

Colonial Alienation and Postcolonial Marginality in African Drama: Implications for Lasting Peace in Africa

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Abstract

Africa enjoyed relative peace before the contact with the West. Though the colonial enigma left mixed feelings of optimism and skepticism, it produced atomic molecules that interplayed with its offshoot (post-colonialism) to trigger off conflicts that changed the existential essence of Africans. Therefore, the problem of this study is how to resolve African conflicts directly or indirectly rooted in these realities. Thus, objectives of the study include examining the views of African playwrights on these realities as they relate to conflicts in Africa and how the dramatic approach can help bring lasting peace to the African continent which is currently bedeviled with different conflicts. Hence, the researcher carried out analyses of Lewis Nkosi's *The Rhythm of Violence* and Esiaba Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die* to ascertain what the plays can contribute to ongoing peace building processes and conflict resolution projects like: the Nigerian Niger Delta epileptic Amnesty Programme, Federal Government/ Boko Haram peace agreement and South African Peace Initiatives. Case study and content analysis approaches of the qualitative research method were adopted for the study. The study concluded that the select plays captured the conflict resolution implications of these "colo-postcolonial" variables, hence, peace projects in Nigeria and South Africa remain peripheral without a re-visitation of the African past.

Keywords: Colonialism, Post-colonialism, Peace, Initiatives, Conflicts and Africa.

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Introduction

Despite her distorted, politicized, controversial historic past and traumatized postcolonial society; there exists in Africa, abundant human and natural resources, favorable weather and wonderful climatic conditions which could combine to make the continent great.

Regrettably Africa has remained backward, underdeveloped and enveloped in all sorts of sporadic but periodic conflicts and crises that threaten peaceful coexistence. A hasty conclusion may insist that the African continent is created with crises or that there is no end in sight to these conflicts. Africa before the colonial encounter was a relatively peaceful Agrarian society that thrived on communalism and kinship. Family and communal ties and care for others were part of the pre-colonial religiosity that characterized traditional Africa before the 15th century. Eric O Ayisi, quoting M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard opines that in Africa:

The largest political unit embraces a group of people all of whom are united to one another by ties of kinship, so that political relations are coterminous with kinship relations and the political structure and the kinship organization are completely fused.¹

Ayisi explains that, "In most African societies, kinship constitutes the primary basis for the individual's rights, duties, and rules of residence, marriage, inheritance and succession."²

Though, there were many systems of government in pre-colonial Africa; the family or clan headed the community government, especially in Igbo-land where egalitarianism is dominant. Broadly speaking systems of government may be classified into three: Decentralized or stateless political societies, Centralized small kingdoms and City-states and centralized kingdoms and empires. The latter is a late comer, because they are mainly outcomes of wars and conquests in Africa. Colonial incursion into Africa was part of the conquests that gave birth to most of the nation-states in Africa. These colonially midwife African nation-states have not existed without obvious conflicts rooted in colonial alienation and postcolonial marginality. The African playwright further lends credence to this historic and political situation as they continue to explore in their plays, themes of anti-social policies that produced alienation, marginalization, consequent conflicts and approaches to their resolution. Lewis Nkosi in *the Rhythm of Violence* and Esiaba Irobi in *Hangmen Also Die* reflected these issues. Irobi's other play; *Nwokedi* as well justifies alienation as a major cause of conflict and violence. Irobi is not alone in this violent revolutionary aesthetics. Emeka Nwabueze in *A Parliament of Vultures* also presents violence and conflict as products of postcolonial marginality using irate youths to descend heavily on the rulers.

Violence as a product of colonial alienation is also evident in Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Mugo's *Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, where the two playwrights justify the two imperatives as variables of conflict resolution was adopted by the Kenyan people during the Mau Mau war of independence. Thus, the researcher aims at examining these issues and see how they implicate on conflict resolution and current peace initiatives in Africa, especially Nigeria and South Africa.

Colonial Alienation and Postcolonial Marginality: The African Experience

Though, many factors can lead to colonialism; war and conquest are major imperatives of colonialism in Africa. Defining colonialism; Curtin Philip says that "Colonialism can be described as a country taking complete control of another country socially, politically, economically and otherwise after they might have defeated them in war."³ Religious or cultural incursions are other media through which colonialism can occur. The West combined the two methods: war and conquest extensively in the colonization of Africa, especially in territories where their trade policies met resistance. The British used the term colonialism to legitimize their system of dominance over African countries they subdued and conquered during the annexation of Africa by the West.

Assumedly, British colonization of Africa was based on a superiority complex that made Europe believe that they were on evangelization mission and enlightenment campaign to ungodly and primitive races. Thus, the colonist justified the colonial incursions into Africa on the premise that they were extending to the colonized: superior economic system, knowledge, better technology, theatre, religion and better and more efficient system of governance. Superiorization or exteriorization of European and African civilization or a comparison of both is a wrong premise upon which to either justify or condemn colonialism. Walter Rodney alludes to this when he says that;

It is enough to note the behavior of European capitalists from the epoch of slavery through colonialism, fascism and genocidal wars in Asia and Africa. Such barbarism causes suspicion to attach to the use of word 'civilization' to describe Western Europe and North America. As far as Africa is concerned during the period of early development, it is preferable to speak in terms of 'cultures' rather than civilizations.⁴

Though, there were other colonists apart from Britain, The British government was more interested in imposing their culture on Africans to enable them subjugate everything African. This was a strategy to subdue the people and pave way for the execution of policies that protected their political and economic interests in the region.

According to Rodney "Colonial governments discriminated against the employment of Africans in senior categories whenever it happened that a white and a black filled the same post, the white man was sure to be paid considerably more."⁵ Colonial alienation cut across all sectors of life during the colonial period; it was a deliberate strategy to marginalize the indigenous people, subjugate and make them powerless economically and politically to pave way for colonial dictatorial tendencies and exploitation that characterized the period.

