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**Metastatised Characters as Hegelian Change Agents In
Osofisan's *Morountodun* and *No More the Wasted Breed***

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Abstract

Scholars and critics always interpret change in Osofisan's plays from a theoretical perspective, thus paying less attention to the roles played by characters as the immediate vehicles of that change. Characters embody the interpretive, primal consciousness which the author may seem unaware although they are his mouthpiece to ventilate remote and immediate ideological concerns. Detailed character analysis suffers an unwholesome fate in literary criticism and this constitutes a major problem. This paper critically examines some characters in *Morountodun* and *No More The Wasted Breed* to reveal how they negotiate and achieve change through metastasis – a radical transformation from one position to another. The paper argues further that the characters imbue Hegelian dialectic attributes which galvanize them to embrace their contrary positions to achieve change. Using the Hegelian Dialectic theoretical framework, the study establishes that change in the selected plays is a product of the characters' sudden awareness and realization of their immediate circumstances. Until the characters became aware, they are continually subsumed in ignorance about prevailing situations in their society. For any real change to occur in society, social actors, the characters must first become aware and then radically shift from their positions to a new one.

Key words: Metastasis, Characters, Hegelian Dialectic, Change, Society

Introduction

Change in this study refers to the transformation of characters which leads to the alteration of society and the prevailing status quo. It also means a departure from the past, a signpost for a new consciousness for navigating existential realities. Champion Muthle (2021) believes that change is constant even though the processes and avenues for achieving it may vary. According to him “the setting, spectrum, and circumstances may change, but the idea remains the same: to impact and create change” (2). His views uphold the immediate concern of this study: to go beyond the borders of change and x-ray the characters as catalysts of that change. No doubt, change is a recurring motif in Femi Osofisan’s dramaturgy to the extent that some scholars have expanded it, ascribing different ideological emblems to it. However, in doing so, these scholars unwittingly disregard the significant roles played by the characters who, without them, the change enterprise will be retarded.

Mainstream literature thrives on the deployment of characters by artists who use them to ventilate their ideological convictions. Without characters as major components of literary culture, it is difficult to harness or interpret human attributes such as love, fame, failure, life and death. They provide the animating, galvanizing impulses which the audience can hold on to as a reflexive instrument to view society and its multiple structures. Through characters, the writer is able to provide an immediate social predilections, tensions and observable trends by which a

society is governed and understood. Characters could be fictional or non-fictional in literature, yet, there is an overwhelming difference between characters in real life and characters as creative endeavours. Anderson, Felski, and Moi (2019) observe that “concern with characters is a defining aspect of reader or viewer engagement with many forms of fiction. It is one of the means by which fiction makes claims upon us” (1). Creating fictional characters is more onerous and tasking than recreating real characters in a non-fiction narrative. To use these characters to re-enact social progress or otherwise is more onerous especially such social subject is as engaging and diverse as change. Social change is anchored on characters whose idiosyncrasies determine the bent or direction of a social system. Thus when writers create characters, they first view their roles and responsibilities in society beyond the aesthetic content of the text. This is the commitment of many writers and Femi Osofisan belongs to this group of writers who exalt characters to the chore of their creative commitment.

While this paper is not poised to embark on the well-known familiar journey of mere character analysis, it demonstrates how the characters through metastasis relive the Hegelian dialectic to embrace their opposites on the way to achieving change. Metastasis is used in this study to depict a process through which characters change from an earlier position to a new one, a radical shift in the development of a character. The change could be positive to negative or vice versa. In other words, it is used as a synonymous term for character transition. Hope Eghagha (2009) opines that “Metastasis comes in two forms: a conversion from a bad case of extreme capitalism to understanding the injustices meted out to, and the dilemma of the oppressed, or an attempt to abandon ideals for the lures of capitalism” (65). This shift in character, metastasis, intersects with the Hegelian dialectic which explains the process whereby a concept is inevitably upheld, entwined with, and fulfilled by its opposite. It is through this kind of metastasis cum

Hegelian dialectic analysis of the characters that their positions as agents of change are understood and established. It is easy to input labels on Osofisan's characters because in creating them, he does not close them. The characters are left open ended to accommodate various ideological imprints. According to Toyin Falola, (2016) in Osofisan's drama, there is "a continuous process in which characters and narration become permanently open-ended"(11). This kind of open-endedness could be interpreted as Osofisan's style to make the plays adaptable to various conceptual and theoretical modes.

