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Characteronymy and Colour Purple in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*

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Abstract

Cultures are viewed differently by individuals depending on experience and exposure. This study examined the characters' roles and names (characteronymy) in Death and the King's Horseman (DKH) and their perception of the African culture using Robinson's (1991) Colour Purple model. The study established that while over 50% of the characters view the culture with the blue lens (eyes of the native culture), 40% view it with the red lens(eyes of the target culture) and just 6.7% perceive the culture with the purple lens (bilingual eyes). The study concludes that the play has vividly projected the cultural tussle in a bilingual society and only a few of the bilinguals have a balanced view of the cultural situations and blend them accordingly.

Keywords: Wole Soyinka, Characterology, OnomasticsColour Purple, Blue lens

Introduction

Wole Soyinka is a Nigerian playwright, novelist, poet, essayist and critic. He is a titan in the literary world whose works have been studied from the literary, linguistic, pragmatic and onomastic perspectives. His play, *Death and the King's Horseman* (henceforth *DKH*), is based on a real historical event that happened during British colonial rule in Nigeria when the British government exercised significant control over the land; leading to profound cultural clashes and conflicts. *DKH* chronicles the conflict of native law and custom as a result of colonial imperialism. It is customary for the Yoruba king's horseman to commit suicide in honour of his king's death. This is captured by Joseph, a major character in the play: "The king die last month. Tonight is his burial. But before they can bury him, the Elesin (king's horseman) must die so as to accompany him to heaven" (*DKH* p. 28)[1] but Simon Pilkings, the District officer, thwarted this as he considers such practice barbaric. This forms the basis for the major conflict in the text. Thus, our preoccupation in this study is to unravel the characters' roles and names (characteronymy) in *Death and the King's*

[1] Soyinka, W. (2002). *Death and the king's horseman*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited. *The Holy Bible King James Version*. (1992). Georgia, Pilot Books. p., 28

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Horseman (DKH) and their perception of the African culture using Robinson's (1991)[2] Colour Purple model.

Theoretical Discourse

Robinson (1991), while expatiating the different ways a language learner can view a new culture, introduces the c*olour purple model*. The model deploys colour symbolism to explain that a language learner can view a second culture using three lenses. These are the blue lens, the red lens and the purple lens. The blue lens points to viewing a new culture with the eyes of the native culture while the red lens views the culture through the eyes of the target culture. The purple lens is the amalgamation of the two – the blue lens and the purple lens. It is a bilingual/multilingual lens that correlates and blends the new culture with the existing one(s). So, the purple lens is more robust and dynamic as it accommodates variations associated with the cultures involved.

Review of Relevant Literature

Melefa and Chukwumezie (2014)[3] carry out a pragmatic analysis of crisis-motivated proverbs in *DKH*. Anchoring the study on Mey's (2001)[4] theory of pragmatic acts, the work draws insights from contextual variables such as shared cultural knowledge, shared situational knowledge and inference to identify pragmatic acts of counseling, cautioning, challenging, accusing and unveiling as the acts that were performed with crisis-motivated proverbs in the text to strengthen the force of dramatic actions. Though the study uses *DKH* as its primary text, its emphasis is on proverbs as deployed by the playwright in the text. Meanwhile, our focus in the present study is on characteronymy and colour purple model.

Karimi (2015)[5] investigates Language and Yoruba Rituals in Wole Soyinka's *DKH.* It is an incursion into the role of a foreign language (English) in transmitting a Yoruba story rich in Yoruba proverbs and figurative expressions. The study observes that the play combines Standard English, Pidgin English, local Yoruba dialects, and localized forms of speech in its narration. Thus, the researcher concludes that the playwright has developed a linguistic spectrum that captures the subtleties of the Yoruba cosmology and his commitment to English as an effective medium to relate the story of a colonized society (Yoruba land) without compromising the essence of its imagination and cultural milieu. The work is based on multilingualism and narratology of *DKH*, while ours is foregrounded by the application of colour purple model to characters' roles and names in *DKH.*