To fully understand the colonial period, it is necessary to think in terms of the economic partitioning of Africa. Unlike the political partitioning of the 19th century, the economic partitioning had no fixed or visible boundaries. It consisted of the proportions in which capitalist powers divided up among themselves the monetary and non-monetary gains from colonial Africa.⁶

These colonial policies alienated Africans hence they could not contribute effectively to the governance of their fatherland and major policy formulations like the colonial partitioning of Africa. This crucial political task (partitioning of Africa) was not carried out on the basis of indigenous criteria, kinship or natural boundary demarcations. Rather the colonist was guided by his own selfish political and economic motives. Unfortunately, these colonial groupings and empires that house very large ethnic groups and very small ones, forced to stay together as one nation; metamorphosed into countries that fought for and gained independence as one sovereign nation. The outcome is that there are at present very large countries and very small countries. While in some nations the ethnic groups lumped together by the colonist are strange bedfellows; lacking anything in common in terms of cultural, ideological, language, or religious ties. Thus, this colonial balkanization of Africa led to lopsided colonial amalgamations, consequent domination of the minority tribes by the majority tribes, or a total alienation of the majority ethnic groups by the minority through colonial manipulations. Though it may sound incredible; subjugation of the majority by the minority was a common colonial practice because the nature of colonialism and its operational tendencies made it racial and dictatorial. According to *Africa, Pre-colonial, Racial and Ethnic Relations in British Colonial Africa*:

The British also tended to choose a preferred ethnic group over all the others in the countries that they colonized. These preferred groups, usually a conservative minority within the country, were supported to the extent that they worked against the interests of their fellow Africans.⁷ These practices and their catastrophic consequences are manifest on the political terrains of Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Kenya, Ghana, and so on. Remote and immediate causes of the crises in Sudan cannot be unconnected to the domination of the majority African population in Sudan by the Arab minority whom the British chose and made them lord it over the Africans; in Nigeria it is the Fulani tribe, while in South Africa, it is the White settlers.

The colonist's preference for some of these minority groups is partly because the British preferred ethnic societies with centralized, hierarchical or monarchical systems that resemble their own system of governance. Apart from preferring and supporting such groups, the British also encouraged and recruited people from these preferred ethnic groups into the colonial army. This strategy made political control over the territories open-ended when the colonists reluctantly disengaged.

Their reluctance to leave the colonies and hand over to the indigenous people resulted to South African apartheid war between the White settlers and the indigenous tribes (the Zulus, Xhosas and Pondos). Even in some colonies where they disengaged early, they maintained indirect control of the colonies. Thus, in most cases they handed over power to stooges who were expected to help them continue imperialism. In some places where such imposed governments failed to work according to the dictates of the colonial masters, the same colonial powers instigated and sponsored high rank officers in the army to overthrow such loyalists who defaulted. Therefore, both colonialism and post-colonialism are twin concepts of British imperialism. Ngugi wa Thiong'o opines that: "Imperialism is the rule of consolidated finance capital and since 1884 this monopolistic parasitic capital has affected and continue to affect the lives even of the peasants in the remotest corners of our countries." ⁸

Critical evaluation of colonialism in Africa isolates South Africa as a unique colonial location, hence, the justification of its selection as a case study. The British colonial system of government differed from place to place and the South African situation was full occupation reinforced with apartheid. This system generated peculiar racial, ethnic, political, religious and cultural conflicts that ravaged South Africa. Full blown apartheid started in South Africa when the Pretoria regime created separate habitation areas for the Blacks and Whites. According to apartheid laws, the exclusive areas with adequate infrastructural facilities were to be habited by Whites only; even though these areas were originally owned by the Blacks. To achieve this objective, Blacks were moved from their ancestral homelands to shanty towns. According to Desmond Tutu:

The South African government has uprooted over 3 million blacks and dumped them as if they were rubbish in Bantustan homelands and not even an uncustomary protest by state Department could stop them from uprooting 300 families from mogopa. Just now a community, the people of kwangena in the eastern Transvaal, faces the threat of being uprooted.⁹

Apartheid as a colonial policy not only alienated the indigenous population but subjugated and subjected them to life of misery. The Pass law that accompanied apartheid imposed the tyranny of time and space on Black South Africans, as movements of Blacks were controlled with the use of pass.

Dialogue and peaceful process towards the resolution of the racial crises failed as the Pretoria regime sustained the alienation policy with violence. South Africans resorted to protests and demonstrations that failed on deaf ears. *South African History: Three Decades of Crises* reveals that:

A turning point came at Sharpeville on March 21st, 1960 when a PAC-organized passive anti-pass campaign came to a bloody conclusion with police killing 69 unarmed protesters. A State of Emergency was declared: detention without trial was introduced and the ANC, PAC and other organizations were declared illegal. The resistance groups went underground.¹⁰

The Blacks responded with violence but since the Whites were better equipped; the Blacks adopted guerilla tactics that kept the Whites on their toes until violence forced them to the negotiation table.

The conflict ended, today apartheid is history, but peace is yet to return to South Africa. The nature of the crisis changed and bifurcated into: Black versus Black and Black versus White. The apartheid sowed seeds of discord between the Whites and the Blacks and among the indigenous tribes as well and this led to political crises, power tussle and embittered vindictiveness that resulted to the farm murders crises.

Apartheid so violently marginalized the Black South African that one cannot help but seek solutions for recent crises in the complexities of the nation's colonial past. Colonial alienation, which reflected in the total brutalization of the freedom of the Blacks and opponents of the Pretoria regime, caused general resentment against the Whites and their friends even if they were Blacks or colored. The South African farm murder crises were a counter violence against the Whites and friends of the Pretoria regime because violence begets violence and love begets love

Colonialism ended in principle with the disengagement of colonial masters from governance, but beyond colonialism lies neo-colonialism which eventually swallowed post colonialism. This made the term post-colonialism generates confusion when it comes to its usage, especially in Africa and the third world, where it connotes backwardness. However, adherents of the latter should not forget that America is a postcolonial state and yet it is one of the most developed nations in the world. Therefore, in this essay postcolonial is; ... used to signify a position against imperialism and Eurocentrism. Western ways of knowledge production and dissemination in the past and present then become objects of study for those seeking alternative means of expression. As the foregoing discussion suggests, the term thus yokes a diverse range of experiences, cultures, and problems; the resultant confusion is perhaps Predictable.¹¹