The critical analysis of the identified characters will also demonstrate their developments and reveal how they can be viewed as the playwright's mouthpiece in addressing multi-layered, amorphous, socio-economic, and political issues confronting humanity at various levels. In most of Osofisan's plays and especially in the two plays chosen for this study, the characters metastasise from their original roles to a different, new position to uphold the change objective of the playwright. In pursuing this objective, Osofisan invests the characters with Marxist attributes to reject the status quo and chart a new cause for themselves and society. Although Osofisan has denounced the Marxist emblem in his art, it is easy to identify Marxist parallels in most of his plays. Muyiwa Awodiya (1996) is of the opinion that "Osofisan shuns dogma and ideological labelling. Whenever he is asked to define his political ideology, he is always evasive because, according to him, all the labels have been abused and misused particularly in the Nigerian context where these ideologies have several misconceptions"(37). Certainly, to awaken people to the realities of their base conditions and bestir them with awareness to strive for change can only accommodate one label, Marxism and this is what Osofisan does in his drama. Also, the playwright, in his choice of characters, straddles the realms of the physical and the supernatural where he transforms a character to play dual roles in both realms.

Hegelian Characters

TITUBI

In *Morountodun*, Titubi is the ebullient daughter of Alhaja Kabirat who represents the affluence of the rich class and manifests all their indulgent exuberances. But as a Hegelian character, she oscillates between two opposite worlds, the rich and poor. Her character occurs as a bridge that connects the two different and opposed worlds. Through her, the consciousness of the capitalist class in society is conveyed and the desperate, deplorable world of the farmers in the text is also revealed. In this way, she is a dual character that embodies two opposite realms of existence. Titubi's character can be likened to the Ogun essence in the Yoruba mythology whose instrument of iron represented as knife as both a blood letter and a creative implement for farming. There is a semblance of characteristics between the provisions of the Yoruba mythology which provides the background to Osofisan's dramaturgy on one hand and Hegel's postulations regarding the unity of opposites.

Hegel maintains that every phenomenon is an embodiment of two opposite extremes and when it is carried to its fullest realization, naturally generates its other direct opposite. According to Hegel (1979) "opposition and its contradiction is, therefore, in ground as much abolished as preserved"(435). Osofisan deliberately delineates Titubi's character to demonstrate how a phenomenon can have the attribute of its negated self. Titubi is a quintessential Hegelian character because her personality provides a suitable structure of synthesis for the audience to appreciate the rich class and their grovelling, poor counterparts. This is so because the contradiction we encounter between the rich and the poor farmers is given prominence when juxtaposed by Titubi's sojourn in the jungle with the farmers. As a metastasised character, she

moves from a position of irreverent affluence to the realization of the realities in poverty and hardship. After her experience in the jungle, she becomes transformed, changed and able to make a clear distinction between her former affluent inclinations and her later experiences of peonage and penury. In highlighting the dialectical nature of opposites Hegel (1979) again remarks that “what is North Pole in the actual magnet of appearance, would be South Pole in the inner or essential being; what presents itself as oxygen pole in the phenomenon of electricity would be hydrogen pole in unmanifested electricity”(98). Thus, every phenomenon contains its opposite within it.

Let us now encounter Titubi’s metastasised character and her steady but gradual development as a transforming agent of change that embodies Hegelian dialectic characteristics. At the beginning of the play, Titubi emerges to stop a dramatic performance meant to ridicule her affluent, capitalist class and expose their insensitivity towards the poor, hardworking farmers. Titubi saunters into the stage and immediately disrupts proceedings, confronting the director of the play and demanding on whose authority they are staging the play.

TITUBI: Nobody will watch any show tonight. Either we stop it all,
or we burn the place down. But nobody is going to watch
anything here tonight. We’ll all wait for the police. (Osofisan 8)

The director and his crew had, in anticipation of disturbances to their play, invited the police to maintain peaceful and conducive atmosphere. Through Titubi’s exchange with the director of the play, it is evident that she is a member of the upper echelon of society committed to protecting her class from imminent shame. While the exchange between Titubi and the director of the play lasted, members of the Police Force invited by the director of the play arrive at the scene. Their

arrival reveals the kind of relationship that exists between the Police Force and the two major classes in society. While the police are ready to protect the rich and influential citizens, they maltreat and brutalize the underclass. Kenneth Novak et al (2020) note that “There are two different variations of political view of the police role. One is that law and the police primarily serve the interest of the most influential person in a community. Such individuals are considered above the law, where as others are treated more harshly”(20). The Police Superintendent Salami and another police officer in a case of mistaken identity, attempt to arrest the director of the play who actually invited them for protection. In realizing their mistake, they attempt to arrest Titubi for public disturbance and it is the exchange between them and Titubi that highlights the antagonism between the two different classes.

