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Claude E. Ake and the Praxis of Knowledge Production in Africa

Jeremiah O. Arowosegbe*

Abstract

South-driven initiatives on endogenous knowledge production owe a great debt to Claude Ake. This article discusses the strengths and weaknesses of Ake's account of the social sciences and knowledge production on Africa. It evaluates his legacies and presents him as one of the most fertile and influential voices within the social sciences community in Africa. Claude Ake, being a political scientist with an unusually broad intellectual formation and horizon, the article examines his production – over the last four decades – of a wide ranging body of works, which have been instructive, not only for their analytical acuity, methodological rigour and theoretical sophistication, but also for being remarkable products of a magisterial erudition, the creations of an exceptionally great mind, written with a deft and profound authority. The works also constitute a sigficant attempt to adapt the intellectual legacies of Marxist scholarship towards understanding the political economy and social history of contemporary Africa from a broadly critical perspective. The *leitmotif* in doing so is 'to establish a specific relevance of studying Ake's works'. Through an examination of the epistemological bases of policy, practice and theory in his corpus, this article establishes an important area within the social sciences in Africa positively affected by Ake's intellectual involvement.

Résumé

Les initiatives enclenchées dans les pays du Sud sur la production du savoir endogène ont une dette importante envers Claude Ake. Dans un tel contexte, cette étude évalue les points forts et les points faibles de l'exposé que fait Ake des sciences sociales et de la question de la production du savoir en Afrique. L'article examine son héritage et le présente comme l'une des voix les plus fertiles et influentes au sein de la communauté des chercheurs en sciences sociales du continent. Il fait un bilan de la production, couvrant les quatre dernières décennies, d'un corpus étendu de travaux de ce spécialiste des sciences politiques doté

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d'une formation intellectuelle singulièrement vaste, et dont la valeur ne tient pas seulement à la sophistication théorique de l'œuvre, à sa rigueur méthodologique et à son acuité analytique ; il s'agit de travaux remarquables de par leur érudition magistrale, car ils sont dûs à un esprit exceptionnel maîtrisant à un degré élevé les théories de la langue et de la critique ; ils sont ciselés avec une autorité profonde, et constituent aussi des aspects significatifs des tentatives d'adapter l'héritage intellectuel des études marxistes en vue de comprendre l'économie politique et l'histoire sociale de l'Afrique contemporaine dans une perspective largement critique. L'idée générale ici est d'établir la pertinence spécifique de l'étude de l'œuvre d'Ake. Grâce à l'examen des bases épistémologiques de la théorie, de la pratique et de la politique dans ses travaux, le présent article trace les contours d'un champ important dans le domaine des sciences sociales africaines et du monde, champ qui a été affecté de manière positive par l'implication intellectuelle d'Ake.

Introduction

This article discusses Ake's contribution to the enterprise of knowledge production. It addresses the question of Africa's epistemological and philosophical lag in the area of knowledge production. To clarify, while the academies in Asia and Latin America shifted to postcolonial studies in the 1980s, Africa remained – trapped – within the dependency, political economy and underdevelopment paradigm as the dominant mode of analysis. Consequently, history writing and more broadly, knowledge production on the continent has neither benefited much from, nor engaged substantially with the expansive debate and rich literature on postcolonial studies, especially as we see in the subaltern studies intellectual project in India, South Asia and Latin America. It bears repeating that Ake was never directly identified with the debate on postcoloniality, which only became common currency and took the centre stage in major intellectual circles and political debates across the world about a decade before his sudden and tragic death in a plane crash in November 1996. While his publications are marked by an original brand of Marxism, some of his contributions and insights can, nevertheless, be linked to the discussions on postcoloniality. This article attempts to make such a linkage explicit.

Data were obtained for this study from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data took the form of extensive, unstructured in-depth interviews conducted with a selected group of twenty strategic informants purposively sampled, five each from the colleagues, contemporaries, old friends and past students of the late Claude Ake. Secondary data were drawn from Ake's original texts; the published commentaries, critiques and tributes written in his honour before and after his death by colleagues, friends and various institutional bodies; the information available in his curriculum vitae

as well as the texts which focus not only on the debates and issues on which Ake worked and wrote, but also on the general context of scholarship in Africa during his lifetime and beyond.

Following the introduction, this article is divided into three sections. The first locates Ake within the academic formation of postcolonial studies. The second discusses his contribution to endogenous knowledge production on Africa and presents his corpus as a corrective intervention for challenging historically entrenched and institutionalized paradigmatic domination of the continent by European and other supremacist scholarships, and advocates the decolonization of knowledge production on Africa – *inter alia* through articulating the epistemological and referential bases of Afrocentrism; asserting the African identity and the possibility of an African renaissance; invoking the exclusivist and ontological connotations of Africanity as well as reclaiming the humanity of Africans. The third section is the conclusion.

The Subject Matter of Postcolonial Studies

This section does not tackle the somewhat quixotic task of writing the history of postcolonial studies, several eloquent examples of which are already in print. Rather, it seeks briefly to describe its central tenets and locates Ake's works within them. Broadly, postcolonial studies represents an intellectual engagement developed over the past three decades on a set of issues, debates and articulations of points of intervention, performed as a tricontinental project within the institutional sites of research centres and universities across the world, particularly outside the metropolitan intellectual centres (Young 1990) on a range of disciplinary fields.

Characterized by its geographical capaciousness and multiple sites of production, its lineage embraces Albert Memmi's analysis in the 1950s of the drama of North African decolonization; Frantz Fanon's theorizations of anti-colonialism and the complex psychology of racism articulated in the 1950s; Edward Said's elaboration of Fanon's (1968:102) thesis that Europe is literally the creation of the Third World in his (1978) *Orientalism*, which sparked decades of scholarship on occidental representations of the East; the wide-ranging Caribbean scholarship of writers such as C. L. R. James and Wilson Harris, whose early lives in Trinidad and Guyana, respectively, shaped their very different approaches to the history of colonialism after their migrations to England; the works of theorists of the Hispanophone Americas, from Gloria Anzaldua to Jose David Saldivar; and the contribution of the subaltern studies group in South Asia initiated by Ranajit Guha, with Dipesh Chakrabarty, Gayatri C. Spivak, Partha Chatterjee and Sumit Sarkar as founding members. As an academic formation, its emergence was inspired

by the realization by these scholars that post-Enlightenment traditions of European historiography had led to a longstanding neglect of 'history from the South' and that disciplinary practices had failed to address the full complexity of historical change in the era that they studied. Hence the determination to make the perspectives of other disciplines integral to the historical enterprise (Holsinger 2002:1195).

Postcolonial studies is an intellectual-political discourse inspired mainly by Marxist, structuralist, poststructuralist and postmodernist writings. It critically engages the legacies of the European Enlightenment for postcolonial societies generally and Africa, Asia and Latin America in particular. As an anti-colonial project, it draws from many hybrid and indigenous sources of representation, self-determination and self-writing with the aim of supplanting the prodigious power of imperial cultural knowledge (Ashcroft 1995). Understood in this vital sense, postcoloniality – notice the ontological-nominalist form of the category – is thus a shorthand expression for an intense, travelling human condition, a circumstantial experience taking place within specific geopolitical boundaries, particularly the South (Ahmed 1992 and Radhakrishnan 1993). From yet another perspective, it is also best understood as a problematic field where contentious and heated debates are bound to take place for quite a while to come – a field where no single historical perspective can have a monopoly over the elaboration of the postcolonial condition – especially at such times like ours when grand discourses and master narratives in general, like Marxism and nationalism, are deservedly in disarray. Hence, the need for rigorous and situated unpacking before they become canonized as universal constants by the imperatives of metropolitan theory (Radhakrishnan 1993:750–62).

While some postcolonial theorists have been influenced by the cultural and political critiques developed over time by structuralist and poststructuralist theorists like Louis Althusser (1918–1990), Michel Foucault (1926–1984) and Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), Ake was influenced mainly by the intellectual legacies of Marxist scholarship, particularly the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883), Frederick Engels (1820–1895), Vladimir Ilich Lenin (1870–1924), Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), Rudolf Hilferding (1877–1941), Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin (1888–1938) and Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), especially as articulated in the Latin American contributions to the theories of dependency and underdevelopment. As Ake's writings reveal, barring the historicist reading noted in his epistemological and methodological formulations, Marx remains relevant not just as a critic of capitalism and liberalism, but also to any postcolonial and postmodernist project of history writing. And as Kelly Harris (2005:78) explains:

> Underdevelopment theorists clearly embrace much of the philosophy of Marx and Engels and Ake was no different. The Marxist vision of development seems closer to Ake's notion of development.

Postcolonial scholars challenge the hermeneutic approach to the construction of history and seek to replace it with competing constructions of the past. Seen from this perspective, postcolonial studies is thus markedly distinguished from orthodox Marxism by combining its critique of objective material conditions with the analysis of their subjective effects. It popularizes a self-reflective critique of the excesses of a history modelled on the Baconian concept of science, which incorporates into historical consciousness crucial components of the moral universe of the ahistorical. Its narrative does not aspire to be a universal form, but rather draws lines, distributes peoples and insists on a position of difference, unlike European rationalist discourses, which attempt to unite all peoples and positions in an illusive universe of ideal consensus. Its insistence on a position of difference, especially in relation to 'its other' should be clear. As permanent features, colonialism and other legacies of the Enlightenment left behind two contradictory heritages within the character of postcolonial modernities. On the one hand, they established and defined not just the character and context of the intellectual engagements and theoretical thinking in the countries of the South (Kaviraj and Khilnani 2001:3), but also shaped and now dictate the very contents of the pedagogical engagements in the disciplinary fields and institutional sites in these societies.

On the other hand, they are implicated in the dependence and underdevelopment of Third World societies, especially through creating the conditions sustaining their backwardness, marginalization and stagnation under the present situations. These two realities define the mode of engagement with the European world and thought generally in the post-Enlightenment period. Consequently, while emphasizing the applicability of universal notions of rights and the equality of humanity to all societies regardless of age, race and sex, postcoloniality also seeks to establish alternative conceptions of history and time by presenting dependency and underdevelopment not as original states of being in these societies, but as products of the unequal relations between the core capitalist countries and the peripheries. Struck by the realization of the need to recover and develop an identity damaged by the domineering imperial discourses, postcoloniality advocates the writing of a new history, which rather than returning to atavistic, nativist histories, or rejecting modernity outrightly in its entirety, invents a narrative that adequately makes visible, within the very structure of its various narrative forms, its own repressive strategies and practices (Chakrabarty 2000). Put differently, postcoloniality sees nothing atavistic or regressive about a people revisiting

the past with the intention of reclaiming it. The problem, however, comes up when revisionist identities are upheld as primordial and transcendentally sanctioned rather than as historically produced.

Postcolonial studies is therefore committed almost by definition to engaging the universals, which include abstract conceptions of the human and of reason, forged in eighteenth century Enlightenment Europe, which inform most of the human sciences (Chakrabarty 2000). And given the control and domination of about nine-tenths of the world by the imperial powers since the post-First World War period and the confirmation of Lenin's (1968) positions on the complete division and future re-division of the world, postcoloniality makes clear the legacies and nature of inherited power relations and their continuing effects on modern global culture and politics (Ashcroft 1998). The spirit of this engagement is found *inter alia* in the writings of Hichem Djait, the Tunisian historian who accused imperial Europe of denying Africa its own vision of humanity. It is also found in Fanon's (1968) articulation of the African liberation struggle, which held on to the Enlightenment idea of the equality of the human person. The engagement with European thought is thus marked by the fact that the European intellectual tradition is the most dominant in the social sciences departments of most, if not all modern universities today. And as Samir Amin (1989) has observed, although the idea of the European intellectual tradition stretching back to ancient Greece is merely a fabrication of a relatively recent European history; nevertheless, that is the genealogy of the thought in which social scientists across the world find themselves inserted. The point at issue here is that, given the contentious nature of the opposing claims to history around which the genealogy of the social sciences is constructed; the critique of historicism is therefore an integral part of the unended story of postcolonial studies. As Chakrabarty (2000:6) submits:

> … the very history of politicization of the population or the coming of political modernity, in countries outside of the Western capitalist democracies of the world produces a deep irony in the history of the political. This history challenges us to rethink two conceptual gifts of nineteenth-century Europe, concepts integral to the idea of modernity. One is historicism – the idea that to understand anything it has to be seen both as a unity and in its historical development – the other is the very idea of the political. What historically enables a project such as that is the experience of political modernity… European thought has a contradictory relationship to such an instance of political modernity. It is both indispensable and inadequate in helping us think through the various life practices that constitute the political and the historical. Exploring – on both theoretical and factual registers – this simultaneous indispensability and inadequacy is the task of postcolonial scholarship.

From our standpoint, it is mainly within this mode of thought that Ake makes his contribution. As Sudipta Kaviraj (1992) observes, many issues characterize the experiences of postcolonial societies generally. But, given their connectible nature, postcolonial studies takes the form of an intellectual discursive practice, which critiques all manifestations of imperial control, language and representations. And, although the histories and legacies of the capitalist penetration of Third World societies are not entirely a homogenous narration, their central thesis has a potentially connectible character. Given this connectible nature, the task of the postcolonial theorists is therefore to engage what Kaviraj and Khilnani (2001) call the constraining contexts of borrowed knowledge, language and paradigms within which the histories of these societies are being written. For, as Kaviraj (1992:34) maintains, unless an intellectual history of anti-colonialism is compiled, the history of colonialism will remain permanently unfinished. As will be shown shortly, Ake's career and scholarship represent an engagement in this direction. Having located him within the tricontinental project of postcolonial studies, the next section discusses his contribution to the social sciences, and Africa's context of knowledge production in particular.

Claude Ake's Contribution

This section discusses Ake's contribution to the African context of knowledge production. I argue that although obliquely so, Ake's works speak eminently in the multidisciplinary direction of postcolonial studies. In proving this assertion, attention is drawn to those aspects of his works which further postcolonial thought, particularly with respect to Africa.

The major issue, which Ake engages in this regard, is the question of how knowledge as appropriated and developed by Africans on the basis of their historical experiences can be valorized for empowering the state in the pursuit of democracy and development (Ake n.d.). The pertinence of his intervention in this regard is very timely, especially now when the continent's political leadership has declared itself in search of a suitable framework for achieving an all-embracing continental renaissance. His (1979) magisterial text, *Social Science as Imperialism: The Theory of Political Development*, radically questions, from the perspective of the colonial and postcolonial world, the profound epistemological transformations which the advent of theory supposedly brought about. Dealing with the Western political science scholarship on developing countries and the literature on political development in particular, Ake engages creatively and critically with one of the most pernicious and most subtle forms of imperialism – imperialism in the guise of scientific knowledge – and establishes its practical significance for development. According to Ake (1979:I):

> My thesis is that with the exception of Marxist tradition, Western social science scholarship on developing countries amounts to imperialism. Western social science scholarship on developing countries is imperialism in the sense that (a) it foists, or at any rate attempts to foist on the developing countries, capitalist values, capitalist institutions, and capitalist development; (b) it focuses social science analysis on the question of how to make the developing countries more like the West; and (c) it propagates mystifications, and modes of thought and action which serve the interests of capitalism and imperialism.
>
> Needless to say that this thesis is not breaking new ground but merely supplementing the effort which others have made. The capitalist and imperialist character of the Western scholarship on economic development in the Third World has been indicated by several progressive economists, particularly Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment*, and Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*. Unfortunately, the treatment of the imperialism of social science in these writings is merely incidental. Paul Baran is mostly interested in how the economic surplus is produced and used and how developed and underdeveloped societies undergo economic transformation. The major task which Samir Amin sets for himself in *Accumulation on a World Scale* is primarily to clarify the phenomenon of underdevelopment. The idea that the bulk of Western social science scholarship on developing countries amounts to imperialism does not come out clearly and forcefully, and the significance of this imperialism does not stand out in clear relief.

Ake takes a critical stance toward continental theoretical discourses from Africa's point of view and exposes the Eurocentric and European assumptions undergirding the most *avant-garde* writings to emerge on the continent from the developed world. He does this by advancing a critical rethinking of our fields' intellectual genealogies in ways that depart from the constricting narratives of disciplinary origin and originality received from the West. Focusing on the theory of political development, he opposes those Western versions of history which claim for themselves a totality of knowledge on Africa. Yet, in keeping with social scientific ideals, he also reveals his own commitment to uncovering an apparently deeper level of truth. He demonstrates with copious evidence, how the models earlier imported from Europe – Marxism, a belief in modernity and progress, a commitment to revolution as forward-looking, linear, developmentalist transformation – are now in doubt. Ake engages these issues with instructive and telling effect.

Exposing the ideological character of the theory of political development, Ake (1979:60–98) claims that its central position within the Western social science scholarship is not fortuitous. He traces its emergence to the winning

of formal political independence by the colonies in the atmosphere of the Cold War, a development which, it was felt, would jeopardize vital interests of the colonizing powers. In these circumstances, Ake argues, the interests of the Western powers demanded the consolidation and preservation of the fledgling-peripheral capitalist states which they had nurtured from the penetrating influence of the now defunct Soviet Union. Corresponding to the need to preserve the West's hegemony across the world, the theory of political development emerged as the ideological tool for maintaining the existing world order under conditions that preserve liberal democratic values as the political correlate of capitalism. Ake writes, given its historical context and its class partisan character, the theory of political development and more broadly, Western social science scholarship in its application to the postcolonial world, is bourgeois ideology. It has no scientific status. It is neither applicable to the world nor useful for understanding it. At best, he says, it merely fosters capitalist institutions and values, and legitimizes the consolidation of the dictatorship of the Third World bourgeoisie who are the allies of international capitalism (Ake 1979: 60–1). And given its orientations and value-assumptions, he states, it studies Africa after the images of the North. It shows the persistent gaps and lacuna that the continent must overcome finally to reach the promised land of democracy and development, of economic prosperity and social peace. This way, Ake contends, it constructs the continent's history in terms of a lack through underlining what more is needed to make democracy work – industrialization, institutionalization, modernization and the development of civic community, civil society, social capital and other recipes – which seek to replicate in the political sphere Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. According to Ake (1979:II):

> Every prognostication indicates that Western social science continues to play a major role in keeping us subordinate and underdeveloped; it continues to inhibit our understanding of the problems of our world, to feed us noxious values and false hopes, to make us pursue policies which undermine our competitive strength and guarantee our permanent underdevelopment and dependence. It is becoming increasingly clear that we cannot overcome our underdevelopment and dependence unless we try to understand the imperialist character of Western social science and to exorcise the attitudes of mind which it indicates.

According to him, it is not only incorrect but also supercilious to claim that some ideas need to be accepted and treated as universally worthy and that their spread across the world is purely positive. In validating this position, he illustrates several strategic moments where particular interests of popular

politics, mobilized as community interests, expose the limits of political universals that liberal theorists had posed as sacred. In doing this, he offers an elaborate exposition on his transcontinental epistemological engagement with the questions of democracy and development in Africa. For example, in his critique of the Princeton series on political development, Ake (1979:12–59) tackles the liberal claim that the nation-state as the most legitimate form of political community has been instrumental in creating some positive values – such as citizenship and the equality of rights – and making them acceptable and applicable across cultural and historical boundaries. According to him, while the modern nation-state recognizes the nation as the only homogeneous and legitimate form of community, actual politics across the world gives rise to various heterogeneous collectivities that do not necessarily conform to the sovereign demands of the nation-state.

Ake not only questions the theory's universalizing assumptions about culture, identity, language and power, but also the institutional privileging of theoretical knowledges as well as the very ontology of theory as a discrete and knowable category of critical engagement. According to Ake (1979:IV):

> … this critique is crucial for my argument about the imperialist character of social science. It exposes the fraudulence of the theory of political development and reveals the sharp contradiction between the raison d'etre of the theory and what it pretends to be. If indeed the theory of political development had been sound scientifically, it would have been more difficult to see it as imperialism. For instance, it would be quite problematic to show that a work which merely explains the principles of hydraulics or of heat is imperialism. In this case, the argument could be made that the work only demonstrates the objective character of an aspect of phenomenal experience, that the only questions one can properly ask of such a work are, is it valid? Is it useful for my particular purposes? Well, I have asked these questions of the theory of political development, and I have found that it fails on both counts. It is by seeing how it fails in these respects that we are able to fully appreciate its ideological character.

Ake (1981:68–87) presents the impact of the colonial presence as central for understanding the continent's history. Following Walter Rodney (1972), he defines colonialism as an effective instance of intervention and takeover in which local conceptions of time, spaces and modes of self-governance were dismantled; in which a tradition was invented and presented to the colonized as sacrosanct, so that, in their very act of self-understanding, they could acquiesce in the epistemic and moral legitimacy of European sovereignty and superiority. This way, he rehearses the familiar thesis of the postcolonial predicament by arguing (i) that heterogeneity and hybridity are written into

the fabric of the postcolonial experience, and (ii) that there is a relationship of historical continuity, however oblique and problematic, between colonialism and nationalism. He says, in spite of formal independence, the domineering impulses of the West on Africa are still strong – through Western social science – the ideological apparatus, which mediates the dependence and underdevelopment of the Third World. Hence his advocacy for decolonizing the social sciences in the global South through endogenizing the very strategies of knowledge production. Describing Western social science scholarship on Africa as 'irrelevant' and 'passé', Ake (1979:IV–V) writes:

> It seems to me that the alternative to Western development studies is not a social science with no ideological bias. That type of social science is neither possible nor desirable. The alternative has to be a social science whose thrust and values are more conducive to the eradication of underdevelopment, exploitation and dependence. A social science which meets that requirement will necessarily have socialist values.

Advancing the case for endogeneity in knowledge production in Africa, Ake (1986:III) argues that:

> …unless we strive for endogenous development of science and knowledge we cannot fully emancipate ourselves. Why this development must be endogenous should be clear for it is not a question of parochialism or nationalism. The point is that even though the principles of science are universal, its growth points and the particular problems, which it solves, are contingent on the historical circumstances of the society in which the science is produced.

Ake's (1979) advocacy of endogeneity suggests transcending the erasures and extroversions that constitute the hallmark of imperial pedagogy and scholarship. He cautions that, failing to achieve this, we risk reimporting the very hegemonies we are working hard to overthrow – a failure which he says must be resisted as a matter of nationalism and professional commitment. The way out of this epistemic failure, he says, is to develop a form of scholarship which takes its local existential, intellectual and political contexts seriously while also seeking to be globally reputable. He advances this position through his pragmatic belief that all theories, paradigms, modes of thought and models of social action should be contextualized in a manner that they enable us transcend the temptations of wrongly generalizing from one context to the others without critically considering the specificities of individual case histories and cultures. He argues that, far from being universal, the European invention of historical consciousness is only the result of its own perspectival imaginings, just as other perspectives are also implicated in the polemics of their own positionalities. His aim in this regard

is to establish the hegemony of 'South-driven intellectual thought' generally through opposing perennially dominant historiographies which resist change and ethico-political persuasion.

Ake advocates the building of an alternative global system of knowledge production based on the appreciation of the different histories which produce the diverse knowledge bases across the world. To him, this is a crucial condition for transcending the limitations of the restrictive contexts of knowledge production in the modern world. It was precisely in the struggle to achieve this objective that Ake became a central figure in the movements that gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s among the progressive forces within the social science community in Africa, movements which challenged and exposed the epistemic shortfalls of Western liberal and Marxist social sciences in their application to Africa. For Ake, therefore, the universality of empirical and theoretical knowledge is only a ruse which should be carefully broken down into distinctive cultural and historical components, to be explored and pursued within the frameworks defined by one's cultural milieu and social experiences. In other words, searching for the universals, vaguely defined as 'knowledge' or the 'truth', must proceed from the point of view of an appreciation of one's context, experience and history. By extension, an understanding of Ake's aversion from dogma and orthodoxy helps one in appreciating his principled rejection of the pluralist, national integration and his modification of the neo-Marxist theories of dependency and underdevelopment in their application to Africa.

His emphasis is hinged on the development of a social science scholarship, which, in epistemic terms is rooted in its culture and locale to create canons in its own right, especially one that takes the African policy making nexus seriously. From this, he critiques a major paradox and practice in the continent's universities, namely, the idea of deploying and teaching, especially in African policymaking contexts, as 'nomothetic' what is rather 'idiographic' in other contexts. He argues that engaging a social science, which derives the source-codes for its epistemologies from the life forms and practices of its context and people is a requirement for taking the practice of scholarship in Africa beyond its conception as translation or data-gathering for others in the global division of intellectual labour. Ake (1979) exposes the inclinations of Western social science for teleological analysis. He demonstrates and encourages further acknowledgement of the idiographic nature and particularities of Western social science and thought, rather than blindly treating them as either nomothetic or universal. He therefore recommends recourse to endogeneity, articulated *inter alia* through critical distancing and a selective borrowing from other epistemic contexts, locales and settings.

Lastly, Ake addresses the question of agency in the struggle towards bringing about the desired forms of change in the continent's economic and political transformation. He does this by identifying the intelligentsia as the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle (see Ake 1978 and n. d.) and also by locating the people, especially the toiling masses, as the means and end of development (Ake 1996). Through this praxis, Ake presents his life and works as examples of the kind of change which he advocates.

In illustrating aspects of the issues, which Ake painstakingly engages, two examples are in order. These concern the presentation of what Hountonji (1977) calls extroversion as the nomothetic and the unkind erasure of what is uniquely African from the collective global memory. As Adesina (2006) observes, Anthony Giddens (1996) defines sociology 'as a generalizing discipline that concerns itself above all with modernity, with the character and dynamics of modern industrialized societies'. This is added to the attempt by most texts in the field to trace the emergence of the discipline to Auguste Comte (1798–1857), the nineteenth century French philosopher, and to identify Karl Marx (1818–1883), Max Weber (1864–1920) and Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) as its founding fathers. Such approaches deny uniquely African contributions and other non-Western cultures a position, not only in sociology, but also in other social science disciplines. They also deny the contributions made to these disciplines by Africans and other non-European authorities and societies. For example, Ibn Khaldun had written his three-volume magnum opus, *Kitab Al 'Ibar*, in 1378 AD. Among others, in the first volume, *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun sets out the conceptual framework and methodological bases for adjudicating between competing data sources, all of which are self-consciously sociological. As Sayed Farid Alatas (2006) and Mahmoud Dhaouadi (1990) have shown, Ibn Khaldun outlines his new sciences of human organization and society *ilm al-umran al-bashari* and *ilm al ijtima al-insani*, which were ignored by the extroversions of Westernization. In Adesina's (2006) estimation, this had occurred for about 452 years before the first volume of Auguste Comte's six volumes on the *Course of Positive Philosophy* was published. In the same work, Ibn Khaldun rigorously articulates the concept of *asabiyyah* in explaining the normative basis of group cohesion, its decomposition and reconstitution; the different ways in which it manifests at different levels of social organization and among different groups (Adesina 2006:6). Again, following Adesina's (2006) estimations, this had occurred for about 515 years before Emile Durkheim's (1893) *The Division of Labour* and its idea of social norms was published. However, in spite of these instructive and pioneering efforts by Africans, one hardly encounters any modern sociology book available to African

students and universities mentioning Ibn Khaldun or even discussing his works. Carefully, but of course deliberately, the value of Ibn Khaldun's works has been repudiated on the ground that they are ridden with excessively religious thinking, which supposedly is contradictory to the modern context of secularism; and that they do not conform with or focus on real modern societies. Other examples certainly exist of African philosophers whose works have been erased on similar grounds by the power-driven impulses of modernity and the West, so that Ibn Khaldun is just one of the numerous examples and illustrations of such instructive and pioneering efforts from the continent which have been dispossessed of the value of their intellectual contribution and labour to the global context of knowledge production.

As a second example, in addition to the erasure of uniquely African contributions from the global system of knowledge production, there is also the denial of systematic knowledge from the continent, especially following Hegelian logic and traditions (Adesina 2006). While not substituting erasure for uncritical adulation, the point at issue here is to highlight the immanently ethnocentric and racist inclinations to create binary opposites between ignorance and knowledge on the one hand as well as magic and science on the other. In this sense, while the West is privileged as the source of scientific knowledge, ignorance and dubious magic are presented as the signifiers of 'the non-Western other'. These issues are taken on in Ake's (1979) engagement with the extroversions of Western social sciences. As he argues, just as Africa has been reduced to raw material production and Europe specializes in the production of capital goods and finished products, there is also the ideological reduction of the continent to a source from which data are generated and exported to Europe for advancing the frontiers of knowledge, so that theories are perpetually imported into Africa in a global system dominated by Europe and the West. He traces the origin of this practice to the developments and period following the European conquest of the continent, and says in spite of independence, extroversion is still immanent in Africa's experiences and relations with the West, especially given its complicated positioning in the global system of knowledge production. He draws a parallel between the extroversion of African economies manifested *inter alia* in the export of cocoa or gold and the import of chocolate and jewellery on the one hand, and the extroversion in the global system of knowledge production manifested in the reduction of African scholarship to the vain proselytization and regurgitation of received paradigms and borrowed discourses, including those which do not speak to the continent's situation, but are nevertheless deployed by the West in explaining social reality in the continent, on the other hand.

Thus, pitching endogeneity and ontology against the contradictions of Eurocentric extroversion and idiography, Ake challenges us to replace the practice of scholarship in Africa as extroversion with its engagement as an objective reflection of Africanity through a careful reformulation of the *African condition* and *self*. In this way, while the practice of scholarship as translation involves the articulation of the humanities and social sciences in Africa according to Western academic terms, its rearticulation, redefinition and reformulation, which Ake advocates are based on the reconstruction, reconstitution and reframing of the various disciplinary fields and vocations following uniquely African critiques and interpretations. This can be achieved through an appreciation of endogeny and ontology as the objective bases of epistemology and philosophy, rooted in a proper understanding of the disciplinary and institutional histories of existing knowledge producing frontiers and inspired by a corrective commitment to reclaim history and rewrite the careless deployment of the ideas of neocolonialism by the alien other in narrating the African past and future (Ake 1979 and Adesina 2006). It should be noted that Ake is not alone in this advocacy. Rather, being an instructive voice, he is complemented on the continent by others whose works have been noted in this study. Put together, these efforts challenge methodological and theoretical universalisms in the social science scholarship on the continent. As Harris (2005:77) puts it, Ake's legacy challenges us to be clear why Western social science is inadequate, how to change it and why; to clarify the idea of development; and to invent an appropriate model of development based on the interests of the masses. Other areas exist within the African context of knowledge production which have been positively affected by Ake's intellectual involvement. We have referred to them in a larger study on which this article is based (see Arowosegbe 2010).

Conclusion

This article has discussed Ake's contribution to the social sciences and knowledge production on Africa. It locates him within the intellectual project of postcolonial studies, which we define as a South-driven critique of historicism. Historicism was defined as a revisionist Western conception of history, which obfuscates rather than furthering the understanding of Africa. We also defined postcolonial studies as a South-driven critique of political modernity and the very idea of the political, a practice, which involves by implication, an engagement with the practice of history writing from the South. Lastly, we argued that the impact of the imperial presence and other legacies of the Enlightenment are central tounderstanding the continent's present and future histories. The aim is to further research on aspects of the

issues raised in Ake's works. This was done by suggesting vital reasons why Ake's works are considered worth reading, at least in the limited understanding of this researcher.

As we have tried to show, Ake's engagement with the extroversions of the Western social science in its application to Africa is only a case in point on the ambiguity of the Enlightenment and more broadly European thought in its reference to non-metropolitan histories. Similar efforts abound in the works of other scholars within this mode across Africa, and also elsewhere in Asia and Latin America. Put together, they represent bold initiatives in asserting the identities of non-Western cultures *inter alia* through carefully rewriting the intellectual and nationalist histories of these societies on their own terms. Importantly, by establishing the centrality of race in the making of the Enlightenment and all shades of imperial thought (Ghosh and Chakrabarty 2002) as well as by exposing the ambiguity and dualism lying at the heart of liberalism and other European philosophical traditions (Chatterjee 1994), postcoloniality decentres Europe and more broadly the West from being the only source of all legitimate signification and makes room for other ways of being (Argyrou 2001) through asserting the abstract possibility of other universes of theoretical reflections (Kaviraj 1992). This school challenges Europe's absolutization of theoretical insights and fights hard to redress the entrenched inequality of ignorance which characterizes the global system of knowledge production (Chakrabarty 1992). Through its legitimate project of narrative history writing, postcoloniality counters the misrepresentation of the continent in terms of a lack, an absence and an incompleteness, which translates into perpetual inadequacy and inferiority – by the imperial project of transition narrative (Chakrabarty 1992). It asserts the originality of the African voice as the authentic expression of the African condition and advocates an end to African studies not just in Europe and North America, but also in South Africa, the vortex of white racism (Mafeje 2000).