Definitely some colonial policies paid off and contributed to the introduction of new civilization and alien culture in Africa. But it is a truism that there was no concerted or consolidated plan to develop, industrialize or revolutionize Africa scientifically. Hence, when the colonial masters left, there was a yawning gap between the colonial and post colonial periods. This gap is not without obvious consequences in the present African society. Mark Fortier posits that:

Like postmodernism, post-colonialism is an attempt to describe the contemporary situation and its culture, this time by focusing on the effects of the Western imperialism which has dominated the world since the sixteenth century. The term post colonialism implies both a situation coming after colonialism: both an ongoing liberation and an ongoing oppression.¹²

Evidently, weak, selfish, greedy and inefficient African leadership class is the aftermath of colonialism that led to bad governance in postcolonial Africa. Since the colonist had no intention to leave, or come up with a genuine plan to develop Africa; politicians and African public servants were caught napping when the mantle of leadership suddenly fell on them as heir apparent to the African throne forcefully vacated by the colonial masters. Subsequently, there was general rejection of imposition of colonial allies in some African countries that led to break down of law and order and consequent overthrow of civilian governments in Africa by military officers who were in most cases foreign trained army officers.

Sponsorship of coups by the colonial masters against African governments that refuse to "corporate" became part of the post colonial malady that helped the African military hijack power in postcolonial Africa. With the emergence of military dictatorship, the people became more marginalized and traumatized. Even in areas where you have civilian governments the ruled are still dehumanized because their rulers are corrupt and oppressive tribalists. The privileged group controlled the nation's resources, used it to perpetuate the stay of their lineage in power. They used their political and economic power to marginalize other ethnic groups and subjected them to second class citizens. Attempts to challenge these retrogressive practices and anti-social policies were seen as treason, rebellion and insubordination. Subsequently, government strategy to clamp down on the opposition in some areas finally led to conflicts, violence, genocide and civil war in most postcolonial African states.

The Congo crisis of 1960 was about the first and pronounced civil strife in a postcolonial African state, it lasted till 1964. This was followed by the overthrow of Kwame Nkruma in Ghana. Others are: Sudan / Darfur civil war, Liberian civil war 1989, Burundi, Rwanda, Angola, Cote de voire, and the Nigerian civil war which started in 1967 and ended in 1970.

The 1966 conflict in Nigeria and eventual outbreak of the civil war in 1967 remains a major outcome of the failure of the 1966 general elections in Nigeria which was characterized by blackmail, thuggery, massive rigging and violence. The elections failed because a particular group wanted to and still wants to remain in power by all means. Hence, the group and their colonial ally manipulated election results and came out with figures that justified already inflated census figures of the colonial government.

When it became obvious that the postcolonial civilian government had lost the grip of governance and had become unpopular due to corruption, the military struck and took over governance. The politicians who survived the first coup fled the country and were granted asylum abroad. Subsequently, the same British trained military officers from the favored ethnic group staged a counter coup that claimed lives of military officers and politicians from other ethnic groups. At the end of the Nigerian civil war, military regimes continued as military officers from one section of the country outstayed each other in incessant coups d'état. These military governments always come up with retrogressive policies and even put in place structures that marginalized other ethnic groups and perpetuate their stay in power.

The Nigerian situation saw creation of more instruments of marginalization like states and local governments; where one ethnic group was given almost fifty percent of the created local governments and states while the remaining over two hundred other groups shared the remaining fifty percent. Others are Federal Character Commission, educationally disadvantaged states, National Youth Service Programme which made a section of the country provide periodic and temporary manpower for another section at a very little cost without pension. The most controversial among these policies is "the on shore, off shore oil dichotomy" that enhanced the exploitation of the Nigerian Niger Delta region. This policy made it possible for those in power to use the oil resources from the Niger Delta to develop their area at the expense of the Niger Delta region. The outcomes are: militancy, ransom abduction, and kidnapping and ethnic and religious conflicts.

These factors have combined to make African continent face; "...many daunting challenges from extreme poverty and environmental degradation to political instability and crises of providing basic education and health care..."¹³ Hence, many African countries have embarked on one type of conflict resolution, peace initiative, peace tours, peace projects and conferences or the other in other to resolve these conflicts and bring lasting peace to Africa. There are also involvement of individuals and Non Governmental organizations in these conflict resolution and peace building processes in Africa. In Nigeria, we have the Amnesty programme and reconciliation panels. In South Africa there is "Gun Free South Africa Amnesty", South Africa for Peace Initiative and so on. Peace tours include Angola, 2006, Rwanda, 2006, South Africa, 2005. The African Union (AU) even declared 2010 year of peace in Africa.

Despite apparent resolution of some of these conflicts, peace still eludes Africa because stake holders in the peace building projects fail to take cognizance of Africa's historic past and the colonial encounter especially with regards to, "what traces have been left by colonial education, science and technology in postcolonial societies"¹⁴ It is also important to assess "How these traces affect decisions about development and modernization in post colonies"¹⁵ as well as how they impact on conflict resolution.

Their impact on conflict resolutions reveal that; most of the conflicts in Africa ended because it was ripe time for participants in these conflicts to end the crises, and not that the conflicts were creatively resolved to usher in peace. Hence, conflicts that are presumably resolved either re-emerge as new conflicts or in a hydra-headed manner re-emerge from other dimensions. This is exemplified in the Nigerian situation where ransomed abduction metamorphosed into Militancy; Maitatsine riots to Boko Haram terrorism and in South Africa where recently, apartheid resurfaced as xenophobia. The researcher therefore, attempts a critical evaluation of the selected plays on the theoretical premises of I. William Zartman's, *The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments* and Morton Deutsch's *Context, Yes - And Theory, Yes* Theories of conflict resolution. According to Zartman:

While most studies on peaceful settlement of disputes see the substance of the proposals for a solution as the key to a successful resolution of conflict, a growing focus of attention shows that a second and equally necessary key lies in the timing of efforts for resolution (Zartman 2000). Parties resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so—when alternative, usually unilateral means of achieving a satisfactory result are blocked and the parties feel that they are in an uncomfortable and costly predicament. At that ripe moment, they grab on to proposals that usually have been in the air for a long time and that only now appears attractive.¹⁶