Titubi’s confrontation with members of the police force is significant in a number of ways. First, it highlights the knowledge of the police to the existing social malaise and class polarity in society. Salami the police Superintendent informs Titubi about the despicable and impoverished conditions of the farmers and poor people who are bound together by hunger, the strongest force in the world, and that this people have arisen to say no more. This revelation by Salami shows the awareness of the police force to the various acts of economic depredation that exists in society but they are bound by the oath of office to defend the state and its various apparatuses of oppression. Secondly, the interaction between Titubi and the police affords her the opportunity to appreciate the determination of the impoverished farmers to fight the government and the capitalist class to a standstill. On realizing that the farmers are determined to fight her rich class and bring them to shame, Titubi offers to infiltrate the farmers’ camp to discover their secret and invincibility. Edde Iji (2009) succinctly describes Titubi’s self imposed vicarious mission by submitting that “initially, it is in defence of her class, the mercantile class that Titubi volunteers

to help suppress the revolt. Adorned with the Moremi necklace, a fashion in vogue, Titubi enjoys the vicarious thrills of Moremi, a religious experience that seemingly endows her with an added spiritual reincarnation of the heroine”(429). It is at this point that her metastasis and begins. The story of the legendary Moremi of Ile-Ife provides the background for her espionage mission. Spurred on by a craving for fame and popularity, she repudiates her mother’s entreaties to withdraw from the deadly mission. The playwright uses Titubi’s character proficiency to good effect by transforming her from one consciousness to another opposite consciousness.

Titubi’s character embodies two opposites in accordance with Hegel’s idea of the unity of opposites. There is a sense in which we can say that her character proficiency advances the plot structure of the play because it introduces us to the world of the poor farmers and their pains. As Titubi is captured, she sojourns with the farmers and this provides her a new experience, a new world contrary to her former world of affluence. In her new world with the farmers in the jungle, she experiences first hand poverty, excruciating hunger and lack, deplorable living conditions where people slept on the bare floor and drank earth water. She saw men, women, and children go to bed without food and walk about for many days hungry. She saw how farmers produce crops but must not eat of it because they need the money to pay taxes to the government. She saw people get sick without any proper medical attention. The scenario presented by the playwright is the direct opposite of what obtained in Titubi’s world of affluence and surplus. In her world of affluence, mosquitoes didn’t bite her, she had more than enough to eat and drink. She was pampered and had access to the best medical facilities.

TITUBI: That was when I began to ask questions. Questions. I saw myself
Growing up, knowing no suffering as these. With always so much
to eat, even servants feed their dogs...yet here, farmers cannot eat
their own products for they need the money from the market.

They tend the yams but dare not taste. They raise chickens but must be content with wind in their stomach. But I have lived in the forest among the simple folk, sharing their pain and anguish. (Osofisan 66)

The juxtaposition of these two world created by the playwright presents two opposites with Titubi as the connecting element. Having had the opportunity to experience both worlds, she jettisons her espionage mission and commits class suicide by abandoning the ideals of her class. That is the true meaning of metastasis. Sola Owonibi (2009) aptly describes Titubi's metastasised process by remarking that "Titubi, who initially appears as a socialite, anti-peasant, and a symbol of the oppressing class suddenly and dramatically, turns a social radical that tilts the popular struggle in favour of the proletariats in what Marxism will term *social struggle*" (232). She goes through a radical transformation and becomes a new person *inter alia*. This is in accordance with Hegel's position that the appreciation of any phenomenon is best when it is juxtaposed with its opposite. It is only in so far as we place Titubi's experience with the famers in the jungle side by side with her experience in a wealthy family that we can appreciate both sides of the spectrum.

As Titubi returns from the jungle after her sojourn with the farmers, she identifies with their sufferings and becomes a transformed person to the consternation of her mother, Alhaja Kabirat. She promptly relates her experiences in the jungle and why the farmers' agitation is justified. Thus, her metastasizing process is completed.