Viewed from the perspective of Ake's works, postcoloniality thus offers an instance as well as a vantage opportunity in which there is the possibility of a levelling up by indigenous theory with high metropolitan theory. It is therefore an arena wherein historically entrenched asymmetries of power historicize themselves relationally – an arena where dominant historiographies are made accountable to the ethico-political authority of emerging histories. Such asymmetries are not only cultural, gender-based or political, but also economic and sociological, as we see in Ake. His works therefore, feed convincingly into the subject matter of postcolonial studies. Taken together, they are parts of an intellectual repertoire of resistance which creates and preserves spaces of agency and autonomy. They illustrate how hitherto

suppressed humanities, in this case Africans, respond to the forces that challenge and undermine their humanity. They therefore constitute the essence of a cross-regional non-hierarchical dialogue in which neither of the two regions is taken as the paradigm against which the other is measured and pronounced inadequate. It should be underlined, perhaps with emphasis, that cross-regional non-hierarchical dialogue for Ake, and also, in this instance, is not the application of a concept, part and parcel, without contextualization. Nor can it be framed in the assumption that one side of the exchange has nothing to learn from the other (see Mallon 1994). To be sure, Ake's corpus constitutes the kind of non-coercive and justice-based universalism envisioned by Samir Amin (1989:136–52), based on a multivalent and versatile postcoloniality rooted differently in different cultures and histories. This is no doubt a welcome corrective intervention to the many instances in which European theories had been placed next to Third World cases and the latter have been found wanting.

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Militancy in the Niger Delta and the Deepening Crisis of the Oil Economy in Nigeria

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Abstract

The area known as the Niger Delta spans over 70,000 square kilometers. At the geographical and ecological levels, it is regarded as one of the foremost wetlands in the world, and rated as the ninth vastest drainage area in the world. In 1957, when oil was discovered at Oloibiri in today's Balyelsa State of Nigeria, the British enacted the Mineral Ordinance Act which vested all the minerals in Nigeria in the British Crown. This Act paved the way for the continued denial that has characterized the relationship between the oil-bearing communities and the central government of Nigeria, leading to the Resource Control agitation by the peoples of the Niger Delta. This article argues that the Nigerian state, true to its colonial origins tightened its grip on the instruments with which to allocate profitable opportunities in the burgeoning oil economy of Nigeria at the expense of the oil-bearing communities. This condition has led to complaints, agitations, and finally to militancy which is crippling the Nigerian economy. The article notes that the Nigerian state and elite forces within and outside the Niger Delta should be held responsible for the crises in the region and concludes that militancy is a product of frustration.

Keywords: militancy, Niger Delta, oil, economy, Nigeria, ecology, elite forces.

Résumé

La zone dénommée Delta du Niger s'étend sur plus de 70 000 kilomètres carrés couvrant des espaces tant géographiques qu'écologiques qui en font l'une des principales zones humides au monde, classée neuvième plus vaste zone de drainage au niveau mondial. En 1957, lorsque le pétrole a été découvert à Oloibiri dans l'État actuel du Balyelsa au Nigeria, les Britanniques ont adopté la Loi sur l'Ordonnance des Minéraux [Mineral Ordinance Act] qui a permis à la Couronne britannique de mettre toutes les ressources minéralières du Nigeria sous coupes réglées. Cette loi a ouvert la voie à la négation continue qui a caractérisé les relations entre les communautés pétrolifères et le gouvernement central du Nigeria ;

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situation qui s'est soldée par des agitations des peuples de la région du Delta du Niger pour pouvoir prendre le contrôle des ressources. Cet article soutient que l'État nigérian, fidèle à son passé colonial, a renforcé son emprise sur les instruments lui permettant de s'arroger de plantureux avantages dans cette économie pétrolière en plein essor au Nigeria au détriment des communautés abritant ces gisements de pétrole. Cette situation a donné lieu à des plaintes, des agitations, et enfin à l'émergence d'un militantisme rédhibitoire pour l'économie nigériane. Le document souligne que l'État nigérian et les forces d'élites à l'intérieur et hors de la région du Delta du Niger doivent être tenus responsables des crises qui secouent la région et conclut que ce militantisme résulte de la frustration.

Mots-clés: Militantisme, Delta du Niger, pétrole, Economie, Nigeria, Ecologie, Forces d'élites.

Introduction

The crisis in the Niger Delta of Nigeria is one of the numerous intractable problems besetting the Nigerian state, and this has manifested itself in different dimensions with adverse consequences for the oil economy of the country. Initially, protest took the form of agitation, declarations, and campaigns in which the people of the area and their organisations asked for justice and equity in the sharing of the oil resources that drive the economy. These campaigns led to the formulation of the fiscal discourse of the nation. The idea of fiscal discourse resonates in the various debates about the way and manner in which the state allocates its resources to the various federating units in the country in a lopsided manner that allows the Federal Government to take 52.68 per cent (including special funds): states 26.72 per cent, while the Local Governments are allocated 20.6 per cent (Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission 2011).

Many of the federating units find this structure lopsided and inequitable, as it runs counter to the practice of federalism elsewhere in the world, as in the US and Switzerland. In the latter countries, federating units only pay tax to the central government for the resources exploited in their localities. The current practice in Nigeria is the source of tension and conflict which are manifested in many arenas, raising even the issue of citizenship rights, equity, fairness, and justice in the Nigerian polity as a whole (see Okonta 2008).

In this article, an attempt is made to locate the current crises of militancy within the general conflict situation that besets Nigeria. The nature of the Nigerian state is such that it is enmeshed in the struggle for accumulation and, in the process, loses legitimacy to intervene in their resolution. These crises erupt in various forms, such as the question of indigeneity, resource control and management, structural deformities, class and religious conflicts, inequality and injustice, leadership failure, etc. These constitute what has come to be known in Nigeria as the Nationality Question (Amuwo and Agbaje, et al. 2004; Adedeji and Otite et al. 1997; Nnoli 1981; Okonta 2008).

Today, as can be seen from the events that are rapidly unfolding in the Niger Delta region, the struggle for resource control and management has taken on a new dimension with the introduction of militancy and kidnappings by the various groups that have emerged in the politics of oil in the area. These burgeoning groups and their militant activities have become a source of worry and concern to all the strategic stakeholders within and outside the Nigerian economy. Since June 2006, violence in the Niger Delta has reduced Nigeria's total oil production by a quarter. It is important to note that Nigeria has a nominal output capacity of 3.2 million barrels per day but its actual production is running short of this level. This has grave implications for the Nigerian economy which depends heavily on oil.

The Historical Background of the Niger Delta

The area known as the Niger Delta in Nigeria spans over 70,000 square kilometres. According to Olorodo (2000), quoting Ogunbunmi (1999), at the geographical and ecological level, the Niger Delta is one of the foremost wetlands in the world both in terms of expanse and bio-diversity. It is also rated as having the ninth vastest drainage area in the world and the third largest mangrove forest (Oyerinde 1998).

As have been documented by Dike (1956), Ofonagoro (1979) and Okonta (2008), prior to the coming of the Europeans, the Niger Delta people were relatively successful as they engaged in trading activities amongst themselves and their neighbours. The area was known for its production of and trade in palm oil. No wonder that by 1889, the British colonial overlords renamed the area the Oil Rivers Protectorate. The Berlin Conference of European powers, convened in 1885 to divide sub-Saharan Africa among themselves, had effectively brought the Niger Delta zone under British suzerainty.

George Goldie, an English merchant attracted to the Niger by the booming palm oil trade had by 1884 bought out oil rival companies operating in the Niger Valley, including French competitors, amalgamating them into the Niger Company. Prior to this time, the Delta middlemen had been relatively successful in confining European trading firms to the coast. But as the competition intensified for the palm-produce trade, the trading companies began to put pressure on the consuls appointed by their home government to regulate trade and also to protect them from 'marauding natives', to intervene and remove all remaining obstacles on their path after the deportation of King Jaja of Opobo. As earlier noted, in 1889, Her Majesty's Government renamed the area the Oil Rivers Protectorate.

According to Perham (1937), by 1893, the Oil Rivers Protectorate was already paying its way, earning a customs revenue of £136,000 in that year alone. It was renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate the same year. In 1900,

the protectorate was amalgamated with the Royal Niger company territories in the Niger valley. In 1906, the protectorate of southern Nigeria amalgamated with the colony and protectorate of Lagos to become the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria, comprising three administrative provinces: Western, Central, and Eastern.

Oil Exploration and its Benefits

In 1957, oil was discovered at Oloibiri, in the present-day Bayelsa State. The first instructive thing the British did was to enact the Mineral Ordinance Act which vested all the minerals in Nigeria in the British Crown. This Act, in hindsight, paved the way for the continued denial that has characterized the relationship between the oil bearing communities and the central government of Nigeria. We must hasten to state that the resource control agitation by the peoples of the Niger Delta is linked within the matrix of the minority question and, by extension, the larger nationality question.

One outcome of the London Constitutional Conference of 1957 was the appointment of the Willink commission to 'investigate the fears of the ethnic minority groups in the country and the means to allay them' (Willink Commission Report 1958). The Willink Commission report had recommended the inclusion of a bill of rights in the independence Constitution. Accordingly, both the 1960 and the 1963 constitutions of the republic set out the fundamental rights of the Nigerian people. In addition to the incorporation of the said bill of rights, section 140 of the Republican Constitution provided for the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Corporation. The right to 50 per cent of the proceeds from mineral resources produced in every region was equally guaranteed in the constitution. But since the peoples of the Niger Delta, like all other minorities in other parts of Nigeria, were denied the right to a region of their own, they were subjected to utter neglect and complete marginalization in the first republic.

Again, in 1968, the Dina Revenue Committee Report centralized fiscal revenues, including oil revenue. The petroleum decree of 1969 (Decree No. 51), stated that 'the entire ownership and control of all petroleum in, under, or upon any lands to which this section applies', be vested in the state.

The Decree also applied to the land under the territorial waters of Nigeria, including its continental shelf. The complaints against the Dina recommendations compelled the Supreme Military Council (SMC) under the leadership of General Yakubu Gowon to reject the report. In November, the Federal Military government published the petroleum Decree of 1969. The centralization of oil revenues took several stages, and was driven by General Gowon's 'Super' permanent secretaries. In 1970, after the civil war when oil began to feature prominently in the economic and political equation of

Nigeria, the Gowon administration gave 45 per cent to the states. The figure was reduced to 20 per cent in 1975 when Decree No. 6 was promulgated during the short-lived regime of General Murtala Muhammed. By 1982, when a democratic government came into power, the allocation dropped to 2 per cent. In 1984, during the era of General Muhammadu Buhari, the figure depreciated to 1.5 per cent and later to 3 per cent during the time of General Ibrahim Babangida who had carried out a palace coup against his boss, General Buhari. The current 13 per cent was introduced during the regime of General Sani Abacha that began in November 1993, after Abacha had sacked the illegitimate interim government headed by Ernest Sonekan.

As can be seen from the foregoing, the central government from the war years on tightened its grip on power and the instruments with which to allocate profitable opportunities in the growing oil economy of Nigeria. As a result, access to important government offices became the all-important ticket to riches and various kinds of influence. As the forces that control the Nigerian state and the oil multinational corporations in the country continue to rake in petro-dollars, the oil-bearing communities of the Niger Delta suffer in want and are buffeted with all kinds of environmental and social problems arising from oil prospecting and production-related activities. In fact, their human ecosystem has suffered substantial damage through gas flaring and persistent oil spillage. This condition has led to reactions, complaints and agitation from the people of the region, leading to its being described as a 'boiling point' (Olorode 2000). We shall return to this presently.

The Nigerian State

Jean Jacques Rousseau's dictum, 'man is born free but is everywhere in chains' (1963) may seem axiomatic and compels attention when considering the set-up in societies and states like Nigeria. Society and its attendant government provide the fetters about which Rousseau laments. Nevertheless, society and government are both necessary for the procurement of human welfare and progress. On the one hand, society provides evolutionary and resilient institutions and rules for accommodating human and environmental inadequacies. On the other hand, government ensures that institutions and rules girding and facilitating mutual dependence and co-existence are upheld without incessant breaches by dissenting individuals and groups for the purposes of realising the goals of collective human welfare.

However, when government and society's constitutive rules and associated institutions seem to fail in significant respects, demands arise – directed at the state. It goes without saying that the duty of government is to ensure that institutions work and that rules are put in place for the realisation of the welfare of the people. When a government fails to discharge its duties to the citizenry creditably, as has been argued by Okonta (2008), they rebel.

Historically, the Nigerian state is a creation of colonial rule and it has continued to function as the instrument of economic accumulation and a key player in its distribution. Consequently, the battle to win control of the resources of the state and its revenue has been particularly fierce between contending political elites on the one hand and among various social groups and communities, on the other. This struggle for the 'spoils' has created considerable tension and controversy, leading Nigeria's Northern Region, for example, to threaten to secede from the federation in 1953; the Western Region in 1954; and the Eastern Region actually to attempt to secede in 1967, culminating in a civil war that was fiercely fought for three years, with dire consequences for the country.

The Nigerian state is thus involved as a participant in the accumulative processes and therefore is not neutral. This has created a major problem in the resolution of conflicts and, especially, those that are engendered by the competition for resources. The Nigerian state has not done away with its colonial character; and at every turn, when there is a conflict, it resorts to brutality and outright decimation of the people. As has already been stated, from 1968 onwards, the Nigerian state became the sole player in allocating the resources that accrue to the country. This it does, in conjunction with the oil multinationals, to the detriment of the oil-bearing communities. Its coercive monolithic character, as Ake (1990) has argued, gives it the impression of a strong state with immense penetrative capacity. Ake further writes:

> In Nigeria, for instance, the state has little influence on the lives of the rural people. Much development that has taken place in rural communities has occurred not because of the state but in spite of it. To many rural dwellers, the state exists primarily as a nuisance to be avoided in their daily struggle for survival (Ake 1990:38).

The Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 created the emergence of a new authoritarian state, centralising both administration and fiscal resources, and forcing the people, even more firmly, into subject status.

Resource Control in the Political History of Nigeria as it has Affected the Niger Delta

As we have seen, the demand for equity from the Niger Delta people is not new. Towards the tail end of the struggle for the decolonization of Nigeria, the minorities had expressed fears of domination and exploitation from the hands of those who were designed to inherit political power from the departing British colonialists. When the legitimate demands of the Niger Delta people for basic social and infrastructural developments were treated with contempt by the neo-colonial ruling class, the youth of the region began to revolt against the Nigerian state.

Thus, on 24 February 1966, Isaac Adaka Boro, an Ijo student at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, led a group of armed young men and proclaimed an independent Niger Delta People's Republic, to assert the right of his people to self-actualisation. His 40-man Delta Volunteer Service blew up two oil pipe-lines belonging to Shell BP, ransacked police stations and engaged the police in a gun duel around Yenagoa (the present capital of Bayelsa State). Boro and his men were defeated, charged with treason, tried, convicted and sentenced to death by the Port Harcourt High Court. This amounted to judicial high handedness, and many saw it as unjust, especially as the recommendations of the Willink Commission Report were not implemented to the letter.

About two decades later, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was formed to champion the struggle for the empowerment of the Ogoni to gain access to the resources which paradoxically had turned into a curse for their existence. The Ogoni Bill of Rights (1990) articulated the strategies with which MOSOP would employ and explore the building and reinventing the Ogoni nation. Other ethnic groups in the Niger Delta have also reacted in a similar vein as their Ogoni neighbours by setting up organisations with bills of rights, charters and declarations. The Kaiama Declaration, a product of the resolutions of All Ijaw Youths Conference held in 1998, was one of such numerous attempts by various groups within the Niger Delta region to make demands on the Nigerian state and the colluding oil multinationals in Nigeria.

As demands for justice and equity in the Niger Delta region intensified in the 1990s, violence against the people, their environment and their resources also increased. In 1990, as Akani (1992) has recorded, the Nigerian government in cahoots with Shell ordered the notorious Nigeria Mobile Police Force into Umuechem, in Etche community in Rivers State, on October 30 and 31, 1990. Umuechem youths had peacefully organized a protest against Shell over the latter's destruction and neglect of their land, leaving behind poverty and environmental pollution. Shell officials requested the anti-riot policemen to stop the protest, and the police killed about 80 people and burnt down an estimated 500 homes in Umuechem. After Umuechem, it was Ogoni where several villages were attacked, burnt down, and people arrested arbitrarily, while others were murdered in cold blood. In November 1995, Ken Saro-Wiva and his eight other Ogoni compatriots were hanged after a flawed judicial trial on the orders of General Sani Abacha.

Earlier in 1994, the Uzere community in Delta State was attacked. When Ijaw youths issued the Kaiama Declaration, they were met with violence for their peaceful campaigns for resource control. In November 1999, seven months after a new democratic regime under Chief Olusegun Obasanjo

came into power, the Odi community, in Bayelsa State, was invaded and close to 3,000 persons were killed. Choba in Rivers State, Odioma in Bayelsa State and several other Niger Delta communities also fell victim to state and corporate violence. This cycle of offences against the people and their natural resources has led to the present security dilemma arising from the state's attempt to secure the oil production which lubricates the Nigerian economy.

One Earth, Environmental Pollution and Resource Control

Clean water and clean air, safe living areas, and nutritive foods are necessary for healthy human communities. When the environment becomes degraded, the victims are usually human and other beings. Crude oil production pollutes the air and can spill over and harm the land. Without safeguards, oil production causes all kinds of environmental problems for neighbouring communities. Crude oil production therefore raises the question of a clash of rights between oil producers, the affected communities, and the oil revenue seeking propensities of the national regime. Environmental rights are an integral part of human rights, as Sonibare (2008) has pointed out. They are derived from a wide range of environmental laws and principles adopted over the past several decades. By the 1970s, international declarations and resolutions began to link environmental concerns explicitly to human rights.

At the 1992 'Earth Summit', governments adopted the landmark Rio Declaration. Its Principle 10 stresses that 'environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens', while its Agenda 21 states that sustainable development is the way to reverse both poverty and environmental destruction. Achieving these aims will demand broad public participation in policy development, combined with greater accountability. Individuals, groups and organisations need to know about, and participate in environmental and development issues affecting their communities.

Similarly, Article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights states that all people shall have the right to a generally satisfactory environment favourable to their development. There are several other efforts both locally and globally being made to ensure that the earth is being exploited for human benefit in a sustainable manner. This means that people's environmental rights must be respected and negative impacts on the environment must be anticipated and prevented, and where they cannot be altogether prevented, remedial action is necessary. To ensure that environmental impacts are not distributed in a manner that unfairly discriminates against any person, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged persons and groups, environmental justice must be pursued. In principle, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognizes all these obligations, as can be seen in Section 20. This declares that 'The state shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wild life of Nigeria'.

Basic human rights only become meaningful when it is accepted that people will have to work towards making them real and this is applicable to environmental rights. This means that on the one hand, the state must follow the principles laid down in the constitution. Citizens and communities, on the other hand, must demand that their rights be respected and must demonstrate that they take up the responsibilities associated with their rights.

In the course of oil exploration in the Niger Delta since 1956, the activities of the oil companies have disrupted the ecological balance of the area, leaving the inhabitants with poverty, disease, widespread water pollution, and soil and land pollution. It is very intriguing to note that in the process of extracting oil and the petro-dollars that come with it, adequate consideration is not given to the more than ten million people who live in the Niger Delta. The unconscionable business habit of the oil companies in the area runs counter to the ideals of One Earth with its guarantee that there are no national boundaries in the atmosphere.

Militancy in the Delta: Implications for the Nigerian Economy

Okonta and Douglas (2001) in their work *Where the Vultures Feast* catalogue the various environmental problems of the Niger Delta, concluding that the area is the 'most endangered delta in the world'. The World Bank estimates that oil companies in Rivers and Delta States spill about 2,300m^3 of oil in 300 major accidents yearly (quoted in Okonta and Douglas 2001). As the oil companies, the Nigerian elites and the state appropriate the resources coming from the zone, the Niger Delta people sink further into poverty, hopelessness and despair. According to an editorial in the *Nigerian Guardian*, the UNDP is reported to have identified the Niger Delta 'as the poorest and the most backward oil-producing region in the world' (*The Guardian*, 15 July, 2008:18).

Successive Nigerian governments have paid lip service to the policy of developing the area, as their rhetoric is not translated into concrete action. It is therefore no gainsay that it was the chronic underdevelopment and environmental degradation of the area, which are the primary defining characteristics of the Delta, that gave birth to militancy and criminal activities in the area by various forces and organisations.

The struggle for resource control initially took the form of debates, campaigns, agitation and declarations, as the people used every available platform to ask for equity and environmental justice. In 1990, one of the ethnic groups in the Niger Delta founded a movement to actualise its dreams of controlling its resources, given the challenges confronting the region. That organisation was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). The organisation took the path of peaceful protest. It also demanded some form of economic and political autonomy within a new

Nigerian federation. Ken Saro-Wiwa, one of the leaders of MOSOP, in his introductory note to the Ogoni Bill of Rights, stated that 'the system of revenue allocation currently in force, whereby the natural resources of the minority areas in the Niger Delta are transferred to the majority ethnic groups is unjust, unfair and unethical, and a ready cause for dissension. Labouring under this catalogue of social injustice and open exploitation, there cannot be peace and stability – and therefore progress – in the Nigerian nation' (Ogoni Bill of Rights, 1990).

In 1992, there was the establishment of the Association of Minority Oil States (AMOS) comprising Delta, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers and Edo States. Their aims, amongst others, were:

(i) To press for an increase in the 1.5 per cent federal allocation to oil mineral producing areas, as the allocation was inadequate to cope with the region's problems.

(ii) To press for a more equitable revenue allocation, given the fact that Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom States produced over 85 per cent of total oil exported outside and consumed in the country.

There were also efforts by the then 17 southern governors of Nigeria to come together and speak with one voice on the issues of resource control.

These intellectual and non-violent efforts were spurned by the Nigerian state and its colluding oil partners. On 10 November, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of MOSOP were hanged after they were tried and convicted by a Military Tribunal for their alleged responsibility for the deaths of four Ogoni leaders on 21 May, 1994.

Since the killing of Saro-Wiwa and other members of MOSOP, the crisis in the Niger Delta has become very intractable, fuelling a jump in the prices of oil on the international oil market. Various groups and organisations have sprung up claiming responsibility for one sabotage action or another against the oil multinationals, including the kidnapping of their staff. Some of these groups include the South South Liberation Movement (SSLM); Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC); Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF); Movement for the Sovereign State of the Niger Delta (MSSND); Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND); Reformed Grand Alliance of Niger Delta (RGAND); Martyrs Brigade (MB); Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV); Niger Delta Patriotic Force (NDPF), etc. These groups and others operate both secretly and openly in the Niger Delta, causing great security challenges to the Nigerian state. The cycle of violence and militant agitation for a fair deal, by the youths especially, is causing serious disturbances in the Nigerian economy which depends so heavily on oil rents. The Federal Government has established a military Joint Task Force (JTF)

to handle the situation but the militant activities of the fighting groups have continued, incurring casualties for both government forces and the militant groupings.

In the 2008 budget, the Federal Government proposed to allocate N444.6 billion for security in the Niger Delta. In the same budget proposal, the government set aside only N69 billion for development in the area, through the Niger Delta Development Corporation (NDDC), whose over N300 billion constitutional funds had been withheld by the same Federal Government from 2001 to date. It is true that the security challenge faced by the Federal Government in the region is indeed grave. Our contention, however, is that if serious efforts and commitments are made towards developing the Niger Delta area, militant activities will be greatly reduced – if not completely stopped. But with the way events are unfolding in the Niger Delta, the prospects for a resolution of the crisis look dim, with great economic cost to the nation.

Thus, the birth of militancy has given rise to criminality and banditry as some of the organisations and individuals who claim to be fighting for justice and equity are exploiting the crisis in the region for their own ends. They kidnap oil workers and engage in various forms of illegal bunkering. Even, government security chiefs are alleged to be involved in illegal oil deals. The current secret trial of Henry Okah in Jos, Plateau State of Nigeria, is informed by a conscious strategy of the Nigerian state not to allow some dirty deals of some Nigerian army generals to be made public to Nigerians and the world at large. In the meantime, the oil crisis in the Niger Delta has thrown up emergency 'small and medium scale' so-called business tycoons as bunkering and such other illegal activities continue.

Conclusion

The Nigerian state and the elite forces within and outside the Niger Delta must take much of the responsibility for the crisis in the region. The oil companies pay only lip service to environmental standards, since the results of their activities in the Niger Delta would never be countenanced in their own countries. A change of attitude on the part of the Federal Government and its colluding oil multinationals is urgently needed. Militancy is a product of frustration arising from poverty, environmental degradation, unemployment and other forms of denial suffered by the region's indigenes. Government needs to rethink its development strategy in the region as it is clear that previous efforts have failed.

It is obvious that implicated in the crises of the Niger Delta are the state, its colluding elite, and the multinational oil giants who seem concerned only with their financial interests. The challenge is for a reconfiguration of the

Nigerian federation in such a manner that issues of equity, fairness, and true federalism will become the basis for interaction among the federating units. The current crises in the Niger Delta raise fundamental questions bordering on the stability of the country, and the need for an urgent and immediate resolution of the self-imposed logjam.

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The Potential Contribution of Love-Sex Songs to the Spread or Prevention of HIV/AIDS: The Case of the Oromo of Ethiopia[1]

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Abstract

This article examines the potential contribution of Oromo love-sex songs to the spread or prevention of the HIV/AIDS. It also shows how Oromo love songs express Oromo beliefs, sexual values, customs, meanings and interpretations of masculinity. The Oromo recite various songs to praise love/sex and lovers; they express, in a manner as explicit as the so-called modern songs, the joy of loving, being loved and the natural energies of lovely sex. They transmit critical information about the Oromo world view by reflecting the beliefs and the values enshrined in Oromo social institutions. This study reveals that Oromo love-sex songs can encourage or discourage risky sexual behaviour. It explains how some Oromo love songs when misunderstood, can influence people to engage in unsafe sex which can potentially spread the HIV/AIDS. Although Oromo sexual ethics are being challenged by external forces, there are some love songs that can educate young people to practise safe sex. Love songs thus can help people to determine real love/lovely sex and negotiate their understanding of sex and HIV/AIDS. This article suggests that Oromo love-sex songs should be critically re-examined to determine to what degree they put lives at risk, and reflect values concerning sexuality, love and gender relations.

Keywords: Gadaa, Saffuu, HIV/AIDS, Love Songs, Oromo, Sexual Ethics

Résumé

Cet article examine la contribution potentielle des chansons d'amour/sexe Oromo à la propagation ou la prévention de l'épidémie du VIH/SIDA. Il aborde également la façon dont les chansons d'amour Oromo traduisent les croyances, les valeurs sexuelles, les coutumes, les sens et interprétations de la masculinité chez les Oromo. Les Oromo chantent plusieurs chansons pour magnifier l'amour/le sexe et les amoureux. Ils expriment, d'une manière aussi explicite les chansons dites

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modernes, la joie d'aimer, d'être aimé et l'énergie naturelle que procure une vie sexuelle joyeuse. Ils transmettent des informations importantes sur le monde tel qu'il est perçu par les Oromo en reflétant les croyances et les valeurs qui trouvent leur siège dans les institutions sociales Oromo. Cette étude révèle que les chansons d'amour-sexe Oromo peuvent encourager ou dissuader des comportements sexuels à risque. Elle explique les proportions dans lesquelles certaines chansons d'amour Oromo, lorsqu'elles sont mal interprétées, peuvent inciter certaines personnes à s'adonner à de rapports sexuels non protégés susceptibles de favoriser la propagation de l'épidémie du VIH/SIDA. En dépit de la remise en cause des normes d'éthique sexuelle des Oromo par des facteurs externes, il existe des chansons d'amour qui peuvent encourager les jeunes à adopter des pratiques sexuelles sans risque. Les chansons d'amour peuvent donc permettre à des personnes de faire la différence entre le vrai amour/l'amour du sexe et affiner leur compréhension du lien entre sexualité et VIH/SIDA. Cet article soutient que les chansons d'amour/sexe Oromo devraient faire l'objet d'un examen critique pour déterminer dans quelle mesure celles-ci ont mis des vies en danger, et évoqué des valeurs relatives à la sexualité, l'amour et les relations entre les sexes.

Mots-clés: Gadaa, Saffuu, VIH/SIDA, Chansons d'amour, Oromo, éthique sexuelle

Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa has been hard hit by HIV/AIDS. So, in this era, AIDS has been one of the primary causes of death in the region. More than two-thirds of those with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the United Nations Programme on HIV /AIDS 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, as of the end of 2007, 33 million people in 147 countries are living with HIV/AIDS. In 2007, about 67 per cent of these people lived in sub-Saharan Africa, and 75 per cent of AIDS-related deaths occurred there too (UNAIDS 2008). It is thus important to try to understand the factors that can contribute to and block the expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa.

In this article, I will examine the nature of Oromo love-sex songs and their potential contribution to the expansion or prevention of HIV/AIDS. The Oromo represent the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia. Oromia is one of the nine administrative regions of Ethiopia. I will also show how Oromo love songs reflect Oromo beliefs, sexual values, customs, meanings and their interpretation of masculinity. Songs have the power to communicate ideas, activities and values, and can serve as a means to investigate shifts in values with the passage of time. Some love songs are segregated by gender, reinforcing gender roles in society. The message of various love-sex songs is explored in the social context of power relations and status considerations within the family and society.

Part one describes the methods used for this study. In part two, I will briefly review the works of numerous authorities on music in Ethiopian and

African cultures. In part three, I will examine how Oromo men, women and youth use love songs to seduce and establish relationships with their spouses, secret lovers and strangers. I will present love-sex songs under different themes although there is no absolute boundary between these themes. Part four deals with love songs by old men. Part five focuses on the educational role of love songs. The last part provides a general conclusion.

There are different types of songs in Oromia. In most cases, young men and women, and adults sing indigenous love songs in Oromia at different times in relation to different events. They sing individually or in groups depending on the situation. Particularly, herders sing love songs in the field without any restriction. Others sing at home, feasts, during religious ceremonies, national holidays, *gadaa* celebration (see below), engagement, marriage, social gatherings and private meetings. Some women sing different songs including love songs when they grind corn, spin cotton, and make butter and bread in rural Oromia.

Some love songs, for instance *gadaa* love songs, were not allowed in some parts of Oromia in the recent past because of government policy and the rise of foreign religions that despised Oromo social and religious values. Abyssinian rulers suspended *gadaa* as a political system in Oromo lands towards the end of the nineteenth century. There have only been *gadaa* rituals in some parts of Oromia. In such places, *gadaa* sex songs can only be sung once every eight years although youngsters may continue singing songs that have been composed by elderly people. Also, some religious people do not encourage the people to sing secular love songs. The proponents of some foreign religions even go to the extent of denying the existence of love songs. P. T. W. Baxter's observation in Kofele and Arsi, demonstrates this fact. 'Some elders, particularly pious Muslims, denied the existence of songs about love and women, but several young men, in private groups of two to four singers, were happy to sing them to me and I recorded between 150 and 160 short songs' (1974:809). Currently, *gadaa* love songs are being revived in most parts of Oromia because of government policy that allows each ethnic group in the country to promote its indigenous values. Although some modern Oromo musicians in one way or another have used some parts of traditional love-sex songs in their works, they have not yet systematically recorded explicit traditional love songs, and presented them for sale. Modern singers try to minimize explicit love songs that may be offensive to the general public. The only exception is that the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency has recorded some *gadaa* love songs, and sometimes transmits them to the public. On the other hand, modern Oromo singers have recorded their own individual songs and made them available to the public. In this article, I will examine Oromo traditional love-sex songs.

I hope my preliminary exposition will inspire others to carry it further than I have done as a researcher who is committed to such crucial problems to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS amongst the Oromo population without discrediting the value of Oromo's culture and tradition.

Methods

Both primary and secondary data were required for this study. I used both individual interviews and focus group discussions. While primary data were collected from people of all ages and both sexes in different parts of Oromia (in Ambo and Toke Kutaye districts, Western Oromia; North Western Shawa; Eastern Shawa, Kofale, Arsi, central Oromia, and Borana, southern Oromia) using participant observation, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews, secondary data were collected from published sources. I also interviewed knowledgeable elders and *gadaa* leaders from other parts of Oromia. The following criteria were used to select the study sites: familiarity with the study sites, HIV prevalence and the availability of authentic indigenous philosophy of sex and love. Most informants were selected in consultation with some experts in the Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, and government officials in the study sites. Interviews were conducted in Oromo language by the author, and three trained Oromo-speaking field assistants.

The main part of the research involved open-ended semi-structured in-depth interviews with various informants. At the end of the study 38 informants (31 males and 7 females) were interviewed. Three of the informants were Oromo *Qaalluu* religious leaders, and four of them were *gadaa* leaders. The study also involved focus group discussions in which three to eight participants discussed different aspects of Oromo sexuality, love songs and the *gadaa* system. Altogether five focus group discussion sessions (32 informants (22 males and 10 females)) were held in the study sites. Each focus group comprised between three and eight persons. Some informants were not interested in the subject of sex, and others did not want to discuss sexual matters with strangers. In particular, some women were reluctant to respond to my questions about love-sex songs. So, I was required to explain the purpose of my research to obtain the confidence of the informants.