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[2] Robinson, G.L. (1991). "Second culture acquisition" In *Linguistics and language pedagogy: The state of the art*. Ed. James E. Alatis. Washington D.C : Georgetown University Press pp. 114-122.
[3] Melefa, Moses & Chukwumezie, Emeka (2014). A pragmatic analysis of crisis-motivated proverbs in Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Research in humanities and social sciences*, 4(8), 81-88.
[4] Mey, Jacob 2001. *Pragmatics: An Introduction, 2nd Edition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
[5] Karimi, G. (2015). *Linguistic imperialism: A study of language and Yoruba rituals in Wole Soyinka's Death and the king's horseman*.https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/151553906.

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Odebode (2016)[6] examines *DKH* from an ethnography of communication's point of view, paying attention to the onomastic sensibility. He observes that the playwright has successfully used the conversation genre to demonstrate his naming power over the characters in the play and the names reflect different socio-cultural backgrounds with informing as the principal illocutionary act that underlies them. The work is similar to ours in corpus, but different in theory.

Boluwaduro (2018)[7] surveys how cultural ideologies are reflected through the names of characters in *DKH*. Using Systemic Functional Grammar as the theoretical framework, the study holds that names of characters in *DKH* are contextualized in relation to their ideological functions in the thematic constructs of the play which includes culture clash and movement of transition. It concludes that the names in the play are derivative and symbolic as they are engraved in Yoruba socio-cultural meanings. The study is related to ours in data but different in theory.

Amusan (2023)[8] researches the semantics of characters' names in *DKH*. Anchoring the study on semantic principles of reference theory of meaning, connotation, entailment and metaphor, the author posits that the characters' names in *DKH* are used to prescribe, inform, assert and predict. Thus, the study affirms that the meanings of words are not limited to what they denote in the real world but include what they connote and entail. Like Boluwaduro (2018)[9], Amusan's work is similar to the present study because it is grounded on the same primary text, *DKH.* It is however, different from ours in theory. While Amusan (2023)[10] uses the principle of referential theory to benchmark his work, we are using Robinson's (1991)[11] colour purple model.

Finally, we may submit that the above studies are related to the present study in the sense that they center on Soyinka's *DKH*, a text on which this study is also based though from a different perspective. The works have contributed to our knowledge of pragmatics, semantics, language and culture as well as naming strategies. They aid our understanding of the text by unveiling Soyinka's ingenuity in portraying the Yoruba cosmos via character portrayal and naming system in relation to the thematic preoccupation of the play. The current study is principally different because it discusses the characters' rolesand names in

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[6] Odebode, I.O. (2016). Ethnographic analysis of round characters' onomastics in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Marang Journal of Language and Literature*27 (16): 49-62.
[7] Boluwaduro, E. (2018). Names as cultural reflections in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Journal of Linguistics Association of Nigeria*, 21(1), 97-109.
[8] Amusan,K. (2023). *The semantics of characters names in Wole Soyinka's Death and the king's horseman*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369759218.Accessed December 13, 2023.
[9] Boluwaduro, E. (2018). Names as cultural reflections in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Journal of Linguistics Association of Nigeria*, 21(1), 97-109
[10] Amusan,K. (2023). *The semantics of characters names in Wole Soyinka's Death and the king's horseman*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369759218.Accessed December 13, 2023.
[11] Robinson, G.L. (1991). "Second culture acquisition" In *Linguistics and language pedagogy: The state of the art*. Ed. James E. Alatis. Washington D.C : Georgetown University Press pp. 114-122.

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relation to Robinson's (1991)[12] colourpurple model which highlights the various lenses a second culture can be viewed.

Analysis and Findings

As pointed out by Robinson (1991),[13] a culture can be perceived through the blue lens (eyes of the native culture), the red lens (eyes of the target culture), or the purple lens (the bilingual eyes). By applying this to Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, we shall be able to unveil each character's disposition and view ofthe Yoruba cultural milieu and Western civilization. This section, therefore, discusses the characters in *DKH* vis-a-vis their perception of the cultural practices projected in the play.

