, justification, statement of problems, aims and objectives are included here. The theoretical preoccupation of the study is also presented and elaborated on, in the chapter. The idea of Marxism, as well as the model of Marxism adopted for this work, got elaboration here. The Lukacian Reflection Model of Marxism, being the adopted model, gets detailed discussion in this section of the study.

The second chapter is primarily concerned with the review of literatures related to this work. The key concepts and ideas needed to make the work more comprehensible and accessible to readers are discussed in this chapter. Marxism and literature are juxtaposed in this chapter of study. That is to say, that Marxism is laid side by side with literature, and both areas are looked up in the way that they are related to each other. The idea, reached, at the end of this section is best described in the idea popularized by Chinua Achebe. Achebe is known for his yam and oil talk in *Things Fall Apart*. And from Achebe's comment, a coinage is made, in relation to literature and theory. In our regard, in this study, it is the relationship between Literature and Marxism. In this study, Marxism becomes like the oil with which yam is eaten. That is to say, that, literature and theory goes hand in hand and by extension, Marxism and literature are interdependent, in the context of this study. The idea is that both concepts are inter-related and dependent on each other, as this study is concerned. In essence, Theory (Marxism) and literature needs each other; especially as it relates to this work.

The third and fourth chapters are chapters, where the main analysis and discussions of the key texts of this study are discussed. The collections containing the poems of Abubakar Gimba, titled; *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of Ours* are presented in these chapters, respectively. Chapter three takes on the first poetry publication of Abubakar Gimba*; Inner Rumblings*, while the fourth chapter takes on the second; *This Land of Ours*. The poems are analyzed, that, the Marxist ideas and tendencies in them are established and discussed, as it relates to this study. The third chapter dwells on the analysis of *Inner Rumblings. Inner Rumblings* is analyzed as a poetry collection in the whole. The length and breadth of the collection is scanned through, and poems in them are taken in their sequence of appearance, and in some places, are randomly selected. The poems contained in the collection are presented, and a full analysis is made on them. The analysis takes the form of representing bits and parts of the poems in the body of this study. The presented poems are then discussed in detail. Through the discussions, the Marxist ideas and postulates in the lines are unraveled and subsequently, discussed as the study progresses. The poems contained in the collection are recollected and presented here. The analysis is carried on them, as the poems are selected in their sequence of appearance and sometimes, randomly selected. The same process as in chapter three is carried out in the fourth. At the end, the Marxist ideas in the poems are discussed as those Marxist tendencies inherent in the poems. The poems are presented, analyzed and the Marxist tendencies are established and thereon, discussed.

The last and final chapter of this study, forms the concluding chapter. This chapter; five, is made up of the summary and conclusions drawn from the whole study. The summary, recollects the process,through which the study is conducted. The frame or structure, so to say, of the organizational component of the study is presented here. The bit by bit presentation of the whole study is discussed or presented in this section of the study. The structure of the whole study is

easily accessed by reading the summary of this study. In reading the summary of this study, the scale of the entire work is easily grasped and finally, the ideas established are seen and discussed in the conclusion

In conclusion, Marxism as a literary theory is one of the tools in analyzing literary works. As has been established in the course of this study, theory is a guide which through its pattern, sets a work of literature in order. Theory is a guiding principle in the study, or analysis of any work of art and other areas as the case maybe. So far, the works in the scope of this study has been properly and closely analyzed in this research, and a conclusion is only possible after this has been done.Having done all analysis and discussion in this work, it is established, that Abubakar Gimba, as a writer and poet, in relation to this study, has Marxist inclinations in some way as the key texts established. This inclination to Marxism, is what the study meant by the use of the word, "Tendency." Tendency as has been used in this study, tells of the disposition, affinity, relationship and (or) familiarity with a concept. The concept in regard to this study is; Marxism. Marxism became the underlying element, or tool in the analysis of the contents of the poetry of Abubakar Gimba. The reason for the adoption of Marxism is due to the fact that most ideas in the poems,as contained, in the twin collections of *Inner Rumblings* and *This Land of Ours* are very Marxist oriented or (and) related. Ideas in the poems points closely to the tenets of Marxism. Through a thorough analysis of the poems in the collections, side by side Marxism, as a tool, it became possible to ascertain the Marxist level of the concerned poems in relation to the author. It is worthy of note that Marxism as a literary theory, sets the pace for this study. This study has all along, tried to familiarize us to the idea and concept of Marxism.It has been noted that originally, Karl Marx (1818-83) and Friedrich Engels (1820-95) were primarily concerned with economic, political and philosophical issues and worked out explanations of the

capitalist theory and mode of production. They did not develop an 'aesthetic' of culture or literature, although, they did say quite traditional things about Greek art which suggest that Marx himself believed in the relative autonomy of the art (Marx *Introduction to the critique of political economy*, 1857 and Hans Robert Jauss's article in new Literary History, titled *The Idealist Embarrassment*). However, Marxist principles and attitudes and modes of thought and enquiry have been adapted to create a Marxist Theory of Literature: what it has been and what it might and, perhaps, should be. The Marxist critics (who tends to be primarily interested in content) writes from the definite standpoint of Marxist's philosophical ideas, and from his view of history, in which the class struggle is fundamental, or in terms of socio-historical factors. This idea has been justified in the body of this study. To this idea, Dobie (2009:87), believes and states that 'Marxism provided a new way of reading and understanding Literature.' It is from the provision of theory; specifically, the Marxist theory, that this study has attempted and succeeded in her quest. The quest of which is to read the poetry of Abubakar Gimba, in a new way. Marxist criticism, operates on the assumption that literature can be properly understood only within the larger framework of social reality. Because it seems the African writer is given to the portrayal of social reality, which evinces the realistic socio-political situation of the third world. Marxism has much to offer the modern African literature.

This research adopts the Lukacs Reflection model in this study. The concept of Literature and the reality of the author or writers' society, matters a lot to this model. In fact, more elaboration has been presented in the body of this study but a very brief summary of the model is seen here.The basic thing to Lukacs is that the works of art (literature) ought to express the society in a reality so vivid and clear. The model is seen, corresponding greatly to the idea that Gimba's works depict.

The poems amongst these, further treats and explore the themes of greed, selfishness, impatience, intolerance, arrogance, pride, corruption, oppression, class divides and other injustices of the ruling class of the society.This address, to the predicament of the current situation of the writer's society, is very much seen in all the poems of this collection. In most instances, the poet is a voice, or rather a mouthpiece of the people. At some other times, he is an advocate as well as an agitator. The Marxist bent is but very much pronounced in almost all the poems of the collection. We easily see, a lot of Marxist ideas and manner of doing things manifested in the poems and all that. The mood, approach and engagements in the poems easily pass for them to be associated with Marxism. At some points in the collection, Gimba goes close as to call the people to arms. He spurs and urge the masses on, as well as address and present the ills and decadence in the society. The society is what he likened to as, 'This Land of ours'. By this expression, the poet involves himself in the predicament of the people. He sees himself as part and parcel of the society he writes about and addresses. The investigation, through the poems in this collection, as well as the other publication, makes for the argument of this study to be valid. Through the analysis of the lines of the poems, Marxist ideas or tendencies are established and have been discussed accordingly, in the chapters concerned with the analysis. Gimba is not pronounced a Marxist or a Marxist writer but these collections, through the poems, have in some way, presented Marxism as an element present in the poetry of Gimba. The ideas in the poems, through the explication of analysis on them, exposes those Marxist tendencies present in the poetry of Abubakar Gimba.

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