My students in both the regular and extension programmes in 2006 have collected some songs in different parts of Oromia, for which I note my thanks. I am grateful as well to Tamene Bitima, Engineer Abera Bekele, Alemayehu Diro and Dereje Dugassa for sending me some love songs.

Anthropologists, sociologists, ethnologists, historians, musicologists and philosophers have studied love songs in different parts of the world, and their publications have proved valuable sources, complementary to my own findings.

In this article, the Oromo *Qube* script, adopted from the Latin alphabet, has been used to write Oromo words. But I have used the usual English spelling for the names of individuals and places. Most of the authors did not correctly write down Oromo words, but I corrected them for this purpose.

Literature on Songs in Africa

The brief review that follows highlights some of the key debates on different aspects of songs. There are different types of music in Africa. Cradle, love, historical, general, work, religious, and environmental songs are some of the common types of songs in Africa (Abrokwaa 1999:200). According to Kofi Agawu three types of music can be identified in contemporary Africa: traditional, popular and art music (2004:405). African traditional institutions nurtured traditional music, one which includes the ceremonial and ritual music; this music is associated with funerals, dirges, laments, and various forms of sacred drumming. The root of such musical genres is in pre-colonial Africa.

By contrast, Africa's encounter with Europe since the end of the nineteenth century has given rise to popular music. 'The musical language of popular music typically fuses European with African elements, including diatonic or modal melody, hymn-like harmony, memorable rhythmic *topoi*, and verbal texts broaching topical matters and drawing on techniques of African oral poetry' (Agawu, 2004:405). Popular music is available on records, cassettes and CDs. Singers use instruments like guitars, violins, woodwinds, the pianos and organs, the accordion, saxophones, trumpets, drums and rattles. The mass media for transmission of popular music include radio, television and oral performance in dance halls, clubs, cafés, community centres and schools.

The third type of music, art music, 'the least prominent of the three genres of music, represents another response to colonialism' (Agawu 2004:406). Such music has a small audience, and they are interested in contemplating music rather than dancing or moving with it as usually happens at performances of traditional and popular music (Agawu 2004:406). Agawu's opinion is that the colonial experience in Africa gave rise to the popular and the art musical genres. Yet, it is possible that yesterday's popular music can be changed to today's traditional music; since the re-creation and transformation of music has always existed in African communities (Agawu 2004:406).

As Agawu notes, traditional music serves as the basis to inspire composers of popular and art music. In rural areas, traditional music is also common, although one can find popular music there because of the impact of radio and of educated children who have access to popular music in

urban areas. My young informants sang both classical and popular songs. So, it is difficult to sketch a clear border between the two. Traditional music is also found in urban areas because of migration and the influence of young children from rural areas who are stationed there to pursue their studies.

Traditional songs reflect people's culture and world view. So, to gain a deeper understanding of African songs, one should have an acquaintance with the basics of African civilization and traditions. In this connection, John Miller Chernoff writes: '[t]he reason why it is a mistake ''to listen'' to African music is that African music is not set apart from its social and cultural context' (1979, quoted in Agawu 2004:410).

In Africa, different ethnic groups have imparted history, cultural traditions and skills, the laws, customs, and political institutions to the young generation through music education (Abrokwaa 1999:194 and 198; see also Kebede 1995:38-39). Addisu Tolesa (1990), for instance, explains how the Oromo *geerarsa* (song) serves as a repository of history, a medium of self-expression and national identity. Songs can also teach the younger generation the value of the natural environment, the responsibility of individuals to community and family, the principles of family living and adult obligations. They can inculcate respect and responsibility among the people (Abrokwaa 1999:202). Some song texts can further tease, quarrel, or serve to criticise individuals who failed to perform their duty. A wife can use cradle songs to criticise an irresponsible husband and thereby remind him to be responsible and take care of his child. Consider the following cradle song of a certain wife:

> 'Stop my child
>
> I am the only one here to help you
>
> We are two but I am always one with two hands and two feet
>
> The other hands and feet are always drinking because they don't care
>
> Stop crying my child' (Abrokwaa 1999:201).

Love songs can also contribute to the struggle against HIV/AIDS. Many modern African singers have tried to raise awareness about the danger of HIV/AIDS. A case in point is Luambo Makiadi, a Congolese musician and composer in the former Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC). He used his songs to erode the walls of silence surrounding AIDS. One of the songs he released in 1987 is entitled 'Attention *na SIDA*' [roughly, 'Beware of AIDS'] (Eaton 2004:280). According to David Eaton,

> ... the 16-minute piece became arguably the single greatest public contribution to AIDS awareness – as defined in secular Western and biomedically informed terms

> – in francophone central Africa in the decade. The song's lyrics broke public silences and spoke powerfully to the emerging crisis. Declaimed in French and Lingala [a language widely spoken upriver from Brazzaville and Kinshasa], they were heard throughout francophone Africa in the years that followed (2004:280).

Through his songs Luambo explained the suffering and abandonment of ill persons; the impact of AIDS on all nations, races and ages, means of protection; the responsibility of rich countries to offer poor countries help to fight AIDS rather than weapons that incite them to killing (Makiadi 1987, cited in Eaton 2004:280-281). The following songs are examples that reflect his message. Calling to researchers, Luambo invoked the spirits of Pasteur and Fleming, singing:

> We await vaccines
>
> We await medicines
>
> Seven, eight, ten years
>
> *Share* your knowledge
>
> Don't work in closed circles! …
>
> It is now your turn
>
> Conquer this evil which terrorizes humanity
>
> (Makiadi 1987, cited in Eaton 2004:280).

The following song in Lingala stresses how AIDS has attacked humanity as a whole without any discrimination:

Benda nzoto ngai nabendi nzoto mama	Protect yourself as I protect myself
Benda ya yo ngai nabendi na ngai.	Save yourself as I save myself
SIDA eponi ekolo te mama	AIDS strikes all nations
Sida eponi lopso te mama	AIDS strikes all races
S*IDA eponi age te mama*	AIDS strikes all ages
Bamama tokeba	Mothers [women] let's beware
Batata tokeba	Fathers [men] let's beware

Luambo's song in French appealed to the youth and governments of rich countries to protect themselves and to support 'developing' nations in the fight against HIV/AIDS respectively.

Youth
attention
AIDS attacks you
Especially you
Force of life in society
If you want to protect yourself …
Avoid dangerous sex …
Avoid many partners …
Governments of the rich countries
offer them means to fight AIDS
Not weapons
Which incite them to killing
The real struggle
Is the fight against AIDS
Brothers and sisters … (Makiadi 1987, cited in Eaton 2004:280-281).

Moreover, various musicians in Senegal, Mali, Kenya, and South Africa have played an important role in educating the people about the dangers of HIV/AIDS and safe sex (Steinriede 2007). Angelique Kidjo, of Benin, Baaba Maal, Senegal and Femi Kuti, Nigeria, serve as United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors and assist the HIV/AIDS education programmes (Steinriede 2007).

Love Songs in Ethiopia

Although different ethnic groups in Ethiopia have their own distinct love-songs, there has been little research on love-sex songs in the country. Michael Powne's observation in 1968 seems to be the case even in the twenty-first century. 'Ethiopia's music is perhaps the only large area of African music that has not yet received the single-minded attention of great scholars' (1968:127). In his recent work, Simneh Betrreyohanes has also supported the view that music in Ethiopia has been among the least explored topics in Ethiopian studies (2008:12).

Research shows that some travellers had documented Ethiopian music before the twentieth century (for details see Shelemay and Jeffery 1997). Aleqa Taye Gebremarian for his part studied Ethiopian folk songs and Abyssinian children's songs and games in the first decade of the twentieth century (cited in Betreyohannes, 2008). Two scholars, C. Mondon-Vidailhet (1922 cited in Powne 1968:vii) and Sylvia Pankhurst (1955) wrote about

liturgical, *Azmari* (Ethiopian troubadour), and other genres of music. Two Hungarian folklorists gathered folk-dances and folk-music from different parts of the country in 1964 (Vadasy 1970). Michael Powne (1968) examined ecclesiastical and secular Ethiopian music. Powne's work is based on the works of Mondon-Vidailhet and Pankhurst. Tibor Vadasy studied Amhara dances in Gojam, Minjar and Gonder (1970), Tegré and Guragé dances (1971) and Wällo and Oromo dances (1973). Zenebe Bekele (1987), Ashenafi Kebede (1971 and 1995) and other Ethiopian and foreign writers studied different aspects of Ethiopian music. The majority of available studies on Ethiopian music have focused on the music of the Semitic people in Ethiopia.

Some scholars (for example., Enrico Cerulli 1922; P.T.W. Baxter 1974; Alessandro Triulzi and Tamene Bitima, 1996; Claude Sumner 1996; Tesema Ta'a 2004) have directly documented and investigated different types of Oromo songs. Moreover, the Oromo Bureau of Culture and Information (1993) documented wedding songs.

Like other African people the Oromo people have different types of songs in accordance with their world view. These songs are partly based on the *Oromo gadaa* system and religion. They have been developing and changing over centuries. In what follows, I will briefly review some works on the *Gadda* system and Oromo love songs.

The *Gadaa* System and Oromo Sexual Ethics

Although some Oromo monarchies began to challenge its political function, before the invasion of Oromo by the Abyssinian leaders at the end of the nineteenth century, the Oromo had their own indigenous *gadaa* system (see Legesse 1973 and 2000; Baissa 1994). The *gadaa* system is a democratic egalitarian system which has its own leaders who conduct government (political, economic, social, judicial, legislative, ritual and military affairs) of the Oromo for non-renewable eight-year terms. It is an emblem of Oromo identity. One generation-grade is said to rule for eight years before being replaced with another. In the *gadaa* system, the filial and paternal classes assume power at different times, and there is no way for both to control power for an indefinite period of time. No ruling group can hold office for more than eight years. All leaders are subject to criticism from their fellows. In addition, the *gadaa* law allows the people to remove unfit or corrupt officials even before their term has expired. Human beings are the real authors of laws and all men including *abbaa gadaa* (president of *gadaa* in power) are required to observe such laws, as laws stand above all human beings. Representation of different groups in the *gadaa* system is based on strict rules, which in turn maintain balanced opposition and distribution of power. This in turn promotes egalitarian norms over hierarchy.

The growing power of Oromo war leaders, landlords, kings, the relaxation of some of the rules of the *gadaa* system, particularly the age limits of child rearing, geographical distance, difficult terrains and the spread of Islam are some of the reasons that weakened the *gadaa* system. Finally, the Abyssinian rulers suspended and neglected the role of the *gadaa* system in most parts of Oromia towards the end of the nineteenth century. Some Oromo were killed for trying to promote the *gadaa* system. In spite of this, the Oromo *gadaa* system has been a living tradition among the Borana, Guji and Gabra Oromo in southern Ethiopia. There have been democratic values and practices without the functioning of the political aspects of *gadaa* in some parts of Oromo lands where the people practise Orthodox Christianity and/or the indigenous Oromo religion. The people have been free to sing erotic *gadaa* songs in most of these areas. However, Muslim and Protestant Oromo had abandoned the *gadaa* system and its values altogether. However, those who were not converted can participate in the *gadaa* ceremony. The point to be noted is that the new religions and the Oromo *gadaa* system favour different sexual mores. As I said earlier, after 1991, Muslim Oromo have been trying to reinstitute the *gadaa* system in their localities although it is not clear whether they have tolerated *gadaa* love songs. One of my informants was a Muslim *abbaa gadaa* from Western Hararge, Western Oromia.

The *gadaa* national assembly formulated and revised the laws including those which govern sexual relationships. Accordingly, the Oromo have a profound ethic of sexuality that regulates marriage, sexuality and other related activities. Partly, Oromo religious beliefs and customs are the bases of guidance. Beliefs about love, marriage, and parenthood are based on beliefs regarding sexuality which in turn are intermingled with laws on sex and values. Thus, there are different cultural and social controls that govern sexual activities.

According to the Oromo world view, *Waaqa* (God) is the creator of all things in the world. *Ayyaana* (spirit) is a manifestation of the unique *Waaqa*. The spirits act as the intermediary between human beings and *Waaqa*. All creatures are essentially affected by the harmonious relationship between *Waaqa* and the Earth. The relationship between *Waaqa* and other things is governed by *saffuu or ceeraa fokko*.

Saffuu is a moral concept that serves as the ethical basis for regulating practices in order to ensure a high standard conduct appropriate to different situations. *Saffuu* is a mediating element between different things. Thus, *saffuu* regulates human beings' activities (for details see Kelbessa 2002). As will be seen in the course of this article, Oromo love songs are expected to be compatible with accepted ethical principles.

Types of Oromo Songs

The themes of Oromo traditional songs include love songs, marriage songs, war songs, praise songs, hunting songs, ballads, drinking songs, insult songs, political songs, social songs, religious songs, birth songs, lullabies, funeral songs, cattle songs, pastoral songs, and so on. Claude Sumner (1997) classified Oromo songs according to literary genres: love songs, heroic, 'historical', pastoral, festive and religious, satirical, gnomic songs and songs belonging to multiple literary types. Sumner stresses the abundance of images in Oromo songs that are related with an all-round view of reality. Images in Oromo songs 'represent the totality of the physical world: man, animals, plants and trees, material inorganic things plus the world of artificial objects: artifacts, food and beverage, clothing' (Sumner 1997:332).

The word '*sirba*' or *weedduu* refers to the songs being sung and played by the people. It has different components sung by different group of people in relation to different issues. In Borana, for instance, the word 'song' has many equivalents such as *baleela, faaruu, geerarsa, gooba, iyangaloo, kaarilee, laalee, ruddii, mokkee, olka, rarree (*religious songs*) and weeduu,* (for more details see Leus with Salvadori 2006:591-592). *Wellu* is a song on love; to praise or do compliment. It is popular among the young boys in Arsi, central Oromia. It is used to refer to both an individual song and the genre (Baxter 1974:809).

Traditional Oromo songs have been changing over centuries. Some songs are newly created by the singers in response to new changes and influences. The Amhara, Somali, Gurage and other ethnic groups in Ethiopia and Kenya have influenced traditional Oromo songs. Other songs are similar at different places in Oromia. Modern Oromo singers sing both indigenous and popular love songs and at times there is no way to indicate that a particular song is traditional or popular. The instrumentation that accompanies modern singers represents a fusion of European and Oromo popular music, ranging from guitar, organ, and saxophone to traditional African instruments such as *masenqo* (one-stringed fiddle), drum, lyre, a bamboo flute and the like. Popular Oromo songs are being recorded on CDs, cassettes and shifted to electronically produced music.

Unlike some denominations of Christianity in Africa, the Oromo do not consider sex as a necessary evil. They use various songs, proverbs, riddles, games and parables to praise sex. According to Sumner, many Oromo love songs

> 'are simply variations on the theme: the joy of love. The metaphors and comparisons vary from song to song, but the basic thought is ever the same: the heart breaks, enflamed, intoxicated, runs away; thought of the girl makes the lover glow, and takes away his own judgement. The variety of experiences is only matched by their beauty' (1996:53).

However, Oromo love songs go further than the joy of love despite the fact that some love songs are cheerful celebrations of love. As I will show later, they represent an Oromo world view on art-music, deity, love and sexual ethics. Love songs come in a variety of forms. Some love songs reflect the beauty of love and the happiness it brings, the appraisal or appreciation of the person being loved and subjective feelings. Other love songs are concerned with the lover without directly addressing the mutuality between lover and beloved. They relate the lover's desire, suffering or impairment. Although there can be an interconnection between love and sex, love songs do not necessarily lead to sexual activity. Some love songs are designed for entertainment and do not necessarily lead to sexual intercourse despite the fact that they are sexually explicit poems. However, some individuals may use such songs to take advantage of members of the opposite sex. It is also important to indicate that some love songs refer to spiritual love or longing for God; parental love and love of children for parents; love of friendship, family, a country, principle, or goal; love of material objects, animals and activities promoted by individuals and so on. In other words, love can exist without any sexual expression.

As Tesema Ta'a (2004) notes, the existence of various Oromo love songs reflects how much the society has been open in expressing its feelings. In Oromo society, children are not totally prevented from having access to information about sex. Children are free to listen to the discussion of their parents and other adults about love and sex. Children are indirectly instructed with songs, riddles, games and parables of a more explicit character. The favourite music of both adults and children is the love songs. Children are not subject to punishment because of their songs. However, in the current context of the threats of HIV/AIDS, if there is no conversation between children and their parents about the risks involved in sexual activities the risk of unsafe sex amongst the children becomes higher.

Findings

Love songs can be categorized into different groups. Some of them are choral songs. It is true that men and women have their personal favourite love songs. The reader should note that Oromo singers use different clauses which are not directly related to the message of their songs, in order to form a rhyme or a kind of parallelism of sounds or images. Sometimes the singer introduces different things in order to compare them with love. Sometimes there is no connection between the first couplet and the second in content. Many expressions are repeated in Oromo songs. A repeated line – called 'hook' in modern music – is easy to be remembered and catches the listener's attention.

Group Songs

Group songs include *gadaa* songs, *dhichisa* (a kind of circle dance, a warlike dance performed by men only) during marriage and other collective works, *ragada,* usually performed by two lines of dancers facing each other at close distance, *hurmiso* (a popular song by young boys who are interested in inviting girls to marriage), *hiiyyasee*, *shuubiisaa*, *soogidoo, gello*, *huurubsaa,* and so on. Both men and women sing *shuubiisaa* (in Jimma), *tirri* (in Arsi), *shaggoyyee,* a variation of the '*ragada*' (in Hararge), *ragada,* (in Arsi, Bale, Guji, Karrayyuu, and in other parts of Oromia), *hiiyyasee* and *gello* (in Macha). Vadasy (1973) considers '*icisa*' [*dhichisa*] and '*ragada*' as the two typical forms of Oromo dance. As he notes, '[t]he basic form of the "Rägäda", performed by both sexes, has of course a definite erotic character. If the dance is performed by members of the same sex only the characteristics of friendship and easy enjoyment dominate' (Vadasy 1973:227). The character of dance is determined by different tribes and circumstances. Men sing love songs when they work together and during marriage ceremonies their bodies shake with the feeling of ecstasy. In most cases, group songs involve the soloist or lead singer and those who have joined in the chorus. I will briefly discuss some of these songs.

Group Songs by Men

Men sing various love songs originating in erotic fantasia. Some singers blow *ullulle* (a bamboo flute) which emits a beautiful sound to attract girls and women of their choice. Men try to attract girls and women by their words for their looks, dress, beauty, talents, charming personality and cooking. They want them to join them as their lovers. By using both plain and figurative languages, they express their feelings and desires. The variety of sound, the rhythmic pattern, and the syllable structure (stressed and unstressed) of the words have a tremendous impact on the allusions and messages of the singers.

Gadaa *Songs*

The Oromo men sing *gadaa* songs which are also known as *sirbaa buutta* and *foollee dhitu* before and during the *gadaa* ceremony once every eight years. These songs have different forms. The *gadaa* songs such as *foolliyyoo rooba* (the fooliyo in the rain) and *ofkali yaa lubakoo*[2] (my generation class let you succeed and be safe) do not focus on sex, because they express different features of each *gadaa* period. *Foollee rooba* is a song sung towards the end of the *gadaa* ceremony. For instance, in Macha Oromo, there are five *gadaa* periods, namely *Roobalee, Birmajii, Horata, Michillee* and *Duulo. Roobalee* is named after rain. The *gadaa* song which will be sung usually during *gadaa* period contains the following phrase: 'Yaa Roobalee yaa

roobashii' – 'The Roobalee; it is bountiful rain'. During *Roobalee* the people plant many trees. *Roobalee* brings happiness and prosperity. *Birmajii* is believed to be the period of songs. This song is formulated as 'Yaa Birmajji, yaa sirbashi' – 'Oh Birmajji, the beauty of her songs'. *Horata* points out to the years of excellent cattle breeding. One of the *gadaa* songs involves the following: 'Yaa Horata maal godhataa' – 'Oh the wealthy, what does he do?' Michelle is characterised as a friend of war. One line of the song includes: 'Yaa Michile yaa miichu duula' – 'Oh Michille! a friend of war expedition'. During this *gadaa* period individuals fight and kill one another. The last *gadaa* grade, *Duuloo*, is filled up with war and famine. *Duuloo* has the nick-name 'bututtuu' – threadbare. Although each *gadaa* period has its own special feature, the year of *gadaa* itself is believed to be a year of prosperity. Men start their song with the following admission: 'Baraa gadaa, barakataa' – 'the year of *gadaa* is full of abundance'. Men in the evening sing and eat different types of food before and on the day of the ceremony, as the termination of each *gadaa* initiation period is followed by a great ritual feast.

The Oromo men who belong to the *gadaa* class in question will undergo circumcision in most cases when they are 40 or older. After the operation is successfully completed, the husband would stay in isolation for five days. He is expected to have sexual relationships with his wife on the fifth day. His health and power will be confirmed after sexual contact with his wife or lover. The circumcised sexual organ is expected to conquer a woman in a sexual combat. During the fifth day, his wife prepares porridge, *cukoo* (roasted barley the flour of which is mixed with butter and spices) and visits him to have sexual intercourse. If some one has no wife, he must have sex with his lover. This phenomenon gives a window into Oromo sexual ethics. In Oromo society a man can have a lover before marriage. In this connection, one may think that among the Oromo sex is meant for love, and sex in marriage is not necessarily so. If one does not have a wife and a lover, one has to pretend to have sex with a tender plant called *bosoqee* (plump – that is, fat in a pleasant looking way); sexual intercourse is compulsory after circumcision. According to respondents, among others, *gadaa* love songs are designed for the circumcised person and remind his wife about the necessity of sex (see below). *Gadaa* love songs have the aim of emphasising sexual pleasure and transmitting the nature and value of sex to the young generation. My informants in Ambo said that the *gadaa* celebration is incomplete, unless love songs are part of it.

For Oromo men, the *gadaa* circumcision rite does not admit their entry into the realm of adults, and the granting of sexual license, although most of the married adults have gone through various types of training and being tested. In other African societies, circumcision initiation elevates an individual

from childhood to adulthood. In Oromo society, fertility and the taking over of power follow circumcision (regarding circumcision and the *gadaa* system, see Legesse 1973 and 2000).

Unlike other common love songs, *gadaa* songs are seasonal; they are allowed only during the *gadaa* ceremony for a few specific days. What makes these songs different from other love songs is that all segments of the society are not formally allowed to sing them. Among the Macha, Tulamma and Arsi Oromo, when the rule is strictly observed, only the young adults in the *foollee grade* sing *gadaa* love songs; sometimes men in other *gadaa* grades and children may participate in these songs. One of the tasks of the *foollee* group is providing military service to the *gadaa* government in power. *Abbaa gadaa*, the presiding councillor of the national assembly, as the leader of the people, and the *qalluu* ritual leaders should not actively participate in *gadaa* love songs. *Abbaa gadaa* can start the song and give guidance to the *foollee* group. *Gadaa* love songs are not universally sung in all parts of Oromia. For instance, they are not common among the Guji Oromo, southern Oromia. Furthermore, *saffuu* is abandoned for few days, once every eight years when people freely sing erotic *gadaa* songs. It is said that God's creation has no inhibitions. While most ordinary love songs are idiomatically expressed, *gadaa* songs are used to allude explicitly to sexual organs and stimulate sexual activities. It seems that this brief period is clearly used to communicate sexual affairs to the future generation. The following songs capture the openness of *gadaa* songs: 'Agaadaan gaaniitti hirkatte, kan gadaa qaanii fixate' – 'A cane leans on a clay pot. The *gadaa* song ignores decency or politeness'. 'Maalifuu yaa jaranaa?' – 'You people if you ask why it is so?', 'Bara gadaatu akkanaa' – 'It is because, the time of *gadaa* is like this'. As noted earlier, among others, *saffuu* is an ethical principle that regulates sexual relationships between the opposite sexes. Some *gadaa* songs seem to violate ethical principles. These songs are officially sung in the presence of husbands, wives, elders and children. The Oromo sexual ethic considers this act as normal at a particular period of time. This type of explicit sexual language usage is an offensive usage of language in other cultures.

Before starting to sing *gadaa* love songs, the members of the *foollee* group request the father of kraal (the person who was circumcised) to open the door for them.

Yaa u´raa fi muraa karraa na bannii.	The hole and circumcision open the entrance for me.
Yaa bokkuu[3] *nanaa karraa naa bannii.*	You the sceptre open the entrance for me.
Saddettaan gadaa karraa na banii.	The eight *gadaas* open the entrance for me.
*Abba qe'ee karraa naa bann*i.	The owner of the courtyard open it for me.

This introductory song is followed by *sayyoo*. *Gadaa* songs start with the expression '*yaa sayyoo'*. Elders and the members of the *gadaa* class can sing *sayyoo*. After general *gadaa* songs, the members of the *foollee* grade sing *gadaa* love songs. Among others they used the expression '*foolliyyoo rooba'*. The word '*rooba*' means rain. At the end of the eight year cycle in the *gadaa* system, the atmosphere is believed to be pregnant with rain that enables different trees to blossom. It is a time for rain and dance. Thus, those who participate in the song praise the green environment and the role of the members of the *foollee gadaa* group. The following are examples of *gadaa* songs.

Soloist [S]*: Foolliyyoo roobaa birbirsi daraarre yaa foollee*.	The fooliyo in the rain, a millettia (Podocarpus falcatus) tree has flowered
Follower [F]: *Yaa foollee birbirsi daraaree yaa foollee*	Oh *foolle*e, a millettia tree has given flower, oh *foollee.*
S: *Birbirsi sangotaa.*	The milletia tree of oxen.
Mirmirsi gadaake.	Shake your *gadaa.*
Gadaa Aabbootaa	The *gadaa* of fathers.
Foolliyyoo roobaa birbirsii daraarre yaa foollee	The foolyo during rain the milletia tree has given flower oh *foollee*
Kunoo akkana wayyaa roobaa	It is better thus when it rains,
birbirsi daraarre yaa foollee.	the millettia tree will give its flowers, oh *foollee.*
F: *Yaa foollee birbirs daraaree yaa foollee,*	Oh foollee, a millettia tree is flowering, oh *foollee*.
Birbirsi jabbootaa.	The millettia tree of calves.
Mirmirsi garaakee	Shake your heart.
Digisi gadaakee.	Prepare a feast for your *gadaa*.
Gadaa aabootaa.	The *gadaa* of fathers.
Kunoo akkana wayyaa roobaa.	Here it is better when it rains,
Birbiris daraaree yaa foollee.	The millettia tree has given flowers, oh *foollee*.

If Mr Kajela was circumcised during the *gadaa* ceremony, the song would be the following. It has the message that sex has the power of healing a circumcised person.

Oh ee raajii gadaa kee.	Oh the wonder of your *gadaa*.
Raajii jaarsaa guraachaa	The wonder of a black old man.
Raajii intala diimituu.	The wonder of a brown girl.

Qajeelaan maal godhi jettee?	What did you say to Kajela?
Rayiiti rayii ofkaalli jete?	Did you say have sexual intercourse, and feel gratified?
Maal qallee gallu laataa?	What shall I slaughter and go home?
Maal sallee gallu laataa?	Whom shall I make love to and go home?
Maalifuu yaa jaranaa	You people if you ask why it is so?
Bara gadaatu akkanaa.	It is because, the time of *gadaa* is like this.
Raadaa muxaa qali jettee?	Did you say slaughter a heifer with a white spot?
Haadha mucaa saalii jettee?	Did you say make love to a mother of a baby?
Raadaa muxaa hin qalu waawuu!	No I don't want to slaughter a heifer with a white spot!
Haadha mucaa hin saluu waawuu!	No I don't want to make love to a mother of a baby.
Arangamaan hin shokoksa.	*Arangama* (*Pterrolobium stellatum*) tree rustles.
Salimi hamaan hin bokoksa.	Hard sex makes a woman bloated.
Ya fasee qarqara udduu.	The vagina on the edge of the anus.
As gorii qallaba fuddhu.	Come to me and take your ration.
Wadalli qorqaa jiraa hoyyo leemmoo.	A robust donkey is grazing.
Sallaan ilma deette.	I had sex with a woman and she gave birth to a child.
Yaa zinnaara sabbataa.	Leather bullet case belt that goes around the waist.
Jaarsi jaartii raawu gabbataa.	An old man having sex with an old woman gains weight.
Foolummaan natti dhuftee.	The scent comes to me.
Bara ruxeen ijaa tufte.	When a vagina spits an eye.
	[When woman has no shame asking for sex]
Yaa abbaa Sharu Sharuu.	The father of *Sharu*, *Sharu*.
Duubaan haa ta'u garuu.	Let it be from behind [a doggy style].
Yaa abbaa Sharakkatee.	The father of *Sharakate*.
Duubaan itti rakkatee.	It was entangled at the back.

	[took on the trouble of doing it from behind]
Dubee yaa ilma Ruksii.	*Dube* the son of *Ruksi*.
Duuban naa futurukisi.	Bend forward and let me get it from behind.
	Bend over and bring it (the vagina) forth for me]
Dubee yaa ilma Jimaalee.	Dube the son of *Jimale*.
*Duubaan natti miaa'ye*e.	It is so sweet from behind.
Foolliyyoo foolliyyoo	The *foolyo* during rain, The *foolyo* during rain.
Yaa yeroo ijoolluummaa	The time of childhood.
Foolleen keenyaa nugussaa.	Our *foollee* is an emperor.
Hodhaa sukkumaa jette buqushaa.	Here take vagina and massage it, says the girl.
Foolleen kenna nugussaa.	Our *foollee* is an emperor.
Hodhaa sukkumaa jette buqushaa.	Here take vagina and massage it, says the girl.
Qanxiin rarraasaa buutee,	A hook drops from its hanging.
Jaartii marga fudhannee.	We hold grass in respect of an old woman.
Jaarsaa marga fuudhane.	We hold grass in respect of an old man.
Jaartiin dharasaa duute.	The old lady is dying for sex.
Yaa qanxii ani sin qarruu.	A hook, I will not sharpen you.
Yaa jaartii ani sin saluu.	An old woman, I don't want to have sex with you.
Qanxii yoo qaran maali?	What is wrong if one sharpens the hook?
Jaartii yoo salan maalii?	What is wrong if one has sexual intercourse with an old lady?
Yaa harree guurraa baajii.	A donkey with in-growing horned ears.
Waan tolluf qaba faseen dur baa faaqii.	There is good reason why the sexual organ of a tanner's daughter is good.

The following songs refer to the importance of sexual intercourse in bed. Generally, most men claim they do not like women who do not move during love making. Several respondents are of the opinion that without the active participation of a woman, sex amounts to copulating with a corpse.

Ro'oonni Abbaa Boruu tuluutti gir jettee.	The goats of *Boru*'s father flocked to the hills.

Maa soch'uu diide.	Why did you refuse to move while you were in bed?
Muluu xiliq jettee?	Were you filled with boiled grain?
Yaa harree gurraa darsaa.	A donkey with broad ears.
Nitii hin soofanne cabootti dabarsaa.	Transfer to *Chabo* a woman who lay still in bed.

Men in Ambo sang the last song, because the people in Chabo area undergo circumcision at an early age, and some of them do not follow the *gadaa* system.

After considering explicit sexual references in *gadaa* sex songs, one may assume that the Oromo people have no restrictions regarding sex. One way of replying to this position is to reiterate that *gadaa* songs are not common songs one may enjoy at any time. It would be unethical and a violation of the *gadaa* laws to sing *gadaa* sex songs outside the prescribed period of time. But this does not rule out the fact that herders can sing these songs in the grazing area. The point is that adults cannot do so. Thus, it would be wrong to think that the Oromo people have no inhibitions regarding sex.

However, one can reasonably argue that if the young people are not aware of the danger of unprotected sex, *gadaa* sex songs may have a negative impact on their behaviour. To put matters another way, although there has been no study regarding the impact of *gadaa* songs on the expansion of the epidemic HIV/AIDS among the Oromo people, it is very probable that these songs can motivate both men and women to have unprotected sex during the *gadaa* celebration, and may expose them to HIV/AIDS at the time.

One may question my position because of the fact that the *gadaa* ceremony takes place every eight years and it does not have a significant impact on the sexual behaviour of the youth. It can also be stated that *gadaa* is one of the oldest systems of the Oromo with various institutions, and the g*adaa* songs are more or less as old as the system itself. HIV is, however, a modern virus that has evolved in the last decades of the twentieth century. If so, in what ways does one relate both?