Zartman's postulation reveals that serves as analytical tool for evaluating the approaches to conflict resolution in the selected plays; because according to Zartman, some participants in conflicts back out of the conflict because they are tired and handicapped to continue, not that they genuinely desire peace. Unlike Zartman, Deutsch maintains that conflicts can be resolved permanently through corporative processes that usher in lasting peace among the conflicting parties. Morton Deutsch opines that: My theory stated that if a conflict is perceived by the parties in a conflict to be a mutual problem, to be worked on together cooperatively, they would have better results than if the parties dealt with their conflict competitively, as a win-lose struggle. In other words, the theory implies that a *cooperative* process could be equated with a *constructive* process of conflict resolution while a *competitive* process would be equated with a *destructive* process of conflict resolution.

This formulation suggests many additional questions, both practical and theoretical, including, "How can conflict parties be helped to reframe their conflict into a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively?" "How can the skills involved in cooperative work be developed so that cooperation is effective?" "What are the conditions under which parties involved in a conflict will develop a cooperative or competitive orientation to their conflict in a situation which permits either?"¹⁷

Deutsch emphasizes the importance of consultations, dialogue and willingness as variables of genuine constructive conflict resolution process that are lacking in the Nigerian and South African situation because of the negation of the past. This theory is used to reveal that the conflicting parties treated the conflicts competitively; therefore they see it as a win-lose struggle as captured by Esiaba Irobi and Lewis Nkosi in their plays.

Colonial Alienation and Postcolonial Marginality in *the Rhythm of Violence* and *Hangmen Also Die*: Implications for Lasting Peace in Africa

Most African writers have exploited the conditions of cultural estrangement, imperial conquest colonial alienation and violent struggle for freedom that led to colonial marginality as thematic materials even in the earliest novels and plays that may be described as African. Gikandi quoting Georges Balandier says that;

The colonial problem remains one of the main issues with which specialists in the social sciences have to deal. Indeed, the pressures of a new nationalism and the reactions resulting from decolonialization give this problem immediacy and a topicality that cannot be treated with indifference.¹⁸

Colonialism and apartheid were as the case may be historical events that are supposed to be forgotten, but unfortunately, they are still very relative as pointed out by Gikandi to be forgotten too soon. The wounds they inflicted on the African skin, even though healed; left obvious scars that continue to refresh memories of the past. Therefore, to ignore the past as we negotiate a peaceful future in Africa is to scratch the problem on the surface. Ellen Gainor, Garner Jr. and Puchner in their analysis of Caryl Churchill's *A Number* says: "We must come to grips with past errors even as we hold on to hopes for the future."¹⁹ There is no gainsaying that the current conflicts and violence in Africa are consequences of past errors of colonial alienation, the decolonization processes and post-colonial marginality that set Africans against one another. The reflection of these issues as remote and direct causes of conflicts in the African continent is obvious in the propagation of religions that are not even African but aspire towards erosion of African religions. Hence, if the conflict does not stem from imposition of foreign religion, it will be bastardization of the people's culture, balkanization of Africa, bad governance or imperialism.

No matter the nature of the conflict: violence and alienation, rebellion, religious riots, exiles, seclusion, militancy, denouncing the authority, militancy or terrorism and at times guerilla warfare; generally, these conflicts subsume revolution geared towards fundamental social change, good governance and lasting peace in Africa. Violence not only interferes, but destroys an undesirable political system; therefore, to the oppressed, violence becomes an inevitable survivalist act.

This violent revolutionary ideology of conflict resolution appears to have influenced Lewis Nkosi and Esiaba Irobis' approaches to conflict resolution, without much attention to the potentials and capabilities of these approaches to restoration of lasting peace to Africa. These radical methodological approaches continue to manifest in their other plays and the plays of other modern African dramatists who see violence from the oppressed as cyclic. But without the cooperation of the participants in the conflict; to what extent can alienation and violence be used to restore permanent peace and peaceful co-existence in Africa?

The Rhythm of Violence and *Hangmen Also Die* both dramatize the political and cultural dislocations of hitherto homogenous African communities by the forces of colonialism and post colonialism. The two concepts chronologically but with divergent techniques alienated the African and first of all generated conflicts that eventually resulted to violent struggles for independence and subsequently emancipation of the ruled from the African leadership class. *The Rhythm of Violence* and *Hangmen Also Die* are set in apartheid South Africa and postcolonial Nigeria respectively. The researcher's selection of the two plays is based on the unique nature of the South African situation which offers a leading perspective in the construction and situation of the concept of colonial alienation and violence; the choice of Nigeria stems from her enigmatic postcolonial crises, reflection of postcolonial marginality that is still raging on despite efforts to unite the modern nation-state; as well as track record of peace initiatives in the two countries in the recent past that produced epileptic results.

*The Rhythm of Violence*²⁰ by Lewis Nkosi is a play based on the political and cultural dislocation of South Africa by the forces of colonialism, apartheid and consequent need for violence in the struggle for the resolution of the apartheid conflict. The Republic of South Africa occupies the Southern tip of Africa; the indigenous peoples are Zulus, Basutes, Xhosas, Pondos and other smaller groups. Because of its strategic location and abundant natural resources like gold, South Africa began early to be coveted by the Europeans beginning at about 1650s. However, with the establishment of separate White and non White residential areas, apartheid fully emerged.

Apartheid political policy enabled the Pretoria regime to introduce obnoxious policies ranging from racism, economic exploitation, unequal wages, unwarranted arrests, forced labour, brutalization and a general restriction of the freedom of the Black South African. In the face of such frustration and alienation, the Blacks cannot help but resort to violence for the emancipation and liberation of their fatherland.

The need to resolve this conflict and do it quickly so that peace can return to South Africa was important to the struggle; because the people have suffered alienation for many years.