Major characters

Elesin (the king's horseman)
He is a central character and a titular horseman who, by tradition, should commit suicide after the king's death, based on his role name (see Odebode, 2010; Odebode, 2016)[14]. As a horseman, he enjoys all forms of luxury ranging from good food, expensive raiment, songs, dances, women to reverence from all and sundry in the community. Elesinis portrayed as a charismatic, vibrant and honourable character rooted in and committed to culture and tradition. The statements of Women and Praise Singer about Elesin attest to this in the following lines.

> Praise singer: He is a man of enormous vitality, speaks, dances and sings with an infectious enjoyment of life which accompanies all his actions (*DKH* p.9)…[15]
> In your time we do not doubt the peace of farmstead and home, the peace of road and hearth, we do not doubt the peace of the forest (*DKH* p.13).[16]
> Women : We know you for a man of honour (*DKH* p. 15)[17]

Contrary to this depiction, Elesinacts otherwise by insisting on sexing up a young woman who is already betrothed to Iyaloja's son before he embarks on his ritual suicide. This strange, unwholesome and selfish act creates a tragic conflict in the play. While enjoying his tryst with the bride, he is arrested and detained; thus, his suicide assignment is thwarted. His not being able to perform the ritual suicide brings great dishonor and irreparable shame to him

[12] Ibid., Pp114-122
[13] Ibid., Pp114-122
[14] Odebode, I.O. (2010). "A pragmatic study of the names of characters in selected plays of Wole Soyinka." Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University of Ibadan: Department of English. P.46.; Odebode, I.O. (2016). Ethnographic analysis of round characters' onomastics in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Marang Journal of Language and Literature*27 (16): 49-62.
[15] Soyinka, W. (2002). *Death and the king's horseman*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited. *The Holy Bible King James Version*. (1992). Georgia, Pilot Books.P,9.
[16] Ibid., P13
[17] Ibid., P15

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and his lineage. He later strangles himself with the chain on hearing that his son, Olunde, has died in his stead.Elesin's suicide is rather a medicine after death. He is a selfish character torn between enjoying luxury and fulfilling the traditional mandate. From his disposition towards the rituals preceding his sacrificial suicide, it could be said that Elesin views his culture with the blue lens but not disciplined enough to sacrifice pleasure in fulfillment of his traditional mandate. He wants to have his cake and eat it simultaneously; hence, his irredeemable shame. This is why Odebode (2010)[18] submits that there is a pun in Elesin's name which leads to a semantic extension as Elesin-in (the contemptible one).He posits:

> We…see the presence of pun especially when some of the Yoruba names are likened in pronunciation to English words. Typical example include the name "Elesin" whichis homophonous with another Yoruba word; Elesin-in (a ridiculed or contemptible person). (Odebode 2010:98)[19]

Olunde

He is Elesin's eldest son who, against his father's wish, left Nigeria to study Medicine in Britain. His decision to further his education outside his homeland strains the relationship between him and his father. Learning that the king has died, Olunde returns to Nigeria to bury his father. This stems from his understanding of the tradition that his father, being a horseman, should commit suicide to honour his king's death. In his words, "…But I knew I had to return home at once so as to bury my father. I understood that" (*DKH* p.52)[20].On getting home, he realizes that his father, Elesin, has failed to do the needful. This gets him infuriated and disappointed. Knowing the implication of his father's action, he commits suicide in place of his father to redeem the honour and glory of his lineage. This is why he is named *Olu omo de* (my principal child has arrived) according to Odebode (2005)[21].

Olunde could be described as the bridge between African culture and western education (including Western culture). Soyinka, through Olunde, unveils the cultural and moral dilemmas of bilingual individuals caught between the web of tradition and colonialism. Olunde represents identity and self-discovery as he consciously balances his dual identity as a Yoruba and Western-educated young man. This is captured in his conversation with Jane Pilkings as follows:

> OLUNDE: Don't make it so simple, Mrs Pilkings. You make it sound as if when I left, I took nothing at all with me.