I certainly understand that one cannot establish a direct relationship between *gadaa* love songs and the spread of HIV. It is not necessarily the case that *gadaa* and other songs about love and sex among the Oromo lead to unsafe sex or HIV. What is expressed in a song may not be easily transformed into practice. It is not necessarily the case that men would go on the hunt just because they heard a song that arouses their sexual desires. What matters is the context of the song. It is not so much the song itself but whether there is also any formal and informal education about what causes

HIV. There has to be an enabling environment for love songs to influence sexual behaviour. It should also be stressed that HIV/AIDS is not simply a behavioural phenomenon. Other factors, such as economic, cultural, historical and political factors can shape the pattern of HIV spread. It is true that the *gadaa* system does not release sexual restrictions during *gadaa* celebration and allow every body to enjoy sex unlike some ethnic groups in Africa.

Although it is not easy to establish a causal relationship between *gadaa* love songs and the spread of HIV/AIDS, sexually explicit *gadaa* songs may influence both men and women particularly in rural areas where there is no regular awareness programme about the causes of HIV. When different groups of people freely sing *gadaa* love songs and move from village to village during *gadaa* celebration, some youngsters may engage in unprotected sex. Although there are various contradictory views about the origin of HIV, the HIV/AIDS crisis is a current phenomenon. HIV has been expanding its territory and attacking human beings all over the world. The growing threat posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic has added to the urgency of examining and controlling all possible routes of HIV transmission. According to some informants, the *gadaa* leaders have already noted this imminent danger in Ambo and Toke Kutaye districts, Western Oromia. They are of the opinion that *gadaa* sex songs may motivate some young men and women to engage in unprotected sex. Following the spread of HIV/AIDS, the *gadaa* assemblies in different parts of Oromia have stressed that it would be wrong to have illegal sexual relationship during the *gadaa* celebration. However, they did not suspend g*adaa* sex songs.

It can also be thought that if lovers are faithful to each other, they can avoid the danger of being infected with the virus. But even then, there is a word of caution. How can we be sure that immature children are restrained from having unprotected sexual intercourse with varying partners? There is no simple answer to this question. We can only suggest that parents should teach their children the danger of engaging in untimely and unsafe sex. In the long run, those who refused to listen to the advice of the physician, parents, and directors have to suffer in many ways for their wrong step.

I have no illusion that abandoning *gadaa* love songs can avoid the risk of being infected by HIV. What I have suggested is that the Oromo *gadaa* leaders, parents and their children should try to make sure that *gadaa* love songs are not the instruments of the deadly disease. There are other means of HIV transmission that also need to be controlled. Local, national and international interventions are required to reduce the chance of being infected by the virus. It is important to address political, economic, social and cultural problems of the society to respond to the growing threat of HIV/AIDS.

On the other hand, *gadaa* with its rules, regulations and principles based on the concept of *saffuu* can be an instrument to fight HIV/AIDS. As stated above, extramarital sex during the *gadaa* celebration is not encouraged and permitted. The *gadaa* leaders have been teaching the people to protect themselves from the deadly disease. Moreover, one remarkable aspect of the *gadaa* celebration is that the *foollee* group takes corrective measures against *sigabaa,* an illegal inheritor of a widow. *Sigabaa* is a person who illegally inherited a widow without meeting the required rules for widow inheritance. Some times he has sexual contact with more than one widow. He may not be a relative or brother of the deceased husband. In most parts of Oromia, the members of the *foollee* group despise *sigabaa* for inheriting the widow for the sake of exploiting her. They humiliate him by tearing down his clothes and physically punishing him. They chase all *sigabaas* away and force the widows who gave them shelter to submit them to the *foollee* group. They seduce them as if they were women. Such men and women are considered the same. Such men already know what will happen to them during the *gadaa* celebration. They sometimes approach the leaders of *foollee* and give them money so that they forgive them. Nobody would challenge the *foollee* group when they undertake this disciplinary measure against the *sigabaas.* Some of the songs of the *foollee* group include the following.

Sigabaa ijoolleen darbattu kubootanii.	Children chase *sigaba* away with the dry cow dung.
Gaafa tokkotti ija baleessan gobanii,	They will damage his eye one day.
Weenniin birbirsa kortee teechee,	A colobus monkey climbs a millettia tree and sits on it.
Michilleen foollome jennaan,	*Sigaba* runs away and enters a
sigabaan dheechitee dannii seentee.	bush after hearing that *Michile* became *foollee.*

Thus, the *gadaa* system can be one of the instruments in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Interestingly enough, it challenges extramarital sex. One has to marry in order to have sex with a known woman. In Oromo tradition a man can have more than one wife if one meets the requirements of marriage. But a woman cannot have more than one husband.

Soogidoo Songs

Sirba soogidoo (*soogidoo* song) is popular in Borana. *Sogidaa* literally means salt. *Soogidoo* is a group of people who go to dig salt and bring it back. Men going to or coming from the salt craters sing *laalee* song about women, with sexual innuendos, insults. They sing *soogidoo* songs to stimulate sexual

desire. They explicitly mention the coital positions and sex in their songs. The Borana sexual ethics do not allow men to sing this song at home. It is sung while individuals are walking in group in the field. What makes this song different from *kaarilee* (see below) is that both married and unmarried men can sing it. However, both married and unmarried women cannot sing *soogidoo*. The following is one example of *soogidoo* song

Rimeessi gaalaa sookkee yaa'ee!	Pregnant camels are streaming slowly!
Ammarree sookkee yaa'ee.	Even now they moved and left slowly.
Rimeettii Abbaan sookkee raa'ee.	A husband makes sexual intercourse slowly with his pregnant woman.
Aa, Ee sookkee raa'ee.	Oh, yes, he had sex slowly.

The above song suggests that a husband shouldn't consider extramarital sex even when a wife is pregnant. Accordingly, *soogiddoo* songs do not necessarily lead to promiscuity. However, *soogiddoo* songs that are designed to stimulate unacceptable sexual relationship can aggravate the spread of HIV/AIDS as it can deceive individuals to engage in an unprotected sex particularly in rural areas. It may not necessarily contribute to the spread of HIV if the local people are aware of the nature of the virus.

Masqala (Meskel)[4] Songs

The Oromo have long been celebrating the end of the three-month long rainy season and the return of the sunshine and light towards the end of August, and in September. After the Abyssinian conquest of the Oromo lands in the nineteenth century, this celebration coincided with the Christian Celebration of *Meskel* (festival commemorating the founding of the True Cross) festival on September 17, Ethiopian Calendar (September 27 Gregorian calendar). There are different accounts of how the True Cross was found, which I do not discuss here. The Oromo men sing different sex songs during *Meskel* festival or the transition period from the rainy season to sunshine and light. Oromo Muslims do not celebrate *Meskel* festival and their sex songs are not related to it. The following sex songs are collected from Toke Kutaye and Ambo districts, Western Oromia.

Yaa sangoota Bookaa Baldaa,	The oxen of Mr. Boka Balda.
Yoomittuu koophii qoffortee?[5]	When did you dig the mound?
Ani nan tottolfadhan jedhaa,	I was trying to position myself for sex.
Yoomittuu soofii xonoqxee.	Suddenly, she started moving her body.
Raaffu fixee kiskisi narraa dhoowwadhu.	Drive away the goat it is eating the cabbage.

Yookin dhirsakeet galaa, yookin sanyookeet dhuffa,	Either your husband comes home, or your lover visits you when he comes home.
wixisii nat sofadhuu.	Please shake it well when you make love to me.
Kurbirrii malkaa Dhagaa,	The *Kurbiri* of *Malka Dhaga* locality.
qullubbii wal liqeeffattee;	borrowed onions from each other.
Keessa keenyaan ciniinnatee,	When I inserted it, it gripped it.
kessaa funaan amuummatee.	When I withdrew, it yawned.
Fuchini maal mi'eefatee?	What kind of taste has the vagina developed?

There is no inhibition during this period of the year. Adults freely sing about love and sex. They move from place to place and collect money. They bless those who give them money. For adults this season is one of the happiest seasons of the year, the season with the most sunshine.

Group Songs by Women

Oromo females sing love songs to express their love. Women's love songs include *kaarilee, helee* and *hamaamotee* motivated by various circumstances.

Kaarilee

Kaarilee is the folksong of married women in Borana. Women sing *kaarilee* songs to praise or insult men at any time out of the village, when they collect firewood and fetch water. Unmarried girls are not allowed to sing this song, for it partly expresses the sexual desire of women who can be lovers. According to Oromo sexual ethics, girls should remain a virgin before marriage. If unmarried girls sing this song, they will be considered as *cabanas* (sexual outcasts) who should be denied all social, legal and economic rights.

Kaarilee has two different forms. Married women sing the first form of *kaarilee* during naming ceremonies, construction of houses and other social activities. They sing this song while working and collecting construction materials. They praise men in general by appreciating their achievements and physical appearance. Men can also participate in this song. Thus, this form of *kaarilee* is morally permissible in Borana. Sometimes women use *kaarilee* to influence politicians. The *gadaa* system allows women to express their grievances using songs although they are not part of the *gadaa* assemblies, and they don't have an age-based social organization. According to Asmarom Legesse:

> [w]herever the meetings are held, women can always make their feelings known about the subject of the deliberations indirectly. They sing work songs (*kaarilee*) that are intended to lighten the burden of their chores. These work songs often

> contain some pointed commentary on some infelicitous expression heard in the men's meetings or a direct criticism of some unjust or unwise decision the men are contemplating (1973:20-21).

Accordingly, although women are systematically excluded from Oromo political institutions and the judicial activities of the people, they can informally participate in political life through the medium of *kaarilee* songs by praising and parodying the character of political and military leaders. Accordingly:

> [w]omen that compose such songs often influence the course of elections and the prospects of a lineage winning or holding political office. They celebrate great men and criticize the weak and incompetent political figures or lawmakers. The songs are remembered for generations and have an important role in shaping public opinion about leaders and thus directing political discourse. That is one kind of role that women play in the political life of their people (Legesse 2000:255).

So, women use *kaarilee* songs to challenge the values of men that tend to perpetuate patriarchy, and exclude women from decision making processes because of their sex. They indirectly influence political and social decisions in their society. Traditionally it is believed that the role of women is restricted to childbearing and domestic work. The Oromo social structure constructed women as subordinate subjects to men. Oromo men use myths and other strategies to justify the position of women in Oromo society. A story about Mr Kiya Wamo's[6] reaction to the gender equality policy of the Military government in 1979 is worth noting. He says: '[o] whatever you say, it shall fail at night' (quoted in Wako 2010:210). Wamo tries to explain the similarity between the position of man-on-top during sexual intercourse and men's positions in social relations. So, for Wamo any gender project cannot change the 'natural' position of women. Some men still think that it is somehow unmanly for the woman to be on top during love making. Here, it is also worth noting that Christian missionaries in Africa taught that a person who used any position other than man-on-top to make love would go to hell although some Africans had a different attitude towards it before the arrival of these missionaries.

The second form of *kaarilee* song is about love. Women recite what they did and what they want to do with their secret lovers by emphasizing their strength, knowledge and their role in the society. They can also criticise men. Women sing *kaarilee* when men are not around, because men don't allow them to do so. If men see women singing *kaarilee* they will beat and chase them away. Although there are some indications that this type of *kaarilee* is permissible in Oromo sexual ethics, some of my informants are of the opinion that this type of *kaarilee* is immoral. They said that this is why men do not allow women to sing this version of *kaarilee* in their presence.

One piece of evidence indicates that this version of *kaarile* was acceptable in Borana. Before the Borana Oromo revised marriage and other laws during the leadership of Dawe Gobo who was *abba gadaa* in 1697-1705, marriage within Gona (moiety)[7] was illegal whereas a *garayyu* (lover-mistress) relationship was permissible. Although Dawe proposed the prohibition of the keeping of lovers within the same moiety, the general assembly refused to endorse his proposal. In particular, the councillor named Dube criticised his proposal and defended the previous practice. Following this deliberation, a certain woman who was happy about the decision, sang the following *kaarile* song:

Ka Dubbee dubbuma.	*Dube's* is eloquence,
Ka Dawwee darsuma.	*Dawe's* is foolishness,
Dudubbachuu fedha	I want to relish again and again
Dubbii Dubbee tana.	This talk of *Dube* (Legesse 2000:210).

The singer stressed that Dawe was too foolish to try to avoid the love-mistress relationship in the Gona moiety. Before the expansion of HIV/AIDS, sex among the Oromo wasn't limited to marriage. It was discreet but went on within the tradition of lover, mistress, widow inheritance, etc. A woman could have a lover besides a husband who could also have a lover of his own. Here is an example of where an assembly refuses to legislate proscription. This kind of entanglement can be cited as evidence of promiscuous sex that could be a vehicle for transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. In the age of HIV/AIDS, this type of relationship is no longer popular in Oromo society.

Women sing *kaarilee* song when they collect firewood, fetch water and participate in other activities in order to seduce men. Consider the following song:

Gadamsi lafa teenyaa	The kudu of our locality
Jirmee boorataa.	fondles/strokes the land.
Jirma ofii nu keessa kaa'eelllee *Waan fedhe soorata.*	He puts his log (sexual organ) in us and, feeds on whatever he wants.

Literally this means that he is making love to women. The first line of the song is introduced to make tonal sound parallelism. This song can easily arouse the sexual desire of men. This implies that men cannot resist the invitation of women away from home. This type of explicit naming of sexual organs is known as *lallee* in Borana. Women cannot use this expression in front of men and elders.

Hellee, Hamaamotee, and Hiiroo

Heellee song is popular in Borana and Ituu Oromo. In Macha and Tulamaa Oromo it is known as *seeyyee*. Oromo virgin girls perform *hellee* songs at different times. In particular, they sing *seeyyee or hellee* after the end of the rainy season in September that marks the beginning of the New Year. Among others, young girls sing *heellee* to express their identity and achievements and praise their lineage and family. Oromo young boys are free to watch their songs and identify their future mates or wives. Songs provide an opportunity for girls and boys to meet in an inhibited fashion. A young boy who likes a particular girl and her family background can put *keelloo* (Bidens ghedoensis), bright yellow daisies, and *coqoorsa (Eleusine jaegeri)* or *sardoo* (*Carissa edulis*) grasses on her. *Coqoorsa* and *sardo*o grasses have religious significance in Oromo culture. *Coqoorsa* is a strong creeper grass, which can stay green during the dry seasons. *Sardoo* symbolizes peace, fertility and life (for details see Kelbessa, 2001). The use of these grasses is the first step for the future relationship between the girl and the boy. After the approval of his family the boy can marry within up to three years.

Also, a bride and her friends in Oromo society sing a special pre-wedding song known as *hamaamot*ee *(amaamotaa arabssu*) (insulting the wedding group of the bridegroom) before her wedding and on the wedding day. They express witty but derogatory remarks against the members of the groom's family.

Hamaamotaa refers to invited friends who accompany a groom/bride. *Hamaamotee* songs lament the bride's departure from her family and friends. *Hamaamotee* is also known as *kille*. *Hamaamot*ee can last for one month or less.

The *gadaa* law does not recognise *hamaamotee* song. It is the song of young girls in honour of the bride. Because of the fact that the friends cannot force her to stay with them, they insult the groom, his relatives and friends. They pretend that the bridegroom and his friends are not good people. They express the negative features of the bridegroom, his parents and his friends. If the girls say whatever they want to, their words are not taken seriously. The belief of such girls is that her parents forced their daughter to get married. The bride complains to her parents that they do not like her. That is why they gave her to an outsider although she loves them, and has no desire to leave them for another chance. Some young girls have no desire to be married, because they have never met their husbands in the past. They often weep on their wedding days.

In Arsi, central Oromia, girls sing *hamaamot*ee in praise of a bride to get money from the groom. If the groom does not give them money, they will insult him. Nowadays, when marriage is on the basis of the consent of the bride, her friends do not insult the groom.

In the past people tolerated such songs and there was no serious conflict. However, currently *hamaamot*ee songs have become controversial and some people get annoyed. They think that it is not necessary to insult any one during marriage. So, they are discouraged by the government. Although some informants regard *hamaamotee* songs as outdated songs, others are of the opinion that if there are no *hamaamotee* songs, the day does not sound like a wedding day. The origin, the significance and philosophical foundation of *hamaamot*ee songs require further research.

The bride also sings about her previous activities before leaving the house of her parents (see Gumii Qormaata Afaan Oromoo (GQAO) 1993). This song is known as *hiiroo*. She uses this song to convey her message to her parents and friends right before the wedding day. She warns her friends that divulging her secrets will hurt their future relationship. *Hiiroo* is also a kind of advice a mother gives to the bride. Among others, her mother would sing the following:

Hiiroo yaa Hiiroo, Hiiroo	*Hiro, Hiro*. Call *Hiro* for me.
na waama ittan dhaamaa.	I will tell her a message.
Waantin sitti dhaamuu.	What I tell you is:
Ibiddikee hin dhaamiin.	Do not let your fire get extinguished.
Gandaa sin waamiin.	Do not be summoned from the neighbour's house.

The girl is encouraged to leave behind her carefree childhood ways and adopt the stature of a woman full of dignity and grace. She should not go out of the house to gossip. She should try to be a good wife and excellent mother.

Private Songs

Songs That Encourage Infidelity and Multiple Partners

Songs by Men

Individual Oromo men also use the following and other similar love songs to seduce married women and to develop clandestine relationships. These songs reflect men's desire for sexual pleasure beyond the confines of a monogamous heterosexual relationship. Contemporary popular love songs have also encouraged infidelity.

Utuman sangaa ta'ee	If I could be an ox,
Sangaasa didda ta'ee	An ox, a beautiful ox,
didaasa bifaa ta'ee	Beautiful but stubborn,
naagadeen na bitatti	The merchant would buy me,

bitatte na qalatti	Would buy and slaughter me,
gogaakooti dhiifatti	Would spread my skin,
gabaatti na baafatti	Would bring me to the market.
boosettii na doofsisa	The coarse woman would bargain for me;
kaamettii na bitatti	The beautiful girl would buy me,
teekko natti daakkatti	She would crush perfumes for me,
waarii itti-marmaaran bula	I would spend the night rolled up around her;
waaree itti-marmaaraan oola	I would spend the afternoon rolled up around her.
namni du'aadha jedha	Her husband would say: 'It is a dead skin!'
animmoo jaalala fixeera.	But I would have my love!

The desire of the singer is to become a cloak of skin to be worn by his sweetheart (Enrico Cerulli 2003). This song has a symbolic message. The lover compared himself with an ox. He pretends that his lover's husband cannot identify his true identity if she is willing to embrace him.

Xayyaarri awwaara kaasee	An airplane causes dust to rise
Bu'e magaalaa Adoolaa[8]	landing in the town of Adola.
Jaalanneen nadheen shamaanee	Real love is the one with the weaver's wife.
Dhirsi boolla keessaa oolaa.	Whose husband stays in a hole, the whole day.

The singer wants to have an affair with the wife of a weaver using his absence as an opportunity.

Koottuu koottu nan jettaa.	You said, come to me.
Karaa kamin dhufaa?	Which way shall I come?
Jaarsii keehoo loon tiksaa.	Your husband is herding animals around.
Dhaabbateet na eggataa.	He is observing my movements.
Abbichuun harroota ooffaa,	*Abichu* is herding donkeys.
Dhirsa kee gurraacha doofaa.	Your uneducated black husband.
Dhirsa kee gurraacha raatuu	Your stupid black husband.
Gurgurii qodaa isa wajjin laffaattuu.	Sell away the organ you are using with him.
Gurgurteetoo daara hin baatuu?	Why don't you sell it and instead buy clothes?

In the above songs, the singer seems to encourage the wife of someone to give him sexual favors. That is he wants to be the 'cloth' on her.

Jaldesi minnaii chekata obaasi.

Sii jaalada jetu, diirsa ke kolaasi.

Issale kolaaftu ka daluutu haffa.

Wolfaan' dabaasi si (hamade) raffa.

If you say, 'I love you': Castrate your husband!

I will also castrate he who succeeds him.

They will pass by together and I will sleep cuddled to your breast (Baxter, 1974:819).

In Oromo culture, in the recent past, a younger brother could take a deceased brother's wife in levirate. The singer was aware that the castration of the husband did not clear the way for him to have the former's wife, as she could be inherited by his younger brother. So, he wanted to get rid of both men before having her and cuddling up to her like a baby.

Oh, the wife of Waqe Gadaa

Who doesn't go out without the golden-light shoes!

It is not that I have a headache:
I have called for you … this way! (MOR, 1935, quoted in Sumner, 1997:76-77).

The singer called for his girlfriend pretending that he was sick. He later revealed his trick to her.

The following Oromo songs show that some men have multiple partners. This sexual behaviour is one of the factors that have aggravated the spread of HIV in Oromia.

Shaggar gubbaa kaa'eetan Kutaa foosisaa,	I will stand up in *Shager*[9] and order women to weave me cotton clothes.
Kaa'eetaan kutta foosisaa.	I order women to weave me cotton clothes.
Shaggee shaggee jaaladheetan	I will love beautiful women
fungee bochisaa,	and make the ugly ones cry;
fungee boochisaa	make the ugly women cry.
Yaa Mareetoo, sin	My honey, I won't leave you
dhiisukaa jalqabetoo.	once I have started.
Sin dhiisukaa jalqabetoo.	I won't leave you once I started.

Yaa Mareetoo Muka bareeddi qawweenii,	My honey, the beauty of a gun is its wooden part.
Si maale hin qabbuu jenaan,	When I said I only have you,
Dhugumma setti dawweeni.	The fool thinks that it is true**.**
Dabalee Dabal Birraatuu,	*Dabale*, the son of *Biratu*.
Kan ati off jajje ya raatuu,	You are so stupid for boasting in vain.
kan atti off jajje yaa raatu.	You are so stupid for boasting in vain.
Argadhe gaarii sirraatu.	I have found a girl much better than you.

When a woman fails to feed her lover, or move well in bed, and incense her body (in the past), her lover insults her and looks for another girl who can satisfy him in all respects. Consider the following song:

Weenniin muka koree gadi	A colobus monkey climbs a tree and
ilaale Roggee,	looks down at *Roge*.
Tiyya haajaa bayee itii faali dhoqqee.	I am already satisfied; rub your sexual organ with cow dung.

In short, the above songs indicate that extramarital sex was permissible in the recent past in Oromo society. As I have shown elsewhere, men and women can have lovers outside marriage. 'In Oromo society, having a mistress is morally acceptable. Having an affair with a married woman is not socially unacceptable. To fall in love with someone other than one's spouse is not considered an instance of betrayal' (Kelbessa 2008:381). 'Likewise, it is believed that a woman who has no relationship with another man is an unfortunate, undesirable, and odourless woman. Thus, being a mistress in Oromo society has value particularly for women' (Kelbessa 2008:381). Currently, the Oromo people have discouraged extramarital affairs because of the danger of HIV/AIDS.

Metaphors and Love-Sex Songs that have an Explicit Sexual Content

Married men and unmarried young men sing erotic songs to have the attention of young unmarried girls. They often use metaphorical expressions that describe sexual world views and other sex-related phenomena (for instance, the act of sex itself, male and female genitalia, multiple sexual partnerships, rationale for choice of sex partners). As George Lakoff (1987) notes, metaphors are central to human thinking, political behaviour and society. Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) suggest that metaphors not only make our thoughts more vivid and creative, but at the same time they naturalise our perception and understanding.

Lakoff defines metaphor as a mapping of conceptual structures from one domain onto another. Metaphors are used to transform more abstract domains into concepts that can be easily understood. According to Lakoff, '[p]ropositional and image-schematic models characterize the structure; metaphoric and metonymic models characterize mappings that make use of structural models' (1987:154). Metaphor involves a mapping between two different domains: a source domain and a target domain. The target domain is interpreted or understood in terms of the source domain (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Similarly, in the field of sexuality, the taboo domain is interpreted and described in terms of a non-taboo domain. Most Oromo traditional singers use this mechanism to refer to sexuality and refrain from naming sexual organs and sexual activities, although some singers do so. They often rely on the visible common properties of the taboo target domain and a non-taboo source domain. Sense experience plays an important role in their perception and understanding. The target domain looks, smells, tastes, sounds, feels like the source domain. For instance, the Oromo singers used the following metaphors to refer to female genitalia: *boddosaa*, *daaboo furda* (fat bread), *baqaqsaa* (slit), *haroo* (pond), *qabee* (gourd/container), *fasee*, *ruxxee*, *dammaa* (honey), *soogidda* (salt)[10] and so on. The person who analogized the female genitalia as fat bread considers the female genitalia as an edible object. For the Oromo coffee beans and *cacoo* (necklace of beads) resemble a female sexual organ. Other words reportedly used to describe the vagina are *fuchii, buqushaa, luuchee, muxuruu, koshoo, umburruu, and dhagna dubartii/nadheenii* (woman's body).

Oromo metaphors used for the penis include the following: *eejersa* (*Olea Africana*) tree, *bokkuu* (the sceptre of authority), *kallacaa* (phallic ornament), *eboo* (a spear), *h(o)rooroo* stick (ritual and marriage stick), *waddeessa* (*Cordia abyssinica*) tree, *jirma* (trunk of tree), and marriage stick. The penis has a similar structural shape as the above mentioned objects. The words *namicaa* (the man), *dhagna/qaama/ nafa dhiraa* (man's body), *meeshaa dhiraa* (man's instrument) are also used to refer to the penis. Other words reportedly used to describe the penis are *qunxurroo, jamalii, bixxoo, seeruu, and qasaraa*. When one says a child has *bilbila* (the little metal bell worn by animals and children), it is a metonymy. It refers to the testicles of a male child. As Lakoff and Mark Turner (1989:90) have observed, it is especially the structural attribute of the one domain that is projected onto the other domain.

There are also other metaphors that are used to indicate similarities between two domains. For instance, in Borana, southern Oromia '*tamboo naaf hidhi*'– 'tie tobacco for me' and '*tamboo sii irraa nyaadhaa*' – 'I will

eat tobacco from you', means I need sexual intercourse. Tobacco is used to seduce women. It is not clear why tobacco and sex are connected. In almost all parts of Oromia, *'itille naafi hafi* – 'prepare a tanned hide used as a sleeping mat or any other sleeping material for me', or '*haffa naafi hafi*' – 'prepare the grass used for making a bed', means I need sex. Some men also say *na kenni/na laadhu* (give me). It is always the woman who 'gives' and the real man who 'takes'. The man says *nan godhee* to mean I had sex. This is an interesting concept that the woman is the one who controls access although access to resources and power affects sexual relationship in other contexts. If she doesn't give, no sex. These metaphors reflect the desire to penetrate the female body; and sometimes the metaphors represent the female's desire to have sex with a male. Likewise, in today's music jargon, 'do me' is another term for sex.

The following love songs contain similarity-creating metaphors about the female genitalia.

Abaan kee hin adeemuu cafee keesa ciisaa.	Your father does not go away; he sleeps in the marsh.
Ani waan kee hin kajelluu.	I do not yearn for your sexual organ.
Laphee keerran ciisaa.	I would rather lie on your heart/chest.
Lapheerra ciisanii waan sana hin dhiisanii	But lying on the heart/chest, one cannot avoid touching the thing.
Obbo Joteen foon hira, dukanaaf jia gidduu.	Mr. Jote is distributing meat in between darkness and the moon.
Boddosaan kee akkam jiraa inni lukakee gidduu?	How is that organ of yours doing that is between your thighs?
Gabaa Tasammaa ilaaluu.	To see the market of *Tesema*.
Kootichi baarii as duulee.	People from *Koticha* Bari[11] have made expeditions.
Waan akka dammaa mi'aawuu.	Something which is as sweet as honey.
Soogidda maalii sittuumee?	What kind of salt has he created in you? (Taa 2004:20).
Dabalaan gabaa galla	Mr. Dabala comes home from the market.
bukee dalgaa lossanii.	They place something beside him.
Baqaqsaa garraa jaalaa	The slit below the abdomen.
wannoo damaa gottanii.	You have something tasting like the honey.
Alaa dukkanaayee.	It is getting dark outside.
Manaas dukkanaayee.	Also getting dark inside.

Shamakee jala qubbanaaye?	If I crouch down under your dress,
Natti dubbattaare?	Would your sexual organ talk to me?
Hiiki hiiki jettaa.	You say: 'unleash, unleash'.
Maal godheen hikka gaango gaango?	How can I unleash a mule?
Dhiisi, dhiisi jettaa.	You say: 'leave it alone, leave it alone'.
Maal godheen dhissa waankoo, waankoo?	How can I leave my thing, my thing?
Hiiki hiiki jettaa, Hiiki hiiki jettaa.	You say: 'unfasten, unfasten'
Gaangoo guddicha kana.	this big mule.
Dhiisi dhiisi jettaa dhiisi dhiisi jettaa.	You say: 'leave it, leave it, and leave it'.
Maal godheen dhiisa	How can I leave,
Daaboo furdicha kana?	this 'fat bread' of yours?
O birroole yaa Shoolewoo.	Oh, my dear, my beauty.
Irraangadee mana Daargee.	Down the house of *Darge* .
Hoolaan calaqeerra ciiftii	The sheep is lying down on a wet place.
Irraanfaddheen qabe waankee.	I forgot and touched your organ.
Qoosaa dallantee ya giiftii?	Do you get angry with a joke? (Taa 2004: 20).

How can I unleash a mule?

A certain man and woman sang the following song:

The man says:

Minee minaaruu.	Why do you roll it and sit on it
Maalumaaf martee irra teessa.	something so sweet as a bread?
isa akka daabboo mi'ahu.	

The woman responds:

Biyyee irraa ta'ii!	Sit on soil!
Atisoo martee irra teessaa.	You also roll it and sit on it.
Isa akka soomaa waddeessaa.	Something as steady as a stick of a tree *(waddeessaa* (*Cordia Africana)).*

The man responds:

Soomaan koo waddeessaa	My stick is a *waddeessaa* tree.
Sitti sagaleessaa.	It is screaming for you.

The woman responds:

Somaa kee mudaan mudaa.	Your stick is under pressure.
Dhuftee qabee koo naa guutta.	You come and fill in my gourd/container.

The man says:

Qabee keetii irreefadhee.	Bogged down on your gourd.
Laphee kee argadhee.	I will find my place in your heart.

The woman responds:

Fooxaa fudhuutii.	Take a towel and hurry up!
Dafi waan lubbutti.	It is a matter of life and death.
Laga abbaa bulguttii.	See you at *Abbaa Bulgu*'s river.

The above love songs explicitly refer to the sexual organ of a woman. They are the most striking examples of erotica. They refer to the health and pleasures of women's sexual organs. They express the joys of love and sex in a manner as frank as any contemporary sex songs. This explicit admiration of body parts would get many slapped with a sexual harassment lawsuit in many Western countries. In fact, this depends on the context and the pre-existing relationship (if any) between the man and the woman.[12]

Songs That Express Masculinity

Some songs celebrate masculinity, male sexual virility, male self-esteem and sense of identity, genital activity and the penis. The following songs symbolise male's sexual prowess. As stated earlier, *eejersa*, a beautiful hard tree, symbolises man's sexual organ. In Oromo society, sticks, clubs, and trees are phallic symbols hinting at male potency, and power. Erection is the symbol of procreation.

Eejersi jabaate.	*Eejerssa* (*Olea Africana*) is becoming powerful.
Cirriquu qajelchee.	It releases saliva.
Haroo caaffesse.	It makes the pond wet.
Caakkaa gamaatti ennaan si eguu,	While I was waiting for you in the bush at the other side of the river,
Ati teesseetuma marqaa hunkurtaa	you were preparing porridge.
Namichoo dhabateet asii na unkuraa.	The guy becomes erect and disturbs me here.

Yoom na bira geessaa?	When will you get to me?
Yoom walitti qajeellaa?	When shall we join?
Marcumaan na dhayii.	Hit me with a chair.
Caccabee ciisinaa.	Let me be broken and lie down.
Achumaan na gayii.	Allow me to reach there.
Dadahabee dhiisinaa.	I will leave it if I am weak (Taa 2004:17).
Shaggar dhaapphen gadi ilaalaa.	I stand at *Shager* and look downwards.
Awaash jidduu maaltu ciisaa?	What is sleeping in the middle of *Awaash* river?
Mee qammasii na ilaalii.	Please taste and see me for yourself.
Dammaaf kichuu maaltu dhiisaa.	Who dares to ignore honey and a sweet young man?

Thus, some love-sex songs reflect meanings and interpretations of masculinity. The maturation of men requires them to engage in sexual activity. Thus, we can say that some love songs reflect the ideology and values of men that are different from those of women. The Oromo culture, however, does not allow unmarried girls to engage in sexual activity as evidence of maturation. It requires them to respect traditional values of chastity and abstinence. All girls are required to remain clean, pure, and virgin until marriage.

Love Songs that Express Appreciation of Physical Features

The lyrics of the following Oromo love/sex songs express physical desire and emotional yearning with an openness and immediacy. Men place a greater premium on qualities linked with fertility, such as a woman's youth, health, and physical appearance such as clear, smooth skin; energetic face; sparkling, straight, bright and sharp eyes; smooth harmonized neck, particularly when ornamented with a necklace; shining teeth gaps; firm breast; full hips; symmetrical features; the slim waist; balanced and elegant structure. The cheeks, the nose, the mouth, the lips, the teeth, the fingers, the leg, the heels, the ankle, the thigh and such things attract the attention of lovers. Saliva is also viewed as a sign of love. The Oromo also consider saliva as the object of blessing. Men are fascinated by women's physical features, odor and feel, and desire to set sex in motion to express love. The expected message of the following songs is: I want to make love to you.