The picture painted below by two White Policemen when Tula a representative of the Left Student Association came to the Mayor's office to submit a petition against the colour bar practice reveals the alienated position of the Black South African:

Jan. Good God! Piet, do you see what I see?
 Piet (staring at Tula). No, Jan, I don't. What do you see?
 Jan. Look closely, Piet. You think it's just my eyes?
 Piet (Straining his eyes) I think it's your eyes, Jan
 Jan. I could swear I saw a kaffir standing by the door. Now, I'm not so sure. Look closely,
 Piet. Don't you see some kind of animal standing by the doorway?
 Piet. (Long pause). Now that you say so, Jan, I can see something.
 Jan. What does it look like to you, Piet?
 Piet. It looks like an ape to me.
 Tula stands there, not daring to move any further.

Thanks, Piet, that's all I wanted to know because that's exactly what it, looks like to me. A goddam ape!

Tula (Gathers enough courage to approach the two policemen.)

Jan. (waves him to a standstill.) Don't come any closer Kaffir. There's already an awful stink in here! What do you want? (p.11)²¹

The playwright brings to us opinions of the Whites about the Blacks during apartheid South Africa. Binary complexes which the South African locale breeds are obvious in the actions and conversation presented above. Piet and Jan not only feel superior; as White Policemen; but pretend that their fellow human being, with mere color difference is an ape. Nkosi also portrays that some of the White South Africans were drawn into apartheid political ideology by some White racists like Jan. It is actually Jan's judgment that psyches Piet up. The other way round, Tula's hesitation to approach the two policemen shows how inferior the Black South Africans felt before the White South Africans.

Having been so subjugated, they were deprived of confidence and the courage to co-exist with the Whites. Hence, thus alienated; skepticism, mistrust, betrayal and hatred characterized the relationship between the two races. The playwright further reveals that the master servant relationship existing between the Whites and the Blacks subjugated and alienated the Blacks from the machineries of government especially, law enforcement agency. Though, the conflict was resolved and apartheid ended, South Africa has not known peace. Hence, the conflict ended at the ripe time, when participants in the conflict have burnt out all their energy and therefore, grabbed hasty peace proposals that are destructive rather than constructive.

With the crumbling of apartheid, has the situation in post apartheid South Africa changed? One will expect that peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes will engender positive attitudinal change that will blur the boundaries and create new multicultural identity, restore the trust and confidence of the three races and bring lasting peace to South Africa. Contrarily, there is a swap in the impact of binary complexes where indigeneity, majority and minority issues become major obstacles to grapple with in restoring lasting peace to post apartheid South Africa. Experiential issues of apartheid continue to widen the gap between the different races and make the Blackman to continuously, remind the Whiteman that he is a stranger in the affairs of their fatherland. To the Whites, they still believe that the Blacks are animals, spineless and subhuman beings, devoid of respect and dignity and belonging to a distinct inferior race, not worthy to share the same world with the Whiteman. Consequently, the fire of vengeance continues to burn among the Blacks because even though there is change in the political situation, the social situation is still the same. Piet and Jan reveal the deplorable conditions of the alienated world of the Black South Africans below:

Piet. To be black! A curse, I tell you, it's a curse! Honestly Janie, what would you do if you woke up with a black skin?

Jan. (They have shifted into a playful mood). Ugh! Then I would start moving from my neighbourhood.

Piet. You'd have to move very early in the morning before the neighbours get up Which black township would you go to? Alexandra?

Jan. Too many goddam thugs there: Every day some black bastard is murdered there.

Piet. Western Native Township? It's not bad.

Jan. Ag, it stinks. You can't walk down a street without getting a mouthful of dust. No, not Western, for Christ sakes. Native townships stink.

Piet. If you turned black, you would have to live somewhere. Orlando. May be? Or Meadowlands!

Jan. Hey, better not joke about this. I get pimples just thinking about it. (Pause). I'll tell you what, though Natives don't mind these places. Natives can live anywhere! No joke. Natives are a marvel to me! (p.18)²²

Though, post apartheid governments have tried to address these deplorable conditions of Black townships, but the injury apartheid inflicted on these unique locations are so enormous that little progress has been recorded. The conversation above reveals what the Blacks suffer in their shanty homelands while the Whites enjoy in their reserved areas developed with the money derived from the Black South African people's God given resources. Yet the White South African arrogates to himself, unquestionable divine rights and an impregnable superiority.

Voice, a character in the play offers insight into the alienated position and conditions of Black South Africans, Voice posits: "Friends I ask you: what do these stubborn men trust they flout the whole world, when they continue to keep you in subjection against all reason and advice? I'll tell you what they trust: gun!" (pp.5-6).²³ Obviously, the complex of superiority thus engendered and nourishes the White South African's attitude to always want to enjoy special privileges he reposed on because of the color of his skin. Nkosi in the play shows how a man's rights and identity were trampled upon during the colonial and apartheid period in South Africa and the expected consequences. The effect of this is a prevalent disharmonious social environment throughout and after apartheid. The above situation forces the Blacks to embark on peaceful protests, Voice says:

Voice: For years we have been waiting for action from the congress leadership. For years we have heard nothing but speeches and rhetoric . . . From now on we are serving notice on these arrogant men that we can no longer tolerate White domination, subjugation and repression at their hands (p.8).²⁴

Rather than cooperate and respond positively to the problem as a mutual problem the White South Africans adopted a win-lose struggle. This rendered incessant warnings and peaceful protests by the Blacks to make the Pretoria regime see reasons for improved relationship between the White, coloured and Black races ineffective. The Whites decide to unleash violence on the Blacks. Piet creates fun out of the killing of thousands of defenseless natives he shot in only one night, below he puns:

Once when we were on patrol in Sophia town. THEY came! I tell you THEY came! It was night. Dark. And their shadows were darker than the dark itself. I was separated from the others! Alone! You understand that? Alone! You ever been alone with Death staring you in the eye? Well. I was! I started firing from my sten-gun. But the Natives kept on coming! It was like eternity, and the dark shade shows kkk kept coming like the waves of eternal night . . . Ah. But a sten-gun spits death much stronger than a thousand natives! When it was all over, I couldn't stop shooting.