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[18] Odebode, I.O. (2010). "A pragmatic study of the names of characters in selected plays of Wole Soyinka." Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University of Ibadan: Department of English. P.46.
[19] Ibid., P 46
[20] Soyinka, W. (2002). *Death and the king's horseman*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited. *The Holy Bible King James Version*. (1992). Georgia, Pilot Books.p., 52.
[21] Odebode, I. (2005). A pragmasociolinguisticstudy of names and nicknames in Soyinka's *Death and the king'shorseman*. In Olateju, M. and Oyeleye, L. (eds) (2005) *Perspectives on language and literature*.Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited, Pp 199-214.

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> JANE: Yes . . . and to tell the truth, only this evening, Simon and I agreed that we never really knew what you left with.
> OLUNDE: Neither did I. But I found out over there. I am grateful to your country for that. And I will never give it up.
> JANE: Olunde, please , . . promise me something. Whatever you do, don't throw away what you have started to do. You want to be a doctor. My husband and I believe you will make an excellent one, sympathetic and competent. Don't let anything make you throw away your training.
> OLUNDE: (genuinely surprised): Of course not. What a strange idea. I intend to return and complete my training once the burial of my father is over. (*DKH*p.55)[22]

The above excerpt shows that Olunde, though exposedto Western education and culture, is still deeply committed to the culture and tradition of his motherland. As an African bred son who has also spent some time in a strange land to acquire higher education, he considers himself better positioned to preserve his African tradition and, at the same time, respect that of the British. In his interaction with Jane Pilkings, Olunde reiterates and affirms the importance of ritual suicide by making reference to the captain who blew himself up to save others.

> OLUNDE: Maybe it was loaded with ammunition and hadcaught fire. Or some of those lethal gases they've been experimenting on.
> JANE: Something like that. The captain blew himself up with it. Deliberately. Simon said someone had to remain on boardto light the fuse.
> OLUNDE: It must have been a very short fuse.
> JANE (shrugs): I don't know much about it. Only that there was no other way to save lives. No time to devise anything else. The captain took the decision and carried it out.
> OLUNDE: Yes . . . I quite believe it. I met men like that inEngland.
> JANE : Oh just look at me! Fancy welcoming you back with such morbid news. Stale too. It was at least six months ago.
> OLUNDE: I don't find it morbid at all. I find it rather inspiring. It is an affirmative commentary on life.
> JANE: What is?
> OLUNDE: That captain's self-sacrifice. (*DKH* p.51)[23]

From the excerpt above, Jane views captain's action as grotesque but Olunde considers it inspiring and sacrificial and a replica of Elesin's obligatory ritual-suicide in a Yoruba society. He uses this analogy to draw a connection between African and Western cultures. Therefore, Olunde represents the purple lens as

[22] Soyinka, W. (2002). *Death and the king's horseman*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited. *The Holy Bible King James Version*. (1992). Georgia, Pilot Books.p., 55
[23] Ibid., 51

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he conveniently views the culture from the native and foreign perspectives and blends them.

Simon Pilkings and Jane Pilkings

Both Simon Pilkings, the British Colonial District officer, and his wife, Jane Pilkings, embody the red lens. They criticize African traditional practices and seek to enforce Western values and laws on the native citizens not minding if they clash with the local traditions and rituals. They use their own cultural lens (target culture) to view and judge African cultural values and customs. In this regard, they consider Elesin's customary ritual suicide as barbaric and needless. Though Jane's name denotes "God is gracious" (Ohwovoriole, 2021),[24] her actions seem hypocritical and cynical in the universe of the text. Meanwhile, Simon Pilkings thwarts the ritual suicide mission by getting Elesin arrested the night he is to commit suicide. This is why Odebode (2010:85)[25] maintains that Simon Pilkings' name:

> derives from the existing Biblical Simon Peter, a strict and hard disciple of Christ. Simon Peter tries to prevent his master, Jesus Christ from dying for the sins of humanity in *The Holy Bible* (see Mathew 16:21-23). Simon is an Aramaic word for stone (Dakes 1998:94).[26] Simon, therefore, denotes a hard man who prevents kings from achieving their 'glorious' purpose(s)…He typifies the themes of ignorance, arrogance and cultural chauvinism. There is therefore a play upon this name Simon, District officer to suggest Simon, the strict officer.