Songs by Men

O stumbling, O great stumbling!
O stumbling <as if> the pavement were pitch!
Why do you refuse to come, to come?
Have you made yourself equal to Jiffar?
Have you become like Dula?
They're two kings;
We're two <bits of> salt!
Ingenious like a calf,
Murmuring like a spirit!
Her eyes are like the white sorghum of the plateau;
Her eyebrows are like <dimma> not yet ripe;
Her cheeks are like pieces of pierced flesh;
Her neck is a support to pass the night.
Sons of nobles go mad for her (Sumner, 1997:87-88).

Abbaa Gulummaa yaa Rooroo	The father of *Guluma Roro*.
Dhiqatee hin nyaatu jaldeessi.	A baboon does not wash hands before eating.
Shaggee shurubbaan jorooroo.	Sweetheart gorgeous lady with long braids.
Ija kee hin baatu dabeessi.	Even a coward cannot resist your eyes.
Awwaara gabaa Gindoo[13].	The dust of *Gindo* market.
Sareen gingilchaa kuttee.	A dog spoiled a sieve.
Magaala sarbaa xiyyoo	Chocolate coloured woman with beautiful thighs
Daabe bttimsaa dhuftee.	came dispersing her hair
	(Bitima, (n.d.), the English translation is mine).
Yaa sangoota Bayyanaa.	The oxen of [Mr.] Beyene.
Maaltoo gaddachaasaree?	Who is driving them down?
Yaa bargoo ija barbadaa.	A youth whose eye is bright like [a] fire [glow].
Maaltoo si fakkaataree?	Is there any one who resembles you?
	(Taa 2004:24).

Baaredduu mormaa Qinxaa.	A beautiful lady with an attractive neck.
Guchuummaan na unsisii.	Allow me to dip in the container.
Guntuutaan na duchisii.	Allow me to bark at your tits.
Ani Sidaama[14] hin jaaladhu warra biroo malee	I don't like the Amhara girls, but other girls.
Lafas na hinkaayinii,	Don't put me on the ground
olis na hin baatini,	and don't raise me way up either.
Harmma jidduu malee.	Just keep me between your breasts.
Nitti magaalaa mormaa.	A woman with chocolate coloured neck.
Farda magaala kormaa.	A strong light brown horse.
Kan abbaa qabutu qabaa.	A person who has a father can have them.
Niitii magaala mormaa. Kan bifa qabutu qabaa	A beautiful woman of chocolate colour, a handsome man can have her.
Goromsakee yaa Olaanii.	Your heifer [Mr.] Olani.
Micciirrataa gaafa hoolaa.	The twisted horn of a sheep.
Gororakee na obaasii.	Let me drink your saliva.
Ittiinan gaaf lama oolaa.	To live on it for two days (Taa 2004:21).
Yaa Geexe yaa Geexe.	Gete, Gete.
Geexeen kan Kabbaddati.	Gete is a friend of Mr. Kebede.
Mormaan na jala seeni.	Please sneak under me with your neck.
Mudhiin kan sabbataatt.	The waist is meant for a girdle.
Otoon Maaruu keessa duulee.	If I went to campaign from Maru[15],
Maaruu fardeen odolotaa.	Maru the country of dark grey horses.
Otoon kaarruu keessa xuuxee.	If I were lucky to suck from a gap-toothed,
Kaarruu nadheen wambaroota.	The gap-toothed wives of the judges (Bitima nd).

Her ankle looks a cleaned root,
Her leg is white as an egg,
Her waist is slim like a whip knot,
Her breasts are sharp as a spear edge,
Her fingers are as soft as whip leather,
Her waist is as soft as the master's bed,

Her teeth are as white as cow milk,

Her lips are as thin as a cup's edge.

Her nose resembles the bamboo flute.

Her eyes aren't different from the morning sun.

The hair on her head is as long as her veil,

What a beautiful girl she is!

By what magical spell does she rob me from my sense? (KB n.d. 3, quoted in Sumner 1997:84).

Jallalle feette murtaa guutuu	Do you want love and to finish
Mana eejersa?	the top of eejersa house?
Yaa mucaa Meexxii qarree.	The daughter who lives nearby. Meti[16] river.
Sagalee beektee dhuftaa?	Can you recognise my voice and come to me?
Sagalee beektee dhuftaa?	Can you recognise my voice and come to me?
Yuusuu akka waraabesaa?	Shall I scream like a hyena?
Nagaadeen buttaa hin qaltuu,	A merchant does not slaughter an animal meant for the *gadaa* ceremony.
Nuugii keessan aramaa.	I weed in the field of niger seed.
Yaa mucaa Meexxii qarree.	The daughter who lives nearby Meti river;
Achatee qullaa hin raftuu.	Undress yourself and sleep naked!
Mundhiikeettan maramaa	I will hug you tight around your waist.
Ani sin jaladhaa, ati na jallattuu.	I love you. If you love me too,
Qamisa kee baaftee narra gangalattuu.	take off your clothes and roll all over my body.

Songs by Women

Women also praise a man's physical appearance: his handsomeness, his height, his eyes especially if they are decorated or have a red iris, his long neck, his broad shoulders, his straight nose, his personality, his intellect, and the like. Women also like brave men and strong political leaders.

Dado, Abba Seko's son,

A python is lying under the cattle!

O elegant one whose neck is like that of
a <siddisa> [three-leaved clover]!

It is for you that my heart beats.

Let me bite you once and leave you.

Like holding birds' wings,

The heart beats when the soul is caught
(PAU, 1893, quoted in Sumner 1997:90-91).

O red-eyed Jofon

Tender like the leaves of the <*dobore*> tree,

You <are the one> God has thrown on my path,

<*Ogio*> which grows on the highlands.

The leaves of the tea plant rot.

Jofon, who are like the sons of the Jilla lineage,

It's you whom my thoughts clasp,

O handsome young man!

God didn't separate me from you.

Our myrtles are only leaves,

But our promise is everlasting (Sumner 1997:32).

Seeyyee seeyyee, seeyyee	Seye[17] seye, seye,
Seeyyee baallee sarariitii	Seye, the leaves of Sarariitii (Asparagus Africanus),
Baallee sarariitii, baallee sarariitii.	The leaves of *sarariitii*, the leaves of *sarariitii.*
Naa ergi dammeekoo	Please my honey, send me
foolii mormakeetii	the scent of your neck
Baalan maritii naallee bariitii.	enclosing it in the leaves so that I spend the night with pleasure.

This song was sung by a woman who sat by her fire, and was waiting for her lover. He told me that he heard this beautiful song when he just arrived without her notice. After he joined her, she sang the following song:

Seeyyee seeyyee, seeyyee seeyyee	Seye, Seye, seye, seye.
Tikfataan godaanee	A cowman has migrated
Diggoo gayee Diggo gayee.	and reached Digo.
Duratto sin eega	Previously I was waiting for you.
Amma maalan eegaa?	What am I waiting for now?
Dammeekoo iddoo gayee.	My honey, now my dream has become true.

Qamadii tuulla randaa	The pile of wheat on the hill.
Xaafii tuullaa Shaggari.	The pile of *tafi*[18] in Shager
Yaa sanyii cuunfaa dammaa	You, the race of processed honey,
Sanyii cuufaan arganii.	the one found after processing,
Abbaboolee boolewoo	My sweet,
Adamookeen oollewoo!	I spent the day hunting for you!

Tilo is a hero,

So don't beat him out;

Your saliva is honey,

So don't spit and spoil it (PAU(TU), 1893, quoted in Sumner 1997:95).

Sometimes, women sing songs to seduce political leaders. Songs praising political leaders are common in Africa. Consider the following song.

Sanbaleexa hin haamtuu laga keessaa?	Don't you mow green grass in a river?
Yaa bareeda ayyaantuu yaa Wayyeessa.	A lucky handsome guy Wayessa.[19]
Ol ilaallan fuullee manakeetii,	When I saw up it is the front of your house.
Gadi ilaallan fuullee manakeetii.	When I saw down it is the front of your house.
Natti urgooftee foolin mormakeetii.	I feel the smell of your neck.

Songs that Appreciate Sexual Performance and Value of Kissing

Some men have fallen in love with women because of their sexual power and the gentle movement in the bed. Consider the following songs:

Abbaan Bayyuu naa wasiilaa.	The father of Bayu[20] is my uncle.
Caboon hattuu qabe reebee.	A person from Chabo caught a thief and has beaten him.
Yaa sawwartuu akka makiinaa.	A gently rocking girl like a car.
Anoo homaattun baru beekee.	I cannot adapt and live with any other women (Bitima n.d.).

The singer refers to the movement of his beloved during love-making, which makes him fall in love with her. He analogized her movement during sexual excitement to the rocking of a car. He said that he could not find such manner of doing sex in other women.

Shoolewoo hunda makiinaa	She acts like a vehicle.
Sofaatuu taftii gabinaa.	A sexy mover whose rump is the front seat of a lorry.
Ilaalaat baatee hati Sharu.	The mother of Sharu went out.
laalaat base ha sisallu.	Let him take you out and have sex with you in public.
Kan kennitu hin tolte.	The one who gives has become kind.
Kan soofattee hin horte.	The one who moves her body during sex has become fertile.

Kissing is another means of expressing love. Some singers underline the value of passionate kissing. It is believed that kissing can change the feelings of a girl who appears to be unruly and wild as far as love is concerned.

Abbaan abbaakee bitaachaa.	The father of your father is left-handed.
Mannaaggashaa duulli yaa'ee.	The army comes out of Menagesha locality.
Ammaan arraabee si naalchaa.	I will make you comfortable by licking on you.
Akka dhadhaa hantuunni nyaatee.	Like butter consumed by a rat (Bitima n.d.).
Bishaan laga Shaggarii.	The waters of Shager[21].
Ol-xuruuran moo gaxxuruuranii	Do they flow upstream or down?
Mariiti na suuqqaddhu pit.	Roll me up and tuck me under your arm-
Xuxxuuxii na dhugaddhu.	Suck on me and kiss me [deep].
Durattuu maqaa nurra tuulanii!	People already talk about our love (Bitima n.d.).
Guddattuun lagarra teessii.	A girl called Gudatu sits nearby a river.
Yaadateetu nattodeessee.	A girl called Yadate told me so.
Dhungaddhuu na qabbaneesse.	Cool me off with your passionate kisses.
Yaadakeetu na bobeessee	Longing for you has burnt me up (Bitima n.d.).

Songs that Express the Appreciation and Pains of Love

Some songs can express both the joy and pain of love. 'One finds anger and satisfaction in love, desire and fear of kissing. One wishes to be close to a girl friend and yet far from her' (Sumner 1997:35). Some lovers would say that they cannot live with their partners and they cannot live without them. Lovers may not meet each other because of various factors and experience both pleasure and pain. Thus, love can be the cause of joy and pain.

Songs by Men

The following songs show how deep love can make the lovers unconscious. They underlie how the lover was blinded by an uncontrollable love that cannot be helped and cannot be chosen. Some singers relate that love is an incurable sickness, an unmitigated agony. Love burns all over and makes one mad, and reduces a lover to thinness. It is comparable to wood burning in fire, the pangs of childbirth and the death of the heart. The heart of love has a stick, which secretly punishes human beings.

Lalisee koo naaf gamee.	My beloved Lalise I am longing for you.
Waraabessi duubanaa	The hyena nearby
Guraachaa duwwaa dhalaa.	gives birth to black ones only.
Yaa maraachituu hintalaa.	The girl whose beauty makes [drives every one] mad.
Ka'een si duukaa galaa.	Let me go home with you (Taa 2004:15).
Anoo rakkadhe haadhoo koo;	I am in trouble, my sister.
garaan koo na foolataa.	My heart is labouring.
Kara Jibaatiin bayii.	Pass through Jibat
kara bishaani bayii.	and across the river,
koottu, koottu, koottu.	and come, come, come [to me].
Yaa qamalee yaa gugee	Oh ape, oh dove.
Ceetee caffeettin galtu.	Cross over and settle in the meadow.
Na waxalee na gubee.	I am [charred and] and burned all over.
Kaatee lapphee nan qabduu?	Why don't you touch my heart? (Taa 2004:22).
Ullullee afaantu afuufaa.	The mouth blows a flute made of bamboo.
Maal sanyiin dhalcha keetii?	What is the origin of your ancestors?
Uurgufeet manaa na fuudha.	It shakes me out of the house.
Maal sanyiin jaalala keetii.	What sort of love is yours [that I have fallen for]?
Yoo xaafii haammatanii	If they reap the Tafi,
Garagalchaa nyaatanii	they will eat [a] pudding.
Yoo gaari jaalatanii	If they love a beautiful girl,
Garaa cabsaa yaadanii	they expect to ruin themselves.

Harka hafarsaa kaatanii	They will move their hands like a pitchfork;
*Akka leencaa aadan*i	they will roar like lions! (Cerulli 2003).
Heexoo baddaa yaa albasaa.	The Heto of the highland that causes one to have diarrhoea.
Mureen dallaa jala dhaabaa.	I cut it down and plant it under the fence.
Jaalalii oollaa nama raasaa,	The love of a neighbour shakes up the lovers.
Buteet manaa nama baasa.	It forces one suddenly out of the house.
Fullee manaa nama dhaaba.	It forces one to stand up in front of the house
Olaan addaan nama baasa.	It separates one from his/her neighbours.
Sokoksina gedheen	'Let us move!' I said.
Sokoksu daddhabe	I cannot move.
Akka baala agamsa	Like the leaves of the carissa edulis
Si obsina jedheen	'Let us spare you!' I said.
Si obsuu daddhabee	I cannot spare you
Akka garaa dhalaa.	Like the belly of a woman at childbirth (Cerulli 2003).

This song compares childbirth with love. The lover expresses that he cannot forget his sweetheart, and he will always keep her memory.

Yaa qaalluu ati rafii ani siifan dalagaa.	Oh the *Qaalluu,* you sleep, I will sing *dalagaa* for you.
Yaa intaloo ati rafi ani siifan wajagaa.	Oh girl, you sleep, I will long for you.
Yaa mana sooressaa	O house of [a] rich man,
Mataa adurree qabaa	you have the head of a wild cat,
Golgeen maragaadha	the pavement is polished.
Yaa garaa jaalalaa	O heart enamored,
Harkaa ulee qabaa	you have a stick in your hand
Dhoksee nama dhaana	which secretly strikes men! (Cerulli 2003).
Irraangadee mana keenyaa	Down the slope by our house,
xaayarri marsee bu'uufii.	a plane is about to land.
Qoricha natti hin barbaadduu.	' Why don't you look for medicine for me?
Si jaala du'uufii.	I am about to die of your love.

Ka'eetan baddaa baya;.	I will go to the highland,
Baddaa biyyaa Gojjamii.	to the highland of Gojam.
Eegan si eegee dhabee.	If I miss you after waiting for so long,
Ka'eetan of ajjeesa	I will have to commit suicide
laga bishaanii gayee.	right by the river side.
Leenca, yaa leenca	Lion, oh lion All come
Koottu sin geessaa.	I'll take you home.
Yaadha shaashii.	The owner of shaashii [multicoloured head scarf]
Adaraa kootta asaani.	please, come closer to me.
Yaa shubbeekoo.	Oh my beautiful one
Adaraa koottuu bukkeekoo.	please, come beside me.
Yaadha shuukkaa	Oh the owner of shuukkaa [fork: hairpin]
Adaraa koottuu na-duukaa.	please, follow me.
Jimmaa galeen kolaasa.	I came home from Jimma where
Abiraangoo	I cut abiraangoo [kind of cabbage].
Sumaa jedheen lolaasa	It is because of you
Imimmaankoo!	that I shed tears! (Triulzi with Bitima 1996:248).

A person who has fallen in love can take his beloved and leave his village for good. Such a person can also do everything that will be nice to his beloved, even if his character makes others conscious about their relationship. The following songs illustrate this:

Mummuuxeen qabee hodha.	I will sew a gourd with different colours.
Gabaan sanbataa boruu.	The Sunday market is tomorrow.
Si fudheen kae'ee sokkaa	Let me take you and go away.
Maqaan nama omaa hin tolluu.	People no longer appreciate even our name.
Dheedanis haa dheedanii,	If they wish to graze, let them to graze.
randattin baasa burreee.	I will take my coloured oxen to the hill.
Beekanis haa beekanii,	If they came to know, let them know.
daraan si baasa surree.	I will buy you trousers.
Yaa Abbabee koo yaa Abbabee.	For you are my flower baby.

Songs by Women

Women also express the pains of love. Like men, women get their hearts broken; they doubt the feeling of their lovers, spend sleepless night, and want to spend more time with their lovers. Consider the following songs:

Motobilii nugussa	An automobile of the emperor,
lafa jalaan tabbisaa.	moves under ground.
Yaa imimmaan jaalalaa	The tears of love
morma jalaan yaa'eti	flow under the neck and
guntutanrraan dhim'isaa.	drip down over the breasts.
Maaloo maaloo, maaloo maaloo.	Please, please, please, please.
Narra yaa'a imimmaanoo .	The tears are flowing over me.

This song eloquently extols a lover's joy and pain. It is a touching heartfelt lyric about expressing one's true feelings in a relationship.

Yaa qoraan cabsituu	A man who collects firewood;
Dhagaraan ashamii.	How is your axe?
Koo garaan gadicitee	My heart is broken.
Kee garaan akkamii?	How about yours?
Amma dhagaan keenya daakuu	If as our grinding stone grinds,
Otto dhagaan keessan daakee,	your grinding stone would also grind,
Yoona midhaanuu dhumeeraa.	the grain would be finished by now.
Amma garaankoo si yaaduu	If as my heart thinks of you,
Otoo garaankee na yaadee	Your heart would also think of me,
Yoona hidhaanuu dhufeera.	The bond would be touched by now.
Kaleessa naan beelayee,	I was hungry yesterday.
Edaa agabuukoon bulee.	I did not eat last night.
Edaa agabuukoon bulee.	I did not eat last night.
Warrakeet si dhoowwemoo,	Was it your parents who held you back from coming
yaa dammakoo,	my honey?
sumatu ganuukoo muree?	Or did you decide to betray me?
Haaduu kee qaruu akaa lafee muru?	Shall I sharpen your knife to cut a bone?
Deebii kee naa kenni akkan rafee bulu.	Give me your response, so that I can have a good night's sleep.

Ana nan agartuu korma wareegii,	You can not see me any more unless you promise to pay a bull.
Yoo sii dhibe caakkaa gamaatti na eegii.	If you are in trouble, wait for me in the bush at the other side of the river.

In the above songs the singers tried to tell the other persons that they are attracted to the beloved and that they are open to possibilities which involve the person concerned. These are great songs for the lovers who want to rekindle the relationship or keep it fresh.

Yaa dhaamocha yaa dhaamocha barii.	Oh the cold weather of early morning,
Yaa diilalla barii.	the chilly air of the morning.
Maaltu na fidaree	Who will bring me, then
Kumala loosaa durii,	the good old day thick cloth,
Kumala loosaa durii.	the good old day thick cloth?

In this song thick cloth is analogized to the old day lover who used to warm up his mistress. It conveys desolation when one's lover is gone.

In spite of cultural restrictions, some women and girls try to seduce men to satisfy their sexual and marital desire.

Naggaadeen nagadumaa.	O merchant of the merchandise.
Kan tulluu Buree jirtuu	Who is at the mount Buree!
Ijatoo qottoo dhabee	The eyes have no axe;
Garaatoo murtoo dhabee	The mind [heart] has no sickle
Kan tulluu muree jigsu.	to cut and throw down mountains! (Cerulli 2003).

This song reflects that a merchant who is at Mount Buree is certainly a merchant. The eyes lack an axe and the mind lacks a sickle to cut and throw down mountains. The song is the lament of a woman separated from her lover because of distance. The distance prevents her from meeting her lover. Bure is a locality found in the present day Illuababorra zone of Oromia region.

A girl can also express her desire to be married. This may not be a violation of sexual ethics when she is mature enough to get married. The proper age for marriage differs from region to region. Most of the time such songs are directed to mothers who always want their daughters to stay with them. Some girls also seduce unmarried men to marry them and get rid of living alone. The following songs illustrate this.

Abbaabbitoon immaammitoo jala lixee.	My father sneaks under my mother.
Anaa taafkiin golatti na fixee.	I am being pestered by fleas in a separate room of the house.
Naati hin jabaattanoo wari firaa.	My relatives please help me.
Ana garaan qondaalaa bira najiraa.	My heart is with a man.
Oddoon isa bira gaye.	I would like to meet him.
Yaa keelloo rasa rasaa.	Kelo[22] soft wild plant.
Biqila gogaatti hafuu.	The seed is spread to dry on leather.
Yaa qeerroo mana haadhasaa	A bachelor in his mother's house
Kitila kopha rafuu.	is the one who sleeps alone.

When a man is shy, a woman sings in front of him and encourages him to be her lover.

Yaa eejersa Ejeree	The eejersa (*Olea Africanum*) tree of Ejere,
Beerren qoraafattu.	used by women to incense a gourd.
Anoo xinnayyoo ka naa,	I am just a small girl,
Mormakeen martee	Why don't you roll me up
nan boraafattuu?	with your neck and use me as a pillow?

This song shows how a young teenager seduces men despite her age and small size.

The following songs are the songs of both women and men.

Hiddinee foona malee.	We will make threads.
Maal jirbii goona garuu.	What else do we do with cotton?
Iyyinee boonya malee.	We cry and weep.
Maal walii goona garuu.	What else do we do for each other? (Taa 2004:14).
Yaa mana abbaan keessa deemuu.	The house that the owner moves in.
Daamuun dabale kanniisa.	Bees increase honey.
Yaa damma affan keessa ayeetuu.	My honey, with tasty mouth like milk.
Raatuu qammasee waaldhiisa.	Only the fools will leave each other after that kind of taste.

Qiritii tumtuun tumtuu jetee ijoleen Gadissa.	Gadisa's children said the blacksmith cut the metal.
Siqiqiin lubbuu hin dhumttu,	Worrying about life has no end.
Taakaa teenya gadisaa.	So, let us take time and relax sitting under the shade of the tree.

These love songs celebrate the start of the day and the beginning and continuity of love. They revealed sublime happiness, the great joy of the lovers union, and the depth of their love for each other. In the last song, the lover asks her beloved to spend a quiet time together, because life is always taking them away from each other.

Songs that Indicate Shifts in Values with the Passage of Time

The following three songs show how modern day girls violate Oromo sexual ethics and practise premarital sex. In the first two songs, the singer asks his beloved to deceive her parents and visit him. This is common in both rural and urban areas where some young girls often miss their classes and engage in unsafe sex with some men.

Shaggar duubattin argee korma	I saw a male gazelle nearby Shager;
kuruphee.	a male gazelle.
Barumsan dhaqa jedhii dabtara	Carry your books with you as if you're going to school,
qabaddhuu koottu yaa shurrubbee,	and come to me for a visit, sweetheart with braids.
Dabtara qabaddhuu koottu yaa shurruubbee.	*come* to me for a visit, sweetheart with braids.
Shaggar duubattin argee	I saw the sleeping place of a gazelle
ciisaa kuruphee,	nearby Shager.
ciisaa kuruphee	The sleeping place of a gazelle.
Qoraanan dhaqa jedhi	Come to me taking the leather
teepha maradhuu	stop pretending that you are going to collect firewood.
koottu yaa shurrubbee.	Come my sweetheart with braids.
Tepha maradhu koottu	Come my sweetheart with braids,
yaa shurrubbee.	taking the leather strap.

Ennaan shaggarii galu	While I was coming from Shager
Maammiteen ashaaroo gingilchiti,	Mrs. Mamite was sorting out roasted barley.
Maammiteen ashaaroo . gingilchiti	Mrs. Mamite was sorting out roasted barley.
Abeet dubara ammaa,	Oh, girls of the present time.
Eelerratti daabboo liqimistii.	They swallow bread right off the oven.
Eelerratti daabboo liqimistii.	They swallow bread right off the oven.
Kan daabboo nan dinqinee,	I am not surprised about the bread.
Dargaggeessa duubaa imimmsitii	But their giggles for a young man.
Dargaggeessa duubaa imimmsitii.	But their giggles for a young man.

These songs reflect the current increasing trends and earlier levels of non-marital intercourse among the young people. In the past, girls in rural areas were expected to be virgin before marriage. There was very little chance for them to meet boys for sex. Now thanks to modern education and other external forces unmarried young men and women live together, and it is normal. Globalization and other associated values have encouraged the youth to ignore normative principles and the value of virginity that in turn facilitate the spread of HIV among the youth. Among others, globalization involves the integration of international markets, different socio-economic activities, the diffusion of technology, international communications and world-wide cultural integration, population movements and the like. Western communication technology has enabled the youth to have free access to explicit pornographic sites, Internet dating services, and other illegal and harmful contents on global networks. This can lead to risky sexual behaviour and unwanted sexual solicitation, and thereby aggravate the spread of the HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Achille Mbembe has summarized the current situation in Africa as follows:

> The last twenty years have witnessed, in fact, a generalized loss of control over sexuality by families, churches, and the state. A new moral economy of individual pleasures has developed in the shadow of economic decadence. Everywhere, the age of marriage has, for the most part, fallen. A general crisis of masculinity is occurring, while the number of female heads of families steadily increases. So-called illegitimate births have definitely ceased to be regarded as a serious problem. Precocious and frequent sexual relations have become commonplace. In spite of the resilience of traditional family models, many prohibitions have been lifted (2001:34-35).

However, in the past, parents had full control over the movement of their girls. For example, the following songs reflect how parents can restrict the movement of their daughters.

Bakkanniisa reebanii.	They have hit *bakkanniisa* [C*roton marcrostachys*] tree.
Danqaraan ulaa cabee.	The big stick (to close the gate) is broken.
Marsanii na eeganii.	They have surrounded watching me.
Na karaa dhufaa dhabee.	I did not have the way to come (Taa 2004:19).
Mutuluu karaa raarree.	Muttulu has a muddy road.
Jimma yaa dhedheertuukoo	Jima my long one.
Nu duruu addaan baane.	We were separated a long time ago.
Jirtaa yaa sesseeqxuu koo.	Are you alive my cheerful friend?

On the other hand, strict control against the activities of the girls can be incompatible with the current situation. The following song reflects how 'old women' resist change and development.

O river of Gera!

Naso flows uphill.

O daughters of old women,

I'm shocked by your situation (Sumner 1997:128-129).

The singer laments that the situation of the daughters of old mothers is not compatible with new development and values, because they insist that their daughters should keep the values respected in their own days.

Love Songs by Old Men

Old men want to attract, date, and seduce beautiful girls. They prefer young and good-looking women in part because they tend to be sexier and healthier than older women from their perspective. Some old men also believe that young girls are free from HIV virus. Others are encouraged to have an affair with young girls for they believe that it would prevent the early onset of impotence that is believed to be inevitable for those who have sexual relationships with only one woman (Repeke and Ayensu 2001:92). In some societies it is believed that a sexual encounter with a young woman can strengthen men's virility. Old men use the following songs to appreciate the value of mating with younger girls:

Gaachanni gaachanan caaluu.	A shield isn't better than another shield.
Caalekaa gaachanni booyyee.	But a shield made of a pig's hide is superior.

Jaalalli jaalalan caaluu.	Love is love, none is better than the other
Caalekaa jaalalli ijoollee.	The love of youth is superior.
Ashawwaalakoo yaa ashawwaalee Galaanii.	My sweetheart the daughter of Galan.[23]
Guraamaleeko simalee jedhe garaani.	My heart says I can't live without you.
Ashawwaalakoo namni	My sweetheart, a person who
qilxu yaabbataaree	climbs up a sycamore tree
Rigaa muratee bua'aree.	would cut a toothbrush and comes down.
Ashawwaalakoo namni	My sweetheart, a person who
kitchuu jaalataaree	loves a young girl
Jiraa gubatee du'aaree.	would burn alive to death.

The above two songs show how old men and young men want to have sexual intercourse with young girls. Here the emphasis is on age. Old men want young girls who have a full body, blood and soft skin. This reminds us of the problem of 'sugar daddies' who use their money to contact young girls and spread HIV. Relatively wealthy old men and the middle classes use their money and power to exploit sexually young girls who have no resources to survive and pay school fees. Thus, the so-called 'sugar daddy' relationship, in which older men seek out younger sexual partners (often mere children) is a serious problem in many sub-Saharan African countries (Uganda, Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Tanzania (Fuglesang 1997, cited in Janssen 2002), South Africa and the Caribbean (Jamaica).

In fact, financial benefit is not the only reason for the young girls to meet older men. Sometimes, financially well off girls have sexual contact with both rich and poor men for various reasons. Some girls want a relationship with older men, because older men are believed to be experienced, stable, mature, secure, trustworthy, and wiser than younger men although age does not necessarily mean wisdom. It is possible that older men can still be alcoholic and run after sex. Some older men take better care of their partners mentally and emotionally although not everyone is the same. Still others prefer mature men because of their previous experience with immature young boys, and because they have more in common. Some girls are attracted to older men for very personal reasons. They can be attracted to the knowledge and/or physical features of older men. Girls who have loving fathers may also be attracted to older men.

The dependence of young women on 'sugar daddies' is common all over the world. A case in point is the commodification of sex in the US, as an article in the US beauty magazine, *Allure* suggests. The title of the article was 'Tricks for Treats'. It describes how young women can use sex to secure expensive gifts from wealthy men (Bachrach 2002, cited in Stillwaggon 2003:823). There are also various sex sites on the World Wide Web where all groups of people publicize their sexual interests and possibly have partners. Wealthy men can also use this forum to contact young girls.

Raising Awareness of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic through Love Songs

Love singers can use love songs to bring awareness of the negative consequences of unprotected sex, extramarital sex, multiple sexual partners and other forms of sexual relationship that can be the means of HIV transmission. Songs can set the mood, maintain humor and provide support for work. They can internalize messages and thereby influence behavior. They can further remind the people that HIV/AIDS is a real problem that needs to be tackled to prevent the death of many people.

Songs That Have a Teaching Role

The following traditional Oromo love songs have an important message for both men and women.

Karkarroon laga horaa.	The boar breeds in the bush.
Maa qilxuu yaabbatinii?	Why do you climb a sycamore tree?
Qancarroo nama daraa yaa dammeekoo	An old man deceives, my honey.
Maa kichuu jaalatinii?	Why did you not love a young man?

This song stresses that a young girl should love a person who is young rather than an old man who can deceive her and spoil her life. This is a song that questions the tradition of sugar daddies.

Yaa qotiyyoo qoti tabba baataa mitii.	Oh ox work on the farm, you don't climb the hill.
Tokkichuma jaaladdhu	Love only one person, you
lama taataa mitii	can't be two persons.
Ashawwaalakoo ijaarrataa mana Qaalluu	My dear, the builder of a Qaalluu house.
Ashawwaalakoo manni aggafaarii jigeeraa.	My dear, the house of a soldier has collapsed.

Ashawwaalakoo ilaalitii	My dear, watch out when you
nama jaaladhu.	love someone.
Ashawwaalakoo namni akka	My dear, people have
afaanii ta'uu dideeraa.	stopped keeping their promises.
Bishaan shaggar kun ol bubbisaa	Part of Shager River flows upstream,
Kunimmoo gad bubbisa,	part of it flows downstream.
Sin ganuu na hin ganiinii.	I don't betray you, don't betray me.
Waaqni jaalalaa nama cuubbisaa.	If not, the God of love makes one a sinner.

These songs praise the importance of fidelity and the negative consequences of extramarital sex. In particular, these songs capture the misunderstanding of real healthy love-sex and the danger of unhealthy sexual experimentation that may dominate the lives of teenagers.

The following songs indicate that although love can bring one suffering, patience is important to avoid unnecessary consequences.

Waaqni jawwee uumte	God [who] has created the python;
Baga qunece uumte	justly he has (also) created the bark of a tree.
Kan jaalala uumtee	He has created love;
Baga obsa uumte	justly he has (also) created patience (Cerulli 2003).

The Oromo use the bark of certain trees as medicine against serpents. So the singer said God who created the python, also created the bark of a tree. God who created love also created patience. Patience and the bark of certain trees have similar role: they serve as a medicine for love and snake bites respectively. The singer stresses also the importance of self-control and soberness.

Yoo garaacha naa murtee,	If you cut the tripe of a ruminant for me to eat,
Anin nyaaddhu nan gogsaa.	I won't eat it. I will dry it up.
Yoo garaa natti murtee	If your heart does no more have place for me,
An-sin yaadu nan obsaa!	I will try to endure patiently the pain of longing for you! (Bitima n.d.).
Sherreereen Harbuutti ceetee.	A girl called Sherere crossed to Harbu.
Boofti Wallaggaa dhalaadhaa.	Snakes in Walaga are all female.