SALAMI

As a character, Salami, the Deputy Police Superintendent metastasises by transforming from an original position to a new consciousness. He embodies Hegelian dialectic attributes but not in the manner that Titubi does. In a different but direct way, Salami is a character in whose

personality we can locate elements of the two opposite classes - the rich and the poor. His character challenges the categorization of police officers in the modern class social structure. While in some countries, police officers belong to the upper echelon of the social ladder, in some other countries they belong to the lower rung of society. The categorization of the police in terms of class structure depends largely on the individual ranks of the police officers because in the police force across the world, we have gradations and ranking which classify the different officers.

In Nigeria where the play is set, a Police Superintendent is a senior officer and by implication a member of the upper class. Other ranks such as Corporal, Sergeant, and Inspector do not belong to the upper echelon of society. In developed countries like US, Canada, UK, Australia, Germany and China, an Inspector of police is a senior officer therefore, can be categorized among the upper class. But in Nigeria, the category of senior police officers starts from the Superintendent of Police and it is in this vein that Salami's is delineated in *Morountodun*. As a senior police officer and by implication a member of the upper class, Salami does not betray the affluent consciousness and arrogance of the rich. Rather, he shows sympathy to the poor, deprived, protesting farmers. His character metastasises from affluent consciousness to poor consciousness. He conveys the mood of the farmers to Titubi and why the farmers have risen to say no to all forms of exploitation by the capitalist class. Salami's metastasising process starts with his arrival on the scene where the drama was billed to hold. He becomes aware and moves as a member of the upper-class to show pity for members of his opposite class.

As a Superintendent of police, Salami's character is a platform where both opposite classes must meet and reconcile each other. Through him, we have a peep into the consciousness of the farmers where his sympathy resides. He has sympathy for the farmers who he believes are

victims of misrule, marginalization, and deprivation. However, as a result of his duty post and sworn allegiance to the state, he is bound to protect the rich, capitalist class whose taxes are deployed to maintain the police force. In this way, we see how the two opposite classes are aligned in a reciprocal relationship where they both benefit from each other. Even though Salami is aware of the various acts of economic despoliations and violence against the farmers, he is helpless in the given situation because he owes his profession and livelihood to the state that pays his salaries and various remunerations. Other characters in the play like Marshal and Mama Kayode, can also be said to be Hegelian dialectic characters but in a minor way. This is because they only help to highlight the agony and sordid living conditions of the farmers and it is through these highlights that we come to appreciate the situation and class contradictions that exist between the two opposite classes.

TOGUN

Yoruba metaphysics is populated by pantheons and gods of complementary suppositions. Sandra Richards (1996) reminds us that “it is important to stress at the outset that Yoruba metaphysics posits both tension and harmony that act upon each other dialectically”(76). It is under such umbrella of oppositional co-existence that spiritual elements in Yoruba metaphysics find relevance. In *No More The Wasted Breed* Olokun is god of the sea who oversees and controls the affairs of the inland waters and his priest is Togun. In Africa with a belief system steeped in the worship and recognition of mythical images, gods and pantheons, there is always a priest that acts as a link between the physical and the supernatural realm. The priest has the onerous responsibility to offer sacrifices to the gods on behalf of the people. He makes necessary propitiations and lubricates the spiritual continuum between men and gods. According to Wole

Soyinka (2005) “This gulf is what must be constantly diminished by the sacrifices, the rituals, the ceremonies of appeasement to those cosmic powers which lie guardian to the gulf”(144).

Through the priest, the people relate with the gods and make their requests known to them. Therefore, the priest of any god or goddess acts as a bridge between the supernatural world populated by unseen essences and the physical world populated by mortal men. In this case, Togun is the Hegelian dialectic factor that reconciles two opposite realms. The priests are seen as infallible because they speak and convey the minds of the gods. Therefore any statement or confirmation by them is seen as sacred and sacrosanct since it bears divine mandate. As many gods in Africa as there are, each has a priest who worships it and maintains a continual lubrication of the gulf between humans and gods. In many cases, each god or goddess has followers who worship it and carry out daily or weekly homiletics to continually replenish the image and outlook of the gods or goddess.