I was no longer in control of my fingers. The sten-gun kept barking in the dark . . . against shadows . . . anything that moved. I began to think that even if my son had appeared there, I would have kept shooting away (He calms down at the thought.) I don't know what I am saying. (Pp.16-17).²⁵

The picture Piet paints above remain aspects of the sad memories of apartheid that continue to fan the burning fire of vengeance especially when the perpetrators of such heinous crimes delight in such memories and show little or no remorse for events of the past. One may beat his chest today and say that apartheid is history, but events that characterized it are still memorable; especially among the Blacks who really suffered and experienced it for decades.

These events are constant reminders to Black South Africans of their subjugated and alienated conditions that reduced them to the status of animals in their fatherland. The use of violence and killings of Blacks were as a matter of policies justified by the colonial masters because in their brutality, it is right to annihilate the black race in South Africa so that the Whites will take over their land. The life of the African was worth nothing in the hands of the colonial police and army, because they were given open license to kill Africans. This is further exemplified in what happened at Sharpeville. Gama a Black South African laments:

Gama: Did you see the bodies at Sharpeville? Did you see the shoulders of children ripped off by machine-gun fire! Did you see anything?...A butchery. I tell you! (p. 34).²⁶

The Black South Africans have been pushed to the wall consequently, the fight for freedom takes a dramatic turn and below in the words of Piet, Noksi makes us know that the struggle has gone violent because violence begets violence and even the agents of the Pretoria regime are becoming worried over the worrisome situation. Piet expresses his worries below;

Piet: There are riots all over Africa these days. A tiny thing can grow into a conflagration. Do you understand that word CONFLAGRATION? It means big trouble. And things like riots are like a disease in Africa. They sort of spread.(p.20).²⁷

As the struggle turns into a violent one, the Blacks mobilize everything at their disposal to survive the reign of terror. Political Organizations and non political unions all hands had to be on deck. The play reveals that the Left Student Association led by Gama and Tula, through their words and actions galvanized the people into actions by raising their consciousness to their plight; by getting them emotionally involved and charged for violence justified by mass killings of unarmed and innocent Black

people, protesting against the inhuman treatments meted out to Black South Africans. The South African Ivory Tower has a role to play towards healing the wounds of apartheid that first of all alienated the Blacks and then the Whites. The citadel of learning as a multicultural society can make impact and introduce new dimensions to the peace initiatives the way the involvement of the Left Student Association led by Gama and Tula brought another dimension into the South African apartheid conflict during the colonial period.

The Blacks and opponents of the Pretoria regime become aggressive and set off a paroxysm that would have culminated in a bomb blast that would have swept away both the Whites and the Blacks. Gama describes the foreshadowed explosion thus:

Gama: And boom! There will be a mighty explosion such as Johannesburg has never heard in a long time. There will be huge flames enveloping the city. The wounded and dying and the dead- God rest their souls in peace - will be taken away by ambulances (p. 28).²⁸

Luckily, the conflict was resolved at ripe time when the participants in the conflict have exhausted their energy on violence and are now hunted by general catastrophe that denies the nation lasting peace. Apartheid crumbled and yet the fight for freedom is still raging on in South Africa. Peace has continued to elude this unfortunate nation as violence and conflicts continue to spread like bush fire across Africa, because the apartheid conflict ended at the ripe time; not that the conflict was cooperatively resolved. Participants in the conflict are yet to see the problem as mutual problem hence, they dealt with the conflict competitively, as a win-lose struggle; thus at the end, the conflict ended but peace was not restored. However, perpetrators of these acts of conflicts need to be reminded that nothing lasts forever and that change is inevitable. The Arab spring which started from Algeria to Egypt to Libya and so on, leave much to be desired about colonialism, post-colonialism, neocolonialism, monarchical governments, democracy, good governance and peace in Africa. For lasting peace to return to South Africa peace initiators must be more creative and less destructive; while participants in the conflict must cooperate to make the peace process constructive as proposed by Deutsch.

Beyond colonial alienation in South Africa, Esiaba Irobi in similar, but different circumstantial variables uses his *Hangmen Also Die*²⁹ to portray the failure of the African leadership class after independence. Irobi's creative impulse is partly revealed in his vehement adoption of Biafran citizenship. This Biafran born revolutionary artist was an associate professor in Ohio University in the United States. Among his ideologically overt plays, *Hangmen Also Die* stands out as a political metaphor, concretizing the Nigerian postcolonial socio-politico-economic situation.

Though, he presents alienation as a socio-economic problem caused by corruption and exploitation of the masses by the privileged few who make up the leadership class; Irobi elongates the problem in postcolonial marginality and adopts a win-lose destructive approach in the treatment of the conflict. He brings to us postcolonial marginality and its consequences in Nigeria; as the desire for change results to violence.

Hangmen Also Die recreates the desire to change the one dimensional political arrangement where corruption and despotism of the leadership class pose serious threat to peace, unity, liberty, individual and collective survival of the citizenry. Furthermore, the play highlights how the oppressed masses have in turn converted oppression and violence into instruments of confrontation for the resolution of the endemic conflict between the people and the leaders.

Hence, the success and failure of this cyclic confrontational revolutionary "attackancy" in Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die* is assessed to determine its implications in tackling the nation's politico-economic crises and restoring lasting peace to the modern Nigerian nation-state. Though Nigeria at large has not known peace since the Biafran/ Nigerian civil war in 1960, post-civil war conflicts in Nigeria appear to have peaked in the Niger Delta incessant kidnapping, militancy and Boko Haram terrorism threatening the nation's existence.

Thus, Irobi's artistic and visionary techniques enabled him to explore how to end the crises in the Nigerian Niger Delta. The devastated Niger Delta environment motivated Irobi to intermingle the past and the present, foreshadowing in the process eminent revolutionary flame yet to engulf the Nigerian nation. Hence the play's milieu is not a mere artistic creation, but a miniaturized but symbolic foreshadowed event which eventually became a reality.