Si se'een abjuutti seeqee.	I thought I met you and smiled in my dream.
Obsi walargaan ganaadhaa!	Be patient just a bit more, it is too soon to bid each other farewell (Bitima n.d.).
Yaa simbirroo laganaa.	A bird in this local river.
Shumburaa naa carcarii.	prepare fresh chickpeas for me to eat.
Yaa garaakoo baranaa.	Oh my heart these days,
Hundumaa naa dandayii!	Please bear up for me the misfortunes that come my way (Bitima n.d.).
Otoo irra rafanii	If slept on, the leaves of pea are comfortable
Nama hin quuqu yaa baala ataraa.	Even pea husks aren't uncomfortable.
Nama hin quuqu yaa baala ataraa.	Even pea husks aren't uncomfortable.
Sabatiin yoo sidadhabee	If the girdle cannot accommodate you,
sansalatan sii bita yaa garaa.	I will buy you a chain oh my heart.
sansalatan si bita yaa garaa	I will buy you a chain oh my heart.
Sin jibbu harmikee madaa	I don't hate you. Your breast is
kiyya hin qoorsa.	medicine for my wound.
Jaaladhe obsaa hin jiru.	I endure it unwillingly.
Raakaadhee dirqamaan obsaa jira.	I was forced and became patient.

It is interesting to note that like ancient Egyptians, the Oromo people believe that the heart and the mind are the centres of thinking and emotion.[24] The singer appealed to his heart to be patient. The above songs imply that if one is patient regarding sex, one can protect himself/herself from HIV/AIDS. Haste can force one to have affairs with HIV-positive partners. Thus, patience should be one of the virtues that should help us to protect ourselves from the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This does not mean that patience equals restraint or abstention. The point is that patience is only one part of safe sex.

The following Oromo proverb also shows the importance of careful action. '*Yoo suuta deeman, qorreen suuta nama waraanti*' – 'A thorn will prick gently if people walk slowly'. A slower approach enables us to deal with the problem of HIV/AIDS and other complex problems better. The English proverb 'slow and steady wins the race' has also an important message for the people to be serious about their sexual affairs. Unreflective speed is likely to produce negative consequences.

The following songs are specifically about HIV/AIDS.[25] They all warn the people to avoid unsafe sex. The last one indicates how people have started to be conscious about safe sex. Many people are scared to visit sex workers. For that reason, prostitution is no longer an attractive and profitable job.

Suuta, suuta, suutaa.	Be slow; be slow in your dealings with the opposite sex,
HIV baraara buuta.	If not, you may encounter HIV the virus of the time.
AIDSii yaa AIDSii maal	AIDS, AIDS. What kind of disease
dhibeen akkaanaa.	are you?
Sababa kee fuutee hin adeemtuu biyyanaa?	Why don't you go out of this country taking away your dangers?
Foolliyyoo roobaa	The fooliyo in the rain.
wayyaa fooleen roobaa.	The fooliyo in the rain.
Eenyu jabbii tiksaa qarqara caakkaa.	Who tends calves on the edge of the forest?
Seeruu gatiin dhibbaa galata Waaqaa.	The price of vagina has become 100 Birr, thanks be to God.
Guggubaan urgaayee.	The burning thing smells.
Buqushaan bushaayee.	A vagina has become cheap.
Yaa Waqa galatakee	Thank You God.
Wayyaa foolleen roobaa.	The fooliyo in the rain.

Likewise, some singers sang the following song when syphilis started devastating both men and women in the past.

Ijaarrataa maana qaalluu.	The builder of the Qalluu house,
dawoon qarabaa tureeraa.	There was the shelter of a penknife.
Ilaallataa nama jaaldhuu	Be a bit discreet about your love affairs,
fanxoon Arabaa dhufeeraa.	there is syphilis that came from Arabia.

A woman who did not like the gradual move of a person sang the following. She advised him that the attempt to have an affair with her will have negative consequences for his name.

Sissiqxee na jalaa buutee	You moved slowly and came close to me.
Siqi narraa salphina fuute.	Move away from me, you will be humiliated.

Like traditional singers, modern singers have the responsibility and the role of alerting the people about the danger of HIV/AIDS. They sing songs that have the power to convey joy, happiness and the negative consequences of unsafe sex. After interviewing some informants and searching for some singers who sang about HIV/AIDS in Oromo Music shops in Addis Ababa, I noted that very few modern Oromo singers have paid attention to HIV/AIDS. Nuho Gobana, a well known Oromo singer based in Canada, included one song entitled *eedsii* (AIDS) on his album *Obsii* (be patient) in 2005. He advised both men and women who have multiple partners to refrain from having sexual contact with many people. He advised married men and women, and doctors to try to control the spread of the virus. The last part of this song has the following message in English: please don't do it! please don't do it! Thus, both traditional and modern songs can play a positive role in the global fight against HIV/AIDS in Africa. Governments and civil society organisations should encourage musicians to participate actively in this struggle in the years to come.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted that Oromo love-sex songs express the joys of loving, being loved and having sex in a manner as frank as the so-called modern songs. They have lyrics attesting to what love is, how it feels to be in love with somebody, and how one can be hurt by love. For indigenous Oromo the way they were sung and the voice used by various singers give additional satisfaction. Unfortunately, all translated songs lack the rhyme and rhythm of the original. When one listens to the lyrics of various songs, one doesn't stop asking oneself whether they are factually true or not, one simply feels the emotions that the songs convey without questioning them. As noted earlier, young men and women can easily be tempted by the emotional power of songs and engage in unprotected sex as they are more prone to making impetuous decisions. Particularly love songs can provoke them to take the initiative to fulfill their physical urges. Families have no longer the power to control the sexuality of their children. Thus, if these groups are not cautious and do not think about these beautiful songs, it can tempt them to get infected with HIV.

Another important conclusion of this article is that Oromo love-sex songs are based on Oromo traditions, being negative or positive. They are not just about sex. They reflect the beliefs and values enshrined in Oromo social institutions (religious, political, legal and the like). They convey the different ways in which the Oromo perceive love/sex in their wider world view. Oromo sex songs are related to love within and outside marriage. Among others, various songs praise the following moral qualities: ingenuousness, innocence,

compassion, benignity, loyalty, courage, and patience. The Oromo believe that *Waaqa* is the creator of all things including sex and all the passions that come along with it. Most sexually explicit love songs express that sexual organs, the feelings of sexual longings, pleasure during sex and patience were created by God. The singers point out that God has the power of making sexual organs very sweet. Although some love songs by men objectify women and girls, the latter also use songs to express their sexuality. Both men and women seem equally comfortable talking and singing about sex. At times, the songs present the man begging for sex. The woman is presented as the party with some power to 'give' sex or 'not to give.' Accordingly, the Oromo world view recognizes the importance of sex, erotic dances, and phallic symbols. It does not propagate the importance of celibacy and monastic life. Instead, it recognizes the power of sex, marriage and family life.[26]

It should be noted that there is no necessary causal connection between love-sex songs and actual sexual behaviour. Singing and listening to sexually explicit songs do not necessarily influence sexual behaviour. As discussed earlier, the context under which the songs are sung may make a difference. The fact that sexual contact is carried on with secrecy and discretion also makes it difficult to determine a measurable relationship between love-sex songs and HIV/AIDS.

Besides religious laws, the Oromo formulated secular laws that govern sexual relationships. Some love songs including *gadaa* songs are permissible. Other love songs are not allowed because of their negative impacts on the people. The Oromo have revised and introduced new sexual mores over-time in response to new challenges and developments. They suspended those laws that are incompatible with twenty-first century sexuality.

However, the Oromo sexual ethic is being eroded because of modern education, external forces and internal dynamics. Some of the love songs discussed above are not compatible with indigenous sexual ethics. For instance, the Oromo sexual ethics demand virginity before sex. The case of the *cabana* in Borana is a good example. If a man has sexual relations with a virgin girl he would be considered *cabana* and must be cut off from his family. A virgin girl who lost her virginity before marriage will be treated in the same way. Citizens who have undergone 'modern' education are challenging this tradition.

In fact, not all love songs arouse sexual desire. There are some love songs that have had the teaching role against unsafe sexual activities and show how the young people rush to sex without understanding the consequences. Love songs thus can help the Oromo people and other people in the 'developing' world as well as all around the world in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Attempts should be made to promote these types of

songs. While appreciating the world view of the Oromo as regards sexuality, I would like to suggest that Oromo love-sex songs should be critically reexamined to determine to what degree they put lives at risk, in light of the changing world in which young Oromo live and challenge the traditional Oromo sexual ethics of self-control. The young generation should be taught the implications of these songs for their future and society. It would be unwise to suspend all forms of love songs as they carry people's values. It would be equally wrong to suggest that people should avoid sex and love songs completely, because this would lead to the extinction of the people. Sex should be openly discussed in each and every family so that the young people would choose sexual activities that will have lasting effects on their life. Sex education should also be introduced in schools so that it will kindle awareness in young people of the dangers of HIV, unsafe sex and of unwanted pregnancy. Sex educators can use love songs to examine and understand people's sexuality.

This study also suggests that both traditional and modern Ethiopian and African musicians should play their part in the fight against HIV/AIDS by creating culturally sensitive, educative and entertaining songs. They have to oppose unsafe sex, and serve as examples of good citizens who care for their future. As Kent Steinriede (2007) notes, many musicians across Africa have died of HIV/AIDS in the last two decades; so, this picture needs to be changed. First and foremost, African musicians should pay attention to their own health and set an example for ordinary citizens through their sexual practice and songs.

The potential contribution of traditional and modern love songs to the expansion or prevention of HIV/AIDS requires a lengthier and more in-depth discussion and evaluation than this article allows. African and non-African ethnomusicologists, artists, historians and philosophers should study this subject in their respective countries to both understand the nature of African love songs and their implications for the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

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Notes

1. This article is part of a larger project on 'The African and the Problem of Sex: African Philosophy of Sex, Globalization and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic'.
2. The word *luba* means generation class, class in the *gadaa* system (see Ton Leus, with Cynthia Salvadori 2006:426-427).
3. Bokkuu is a stick with a knobbed head. In the *gadaa* system; it is carried by the *hayyuu* as the sign of their authority.
4. *Masqala*: celebration at the end of the rainy season in September. 'Meskel' is the Amharic word for the cross.
5. The word *qoffortee* is borrowed from Amharic word *meqofer*.
6. Kiya Wamo lived in Irdar locality in Southern Ethiopia.
7. The Borana Oromo are divided into two exogamous halves or moieties, Gona and Sabo. Gona is the senior moiety, and consists of fourteen clans.
8. Adola is the centre where the miners collect gold.
9. Shager is another name for Addis Ababa. Finfinne is the indigenous name of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. Shager became the capital city of Ethiopia after the Abyssinian rulers conquered the Oromo people towards the end of the nineteenth century.
10. The women's sexual organ is analogized as sweet salt.
11. In this song *kooticha* means black soil; good, fat soil; Koticha Bari is the name of a place.
12. However, this does not mean that sex has never been open in the West; the above type of sexually explicit imagery has long been common in popular Western music including contemporary genres like country, rap, and rock. Some Westernised societies like the Japanese enjoyed erotic poems and songs. According to Robin Frederick, the ancient Romans were frank about sexuality. 'Sex in ancient Rome was something you just didn't hide under a barrel. Consequently most Roman love songs are of the ''love-the-one-you're with variety''' (Frederick 2004:3). Michel Foucault also argues that Western societies have become increasingly obsessed with sex; inciting discussion of it, even if veiling it with secrecy at the last moment. He thinks that the sexual obsession was created by repression (see Foucault 1976). Sexual issues were increasingly discussed in relation to diverse aspects of social life in nineteenth century Europe (Weeks 2003). However, as Jeffrey Weeks notes, the Victorian period was not peculiarly liberal. For example, until 1861 England employed the death penalty against sodomy. The law also restricted female sexual autonomy. According to Weeks, '[a]lthogh the present may not have produced a perfect resolution of all conflict, for many of us it is infinitely preferable to what existed little more than a hundred years ago' (Weeks 2003:34).
13. Gabaa Gindoo is a weekly market in Gindo town located in Amaya west of Waliso town, central Oromia.

14. The Oromo use the word Sidaama to refer to the Amhara ethnic group. This word is also the name of one ethnic group in southern Ethiopia.
15. Maru is a locality east of Waliso town, central Oromia, and is well known for horse-breeding as well as horse racing. It is believed that a gap-toothed person is sexy.
16. Meti is a small river found in the vicinity of Meti town, north of Ambo.
17. In this song the word *seye* refers to a melancholy feeling.
18. Tafi is a crop from which staple food is prepared in Ethiopia.
19. Mr. Wayessa was a well-known local leader in Korke area, eastern Ambo.
20. The father of Bayyuu is one of the well-known men in Chabo Oromo, west Shawa.
21. The waters of Shager include Akaki, Kolfe, Kebana and Bulbula rivers.
22. *Kelo* stands for yellow daisies.
23. It is interesting to note that various singers in Ambo, Addis Ababa, Salale, northwestern Oromia and even in Amhara region in Debreberhan refer to Galan girls. In Oromo history Galan is the first son of Tuulamaa. It appears that the descendants of Galan live in different parts of central Ethiopia.
24. In the Egyptian language, the heart is also considered as the seat of thoughts and emotions. 'The word for heart also meant "mind", "understanding", and "intelligence"' (Obenga 2004:35). Reason, emotion, spirit, mind, and body are believed to be complementary. Philosophers can rely on all the resources of their being to achieve fulfilment.
25. C Otutubikey Izugbara shows that some erotic songs and chants by the Ngwa adolescents in Nigeria reflect the potential risks of sexual encounters including 'sexually transmitted diseases (such as HIV/AIDS and gonorrhea), death, teenage pregnancy, illegitimate children, poverty, ill luck, shame, and embarrassment' (2005:68). The following song is one example:
    The penis, the penis, You are looking for
    The vagina? Hope you have enough money
    to cure gonorrhea, and to attend to the
    needs of a wife and child. There is disease
    everywhere, including the cureless AIDS.
    Multiple sexual encounters destroy
    the future, young males.
    The penis, the penis (Izugbara 2005:69).
26. Like the Oromo, Christians believe that sex, sexual desire and pleasure were created by God and marriage was created to fulfill that pleasure. One example is the 'Song of Songs' (also known as the Song of Solomon or Canticles) in the Hebrew *Bible*. The Song of Songs celebrates the joy and beauty of sexual love within marriage. God's intention of sex in marriage is clearly intended to be pleasurable.

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Residents' Perceptions of Property Rating in a Traditional African City

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Abstract

The success of any revenue generation drive by government depends on the support shown by an area's residents. This in turn depends on the latter's perceptions of the revenue. This study examines the influence of residents' perceptions of a property tax in the different residential districts of Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. Two of the ten political wards representing the three identifiable residential districts in the city were sampled. Two hundred and thirty-one occupants of dwellings were sampled, using the systematic random technique. The study identified that although variations exist in the socio-economic status of residents in the different residential districts, there was not much significant difference in the perceptions held of the tax. While residents' level of awareness of the existence of the tax and the proportion of residents that had once paid the tax increased from the core residential area to the suburban, an inverse proportion of residents supported the justification for its imposition. The study concluded that the tax should be portrayed as charges on services provided and that the residents' present negative perceptions of the tax would change if services are provided to meet minimal residents' satisfaction.

Keywords: internally-generated revenue, residents' perceptions, property tax, residential zone, traditional city.

Résumé

Le succès de toute initiative de génération de recette fiscale menée par le gouvernement dépend de l'adhésion des résidents de la région où ce projet a lieu. Par conséquent, un tel projet doit sa survie à la façon dont ces résidents perçoivent la question de l'impôt. Cette étude examine donc l'influence de la perception que les résidents ont sur le régime d'impôt foncier instauré dans différents quartiers résidentiels de la ville d'Ogbomoso, située dans l'État d'Oyo, au Nigeria. Deux des dix circonscriptions administratives représentant les trois quartiers résidentiels de la ville ont été retenues dans l'échantillon. Deux cent trente et un occupants de logements ont été sélectionnés à l'aide de la méthode d'échantillonnage aléatoire systématique. L'étude a permis d'identifier que, bien que la situation socio-économique des habitants présente des variations dans les différents quartiers résidentiels, il n'y avait pas de différence significative dans leurs perceptions de

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cet impôt foncier. Bien que le degré de conscience de l'existence de la taxe et la proportion de résidents ayant déjà payé la taxe de résidents aient progressé de la zone résidentielle de base pour s'étendre vers la banlieue, une proportion inverse de résidents a soutenu les raisons qui ont justifié cette taxe. L'étude a conclu que pour une meilleure adhésion des habitants, cette taxe devrait être présentée comme des frais additionnels prélevés pour les services offerts et que les perceptions négatives actuelles des résidents changeraient si les services offerts assuraient un minimum de satisfaction aux résidents.

Mots-clés : recettes générées au niveau local, perceptions des résidents, impôt foncier, zone résidentielle, ville traditionnelle.

Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous black nation south of the Sahara, operates a federal system of government. There are three tiers of government. These are the federal (central), state and local. The local government system is the one closest to the people at the grassroots. It is charged with certain constitutional responsibilities. These responsibilities include the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of local roads, drainage, market stalls, primary schools, slaughter slabs, cemeteries, primary health care and maternity centres (Nigeria 1999). If these responsibilities are discharged effectively, the quality of life of residents will be greatly enhanced.

To discharge these responsibilities, five distinct sources of revenue exist for a local government. These are grants, local tax, property tax, fees and charges and loans (Bello-Imam 1990). These could be broadly categorized into three: statutory allocation or grants, internally generated revenue (IGR) and loans. The IGR includes the local tax, property tax and fees and charges.

Of importance among the components of the IGR is property tax. The collection of property tax is not only a means of raising revenue, it is also among the main functions of a local government council in Nigeria (Nigeria 1999, Fourth Schedule, Section 7, Part 1).

That property tax could make a huge contribution to local government revenue in Nigeria has been severally acknowledged for some time now (Orewa 1966; Olowu 1987; Alex-Gboyega 1990; Bello-Iman 1990, 1996; Asaju 2003). For example, Orewa (1966) comments that: 'for any local government to make long-term financial plans for a gradual development of its social services, property tax is the most desirable of all the forms of local taxes'. Alex-Gboyega (1990) opines that property tax is 'a key to the problem of the perennial financial insolvency of local governments in Nigeria'.

The above estimation of the potential contribution that property tax could make to IGR emanated from the experience of the advanced countries of the world. For example, Jackson (1976) concluded that there was no year when property tax contributed less than 26.20 per cent to local government

revenues in the US between 1923 and 1973. Similarly, Ostrum et al. (1988) document that property tax is historically the most important tax for local government in Britain. The authors concluded that it was the only tax source that provided 77.2 per cent, 93.7 per cent, 96.8 per cent and 79.6 per cent and 32 per cent of all taxes, respectively in counties, townships, school districts, special districts and municipalities.

While government policies, over the last five decades in Nigeria, have favoured the use of property tax to strengthen the financial base of local government, little success is recorded. Attempts to explain why there is so little success in levying and collection of property tax are always focused on technical issues. These include the non-availability of the required, competent, qualified and experienced rating officers, non-availability of an enabling rating legislation, failure to set up a rating assessment and appeal tribunal, improper street numbering, among other factors (Olowu 1987; Bello-Imam 1990, 1995; Oyegbile 1996; Tomori 2003).

Although these technical problems were real to the extent that they could constitute a major impediment to effective levying and collection in years back, as of today however they are of little importance to hinder the success that could be achieved. One of the major reasons for this state of affairs is that payers' effective participation in property tax is not considered as very important. In other words, citizens' attitudes towards its payment – which is very poor – are not regarded as a serious hindrance. The payers' attitude is hinged on their conception of a number of factors. These may include the meaning and purpose of levying property tax, whether its imposition is justified or not, and whether the money realized from it would not be embezzled or misappropriated like the federal grants and other IGR. In other words, it is important to understand the residents' perceptions of property tax if it is to become a reliable and predictable medium of IGR.

Studying the perceptions of an issue held by residents has some specific advantages. Chokor (1983) observed that how residents perceive an issue may produce a change of attitude and also promote pressure groups and spirited public participation. Furthermore, perceptions reveal the image of the everyday users in the city. Also, how issues are perceived would help policy makers to identify the need and direction to which public education and enlightenment campaign will focus (Afon 1998). Public unrest may be averted since policies and programmes of government at whatever level that do not go down well with the public are quickly dropped or modified through appropriate information on perceptions. Therefore, for effective public participation in property tax, which is the only pivot on which its success rests, the residents' perceptions cannot be over-emphasized. Though each individual has their own perceptions, there seems to be substantial

agreement amongst members of the same socio-economic and cultural background to have similar view of urban issues (Lynch 1977:356), most especially when they are living in the same urban residential zone.

This type of study becomes imperative at this crucial period for a number of reasons. First, local government councils especially those that are urban based are becoming perennially financially insolvent due to over-dependence on federal government monthly grants. Second, the present scuffle between the state and local government on the latter's monthly allocation from the central government will be greatly reduced if a reliable IGR can be developed. Third, the study can show the direction which an educational campaign should focus in the different residential zones in order to evolve successful tax levying and collection. Lastly, the study will contribute to making property tax a success through the utilization of scientifically obtained payers' perceptive information. This would be regarded as the input of the residents' into governing, and would enhance their support, not only on property tax, but also on other related policies at the local government level.

The study is focused on the section of Ogbomoso town, situated in Ogbomoso North Local Government Council of Oyo State, Nigeria. The town is the second largest town in the state, next in size and population to the state capital, Ibadan. It is a traditional African city.

The Main Features of an African Traditional City

The traditional city in Nigeria and, by extension Africa, predates the advent of colonialism (Bascom 1962; Mabogunje 1968; Onokerhoraye 1976; Adedibu 1989). Many such cities were walled around for security reasons. Their growth outside the walls, according to Mabogunje (1968), produced a twin centre city: one traditional and one modern. The combination of these two parts in Nigerian cities has revealed three contrasting residential areas. These, according to Onibokun (1985) are: the suburban; the zone between the suburban and the pre-colonial development; and the traditional heart of the city. Each of the above is referred to as the suburban, intermediate or transitional, and core or traditional residential settings respectively in this study. Studies on some Nigerian traditional cities have identified these kinds of residential zones. They include those in Benin (Onokerhoraye 1977), Ilorin (Akorede 1974; Onokerhoraye 1982; Adedibu 1989), Ogbomoso (Okewole 1977; Afon 1998, 2005), Bida and Mina (Gana 1996).

Certain distinctive physical characteristics of each residential zone and the peculiar socio-economic attributes of occupants have also been identified. In other words, residents of the different zones have diverse socio-economic attributes. One of the theoretical backgrounds for these variations could be derived from the classical urban land use theories propounded between 1925

and 1945. Even though they may not be of much relevance to explaining the spatial structure of African cities, they all provide a unique criterion upon which spatial variations in socio-economic attributes of urban residents could be measured. This is because each of the concentric zone (Burgess 1925), the sector (Hoyt 1939) and Multi-Nuclei (Harris and Ullman 1945) theories recognized three categories of urban residents based on income. These are the low, medium and high income groups. Each of the groups occupies different residential areas of any typical urban centre. Indeed it has been discovered that residents' income and education status is on the increase as distance increases from the traditional/core residential setting to suburban areas. Heterogeneity in population is likewise on the increase. The spatial variation in the supply of urban infrastructure follows the above pattern (Egunjobi 1986; Oherein 2003). In contrast, population density decreases. Traditional houses closely built together and constructed of mud followed that of the pattern of the population density. The number of buildings that are landlocked steadily decreases towards the suburban residential area.

With these varied socio-economic attributes of residents and physical characteristics in the different residential areas of a typical African traditional city, it is expected that the perception on any issue would be different. This is because it has been emphasized that culture, experience, socio-economic status (education, occupation, income) and quantity and quality of information are modifying factors of residents' perceptions (Goodchild 1974; Tuan 1974; Porteous 1976; Golledge 1975; Afon 1998a).

Issues in Property Tax Perception as Related to the Different Residential Settings

The origin of the modern day property rating can be traced to 1601 in England when parish inhabitants' visible estates (real and personal) were taxed to relieve local poverty (Jackson 1976). This tax was termed a 'poor rate'. A simplified and consolidated system was established through the rating and valuation Act of 1925. This act transferred the powers of parishes for making and levying rates to rating authorities. Several acts of parliament attempted to make property rating more relevant to the needs of local government (Jackson 1976:251-260).

Property rating is known to have made a significant contribution to local government income revenue, especially in the advanced countries of the world. For instance, between 1923 and 1973 Jackson (1976: 243) reported that the annual contribution of property tax was not less than 26.20 per cent to local government internally generated revenue in England. Similarly in the USA, Ostrum et al. (1988) documente that property tax is historically the most important tax for local governments. They conclude that property tax

as a proportion of all other taxes contributed 77.20 per cent for counties, 93.70 per cent for townships, and 96.80 per cent for school districts. Property taxes contributed 79.60 per cent of revenue for special districts and 32 per cent for municipalities.

The advantages of property tax have been thoroughly ventilated in the advanced countries. However, these have not been properly identified in the developing nations. Some of these advantages include:

- Property tax provides the local government with an independent source of income from within their own boundaries and raises a large amount of revenue;
- Property tax is payable on immovable property; a characteristic which made the tax almost impossible to evade;
- This form of tax is one of the easiest and most economical to collect. Balchin and Kieve (1988) concluded that the costs of collection were no more than 1.2 per cent of the total revenue. This view was corroborated by Tomori (2003:303);
- The tax is flexible. This is because the 'nairage', that is, an amount per naira payable on rateable value can easily be altered to suit the financial needs of the local government;
- It acts as a deterrent to under-occupation of property. It thus encourages fuller occupation. This advantage is not of relevance to Nigeria since unoccupied buildings are not rateable;
- Since property tax is paid on properties, owners are encouraged to take an interest in local government activities (Onibokun 1977);
- Property tax offsets expenses on increasing demands for more and better social and public services as towns grow.

From the above advantages of property tax, some basic characteristics of this kind of tax include:

- It is levied on immovable property (Olowu 1985);
- It represents the benefits received from government expenditure that raises the value of property. Such benefits include paved streets, street lights, fire protection, police protection, location in a good school district, sanitized environment among others.

If property tax is viewed as above, its levy and collection may not pose major problems in some developed and developing nations of the world. In some African settings, as in Yorubaland, problems have been identified by Alex-Gboyega (1990):

- Political: The levying of property rate is a major political issue. When introduced for the first time it may be hard to justify. For example, Orewa (1979) observes that the Western State Government of Nigeria in 1974 educated traditional rulers and community leaders before a property tax could be imposed. Despite the extensive consultation, the programme failed. It was abandoned especially in the rural areas where resistance was highest (Olowu 1988).
- Definitional: The question of what exactly a property tax is seems difficult to answer. Is it a tax on the property or on the occupiers? Is it a tax on the services they enjoy? In other words, is it a tax on the expected or actual rent collected? These questions may be difficult to answer to the satisfaction of residents who are to pay the tax.
- Cultural: Historically, the tax has been presented as a form of tax on property itself. This notion is not always easily accepted. That a person would pay tax on a building he had used his money to construct is unimaginable for Nigerians, especially those living close to rural areas or in poverty.
- Locational: The varying locations of properties do not encourage ratings, especially those in the rural areas. Hereditaments in the rural areas and the core residential settings (especially of the African traditional city) are usually in a poor state. Thus they command a low rateable value. Before 1995, buildings in the core residential area of cities in Oyo State, Nigeria, were classified as non-rateable (Oyo State 1985).
- Services: Property tax in Western Europe is regarded as payment for local services. It thus becomes tied conceptually to the moral duty of citizens to contribute to the cost of providing public services. In such a case, a property tax may prove acceptable to residents satisfied with local service provision. In Nigeria that is often not the case. Services are either non-existent or are viewed as unsatisfactory by residents.

The problems enumerated above have in no small measure contributed to the negative perceptions amongst residents regarding a property tax. This is in addition to the technical and administrative problems that are related to the tax. Then there are the varied educational, income, occupational, and social status levels in the different residential zones of traditional urban centres that may be responsible for differing views among residents. By implication these possibilities suggest that the perceptions regarding a property tax may vary by location in an area such as that studied here.

The Study Area

This study was conducted in Ogbomoso, a traditional town and the second largest city in Oyo State. Historically, the town was believed to have been founded in the middle of the sixteenth century by the union of about five groups of early settlers who were hunters and came together under the company of the 'Alongo Society'. The society was composed of Aale of Oke-Elerin, Onisile of Ijeru, Orisatolu of Isapa, Akandie of Akandie and the ancestor of the Soun Dynasty located in Igbale Grove (the present location of the town's palace).

The name Ogbomoso was derived from an heroic act of one of the Souns against the neighbouring Oguro people led by a powerful warrior called Elemoso. Soun Ogunlola is said to have defeated and beheaded Elemoso. This act earned him the appellation *Eni ti o gb'ori Elemoso*; ('the man who took the head of Elemoso'). This was later shortened to Ogbomoso (Oyerinde 1934).

The physical and economic growth of the town can be traced to the 1920s when the Fulanis destroyed important and powerful towns around Ogbomoso. These towns include Ikoyi, Iresa, Ofa, Erin, Ajaawa, among others (Johnson 1921). Oyerinde (1934) records that over a hundred and forty communities found refuge in Ogbomoso. Many of the people from these towns did not return to their former towns when peace finally returned. Today in Ogbomoso, there are wards and quarters as well as compounds which bear the names of the towns and villages whence the residents' forebears had fled. Hence we find wards like Ajaawa, Okeola, Ita-Offa, Ilogbo, Osupa, Isoko, Masifa, and compounds like Aresa, Ajaawa, among others. All these are located in the core or the traditional residential district of the town.

The town has witnessed considerable physical and population growth. Thus, the town with a population figure of 25,000 in 1851 (Bowen 1857), was projected to have 236,732 inhabitants in 2003 from the 1991 census figure of 166,034. Similarly, Akinbola (2004) estimated that the town's physical size was 576 hectares in 1950 and 2,432 by 1995. The figure was thought to be around 27.49 square kilometres in 2003. With population and physical growth, residential areas have developed where properties have different rateable values. In the two local government council areas of the town, Ogbomoso North and Ogbomoso South with their headquarters at Kinira and Arowomole respectively, it was expected that the IGR from property tax should be substantial. This study is focused only on the Ogbomoso North Local Government Area of the town.

Methodology

The data for the study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. To collect the primary data, the local government was stratified into three residential zones. This approach was adopted for the following reasons:

(i) Urban residential zones tend to exhibit more permanent geographical features in terms of locations, structures, housing types and commercial activities among others (Beyer 1965).

(ii) These permanent geographical features objectively reflect the social, economic and cultural attributes of the residents (Herbert and Johnson 1978).

(iii) Each residential zone is likely to internally contain residents that have homogenous social and economic characteristics (Gana 1996).

(iv) By grouping the urban centre into residential zones, the analysis of residents in each zone (Timis 1971) and the perception held of specific urban issues is considerably simplified.

Different techniques existed in delineating the residential environment. These include aerial photographs (Mabogunje 1962; Oyelese 1990); general house rating list (Ayeni 1982a; Yirenkyi-Boateng 1986) and the historical and physical attributes factor (Mumbower & Demoge 1967; Okewole 1977; Onokerhoraye 1977). The absence of information on the first two methods prevented their use.

Okewole (1977) delineated Ogbomoso into three zones using the historical factor and physical attributes. He concluded that all wards built prior to the nineteenth century consist of the old parts. The part of the town built before independence is regarded as a transitional residential zone. The post-independence built up area is regarded as the modern area or the suburban. Similarly, Onokerhoraye (1977) stratified Benin City into three. According to this classification, population and building densities diminish as distance increases from the core towards the suburban.

To administer the questionnaire, the local government was further stratified into the ten political wards used by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct polls. Two political wards were selected for sampling. The political wards were Taraa/Sabo and Jagun. The two adequately represented the three residential zones of the city. The first hereditament sampled was randomly chosen. The subsequent unit of investigation was the fifth building. Questionnaires were administered either to the landlord (if available) or the head of the tenants or users of the properties selected. Public hereditaments were excluded since they were

not rateable. Such buildings include places of worship, schools, the king's palace, remand homes, uncompleted and un-occupied buildings, and vacant lands (Oyo State, 1995).

Through this method, a questionnaire with sixty-four questions was administered in the core/traditional residential setting. Questionnaires with ninety-one and seventy-six questions were respectively administered in the transition and suburban zones. Thus, the total number of questions administered were two hundred and thirty-one. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics of ANOVA and Chi-square were also used to test whether significant differences existed in residents' income and educational background in the different residential zones.

The secondary data collected included the information on the property tax as a proportion of the IGR in the local government on annual basis from 1994-2003.