Togun’s character straddles both opposed realms of existence, the supernatural and the physical. Many critics have tried to rehabilitate some of these gods and give them a pride of place in the Yoruba mythic corpus. Ola Rotimi in his play, *The gods are Not to Blame* dramatizes the relationship between the people of Kutuje and the Ifa prognostic divination essence through Baba Fakunle. In each case, these priests stand in the gap between two contradictory, opposite existential order, they act as a synthesis which reconcile the two opposite realms of existence. It is within this interpretation that Togun, the priest of Olokun must be understood as a Hegelian dialectic character. As a priest of Olokun, Togun is committed to worshipping the god and ensuring that its spirit is properly and continually regenerated. In his capacity as the priest, he offers sacrifices to the god on behalf of the people to maintain order between the supernatural and the physical realms of existence. Togun’s dual manifestation as he

straddles between humans and gods is in line with Hegel's unity of opposite ideology where two opposite realms must find a reconciliatory platform for progress and advancement. The two realms of existence at play here obviously require the complement of each other but without the character of Togun as a priest of the god Olokun, it will be impossible for them to have a reciprocal relationship. While the humans offer sacrifices to the gods and goddess of the sea, they in turn offer protection and rich, healthy harvest for the people. All of these are carried out through the synthesizing platform offered by Togun. If the people needed anything from the god of the sea, they went to Togun. If their children were sick, they went to him. If their harvests failed, they went to him. Generally, they consulted him to know the mind of the gods of the sea each time they were confronted by the overwhelming realities of life

At the beginning of the play two gods, Olokun the god of the inland waters and his wife Elusu manifest in human forms. From their exchange, we understand that Elusu the goddess of the sea is angry because the people of Egure community abandoned her. They also disrespected her by failing to offer sacrifices. As a consequence of this neglect, she has punished the people by causing the sea to submerge their farms and caused sickness in the land which also claimed lives. However, her husband appears more temperate and restrained, therefore, preaches caution and pity towards humans. Their conjugal alliance is complemented by Togun who conveys their message to Biokun and his friend Saluga both members of the Egure community and fishermen. The confrontation between gods and humans is mediated by Togun.

The synthesizing platform in this case is Togun, the priest of the god Olokun. As a Hegelian dialectic character, he occurs between two opposites, uniting them, reconciling their differences to initiate progress and advancement. In the Hegelian dialectic system, the existence of opposites is paramount. However, in that contrary existence, there must be a rallying point, a reconciliatory

situation which shows that both opposites share a reciprocal and complementary relationship. Most importantly, there must be a platform that reconciles the opposites. Therefore Togun is fully delineated as a Hegelian dialectic character because it is through him that the god and goddess of the sea relate with humans to sustain their existence and relevance. Perhaps, without Togun's character, it will be impossible for humans and gods to achieve any kind of interaction and their complementary channels will be broken.

During the interaction between humans and gods, Biokun is ready to bear his responsibility as a Carrier, one chosen to die for the wellbeing of the entire community but his friend, Saluga consistently dissuades and discourages him much to the anger of the goddess Elusu. Biokun's doubt of his personality as a Carrier is given credence by Togun the priest who rehearse Osoosi, Biokun's father's ill-fated attempt to offer himself as a Carrier. Togun also points out that Biokun's father had passed on the Carrier totem to him and that Biokun will also in turn pass it on to his son Ehindro. This rehash of events by Togun to an extent convinces Biokun who is now ready to embrace his fate to die through a ritual sacrifice. In this way, Togun becomes a vehicle through which humanity can access the esoteric and hallowed chambers of the spiritual realm.

Due to Togun's presence, the gods and goddess divest themselves of the paraphernalia of spiritual essences and transform themselves into human flesh to be able to communicate freely with Biokun and Saluga. It is in this state of transformed and changed beings that the eventual communication and interaction between men and gods take place. During the exchange, Saluga questions why the gods should always choose the Carrier from among the poor while protecting the rich class whose ships of merchandize degrade and violate the sea. His impudence infuriates Elusu and she strikes him dead immediately. At his death, Biokun is angry and goes on to make a

case for the poor who are always the victims each time the gods get angry and require vengeance. Biokun's explanations are well received by Olokun who share the sympathy and plight of the humans in the face of apparent injustice by the supernatural elements. As a demonstration of his sympathy, Olokun goes on to raise Saluga and punish his wife Elusu by banishing her to another generation. Thus two opposites are inevitably conjoined to build a symbolic and pragmatic order.