Iyaloja(mother of the market place)

She is the market leader who wields great influence in society particularly, over females. Through Iyaloja, Soyinka projects the significance and responsibilities of women in the traditional Yoruba community. Women are socially, morally and spiritually relevant as they play the role of mother, enforcer of discipline and guidance to the community at large. This is why hers is a role name. She is the progenitor of the society and the matriarch of culture. The Yoruba believe that the world is market and heaven is home. Thus, she is the market mother (Odebode, 2016).[27]Throughout the play, Iyaloja keeps Elesin on his toes by warning and reminding him of his traditional mandate i.e. the need to go "home". She encapsulates the voice of reason and tradition given that she

[24] Ohwovoriole, T. (2021). "Jane name meaning" In https://www.verywellfamily.com/jane-name-meaning-origin popularity5191026#:~:text=The%20name%20Jane%20is%20of,it%20was%20used%20as%20an. Accessed December 14, 2023.
[25] Odebode, I.O. (2010). "A pragmatic study of the names of characters in selected plays of Wole Soyinka." Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University of Ibadan: Department of English. P.46.
[26] Dakes, F.J. (1998). *Dakesannotated reference Bible.* Georgia: Dake Bible Sales, Inc.
[27] Odebode, I.O. (2016). Ethnographic analysis of round characters' onomastics in Wole Soyinka's *Death and the king's horseman*. *Marang Journal of Language and Literature*27 (16): 49-62.

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ensures unity in the society. She epitomizes African culture and doesn't embrace western civilization at all.

Minor characters
Amusa

He is an African police officer who works under Pilkings with the sole responsibility of policing his fellow Africans. He executes Simon Pilkings' order to arrest Elesin so as to prevent him from committing his ritual suicide. **Al** Sudairy(1999)[28] is quoted by Odebode (2010)[29] as saying that Amusa is a borrowing from the Arabic Hamzi which denotes brave servant.He proves this by confronting the women alone in the market while trying to arrest Elesin in the play. Though he works under the colonial master, he still holds African cultural values in high esteem. This is demonstrated in his resentment to Pilkings' wearing of confiscated Egungun costume. He sees such as disrespect to the custom of the land.

> AMUSA: MistaPirinkin, I beg you sir, what you think you do with that dress? I t belong to dead cult, not for human being.
> PI LKINGS: Oh Amusa, what a letdown you are. I swear by you at the club you know - thank God for Amusa, he doesn't believe in any mumbo-jumbo. And now look at you!
> AMUSA: MistaPirinkin, I beg you, take it off. Is not good for man like you to touch that cloth. … I treat egungun with respect.

Like Olunde, he is caught in the web of obedience to the British colonial powers and Yoruba cultural traditions. Sergeant Amusa represents the bilingual individual grappling with culturalclash. Despite working for and carrying out orders of Simon Pilking, he never sees customs of his native society with the Whiteman's lens (red lens).

Praise-singer

In traditional Yoruba society, a praise singerrecites songs and poetry at important events and in honour of prominent people (e.g. king). In *DKH*, the praise singer eulogizes Elesin and engages him in banters from which he reveals Elesin's state of mind and readiness for the ritual suicide. He is Elesin's moral voice. The Yoruba saying that songs precede intrigues foregrounds his name. This is evident in his words to Elesin when he chooses to marry in the course of the preparation for his ritual suicide. Praise-singer points out the possibility of his (Elesin) derailing from the path of the sacrifice. His role is sacrosanct inan African community.

[28] Al-Sudairy, C. 1999. "Femine Arabic Names" In http://www.sudairy.com/
[29] Odebode, I.O. (2010). "A pragmatic study of the names of characters in selected plays of Wole Soyinka." Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University of Ibadan: Department of English. P.46.