Findings

Socio-Economic Attributes of Residents

A survey of the variation in the socio-economic attributes of the respondents in the different residential zones is examined with a view to be able to relate easily the perception held of the property tax.

Four attributes are considered. Unless otherwise stated, all the tables in this section emanate from the field survey of 2004.

(i) Educational Background of Respondents

Table 1: Educational Background of Residents

Educational Status	**Residentiel Zones**			**Total (%)**
	Core (%)	Transition (%)	Sub-urban (%)	
No formal	31 (13.42)	13 (5.63)	8 (3.46)	52 (22.51)
Primary	15 (6.49)	15 (6.49)	9 (3.90)	39 (16.88)
Secondary	14 (6.06)	36 (15.58)	23 (9.96)	73 (31.60)
Tertiary	4 (1.73)	27 (11.69)	36 (15.58)	67 (29.00)
Total	**64 (27.70)**	**91 (39.40)**	**76 (32.90)**	**231 (100)**

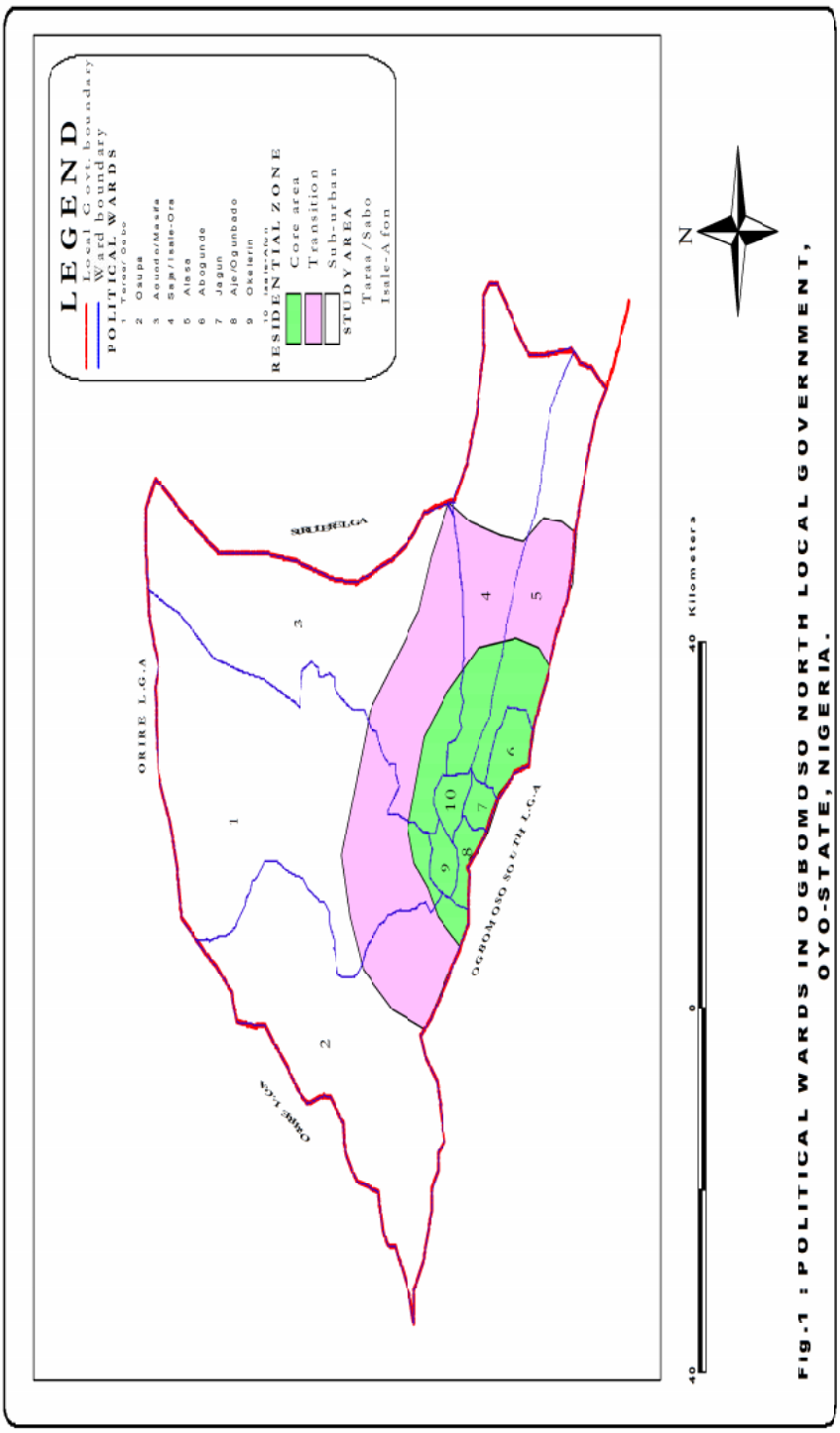

Fig.1 : POLITICAL WARDS IN OGBOMOSO NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OYO-STATE, NIGERIA.

SOURCE : Adapted from INEC Office Information, 2002.

It can be seen from the table that the educational status of the landlords or the head tenants increased as distance from the core residential zone towards the suburban also increased. Over half of the 22.51 per cent of the respondents with no formal education resided in the core residential area. In contrast, the distribution of the 67 respondents representing 29 per cent of total had a tertiary educational background. The research established that four (1.73 per cent), 27 (11.69 per cent) and 36 (15.58 per cent) respectively resided in the core, transition and suburban residential zones. The proportion of respondents with this educational status represented 6.25 per cent, 29.67 per cent and 47.37 per cent respectively in the core, transition and suburban zones. The variation in the residents' educational background was statistically significant. The computed chi-value of 49.203 at 0.05 levels of significance confirmed this position.

(ii) Occupational Distribution of Respondents

Closely related to the issue of educational status is the occupation of respondents. The residents' occupation was categorized into five as shown in Table 2. Two of these however need further explanation. These are artisan and 'others'. Artisans were residents that engaged in occupations like road-side auto-mechanics, bricklaying, radio, television, air conditioning and refrigerator repairing, carpentry, tailoring, shoe making and repairing among others. Occupations categorized as 'others' include groundnut and food vending, and bread baking, among others.

Table 2: Occupational Distribution of Respondents in the Different Residential Zones

Types of Occupation	**Residential Zones**			**Total (%)**
	Core (%)	Transition (%)	Sub-urban (%)	
Farming	6 (2.60)	11 (4.76)	2 (0.87)	19 (8.23)
Artisan	7 (3.03)	10 (4.33)	5 (2.16)	22 (9.52)
Trading	40 (17.32)	28 (10.12)	23 (9.96)	91 (39.39)
Civil Service	5 (2.16)	20 (8.16)	31 (13.42)	56 (24.24)
Others	6 (2.60)	22 (9.52)	15 (6.49)	43 (18.61)
Total	**64 (27.71)**	**91 (39.40)**	**76 (32.90)**	**231 (100)**

The study established that the number of respondents in occupations that require higher educational status (such as the civil service) increased

positively with distance from the traditional residential area towards the outskirts. Thus, 24.24 per cent of the respondents in the civil service in the study area, 2.16 per cent, 8.66 per cent and 13.42 per cent resided in the core, transition and suburban areas respectively. If the assumption holds that those in civil service occupations should have a better knowledge of the property tax, then residents of the suburban area should be better informed. Respondents in this category either worked for the state or the local government where decisions on the administration of property tax are taken.

(iii) Respondents' Income Distribution

Three income groups were identified – low, medium and high. The low income class earns up to N10,000 per month. This was the range of the monthly income of workers on salary grade levels 1 to 6 in government service as at the time of this survey. People in this income category are regarded as junior workers. The medium income group earned between N10,000 and N20,000 monthly; while anybody earning above N20,000.00 was regarded as a high income earner. The distribution of respondents into the various income cadres in the different residential zones is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Income Distribution of Respondents in the Different Residential Zones

Income per Month	**Residential Zones**			**Total (%)**
	Core (%)	Transition (%)	Sub-urban (%)	
Low = N10,000.00	37 (57.81)	41 (45.05)	26 (34.21)	104 (45.02)
N10001 - N20,000.00	22 (34.30)	35 (38.16)	30 (32.47)	87 (37.66)
= N20001.00	5 (7.81)	15 (10.48)	20 (26.32)	40 (17.32)
Total	**64 (100)**	**91 (100)**	**76 (100)**	**231 (100)**

The percentage of low income workers decreased as distance from the core to the suburban residential zones increased. While the portion of residents who were in the low income cadre in the core area was 57.81 per cent, it represented 35.58 per cent of all the respondents in the income group in the three residential areas. Thus it can be concluded that the per centage of respondents in the high income group reduced as one moves from the core/traditional residential area to the suburban. In general however, the proportion of low income earners was 45.02 per cent of all respondents. The variations examined above were statistically significant. The analysis of

variance (ANOVA) computed supported this claim as the computed F values of 14.157 is significant at 0.05 levels.

(iv) Types of Houses Occupied by Respondents

Three major types of houses are common in a typical traditional African city. These are the traditional courtyard, self-contained dwelling, and 'face-me-I-face-you' residence. Information presented in Table 4 indicated that the pre-colonial houses with mud walls were predominant in the core. Indeed, the pattern was that such types of dwellings decreased as distance increased towards the suburban area. The pattern of the distribution of the self-contained houses was the inverse of the courtyard system. It was thus established that the rateable value of hereditaments increases as one moves from the core towards the suburban residential zone of Ogbomoso.

Table 4: House Types Occupied by Residents in the Different Residential Zones

House Type	**Residential Districts**			**Total (%)**
	Core (%)	Transition (%)	Sub-urban (%)	
Self-contained/Flat		18 (32.73)	33 (60)	55 (23.81)
Traditional Courtyard	42 (73.68)	12 (21.05)	03 (5.26)	57 (24.68)
Face-me-I-face-you	18 (15.12)	61 (51.26)	40 (33.61)	119 (51.51)
Total	**64**	**91**	**76**	**231**

The next section of the study discusses the perceptions among residents regarding the property tax in the different residential areas.

Residents' Perception of Property Tax

This section considers the residents' level of awareness of the tax, the proportion of residents that had at least once paid the tax, the meaning of the tax to residents, whether the imposition of the tax is justified or not, and residents' opinion on what should be done to gain their support for the imposition of this tax.

(i) Residents' Level of Awareness of the Property Tax

As shown in Table 5, the residents' level of awareness of the existence of a property tax was very low. Only 82 (35.50 per cent) of the total respondents had ever heard of the tax. The study further revealed that it was only in suburban area where up to 50 per cent of the residents had known of the property tax before.

Table 5: Residents' Level of Awareness of the Property Tax in the Different Residential Zones

Residential Districts	Respondents that were aware (%)	Residents who were not aware (%)	Total
Core	15 (23.44)	49 (76.56)	64 (100)
Transition	23 (25.27)	68 (74.73)	91 (100)
Sub-urban	44 (57.89)	32 (42.11)	76 (100)
Total	**82 (35.50)**	**149 (64.50)**	**231 (100)**

It follows from the data that the valuation list exercise carried out in 1997 in the jurisdiction of the local government had not alerted many residents to the existence of the property tax. An interesting observation about the level of awareness regarding the tax is that it tended to increase as the distance increased from the core residential area to the suburban. Further, not all the respondents that had been aware of the tax had paid it. Of the 82 respondents who claimed that they were aware of the tax, only 65.85 per cent had paid it at least once.

Table 6: Status of Payment of Property Tax among Residents

Different urban area	Respondents that had at least once paid (%)	Respondents that had never paid (%)	Total
Core	6 (40)	9 (60.00)	15 (100)
Transition	15 (65.22)	8 (34.78)	23 (100)
Sub-urban	31 (70.45)	13 (29.55)	44 (100)
Total	**54 (65.85)**	**28 (34.150**	**82 (100)**

It appears from the data that 60 per cent of those in the traditional residential area who were aware of the property tax had never paid it. One reason for this state of affairs was that residential properties built of mud had for many years enjoyed exemption from rating. Those that had paid would have done so on commercial properties like shops and petrol stations. In the transition residential area, only 65.22 per cent of residents who had knowledge of the tax had paid it at least once. A majority of the residents in the suburban residential zone (70.45 per cent) had at least once paid the tax. One obvious fact from variations in the level of awareness and tax payment is that effective

means of collecting the tax were not in force as defaulters were not prosecuted. It was also noted that nine of the respondents who had never heard of the tax had actually paid at least once. It would seem that some residents paid taxes that they did not understand.

To investigate what exactly residents understand about the property tax, five definitions were provided. A respondent could indicate as many of the options that came close to what he thought the tax meant. The findings are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Residents' Views Regarding the Property Tax

Residents' View of Property	Tax Residential Area			Total
	Core	Transition	Sub-urban	
(a) Tax on services provided by the local government	28	46	59	133(39.35)
(b) Tax for owning the property	13	37	26	76(22.48)
(c) Tax on rent actually received on the property	12	17	26	55(16.86)
(d) Tax receivable on the property	6	21	16	43(12.13)
(e) Tax on occupiers/tenants	4	12	15	31(9.17)
Total	**63**	**33**	**142**	**338** ***

*** The total exceeds the number of questions as a result of multiple responses.

The most frequent view was that the property tax was imposed for services rendered by local government. The number of respondents with this view increased as the distance increased from the core to the suburban residential area. This most frequently offered view suggests why residents support its imposition. If the tax is seen as a charge on the services provided by the local government, it follows that such services should be available at a quantity and quality that meet the minimum needs of residents. But if that is the case, nobody should pay property tax as far as the study area was concerned. This is because meaningful services that could raise the value of properties were not available.

Closely related to the meaning of the tax is whether the imposition of the tax is justified or not. From the core residential setting, 21 respondents (32.81 per cent) perceived that the imposition of property tax was justified. In the same zone, 30 (46.88 per cent) could see no justification for its imposition. The remaining thirteen respondents (20.31 per cent) did not indicate their stand.

Table 8: Respondents' Views on Whether the Imposition of Property Tax is Justified

	Residential Area			**Total (%)**
View on the imposition of property tax	Core (%)	Transition (%)	Sub-urban (%)	
Justified	21(32.81)	31(34.04)	27(35.53)	79(34.20)
Not justified	30(46.88)	45(49.45)	49(64.47)	124(53.68)
Not response	13(20.31)	15	-	28(12.12)
Total	**64**	**91**	**76**	**231**

Similarly, close to 50 per cent of respondents in the transitional residential area did not support the imposition of a property tax. Only 34.07 per cent of the respondents in the area supported such an imposition. The support for a property tax was least in the suburban area where a higher proportion of respondents with high education status resided. Of the 76 respondents in the area, 49 (64.47 per cent) did not see any justification for its imposition. On the whole, 79 respondents (34.2 per cent) supported the use of a property tax, while over half of the respondents were against it. One observable trend from the data presented in Table 8 is that the view that the imposition of a property tax was not justified became more frequent as the distance increased from the core to the suburban area. It could perhaps be concluded that for the more educated residents, the meaning of the tax seemed clearer. However, while the more educated section perceived the rationale for the tax, the residents concerned were aware that the local government had not done enough in terms of infrastructure provision to justify the additional tax after the 'pay as you earn' tax on wages.

Residents were requested to indicate the reasons why they thought that the imposition of a property tax was justified. Seven possible reasons were provided. Respondents were allowed to indicate as many of the reasons as they wished. Table 9 summarises the findings.

Table 9: Why residents think the imposition of a property tax is justified

Reasons	**Residential Zones**			**Total**
	Core	Transition	Sub-urban	
Services rendered by local government were not reliable	24	38	43	105 (33.02)
A form of double taxation	29	42	39	110 (34.59)
Money realized will be embezzled inappropriate	25	37	41	103 (32.39)
Total	**78**	**117**	**123**	**318*** **

Note: *** The figure exceeds the number of questions administered due to multiple responses.

That property tax would increase the internally generated revenue of local government represented the most important view held regarding why its imposition was considered justified. This represented 20.15 per cent of the reasons put forward. One of the major reasons for imposing property tax all over the world (to recover some of the expenses on facilities provided) ranked third in this case study. Residents also felt more comfortable in supporting its imposition because such a tax was imposed in the other states in Nigeria.This reason ranked second and accounted for 18.51 per cent of the total responses.

On the other hand, the views expressed on why property tax should not be imposed, as summarized in Table 10, indicated an almost total lack of confidence in the country's governance.

In the first place, there was no reliable infrastructure service for which residents were already paying. Lives and properties were not secure enough that residents could feel safe at night. Furthermore the confidence of residents regarding the integrity of local government administrators had been almost completely eroded. Any means adopted by the local government to generate additional IGR was usually perceived by the people as yet another ways to obtain more money to be misappropriated or embezzled. With this public mind set, levying and collecting property tax must become very difficult if not impossible. Effective public participation is necessary for its success. To this end, residents were asked to indicate what could be done to secure support for local government with regard to property rating. Table 11 summarises the residents' suggestions on what could be done to improve the support for the imposition of the tax.

Table 10: Why the Imposition of Property Tax was not Considered Justified

Reason for Justification	Residential Zones					
	Core	Transition	Sub-urban	Total	Rank	
LG will recover expenses on services provided	12	18	21	51	(3rd)	16.35%
IGR of LG will be increased	18	21	25	64	(1st)	20.51%
Advanced countries are paying	6	14	21	41	(5th)	13.14%
Other developing countries are paying	4	16	26	46	(4th)	17.74%
Some states in Nigeria are paying	13	26	19	58	(2nd)	18.59%
Less costly to collect	-	10	21	31	(6th)	9.94%
Difficult to evade	-	7	24	21	(7th)	6.73%

Table 11: Residents' Suggestions to Improve the Support for the Imposition of Property Tax

Residents' suggestion	Residential Districts			
	Core	Tradi-tional	Sub-urban	Total
General Public Service Improvement	51	83	62 (24.08%)	196 (84.85%)
Public Enlightenment Campaign	38	62	61 (19.78%)	161 (69.70%)
Proper Accountability on low Local Government Finance.	49	77	57 (22.48%)	183 (79.20%)
Publicity of the Authorized Collecting Agents	29	58	42 (15.85%)	129 (55.84%)
Timely sending of Rate demand notice	23	47	48 (14.50%)	118 (51.08)
Effective monitoring/strong enforcement	19	39	49 (13.14%)	107 (46.23%)

Many residents argued that the most important step that the local government and the other tiers of government could take was not only to improve the existing urban infrastructure, but also that additional ones should be provided. This view represented 84.85 per cent of the total responses. Of importance is the view that the local government functionaries (elected and career officials) should provide accounts of the IGR and statutory grants from the central government for public scrutiny, although the most significant step forward would be to improve the quantity and quality of services provided.

Conclusion

Property tax levying and collection in the developed world is a stable and reliable source of income for local government. This is achievable as a result of high public willingness to pay. People in such countries know that paying a property tax is related to the quality of the services rendered by government, which in turn will lead to an increase in the value of their properties. This is contrary to the situation in Nigeria where residents are not willing to pay property rates due to the very low level of satisfaction with the available public services. Thus, paying property tax is conceived as double taxation.

This study argues that for success to be recorded in property rate levying and collection in developing countries and especially in Nigeria, residents' negative perception regarding the tax need to change. Such a change implies that:

(a) Government must provide adequate public services such as roads and personal security that satisfy the minimum expectations of residents. This single action would not only improve the quality of residents' lives, but also restore the lost confidence regarding governance capacity. Indeed, the provision of adequate physical facilities would demonstrate more accountability on the part of local government than the prepared annual accounts and budgets and public speeches of the elected officials.

(b) Local government should make public the amount of money collected from property rates from the different political wards. A reasonable proportion of the amount collected from each ward should be expended on the development of specific projects in the area. This would encourage residents to show support for government in its efforts at levying and collecting not only property rates, but other forms of levy and taxes.

(c) Local governments should embark on educational and enlightenment campaigns. Such programmes should focus on the importance of the IGR to local government and the benefits that can accrue to the public through its payment. Educational and enlightenment campaigns can

be organized in churches and mosques, and among members of cooperative societies and unions. Trade unions like the National Union of Road Transport Workers, the Market Women Union, Nigerian Union of Teachers among others could be contacted to give support in organizing appropriate fora for information dissemination to their members who are inevitably property tax payers.

(d) It is also imperative that local government should compile a rating list. And indeed, the names and addresses of the collecting agent or agents commissioned must be made public. Amounts payable as rating must be made known to payers on time (preferably in January of every year). The estate management section of the local government should make further clarifications about the different designated locations within the local government where payment can be made. To this end, the need to adequately staff the estate management section of local government with qualified and experienced experts in property rating administration becomes imperative.

It must be emphasized that a key solution to the problem of the perennial insolvency of local government is through evolving an effective property rating administration. This subsequently depends on changing the negative perceptions among residents regarding the property tax. Local government would then be able to rely less on statutory allocations from central government if this source of IGR, which is constitutionally its sole responsibility, could be effectively administered.

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The Role of Trust as an Informal Institution in the Informal Sector in Africa

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Abstract

The study analyses an unexplored issue of how trust, framed as an informal institution, plays an important role in business operations in the informal sector by filling the vacuum left by the lack of formal institutions. It brings together 'snapshots' from other studies that show how trust plays a role in the informal sector. In the author's approach, trust is framed under informal institutions. Under this framework the author presents a larger picture of the significant role of trust as an informal institution used in the business operations within the informal sector in Africa. In the study, trust is analysed from two main dimensions, namely: Social Networks Dimension and Business Cooperation Dimension. The study is divided into four main sections: the first section presents an overview of the informal sector; the second section analyses the Social Networks Dimension, the third section analyses the Business Cooperation Dimension, and the fourth part concludes by hypothesizing a causal relationship between trust, the two dimensions, and socio-economic development.

Key Words: trust; informal institutions; informal sector

Résumé

L'étude analyse la question inexplorée de la confiance qui, lorsqu'elle est perçue comme une institution informelle, joue un rôle important dans les opérations commerciales qui rythment le secteur informel en comblant le vide créé par l'absence d'institutions formelles. L'étude compile des « images ponctuelles » présentées par d'autres études qui soulignent le rôle important de la confiance dans le secteur informel. Selon la perspective de l'auteur, les institutions informelles constituent le terreau fertile à l'existence de la confiance. Dans ce même cadre, l'auteur réchampit ensuite le rôle de la confiance en tant qu'institution informelle dont le secteur informel en Afrique se sert dans ses opérations commerciales. Cette étude analyse la confiance à l'aune de deux dimensions principales, à savoir: la dimension Réseaux Sociaux et la dimension Coopération entre Entreprises. L'étude s'articule autour de quatre principales sections: la première partie présente une vue d'ensemble du secteur informel, la deuxième

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section analyse la dimension Réseaux Sociaux, la troisième section analyse la dimension Coopération entre Entreprises, et la quatrième partie conclut en émettant l'hypothèse de l'existence d'un lien de causalité entre la confiance, les deux dimensions, et le développement socio-économique.

Mots clés : Confiance, institutions informelles, secteur informel.

Introduction

Since 1971, when Keith Hart first coined the term 'informal sector' from his fieldwork on small enterprises in Accra, Ghana, and the subsequent internationalization of the term by the International Labour Organization in a Mission Report on Kenya in 1971 and 1972 (King 2001:97), the sector has been widely and variously studied by scholars from different disciplines, as well as organizations that participate in Africa's economic development. Most of the early studies that were conducted by both individual researchers and institutions from different countries were done under the auspices of the ILO and the Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA). Although the informal sector is also prevalent in other developing countries, Africa has been more of a target for studies on the sector due to the fact that the activities of the informal sector have existed much longer in African countries than in other developing countries (ILO/JASPA 1982:9). The earliest work on the informal sector focused on the towns and cities of Africa. Later, the existence of the informal economy in rural areas was also recognized, although scholarship in this area tended to concentrate on the non-farm productive activities of rural dwellers rather than on subsistence or cash-crop agriculture (King 2001:97-99). To African countries this sector has been an important contributor to GDP as a source of jobs, income, social services, and also provides a training ground for human development. But one of the challenges that faced African countries in the 1990s was mastering the dynamics of the informal sector as it was emerging as a salient element of African development (United Nations 1996). Apparently, this challenge continues to face African countries as the sector increases in size.

When the informal sector was initially put in the spotlight in the 1970s, governments neglected it for its backwardness and social scientists ignored it because of oversight or lack of interest (ILO/JASPA 1982:11). A decade later, in 1982, ILO and JASPA noticed that due to the growth of the sector it had become a focus of at least periodic attention by governments and of rather more sustained attention by social scientists. In the 1990s the size of the sector had increased to the point where it was a prominent component of most African economies and could no longer be neglected as a mere stage for businesses that were yet to be formalized. Emmeriji (1991:9) points out that during the early 1990s initial expectations that the informal sector

would soon be absorbed into the formal had given way to the realization that the informal sector was here to stay, and the informality even seemed to be spreading. According to Mhone (1996), the promotion and expansion of the informal sector was reinforced by the intractability of the problems of economic stagnation and recession, inequity and declining per capita incomes in many of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa. By the mid-1990s it was evident that the informal sector was making an invaluable contribution to the economic and social development of Africa. By then, it accounted for over 20 per cent of Africa's gross domestic product (GDP), while providing 60 to 70 per cent of employment (United Nations, 1996:v. Since the late 1990s, the transformations that the sector has undergone have prompted scholars to study it with a particular interest on its role in economic development. As a result, the preoccupation with the informal sector has generated a substantial descriptive literature based on numerous surveys, on the basis of which a number of economic policies and project ideas have been recommended and attempted in Africa (Mhone 1996).

Although various social scientists have analysed the sector, most of the knowledge on developmental issues that affect the sector has been generated by economists. The drawback of using economic models to study the informal sector is that the role of informal institutions in the informal sector has been largely neglected. But social scientists who have analysed the sector have also not done well in elucidating how informal institutions play a significant role in the operations that take place in the sector. Most of the studies that try to show how business operations take place in the informal sector in Africa seem to focus on questions related to formal mechanisms. But there are a few studies that have tried to show how informal institutions play a role in the business operations although that was not the reason they were mentioned. Instead, it seems that scholars inadvertently mention them in 'snapshots' in their analyses without clearly expounding on them. Therefore, there is a need to try and take these 'snapshots' and bring them together systematically to present a larger picture of how informal institutions play a significant role in the informal sector.

This study therefore has two main goals: it attempts to briefly show how trust, framed as an informal institution, plays a significant role in the informal sector, using two dimensions, namely: (i) Social Networks Dimension, and (ii) Business Cooperation Dimension. The study attempts to accomplish the two goals by trying to bring together the scattered 'snapshot' analyses on the role of trust in the sector and frames trust under informal institutions, and then subsequently presents a larger picture of how trust as an informal institution has been important in the operations that take place in this sector.

The methodology used for this analysis follows a small-N case study approach, in the sense that I have tried use evidence from the existing literature on actual case studies that have been undertaken on the informal sectors in sub-Saharan African countries from different regions. Utilizing the existing evidence, I try to corroborate my argument that trust is prevalently used to fill the institutional void that has been left by the lack of adequate formal institutions to build social networks and enhance business cooperation. The study is divided into four main sections: the first section presents an overview of the informal sector; the second section analyses the Social Networks Dimension; the third section analyses the Business Cooperation Dimension; and the fourth part concludes by trying to hypothesize a causal relationship – subject to empirical research – between trust, the two dimensions, and socio-economic development.

Overview of the Informal Sector

Defining the informal sector has always been a controversial issue among researchers and organizations that specialize on this topic. Generally, in the informal sector, small enterprises operate outside the formal economy, utilize lower levels of investment and less demanding skills, and handle relatively simpler products. In terms of the workforce, small enterprises may employ from a minimum of one or two persons to as many as ten or more employees or working family members (United Nations 1996). The majority of people in the informal sector are, therefore, involved in small businesses that are vital to economic development. The ILO's study in 1972 defined informality as a way of doing things characterized by (a) ease of entry; (b) reliance on indigenous resources; (c) family ownership; (d) small scale operations; (e) labour-intensive and adaptive technology; (e) skills acquired outside of the formal sector; (g) unregulated and (f) competitive markets. This definition was not widely accepted since other competing definitions were still emerging. For example, the United Nations (1996) broadly defined the informal sector as any business or enterprise that is not formally registered with the national or local government. At the same time, the United Nations Development Programme, an agency within the UN, defined the informal sector as home-based or individual enterprises with few or no em-ployees, which are also known as micro-enterprises (UNDP in UN 1996:50).

After many years of controversy concerning the nature of informality, the frontier between formality and informality, and the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the informal sector, two characteristics emerged as operational criteria for identifying informal sector enterprises: small size (micro-scale); and the extent to which an enterprise avoids official regulations and taxes (Louis 1991:11). The definition of the informal sector used in this

article follows the ILO's (2007) conceptualization of the informal sector, which divides the sector into four broad categories: (a) Own-account workers in survival-type activities; (b) Paid domestic workers in households; (c) Home-based workers ('disguised wage workers') in production chains, and (d) Self-employed workers in micro-enterprises with or without contributing family workers or employees.

Ghana has one of the largest and most diverse informal sectors on the continent, which spans activities such as trading, spare parts, transportation, construction, agriculture, livestock, food preparation, credit facilities, refrigeration, electricity, dressmaking, etc. The informal sector in Ghana has for a long time been characterized by mainly self-employed entrepreneurs, who are known as the worst tax evaders in their attempts to avoid interaction with formal institutions (Ayee 2007). In a study on the appropriate mechanisms for taxing the informal sector, Ayee (2007) points out that taxing the informal sector is a daunting and herculean task because there is no culture of tax compliance due to different informal rules, values and beliefs from the formal ones. An atmosphere of trust is one of the important values that Ayee (2007) points out as lacking in the relationship between the government and the informal sector. He makes the recommendation that, in order to tax the informal sector in Ghana successfully, the state will have to increase its capacity to perform its extractive role through promoting an atmosphere of trust. Using an institutional framework, Ayee's (2007) recommendation highlights the need for interdependence between the formal institutions of taxation and the informal institution of trust in order for the state to be successful in promoting the increase of labour market activities.

The informal sector covers a wide range of labour market activities that combine two groups of different nature. On one hand, the informal sector is formed by the coping behaviour of individuals and families in economic environments where earning opportunities are scarce. On the other hand, the informal sector is a product of the rational behaviour of entrepreneurs that desire to escape state regulations (World Bank 2007). The informal sector activities can be described under two categories, namely: (a) Coping strategies – these are survival activities, such as: casual jobs, temporary jobs, unpaid jobs, subsistence agriculture, multiple job holding; and (b) Unofficial earning strategies (illegality in business). Unofficial earning strategies have two types of activities: (i) Unofficial business activities, which entail: tax evasion, avoidance of labour regulation and other government or institutional regulations, no registration of the company; (ii) Underground activities: crime, corruption – activities not registered by statistical offices. In general, these activities have been stimulated by various forces that emerge from a range of economic and political dynamics (World Bank 2007).

As a result of various economic and political dynamics, the informal sector has experienced exponential growth in a number of countries on the continent. In many of these countries, small scale producers have been driven into the sector by a heavy burden of taxes, bribes, and bureaucratic hassles (Azuma and Grossman 2002; Tripp 1997). According to Mofokeng (2005:3), the growth of the informal sector has been accelerated by structural adjustment programmes, economic reforms and instability, and lack of national economic growth. Apart from laying the foundation for promoting the evolution of large firms that ultimately dominate the formal sector the informal sector plays a significant role in economic development by providing employment opportunities in both rural and urban settings. At the beginning of the 1990s the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) speculated that in the decade of the 1990s the informal sector would be the most important labour sponge in Africa's labour markets, where it will provide some 60 to 70 per cent of job openings (United Nations 1996). By 2005 it was clear that the informal sector had achieved and was surpassing the speculated 1990 targets and was now absorbing more workers both from the formal sector and those that were unemployed. The informal sector in Africa has now absorbed more than a half of the active population in different countries. For example, by 2005, the proportion of workers absorbed by the informal economy in Burkina Faso was 80 per cent, in Ghana 90 per cent, in Kenya 72 per cent, in Mali 80 per cent, in Tunisia 50 per cent and in South Africa 53 per cent (Mofokeng 2005:5). It is therefore clear that the informal sector plays a very important role in economic development.

The Role of Trust as an Informal Institution

Trust in individuals and institutions usually expresses the beliefs about the predictability of actions (Fukuyama 1995). Predictive stability is fundamental in the interaction between individuals in a society, because if a society is able to process the information originating from its environment and itself and predict the problems and their solutions, it can stay on its desired path of development (Fukuyama 1995). Humphrey and Schmitz (1996) distinguish between three different elements of trust:

a) Contractual trust – that the businessman will act honourably;

b) Competence trust – that the businessman has sufficient technical and organizational capacity and capital or credit-worthiness to fulfil his obligations; and

c) Goodwill trust – defined as mutual expectations of open commitment to each other. Goodwill trust is the basis for long-run collaboration.