The playwright's constant appropriation of the Yoruba mythology helps him to also rehash Hegel's idea of opposite symbiosis where differences and opposites continually co-exist in unity. According to Hegel, in the relationship between opposites, the reconciling factor or platform is always unaware of its role in the general scheme of things. This is because the reconciling role is not premeditated but created by nature or an enveloping spirit which amounts to God. The reconciling platform is not a human creation rather, it is a divine creation which is a natural part of the existential order where opposites must co-mingle for positive advancement. This same theme runs through Osofisan's dramaturgy especially his use of the supernatural and physical realms of existence. He constantly shows that the two opposite realms are interwoven and one can hardly do without the other. Through their inevitable relationship, a change, a transformation can occur in the social human equation. However, there is a sense in which we can say that other creative writers echo the same artistic sentiment but certainly not in the degree and manner that Osofisan has done. Each time he juxtaposes opposites, the Hegelian sensibility becomes the most suitable and appropriate to interpret and analyze it. We can therefore contend that Osofisan's use of opposite and Hegel's idea of the relationship between opposites share a necessary affinity.

OLOKUN

Olokun is the venerated god of the inland waters who has the onerous responsibility of overseeing the water ways and protecting its banks. His efforts in this regard are complemented by his wife Elusu, the goddess of the sea who also receives sacrifices on behalf of her husband. As a god of the sea, Olokun occupies a very important place in the Yoruba pantheon because he ensures bountiful success for fishermen and also guarantees the safety of boats, canoes, and other important activities carried out within the domain of the waterways. In *No More the Wasted Breed*, Olokun is delineated as a Hegelian dialectic character because his consciousness straddles two opposite realms, the realm of the supernatural and the realm of the physical. As a spiritual essence, Olokun loves his wife but at the same time, advises her to exercise caution in her anger towards humanity for their failure to honour her by offering regular sacrifice. This dual consciousness by Olokun can therefore be seen as a synthesizing platform for the spiritual stance of the wife and the radical position of humans represented by Saluga. Although Olokun cannot be said to be a Hegelian dialectic character in the mould and degree of Togun the Olokun priest, his characterization fits into a Hegelian dialectic mode from a different interpretation. While Olokun constantly requires sacrifice from humans in order to maintain and lubricate the spiritual continuum, he on the other hand protects them and ensures they have a rich harvest. In this way, the two opposite realms share a reciprocal and complementary relationship. It is this kind of relationship that Olokun recognizes which informs his caution and temperance in his approach to human folly knowing full well that he needs humans as much as humans need him. This kind of mutual relationship between opposites is in tandem with the Hegelian dialectic consciousness which upholds the continual existence of opposites in a reciprocal alignment.

At the beginning of the play, we promptly encounter the sea god Olokun and his wife Elusu in a human form making their journey to the land of the living to have an interaction with

humans through the Olokun priest Togun. As both Olokun and his wife appear, they are engaged in intense argument over the fate of humans who have been punished by Elusu because they failed to offer sacrifices to her. Elusu destroys their farmlands and drives all the fishes to other shores thereby causing untold hardship and suffering in the entire Egure community. As if that is not enough, she also causes sickness, disease, and death among the people too. While Elusu tries to justify her actions against humans, her husband Olokun has a different opinion. He cautions his wife to show mercy to the people and withdraw her anger because humans need to be alive in order to worship the gods and offer sacrifice. This dual consciousness by Olokun sets him at the middle of the two opposite realms of existence as he recognizes that both realms require the existence of its counterpart for onward progress and continual existence.

It should be noted that for the two spiritual essences, god and goddess to be able to interact with humans, they must first assume human form and by so doing, embrace the physical nature of their existential opposite number. This kind of transformation from the spiritual to the physical has also taken place in the Biblical Christian account of God's relationship and intervention in the lives of men. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ the only son of God volunteered to come to earth to interface with humanity and save them from destruction. However, in order to relate with humans and accomplish His objectives, Jesus Christ, a spiritual essence, had to take human form and subject Himself to all forms of humiliation. He was eventually crucified on the cross of Calvary before again assuming His spiritual nature. This Biblical account of spiritual transformation points to the fact that the spiritual and the physical will always embrace each other in order to maintain their relationship. Perhaps, Jesus Christ may not have been able to accomplish his purpose without that transformation. This is also the case with Olokun who had to transform to a human nature before he is able to interact with humans

and accomplish his purpose. It is this transformation from one opposite to the other, both of consciousness and of physical attribute that clearly defines Olokun's character as Hegelian dialectic character.