The opening scene of the play reveals defiant and blank faces of seven young men in a typical Nigerian prison yard; condemned to death for murdering a commissioner- Chief Isokipiri Erekosima. However, Yekini, the Hangman refuses to hang them. In a flash back the young men inform the audience that they are forced into crime by the anti-social government policies and harsh economic conditions that marginalized them. Tamara, mother to one of the condemned men, informs the young men that Chief Erekosima has confiscated three million Naira which the government paid the people; as compensation for the oil-spillage that devastated the lives of fishes, plants, animals and subsequently people of the community. Tamar tasks the squad to disrupt the ongoing Chief Erekosima's Chieftaincy coronation if they call themselves men.

In a dastard move, the gang (suicide squad) disrupts Chief Erekosima's Chieftaincy coronation organized with the stolen money; the suicide squad abducts him to their alienated world, torture him and hang him till he dies. Irobi is very prophetic in this scene given the ransomed abductions and incessant kidnapping menace that ravaged the South Eastern part of Nigeria in the recent past, especially the Aba, Port Harcourt axis where major markets of Aba commercial city closed down and mass exodus of people recorded in this axis.

Today, most people are yet to go back to Aba since they have no capital to start business afresh. This calls to question the method and target of the Suicide Squad in the play, before they are sensitized by Tamara to refocus their oppression. Hence, revolutions require directions; revolutions without focus are bound to fail the way the Suicide Squad and Osisikankwu (the leader of Aba axis kidnapers) and his group failed.

Is it possible that kidnapers could have been popular if they had targeted only the leadership class? Having personalized the struggle, the squads now see the conflict as a personal rather than a mutual problem; therefore, there is need for redirection of purposeless revolutions.

Though it is a truism that the Suicide Squad is a product of bad governance, their modus operandi cast doubt on the capability of the squad's approach to restore lasting peace in Nigeria. Irobi, further links the emergence of the squad to the endemic conflict between the masses and the postcolonial leadership class as he raises issues of governance and portrays the leadership class as corrupt, exploitative and oppressive; irrespective of their "brand name" – civilian or military. Hence, Irobi shows the extent of collaboration between the two groups to exploit the people and denude the land of its God given resources, which Yekinni in emotion-laden words describes nostalgically:

Yekini My life was the sea and it sustained me and my family with the fishes I caught day by day. I knew the joy and the calm, the peace of mind of sailing out into the belly of the ocean to rescue from the depths of its gullet, what belongs to man, sometimes I paddled to the horizon where the sky merges with the sea and everything is blue. There I saw the navel of the rainbow! I saw the face of God! (p. 8).³⁰

Unfortunately, both colonial and postcolonial governments in Nigeria contributed to the Niger Delta crises because of their selfish economic interests. According to J.P Clark in his *All for Oil*, it was first of all palm oil during colonialism and subsequently crude oil, in the postcolonial era. Government and its colonial allies as well as its agencies (the Multi National Oil Companies) lay bare this environment through seismic operations and oil drilling, taking as Yekinni points out, both the

things that belong to man and the ones that belong to God. They pollute the environment in such a manner that the environment can no longer support life; yet the owners of these God given resources benefits little or nothing from them. Rather, a few members of the community who are part of the leadership class enjoy the benefits accruing to the people from oil and marginalize the masses. Consequently, starvation and hunger resulting from deprivation and unemployment stare the citizens at the face in ominous mockery. Hence, there is a feeling of estrangement among the oppressed that culminates in existential disharmony, militancy, youth restiveness, armed robbery and political conflicts. Ibiaye, paints a vivid but pathetic picture of the situation below:

Ibiaye, We wake up to see the sea heaving something thick and pungent- like petroleum jelly... surged like lave from the armpit of the ocean until it embalmed the mouth of the fresh water spring from which we daily drink. Our plants began to die, our roots to rot. Our seeds shriveled. We fled. (p.71).³¹

The picture painted above by Ibiaye, depicts the state of the Niger Delta environment and how the government and its agencies (the multi-national oil companies) continue to pollute the environment. Though some of these accidents are not ruled out during oil drilling operations, but there is no genuine commitment from the oil companies to clean up the environment and sustain the environment from which they gain a lot. Thus, apart from the fact that exploitation alienates the people because, their resources are forcefully taken from them; the degraded environment is made to alienate them too since it can no longer support life. The oppressors until recently, failed to provide facilities in any form to take care of the resultant environmental hazards; rather they use oil money to develop other parts of the country, while the Niger Delta is marginalized. Even in the people's migration to safer areas, Ibiaye continues to reveal the deplorable condition of the Niger Delta, pointing out: destitution, illness and physical disability of the people as part of the plight of a brutalized and marginalized citizenry. He narrates, Ibiye:

Ibiye Our Canoe capsized in an ambush of water-hyacinths. Everything we own was lost except our lives... So we swam ... onto the shore. But little did we know that the water had been poisoned by the film of racial crude oil. We stopped at Gborokiri, and settled in a tent built with stilts...The next day I scratched throughout the night. Three days later, I could no longer see the sunlight. And my hosts said the nearest hospital was at Port Harcourt? (p.71).³²

The level of ecological and biological damage, which the government and the foreign oil companies have done to the people and environment of Niger Delta, cannot be quantified, yet the abundant aquatic resources of the region including water means of transport are not developed.

They still travel long distance on local wooden canoes. The situation becomes more worrisome when the entire Niger Delta region had nothing to show for such environmental degradation. For instance, Ibiaye points out that the nearest hospital to Gborokiri is the one in Port Harcourt. Yet resources from their land are being used by those who claim that the ruler-ship of the nation is their birth right to develop their own region. Worst still when one of the Niger Delta sons became president of a nation that depends on the Niger Delta oil by popular vote not by appointment; the same region that has benefited from the Niger Delta resources threaten him with Boko Haram.