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Aide-de-Camp a.k.a. Bob

He is a colonial officer answerable to the prince whose role is to *aid* the Resident and his fellow British administrators. Like the Pilkings, he is insensitive to the indigenous residents of the society and their traditions. This shows in his aggression towards Olunde just because Olunde says something that gets Jane Pilkings emotional.

Joseph

Joseph is a houseboy to the Pilkings. This character with his name is an analogy from the Biblical Joseph who is a houseboy to the Portiphars (Odebode, 2005)[30]. Joseph denotes "he shall add" (Genesis 30:24).[31]As the meaning of his name (he shall add), he is added to the Pilkings as a house boy. He is a young Christian convert, who picks offense by Simon's fondness for blasphemy. The play is silent about his disposition to the brouhaha of cultural differences in the play. This may be as a result of his position as a house boy; a house boy doesn't have a voice other than to perform hismaster's assignments. Being a young convert, we can presume that he would view African culture with a red lens.

Bride

Culturally, bride is the nickname given to a newly wed young lady in Africa. Contextually, however, the character is the young betrothed woman to Iyaloja's son thatElesin sees around the market and decides to marry before transiting to the afterlife. It is implied towards the end of the play that she is pregnant with Elesin's child. Although she is somehow passive in the play, we could say that she doesn't oppose the cultural and traditional dictates. She accepts Elesin'sovertures without arguing with Iyaloja, despite her relationship with Iyaloja's son. This could be attributed to her understanding and acceptance of the Yoruba culture that Elesin, like the king, is not to be turned down by any woman.We may establish therefore, that she views the African culture with a blue lens.

H.R.H. The Prince

He doesn't play any significant role in the text other than that his visit to Nigeria coincides with the time that the natives are performing rituals in preparation for Elesin's suicide. According to Olunde, the prince is a brave man given that he is able to journey from England to Nigeria in the middle of the Second World War. His visit unsettles Simon Pilkings because he is apprehensive that the Prince may be disappointed in him if his attempt to prevent Elesin's suicide causes any uproar. However, HRH the Prince is a name with the initial acronym standing for His Royal Highness. This is an honourific term used for kings in

[30] Odebode, I. (2005). A pragmasociolinguisticstudy of names and nicknames in Soyinka's *Death and the king'shorseman*. In Olateju, M. and Oyeleye, L. (eds) (2005) *Perspectives on language and literature*.Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited, Pp 199-214.
[31] Dakes, F.J. (1998). *Dakesannotated reference Bible.* Georgia: Dake Bible Sales, Inc.

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Africa. But it is used for the white prince in this context. It therefore, portrays the superiority complex of the white men over their black counterparts. Thus, he can be said to belong to the red lens group. In the text, he is well protected as affirmed by Olunde thus: "I came home to bury my father… in fact, we were fortunate. *We travelled in the same convoy as your* prince, so *we had excellent protection* (*DKH* p. 52)[32] (emphasis ours).

The Resident

He is a local British administrator who hosts H.R.H. the Prince. He reveres the British Empire such that he is not quite comfortable with Simon Pilkings' approach to preventing Elesin's suicide. He felt such could ruin the royal visit of H.R.H. The Prince. His is also a role name with the mandate of protecting the interest of the British in the protectorate; hence, we may submit that he views the culture with a red lens.

Drummers

The drummers' constant presence in the play is very significantto the processes involved in the ritual as their music enables characters like Olunde and Joseph to tell the kind and stage of the ritual being performed. Drumming and dancing are intertwined in Africa. In any play, drummers normally appear first to entertain the audience and set the stage in motion. Additionally, they bear special names (e.g.*Ayanwale,*drummer comes home and *Ayankunmi,* a drummer is added to me) which indicate the profession among the Yoruba. Thus, drummer is a role/occupational name. In *DKH,* drummers are given this collective role name as characters. Moreover, their presence is very significant in kings' palaces. Drummers are, therefore, part of the custodians of African culture. Hence, they belong to the blue lens class.