Contractual trust may initially be ascribed to family members, or people from the same ethnic group with whom the business person has mutual social obligations (Humphrey and Schmitz 1996). But business trust is gradually expanded over time as a result of the experience of continuously testing the trust. In unstable and risky environments, such as Africa, competence trust may be as important as contractual trust (Pedersen and McCormick 1999:122). Fukuyama (1995) goes further than Humphrey's and Schmitz's (1996) three elements and adds two levels to the issue of trust by laying out the advantages and disadvantages of what he calls 'high and low trust'. According to Fukuyama, the advantages of 'high trust' are: (a) lower administration costs, higher institutional, and reliability; (b) large and efficient organizations. On the other hand, the disadvantages of 'low trust' are: (a) corruption and trade with influence; (b) small and inefficient organizations.

The role of trust in the informal sector has been widely studied without any particular institutional framework in mind, thus presenting a scattered and rather disorganized image from various studies that do not make it clear why trust is a significant factor in the informal sector. This study echoes the argument that trust is an important informal institution (Fukuyama 1995; Bratton 2007; Hyden 2006) and subsequently frames trust under informal institutions. In order to present a clearer and more organized image the study analyses trust from two dimensions: social networks and business operations, which I further summarize, using two different illustrations (see Figures 1 and 2).

Social Networks Dimension

Fukuyama (1995) asserts that the personal and institutional networks are means of trust generation. Therefore, based on Fukuyama's assertion, networks of individuals and organizations are sources of trust. Social networks are known to typically offer accommodation and entry for the poor into the informal economy (Macharia 1997:x). But the informal sector not only accommodates the poor who are unable to find jobs in urban areas but also acts as what Kilby (1969:310) calls, a 'quasi-sponge' for the formal sector when urban unemployment in the wage sector increases due to surplus labour. In its 'quasi-sponge' role, the informal sector acts as a secure catchment area where the anger and frustrations of the urban unemployed, who constitute a significant destabilizing force in the political and economic realms of society, are effectively muted and converted into the energy for survival (Ninsin 1991:5). This is usually one of the processes that lead to an increase in social capital. Lyons and Snoxell (2005) note that traders consciously develop their marketplace social capital and dramatically increase

the number of people they feel they know well and can count as relatives and friends. In the formation of this new and valuable social capital, Putnam (1993, 1995) identified networks and trust as its essential components.

Due to the lack of formal institutions that undergird these networks, they tend to be mainly sustained through informal institutions, which have an important role in shaping human behaviour. Hyden (2006:83) points out that informal rules play an important role in constraining individual choice and behaviour and the informal rules may be more influential in determining human behaviour than formal ones. Based on existing evidence, which guides the analysis in this article, the main informal institution that seems to be prevalent in the social networks that exist in the informal sector is Trust, which is often described by means of the words 'obligation' and 'expectation/ prediction' (Radaev 2002). This study uses the definition offered by Coleman (1988), who defines trust as 'a belief that the other agents would act in a predictable way and fulfil their obligations without special sanctions'. The importance of trust is dependent on the social structure (Coleman 1988). There are social structures in which people are always doing things for each other and social structures where individuals are more self-sufficient and do not have to depend very often on other people. Trust can be created in different ways. Höhmann and Welter (2004) make a distinction into personal, collective and institutional trust. Personal trust is based on initial knowledge about the partner and is formed in a long bilateral relationship where persons have come to know each other. Radaev (2002) calls trust in people reciprocal trust, probably because he shares the opinion of Höhmann and Welter that this form of trust is based on a bilateral relation. Höhmann and Welter (2004) mention shared characteristics of a group as another reason for personal trust.

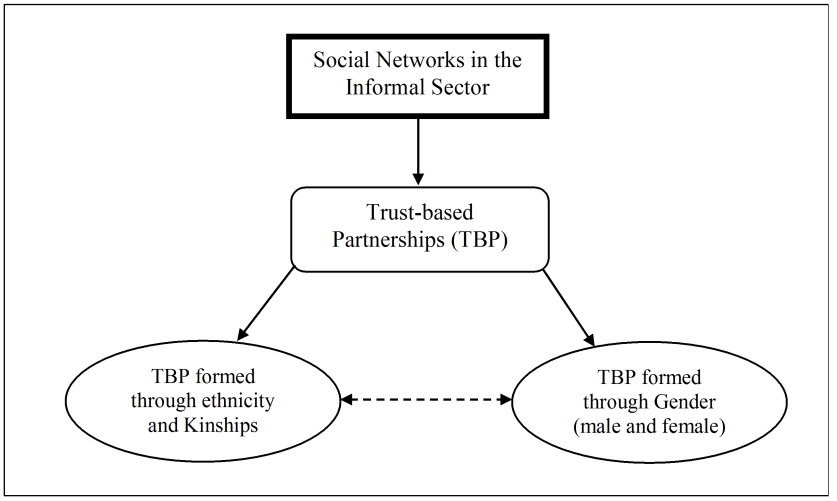
For the most part, informal institutions are usually maintained through interpersonal trust that actors have in the rules that govern the interactions they establish. Macharia (1997:xiii) notes that the concept of trust leads to the formation of social networks that later translate into social capital and real capital used to run the enterprises in the informal sector. In a study of the informal sector in Nairobi, which Macharia conducted in 1989, he interviewed 200 informal sector operators and found that trust was a very important concept among them, such that it forms an important basis of social capital among the entrepreneurs. Trust also plays an important role as a requirement for collaboration and networking in the sector (Pedersen 2001). Usually, entrepreneurs network to address issues including business management, pricing, marketing and searching for stock or capital. Alila (2001:338) points out that developing trust is a fundamental consideration

in the establishment and existence of small and micro enterprises in the informal sector.

When there is personal trust between two persons, they both know that the other will not act in a way that is damaging to the relationship. This is normally the result of informal norms and rules that dictate the actions that matter for the relationship. In a study on Iganga maize traders in Uganda, Sorensen (2001:305-306) found that in order to handle the intrinsic conflict between individual achievement and the common interest of the kinship group and the local community, traders follow advanced economic strategies in which they manipulate and negotiate the principles of both spheres through the creation of trust-based and trust-proven trading partnerships. These sorts of trust-based principles that facilitate partnerships play a significant role in filling the void that has been left by the non-formalization of the sector by governments. But even where governments try to use formal institutions to regulate the informal sector entrepreneurs tend not to trust them. Evidence from a study done in Chad found that entrepreneurs stay away from formal institutions because of the significant priority they place on trust-based partnerships arrangements (Sananikone 1996:108). According to him, the legal authority and regulatory framework has been biased against the development of small businesses, thus they have avoided interaction with formal institutions and turned either to other informal institutions for survival, such as informal sources of credit from what is known as tontines or to credit programmes provided by a small number of NGOs (Sananikone 1996:112).

Trust-based partnerships can be better understood by looking at some common factors that determine the formation of such partnerships. The two main factors that seem to be prevalent in existing evidence on informal sectors in Africa are: (a) Ethnicity and kinship, and (b) Gender. I use the illustration below to summarize how trust is used as an informal institution in the informal sector.

Figure 1: Social Networks Dimension



In Figure 1 above, the dotted arrow that runs from 'TBP formed through ethnicity and Kinships' to 'TBP formed through Gender (male and female)' indicates that some partnerships can be composed of members of characterized by the combination of the same gender and ethnicity.

(i) Ethnicity and Kinship in Trust-Based Partnerships

In African societies, ethnicity and kinship have been known to play an important role in the strengthening of trust among people from same communities or in the weakening of trust among people from different communities (Lyon 2005). These ethnic and kinship bonds subsequently determine how people interact with each other and the treatment that they accord each other as members of related families and kin in various spheres of life, whether it is within the private or public realm. In most cases, trust is stronger within people from the same kinship or families, who happen to be quite cohesive. Tripp (1997:11) points out that family and kin are important to cohesiveness of society in Africa, and African sociability is a key feature of the African social landscape. Apparently, due to the fact that most informal sector enterprises are family-based, (Webster and Fidler 1996:9) ethnicity has been one of the criteria that shape the interactions and relationships that exist in the informal sector, especially with the social networks that group entrepreneurs together with a goal of seeking to benefit jointly from various business operations. Based on a study done in the informal sector in Kenya, Macharia (1991) asserts that ethnicity is a key element in the operation of the social networks pervading the informal sector.

In a study done on informal sectors within twelve West African countries, in two phases – 1994 and 1995 – a team of eight researchers under the auspices of the World Bank found that the most common sources of credit for informal enterprises were kinship ties, especially family and close family friends, which frequently pool their incomes to create an effective social safety net for one another (Webster and Fidler 1996:15). In the study done on Kenya's informal sector, Macharia (1991) also found that ethnicity was a significant determinant in the transfer of skills, the allocation of informal business premises, acquisition of technologies, and most importantly, access to markets and customers. He particularly points out that whole sub-sectors of the informal sector in Nairobi are operated by specific ethnic groups which tend to perpetuate the entry of the same ethnic group members to any space for running a business or kiosk. In a different study done in 1997, Macharia (1997:124) found that entrepreneurs relied on trust to decide whether to give credit to their customers. There was strong evidence from his fieldwork showing that sellers trusted members of their ethnic groups more than customers from other groups and credit was usually advanced to co-ethnics.

Ethnicity has also been used as a criterion for how much one is trusted in rotating credit and savings organizations in South Africa, which are known as *stokvels*. Within these stokvels, ethnicity has also been used in establishing relations of trust with people of the same ethnic group. As a result, stokvels generate a strong sense of solidarity among members, taking on the functions of a provident society for those in need – not only for the member, but also for the family (Verhoeff 2001:272).

Somalia presents an interesting case in Africa due to the realities it has undergone as a stateless economy for so many years. The lack of a functioning formal legal system has made it impossible for Somalis to trade and engage in commerce in the formal sense, that is, trade facilitated and regulated through codified rules. Thus, as Little (2003) puts it, there is no distinction between official/unofficial, legal/illegal economies. Accordingly, the rules of the game are half observed by the public and half enforced by authorities (Little 2003). Due to the weak formal institutions, trade has always taken place under various informal institutions, especially trust. In his book *Somalia: Economy without State*, Little (2003) talks about social trust as the value that underpins informal trade in the country. In a way, Little (2003) echoes Fukuyama's (1995) assertion that no economy, no matter its nature or size, can function without social trust. In terms of ethnic groups, Somalia is one of the most homogenous countries in Africa with 85 per cent Somalis and 15 per cent Bantu-speakers and other non-Somali groups (CIA 2008). Although Somalia does not have an ethnically divided society as is in other

African countries, kinship ties play an important role in determining the way trade takes place. Working through a network of kin and marital relationships, Somali traders buy livestock on credit from herders (Mahadalla 2003). Little (2003) asserts that without trust the informal trade that takes place among livestock herders would have been impossible. Mubarak (1997) points out that Somali herders have historically provided credit directly to livestock exporters at the border between Somali and Kenya through negotiated agreements that have been made possible by the social trust that lubricates the wheels of livestock trade.

In a study done on how Ghanaian associations in the informal sector manage cooperation, Lyon (2005) examined how cooperation is sustained in the absence of strong legal institutions and mechanisms, such as legal contracts or regulated loan finance. The evidence from Lyon's study indicates that cooperation is based on trust and power, both of which are based on cultural specific norms. Lyon points out that in southern Ghana the norms of interaction vary with differences based on ethnicity. With regard to trust based on existing relationships and kinship, Lyon (2005) found that existing business relationships were mainly kin-based or community-based with members knowing one another well before they formed a group. Lyon's findings are in line with the argument that trust is an issue that builds up over time through frequent interactions, and reciprocal relationships (Coleman 1998; Radaev 2002). The table below summarizes what Lyon (2005) found when analysing the nexus between trust and kinship among various groups.

Table 1: The Role of Trust and Kinship in Various Groups within Ghana's Informal Sector

	***Susu* savings Groups**	**Manual palm oil processing**	**Mechanized palm oil processing**	**Transport union branches**
Trust based on existing relationships and kingship	Community members knew each other. Traders have stalls next to each other over many years	Other members were neighbours and kin	Guarantees of supply to women processors from others community members. Staff attended the same church group	Introduction of new members by existing members

Gender in Trust-based Partnerships

Issues related to gender in the informal sector have been studied with respect to the different types of businesses that men and women decide to pursue in the sector. Apparently, both genders also seem to prefer different sorts of activities and ways of doing business. In a study of two markets in Kenya's informal sector, Lyons and Snoxell (2005) found that there is a clear gender boundary when it comes to savings and microfinance, especially within associations that are popularly known as 'merry-go-round' (MGR). The MGR is an informal rotating savings association (ROSCA), whose members deposit a mutually agreed sum with the group at regular intervals, the combined 'pot' going to each member in turn. Thus, the economic function of this group is generally not to accumulate income, nor to enable borrowing, but to guarantee the periodic availability of a capital sum, through peer pressure to save. Within this arrangement Lyons and Snoxell (2005) found that the development of MGRs is associated with the development of trust. It is trusted, for example, that members who draw from the pot early in the cycle, will continue to make their contributions to enable others to benefit, or that secretaries will not abscond. In savings and loan associations, four members rely on each borrower to keep up his loan repayments, because they all act as his, or her, guarantor. Most importantly, they found that most MGRs are often dominated by a single sex. Only one of the MGRs out of several of them is found to be composed of mixed gender. Otherwise, women and men have invited friends or acquaintances of the same sex to join. The administration of these groups is also approached very differently by women and men. For men's groups, regular weekly or bi-weekly collections are made and disbursed by a secretary and social contact takes place only at an annual social event, or on exceptional occasions, such as a funeral. In contrast, women's MGRs meet once a week or once a fortnight to make the collections, disburse them and discuss business conditions and personal lives (Lyons and Snoxell 2005).

The women in Cameroon's informal sector are also known to be active and successful in managing credit and finance issues within the trust-based micro-finance institutions, which are a sub-sector of the informal sector (Ayee 2007). Just like in the stokvels in South Africa, the success of these women's operations have been mainly determined by the emphasis they put on trust as a way of filling the vacuum left by lack of formal institutions. In a study conducted by Mayoux (2001:435) on women's empowerment and micro-finance in Cameroon, she points out that the micro-finance programmes are dominated by the 'financial self-sustainability paradigm' where women's participation in groups is promoted as a key means of

increasing financial sustainability while at the same time assumed to automatically empower them. However, the process of empowering the women has been challenged by the complexities involved in power relations and lack of clear norms, networks and associations that are to be promoted. But amidst this confusion, there is optimism based on the understanding of the concept of social capital focusing on horizontal norms, networks and associations assumed to generate trust (Mayoux 2001:439). The role of trust in these associations has been the sharing of information, which is used in the micro-finance programmes to level asymmetries that may lead to increases in the costs of their operations and subsequent losses due to lack of formal institutions that make it possible to access information easily. Fafchamps (1999) notes that in Africa legal institutions offer little protection against breach of contract and the cost of searching for information and screening products and business partners is high, thus there is considerable potential for opportunistic behaviour and an incentive to deal with those one can trust.

In South Africa, during the 1980s, women entrepreneurs also established partnerships based on trust in stokvels – as noted, a type of rotating credit and savings organization, as they tried to fight traditional kinship factors that prevented African women from penetrating the informal sector. Verhoeff (2001:259) notes that traditional kinship relations denied African women access to property and cash income until the late 1990s, when changes started occurring. As women moved out of the rural to urban centres, women created opportunities for independent earnings, and displayed remarkable entrepreneurial spirit in undertaking economic activities. These stokvels are formed on the basis of voluntary association of mutually trusted parties (well-known and trusted friends, family, or neighbours of long standing), which require regular cash contributions (Verhoeff 2001:264). Since the stokvels lack formal institutions, the admission of members in the stokvels is based on trust (Verhoeff 2001:271). Trust is also the criterion that women have used to argue against the admission of men to the stokvels. Thus, there are stokvels with exclusively male membership and stokvels with exclusively female membership. Verhoeff (2001) found that when asked why they do not admit men, women often commented that men were not trustworthy.

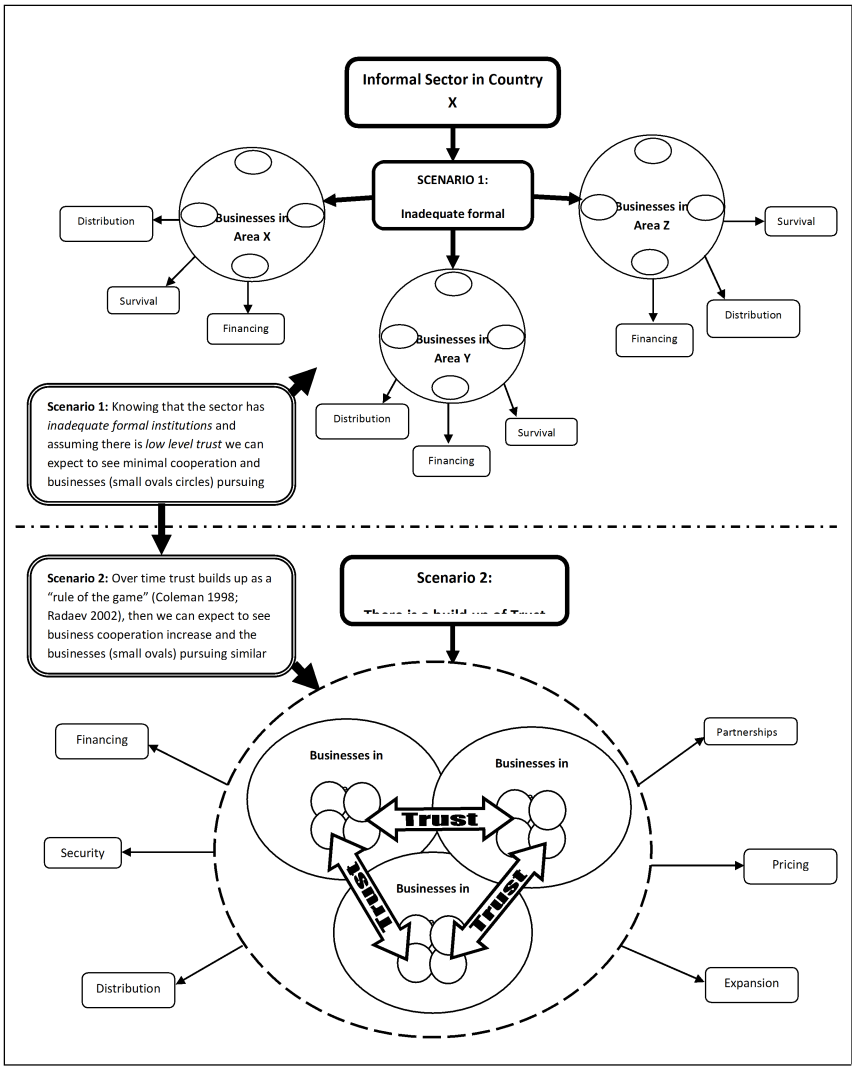
Business Cooperation Dimension

The informal sectors in most African countries are known to be the most diversified in the world when it comes to the types of business operations that entrepreneurs invest in (Kimuyu 1997). In urban areas, they range from street vendors to small manufacturing entities. In rural areas, small enterprises

engage in the production and sale of farm products, handicrafts and services. In short, the informal sector can be identified in activities of almost all types in the African markets: financial, labour, manufacturing, agriculture, etc., and services (UNDP 1996). Following Portes et al., (1989), informal sector trade operations can be defined as trade in legal goods and services, taking place outside the law. Working outside the law may include trading without a permit, trading outside formally designated trading locations, non-payment of municipal or national taxes, or self-provisioning of shelter. Moves between the 'formal sector' and the 'informal sector' are thus of various types. Hawkers are at one end of a spectrum of informal traders, with no formal shelter, often trading in undesignated spaces. At the other end of the spectrum are traders with established premises and licensed businesses in designated spaces (Lyons and Snoxell 2005). Thus, due to the shortage of resources in the sector cooperation is quite essential.

Typically, in the formal sector written rules – such as contracts – facilitate cooperation and help in the reinforcement of trust through creating an environment of predictive stability. As Fukuyama (1995) puts it, the trust producing ability of organizations depends on the rules within the legal system, which extend trust by the belief that the rules will be respected and applied as announced. But in the informal sector this role has been taken by the trust that builds up over time among traders and entrepreneurs. Therefore, with regard to businesses cooperating to achieve various goals, we can assume that there are two possible scenarios in the informal sector: (a) In scenario one, in which there are no adequate formal institutions and there is a low level of trust, leading to a lack of cooperation and pursuit of few goals because individual businesses only have minimal resources; and (b) Scenario two, in which the vacuum left by the lack of formal institutions has been filled by trust that has build up over time through reciprocity (Coleman 1998; Radaev 2002). In many ways, the reciprocal relationships that exist in the informal sector are similar to those that Hyden (2006) describes as the 'economy of affection'. Hyden (2006:84) argues that in the economy of affection the essence of rule of law is replaced by an interpersonal trust that is more immediate and exclusively reliant on unwritten rules in use. Within an expansive regional context these interpersonal reciprocal relationships can increase through networking and be conceptualized as, what Putnam calls, 'social trust' (1993:171) points out that social trust can arise through norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. The build up of trust may subsequently lead to an increase in cooperation within extensive business networks and the pursuit of more goals that eventually increase productivity. Figure 2 illustrates the two scenarios.

Figure 2: Business Co-operation Dimension



Based on the argument I make on how trust facilitates business cooperation, which I have illustrated using Figure 2, this section uses three cases from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Kenya as evidence of how trust facilitates cooperation among businesses on three issues: financing in Nigeria, survival strategies in Zimbabwe during uncertain political periods, and in the distribution of goods among traders in Zimbabwe and Kenya.

Trust has been instrumental in determining the types of business ownership that exist in the informal sector. In the formal sector legal mechanisms such as contracts, registration forms and ownership certificates help in the establishment of various types of partnership (Eeekhout 2006); hence making it possible for two or more friends or relatives to enter into a partnership and own a business together. This is not to say that trust does not play a role also, instead trust becomes a low level criterion for deciding whether to enter into a partnership or not. But in the informal sector these legal mechanisms do not exist for the most part and use trust as a high level criterion to decide whether to enter into partnerships or not. From a survey done in Lagos, Fapohunda (1985:30) concluded that partnerships form a small proportion of all establishments due to mutual distrust among entrepreneurs in business undertakings within the informal sector. In his study he found that informal sector enterprises in Lagos were predominantly a one man business. Out of 2,074 establishments that were covered in the survey, 92.6 per cent were single proprietorships, seven per cent were partnerships, about 0.3 per cent were private Nigerian or public limited liability companies, and almost 0.2 per cent said they were of other type of ownerships different from any of the three stated above.

Nigeria's informal sector is also similar to Ghana's in terms of size and the difficulties encountered in measuring the sector (Ekpo and Umoh 2008). The activities that take place in the sector are highly dynamic and contribute substantially to the general growth of the economy and personal or household income. Within the informal sector of Nigeria the financial sub-sector is the most difficult to measure due to its underground nature. The activities of this sub-sector are mostly underground, unofficial, irregular, informal, shadowy, and parallel. The most predominant type of underground informal finance in Nigeria is the *Esusu* (Ekpo and Umoh 2008). The general practice is that *Esusu* associations contribute a fixed amount periodically and give all or part of the accumulated funds to one or more member(s) in rotation until all members have benefited from the pool. The *Esusu* associations are characterized by both formal and informal institutions. Ekpo and Umoh (2008), note that some *Esusu* groups operate with written laws, while others operate with unwritten laws but on oath of allegiance and mutual trust.

In Zimbabwe, trust played a significant role in the survival of urban street vendors in the informal sector during 'Operation Murambatsvina', in which President Mugabe's regime attempted to wipe out the urban street vendors, who were usually supporters of the opposition. Mugabe's government perceived the urban street vendors as culprits that have been the principal cause and engineers of the dirt in the city (Chirisa 2005). However, due to its dynamic nature the informal sector has not disappeared.

Instead it has assumed a different form and continues to operate in clandestine ways. In a study of the informal sector after Operation Murambatsvina, Chirisa (2005) summarizes the new form it has taken as follows:

> Shop fronts everywhere in the city are littered with informal traders of various goods and services like carrier bags, locks and keys, food items, etc. Competition is rife in the sector. Newcomers not trusted in the sector find it difficult to establish themselves in established locales, as the 'conscription' is watertight. Tolerance by shop owners is a wide phenomenon. Foreign currency dealership is one of the lucrative ventures for some. As one moves around Fourth Street and Africa Unity Square, he or she may hear the 'hiss' by the dealers attempting to attract trade with passers-by. Airtime phone cards are now sold from the pocket.

Evidently, trust plays a significant role in maintaining the operations that exist under the aforementioned forms of clandestine operations, which are mainly made possible by trust-based partnerships. The partnerships reflect a deliberate alliance where all parties work harmoniously in bringing permanent positive change. Chirisa (2005) points out that these partnerships are mainly built through trust. As partnership builds up, more and distant partners will be brought in and the web widens. In a study of two markets in Nairobi, Lyons and Snoxell (2005) found that some new traders who want to survive in the informal sector, by extending their partnerships, usually set out to make friends based on trust in their new marketplace directly in order to support their trading activities. This is used as a way to learn about suppliers, find trustworthy colleagues for the exchange of necessary favours and manage competition.

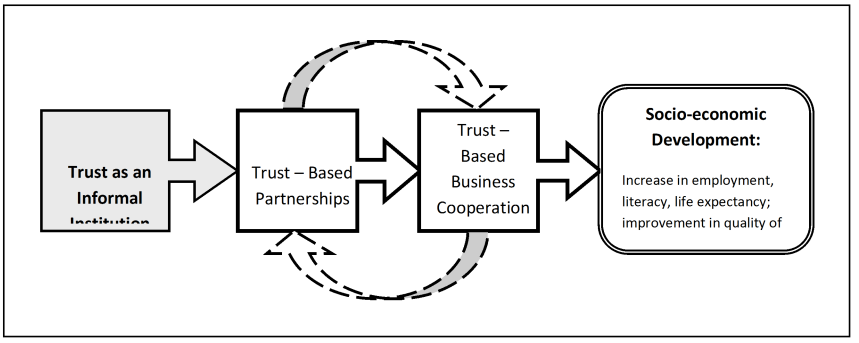
In widening the web with distant partners in the operations that take place in the urban sector the status of the infrastructure matters significantly, given that goods have to be transported from one trader to another. But in many African countries the existing infrastructure is overloaded and in bad state, while services are unreliable and often expensive and infiltrated with corruption. The poor infrastructure thus impedes the ability of small traders to move goods back and forth to each other. Therefore, in order to be successful, they have to rely on wholesalers and trading agents to ferry the goods, but with no binding contracts. In place of the contracts, they are forced to use trust as a criterion for determining which wholesalers and traders will ferry the goods. In many African countries, monopolistic or illicit tendering practices and the inability of the legal system to secure enforcement of contracts is a major problem, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (Fafchamps 1996; Kimuyu 1997). Therefore, they need to base their business relations on mutual personal trust. In Kenya, for

instance, Asians control most of the wholesale sector, and in Zimbabwe the dominance of large retail chains operating as their own wholesalers means that an open wholesale sector has failed to emerge. As a result, small and medium-sized producers are forced to develop their own distribution system if they want to expand beyond a very local market. Some travel themselves, using the public transport system, while others build trust based relationships with mobile traders who transport their goods for them (Pedersen and McCormick 1999:122).

Conclusion

At this point of the analysis, one important question that remains to be answered is: What are the developmental implications of the trust-based partnerships (TBP) and trust-based business cooperation (TBC) that keep the informal sector going? This final part will only attempt to respond to the question briefly and hypothetically. Perhaps, a comprehensive and thoroughly researched response will be offered after the field research for this study has been carried out. The question, therefore, also serves as a point of departure. The prevalent concern that seems to be evident in most of the studies that have been done on the informal sector seem to revolve around the relationship between the informal sector and socio-economic development (for example, Alila 2001; King 2001, and Portes 1999). There are some studies that have tried to address the role of the informal sector in development (Fapohunda 1985; Ninsin 1991, and Little 2003). There are also some studies that look at external factors, for instance political, that affect the business operations that take place in the informal sector (Ayee 2007; Kimuyu 1997, and Tripp 1997, etc.) and finally there are studies that look at the factors that make it possible or impossible for the informal sector to contribute to socio-economic development (Fafchamps 1999; Verhoef 2001, and Billetoft 1996). This study falls more appropriately into the latter category. I argue that trust as an informal institution plays a significant contributing role in socio-economic development by: (a) making it possible for social trust-based partnerships to exist through social networks, and (b) making it possible for business cooperation to take place in the informal sector, thus possibly leading to increased productivity. A causal relationship – subject to empirical research – can therefore be modelled, where trust as an informal institution is the independent variable; trust-based partnerships and trust-based business cooperation are intervening variables, and socio-economic development the dependent variables. Figure 3 illustrates this hypothesized causal relationship.

Figure 3: Possible Relationship between Trust, TBP-TBC, and Socioeconomic Development



In Figure 3, I use the two arrows going around trust-based partnerships (TBP) and trust-based business cooperation (TBC) to suggest that the difference between TBP and TBC is possibly a matter of stages that are constantly going on in the informal sector like an endless loop. In the causal relationship that I hypothesize above the difference between partnerships and cooperation is that partnerships capture the initial stages that exist in joint operations within one business, which are characterized by members of the same ethnic group, kinship or members of the same gender, and small scale operations. On the other hand, business cooperation goes beyond the ethnic, kinship, and gender boundaries by expanding small scale operations to large scale operations among different ethnic groups, members from different kinship groups, and between both men's and women's associations. This second stage is made possible by the long-term build up of trust among entrepreneurs. These two stages can be appropriately explained by what Fukuyama (1995) calls 'low and high trust'; low trust being evident in partnerships and high trust in business cooperation.Therefore, after partnerships have been formed at the lowest levels, the businesses in the sector may be more inclined to cooperate at higher levels on various issues so as to benefit from the advantages of high trust, such as lower costs in the distribution of goods and in securing their businesses.

If the above causal relation is true, then we can also expect to see socio-economic development gradually taking place. The appropriate way for measuring the informal sector's contribution to development is under the framework of socio-economic development, which is much broader than the concept of economic development alone. Socio-economic development involves a wide range of changes in a variety of social indicators such as health, education, technology and life expectancy, which are directly or

indirectly linked to economic changes (Zirmai 2005). The final output from the trust-based business cooperation – as argued in this article and also in line with 'high trust' (Fukuyama 1995) – is an increase in productivity, due to the large and efficient organization structures that we should expect to see in the informal structure. The positive spill over effects of this productivity, whether at the single business level or at the partnership level in the informal sector, is its contribution to socio-economic development in the long-run. For, example, when it comes to employment, micro enterprises – which form the largest category within the informal sector (Sandefur and Teal 2007) – make a higher contribution that the formal sector.

Micro enterprises make an important contribution to economic output and employment in developing economies. While estimates vary greatly depending on definitions, recent work by the World Bank suggests that almost 30 per cent of employment in low-income countries is generated by the informal sector, while an additional 18 per cent is provided by formal small and medium enterprises (Sapovadia 2006).

Both in the past and recently, some scholars (for example, Billetoft 1996; Fafchamps 1999; Ayee 2007, and Eeckhout 2006) have argued that African governments should formalize the informal sector if they want to increase tax revenues, which can be added to government budgets for the purpose of financing national development initiatives. These are certainly noteworthy recommendations that need to be seriously considered. However, given that most African governments are still not trusted by traders and entrepreneurs in the informal sector (Ayee 2007; Chirisa 2007), it may also be important for governments to cautiously embrace and implement these recommendations with respect to the socio-economic development role that trust, as an informal institution, plays in the sector. In this regard, the most important issue that needs to be understood is the effect that formal institutions – which are not effectively enforced in Africa (Hyden 2006; Billetoft 1996; North 1990) – will have on the role of trust in facilitating partnerships and business cooperation, both in the short and the long run. While making this suggestion, I am aware that even in business operations that take place under formal institutions, trust still plays a fundamental role (Fukuyama 1995).

As a point of departure for this study, I have hypothesized a causal relationship between trust, trust-based partnerships, trust-based business cooperation, and socio-economic development that can be researched to increase our understanding of the possible effects of formalizing the informal sector. Such a study can be done by replacing trust, which is the independent variable, with a formal institution, for example, contracts, and comparing

the results of the new scenario (under contracts) with the former scenario (under trust) using some socio-economic development variables. In the short-run, I tenuously speculate that there will be turbulence and some negative results. On the other hand, my tenuous speculations for long-run results range from uncertainty to some positive results. In sum, as Mhone (1996:110) points out, 'the informal sector needs the application of more rigorous research tools and methodologies for its understanding and efficient support, promotion and integration; the task is to deploy these tools more systematically to the investigation and understanding of the informal sector'. This should be the future thrust of the work that needs to be done in the sector by social scientists from diverse disciplines.

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