There are accounts where humanity had to transform into spiritual beings to be able to relate with its existential opposite. The human transformation into the spiritual realm is mostly carried out through incantations, astral travelling, and other occult practices. These practices are upheld by Hegel's submission that opposites must find sustenance in their mutual interaction. In William Blake's opinion (2021) "without contraries, there is no progress, attraction and repulsion, good and bad are needed for human advancement"(1). In this way, we can safely contend that the interaction of opposites, the transformation of one entity into its opposite, contrary number is embedded in the spiritual where life derives its regeneration. Accordingly, Olokun recognizes the importance of his relationship with humans. He knows that he needs the humans as well as the humans need him. He knows that without the human sacrifices, his cult and that of his wife will vanish. He recognizes the reciprocity in their relationship therefore, is minded to follow the part of justice while listening to the face-off between the humans and his wife Elusu. In his human form also, the Hegelian dialectic attribute of Olokun is demonstrated further more when he begins to mediate and act as a reconciling platform between humans and his wife Elusu. Having listened to Saluga and Biokun, Olokun identifies with their plight and sees reasons in their complaints.

Olokun's position is at variance with that of his wife who is further angered by the impudence and rudeness shown by Saluga. In response to Saluga's effrontery, Elusu strikes him dead and encourages Biokun to proceed with his responsibility as a carrier. At this juncture, Olokun stands aloof, becomes impartial while listening to the submissions of the humans

rendered by Biokun. At the end of Biokun long speech which implicated the gods in the entire process of human misery, Olokun is moved by sympathy and goes on to raise Saluga. By so doing, he identifies with humanity. Olokun banishes his wife to another generation and returns to the sea. In this way, the playwright is able to achieve a change and social transformation by situating Olokun's character and investing him with dual characteristics, the spiritual and the physical. The change we see at the end of the play is primarily achieved due to the inevitable interaction between two contrary entities where the supernatural, through Olokun must embrace the nature and semblance of its physical counterpart. In this way, the events of the play collaborate the Hegelian notion that social transformation or change can be achieved through a reciprocal alignment of opposites where there must be a synthesizing platform reconciling the opposites and initiating the required change.

Conclusion

From the foregoing analysis, the characters are the harbingers of change by metastasising from one state to another or by straddling two opposite positions. The two different states are always contradictory but complementary in line with Hegelian dialectic sensibilities. For Titubi, The change in her character marks the difference between her and the legendary Moremi of Ile-Ife. While Moremi infiltrates the enemy camp and discovers their secret power and then returns to relate same to her people who build on the knowledge and defeat their enemies, Titubi is transformed by her experience in the jungle and abandons the ideals of her class. However, while viewing Titubi's character in relation to the occurrence of opposites according to Hegel, the rich cannot exist without the poor and the poor on the other hand cannot certainly exist without the rich. It is therefore interesting to note that opposites, like day and night, attraction and repulsion, sowing and reaping, good and bad, birth and death must continue to exist side by side for the

progression of humanity. Salami's character as a member of the upper class contrasts with the farmers whom he identifies with. By this alignment of opposites using Salami's, character, the playwright echoes the Hegelian dialectic sensibility that every phenomenon contains elements of its opposite number and that there is a complementary, reciprocal relationship between opposites.

It is obvious that the playwright recreates reality by creating two separate opposed worlds but also using Togun's character to demonstrate that in the midst of opposites, contradictions and differences, there can be a unifying point, a platform for reconciliation and progress. There is a sense in which we can say that Olokun occurs as the Opon Ifa prognostic divination tray in the Yoruba mythology which provides a backbone to the entire Osofisan literary corpus. Without the character of Olokun, it would have been difficult to achieve the change that took place at the end of the play. This is because Olokun's character becomes a reconciling medium, a synthesis where opposites, human and gods join forces to achieve change. Therefore we can say that Olokun represents Osofisan's vehicle of change achieved through the inevitable interaction of opposites. Again, Osofisan, by introducing Olokun's character echoes the Hegelian dialectic gospel of change which highlights that opposites must locate their complementary beings in order to achieve a desired change. This provides a suitable commentary for a homogenous society like Nigeria made up of many opposites at different fronts. The reciprocal alignment of these opposites and the discovery of their complementary elements can aid in the desired social transformation as can be seen in *No More The Wasted Breed*.

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