Women and young girls

These are age related collective nouns which also pass for matronymy (naming patterned after women). For instance, componentially, *women* will have *+old, and +mature* potentials while *young girls* will have *+fresh, and +immature* potentials. These characters help Elesin in preparing for his sojourn to the afterlife. So, when Sergeant Amusa comes to preventElesin from carrying out his mandate, they, alongside others, taunt and send him away. Therefore, they view the culture with a blue lens.

[32] Soyinka, W. (2002). *Death and the king's horseman*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited. *The Holy Bible King James Version*. (1992). Georgia, Pilot Books.

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Statistical Analysis

This section presents the statistical analysis of characters' representation of the three lenses (perspectives)of Robinson's Colour Purple model.

Table1 showing the characters and their lenses

Characters	**Lenses**
Elesin	Blue lens
Iyaloja	Blue lens
SeargeantAmusa	Blue lens
Jane Pilkings	Red lens
Olunde	Purple lens
Bride	Blue lens
Resident	Red lens
Simon Pilkings	Red lens
Joseph	Red lens
H.R.H The Prince	Red lens
Aide-de-Camp (Bob)	Red lens
Praise-Singer	Blue lens
Women	Blue lens
Drummers	Blue lense
Young girls	Blue lens

Source: Author

Table 2 indicating the lenses and their respective percentage

Lenses	**No. of characters**	**Percentage**
Blue lens	8	53.3
Red lens	6	40
Purple lens	1	6.7
Total	15	100

Source: Author

From Tables 1 & 2, the blue lens has the highest percentage of 53.3%, constituting 8 characters. This is followed by the Red lens which is 40% and consists of 6 characters. The purple lens is just 1 character with 6.7%. The high percentage of the blue and red lenses is a reflection of the serious tussle between African indigenous culture and Western civilization while the purple lens being as low as 6.7% shows that only few, among individuals exposed to both cultures, are able to have a balanced view and marry the cultural

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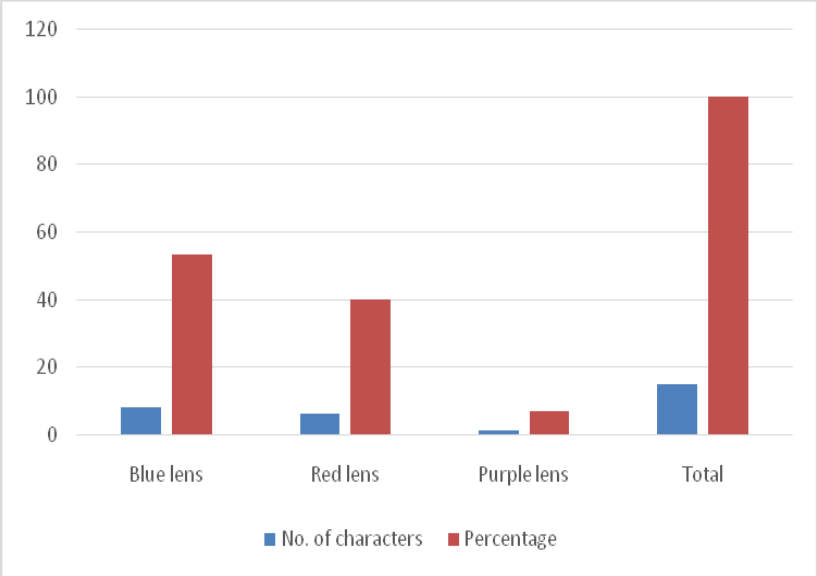
differences. The above analysis is represented by a simple bar chart in Fig. 1 below.

Fig. 1: Bar chart indicating the lenses and their respective percentage in *DKH*



Source: Author

Conclusion

The study has established that Soyinka, by reflecting and refracting occurrences in Oyo, an ancient city in Nigeria, has exposed the readership to the colonial and post-colonial experiences of a typical colonized African society. The study unmasks the characteristic roles of individuals in relation to their names in *DKH* and confirms that the playwright, through characterization and onomastics (characteronymy) deploys Robinson's three lenses of viewing a new culture. This gives a clearer picture of the clash of cultures in any given community and in individuals exposed to more than one culture.

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