Though, the situation is no longer the same; because militancy forced the Nigerian government to give little attention to the Niger Delta. Yet, there are injustices in the region which any meaningful peace crusade must cooperatively address because the Niger Delta according to Ibiaye, is gradually losing her active population to oil exploration without commensurate benefit, he laments:

Ibiaye ...the muscles of our young men turning the wheels for the foreign oil companies. Shell B.P, Texaco, Gulf, Elf, National, Total, Others. (*Enacting*) Bore holes: Blast upon blast... two of my sons ... got jobs to plant the mines in the bottom of the sea, one of them died from a ruptured hernia. He was trying to plant a large iron grid into the swamp... my other son floated on top of the sea. His belly had been blown by the mine he was trying to plant (p.70).³³

The huge loss in human and material resources; occasioned by oil exploration and drilling without adequate compensation for it, affects the minds of the masses and induces in them a feeling of estrangement. To worsen the situation, when little compensation is paid, the same leadership class confiscates the money for their selfish use. While the people remain marginalized and wallow in abject poverty. Yekinni, affirms this practice below and says:

Yekini ... you see, some time ago, the Federal Government gave the citizens of this state, the sum of three million Naira as compensation money for the oil spillage which has ruined their farms, their homes and their lives ... Chief Isokipiri Erekosima a commissioner for Local Government, Rural Development and Chieftaincy Affairs, connived with his Councilors and local government Chairmen to confiscate the 3 million Naira ... no single citizen, no matter how wretched, got a single kobo (p. 13).³⁴

The same way, government officials hijack every government programme, favouring only their relations and friends and marginalizing the majority. The dialogue below, between two members of the Suicide Squad, Discharge and Dimeari confirm the above practice.

Discharge: But the government has a scheme for lending out money to unemployed graduates.

Dimeari: Yes on television.

Discharge: But I know a young girl who got N25, 000.00

Dimeari: Then, she must have somebody in the government. Her father or mother or brother or sister or sugar Daddy must be a top government official (p.52).³⁵

This way the vast majority of the people are marginalized, denied their legitimate rights and the opportunity to participate in the political process; or contribute their quota in nation building to fulfill their existential essence. Thus, marginalized by the anti-social policies of the government a feeling of hopelessness engulfs the citizenry. In a rhetorical question directed to the Doctor who symbolizes the leadership class in the play, Yekinni paints the true picture of the marginalized world of the ruled below. "You know how things are for us poor people.

Do you know how much I am paid each month? N198.00. a month. For a man with seven children. And all of them in school. Imagine it" (p. 14). Still exposing the harsh living conditions of the oppressed, Yekinni further states, "Where I live I have no water. I have no light. The stream is two miles away. And I have no car" (p. 15).³⁶

Yekinni paints the picture of the parody of poverty and abundance characteristic of postcolonial marginality in Africa. Apart from poor living conditions, youth unemployment, created by lack of foresight, corruption and anti-people practices of the leadership class further marginalize the people and generate in the youth a sense of meaninglessness and insinuate resentment for the oppressors. Acid a member of the Suicide Squad laments the predicament of the youths in a refrain with the chorus. He says: "We graduated." While the Chorus and other members of the squad respond accordingly:

Dayan: And started looking for job.

Chorus: No jobs

R.I.P: (Vehemently) we have no jobs

Acid: Therefore we have no money

Dayan: Which means we cannot marry.

R.I.P: And consequently cannot have children.

Chorus: We are the rejects of world (p. 30).³⁷

Having been rejected and marginalized by the oppressors who continuously loot the national treasure the way and manner Jonathan administration did, the Suicide Squad decides to create, far away from the people, their own alienated world. They withdraw into their own world in search of self-fulfillment.

This goal they want to achieve through violence. Spurred on by vengeance, the group is determined to pay back the society that frustrates and rejects them with violence. This partly accounts for incessant armed robbery menace, militancy, and other socio-political crises ravaging the lives and property of innocent Nigerians. Dimeari in his plea to join the Suicide Squad says:

...after serving your country as a Youth Copper ... is it too much to ask your country ... to put a shirt on your back and some bread in your hand?..

I want to join you so that I can hit back on those who have turned me into a spiritual nomad, and an economic destitute (p. 52).³⁸

It is the same determination to revenge, to hit back at the oppressors that made the suicide squad withdraw to a hideout, a bush clearing in the forest, which becomes a metaphoric representation of the marginalized world from which they unleash terror on the society.

Thus, marginalization begot alienation and violence which like the colonized and alienated masses, the Squad converts to imperative instruments of confrontation and liberation. In a verse refrain technique, members of the squad defend alienation and violence as imperative alternatives to the marginalized people.

R.I.P: (Violently) so, if today, we have turned to violence as the only weapon to redeem our destiny, redeem our fate, our future and our manhood, it is because: (p. 31).

Dayan: We have no place in the politics of this nation.

Acid: The Constituent Assembly is filled with the faces of the same ancient Chimpanzees.

R.I.P: It is because:

Dayan: We have no chance to help in shaping the destiny of this nation.

R.I.P: It is because.

Dayan: We have no solid earth beneath our feet. Consequently,

Chorus: We have been marginalized out of existence (p. 32).³⁹

Armed with alienation and violence, the Suicide Squad starts a revolutionary process, redirected and sustained by Tamara mother of a member of the Squad. She Psyches the Squad up and motivates them to target those who exploit and marginalize the people rather than the helpless masses, Tamara says:

Haven't you heard that Chief Erekosima has confiscated the 3 million Naira, compensation money for oil spillage, which the federal Government gave to indigenes of Izon State ... (p. 62).⁴⁰

Tamara, Captures the interest of a member of the squad who encourages her saying, “madam I beg dey talk. We dey on your side” Tamara presses on, urging the squad to disrupt Chief Erekosima’s coronation ceremony, she uses images of the marginalized and suffering majority to taunt the squad and pleads;

Young men, remember your seventy-year-old grandmother who still farms before she eats; remember also your poverty stricken people; remember too your petroleum which is being pumped out daily from your veins and then fight for your freedom (p. 65).⁴¹

Responding to Tamara’s persuasive request, two members of the squad; R.I.P and Dimeari reply:

R.I.P. We can disrupt the Remembrance Day celebration.

Dimeari: even the independent day celebration (p. 64).⁴²

Having succeeded in psyching the boys up, Tamara gives them a final challenge: “Then why don’t you come and interrupt Chief Erekosima’s coronation. If you call yourselves men ... The ceremony is going on right now” (p. 64).⁴³ Having been conscientized, members of the squad in a dastard move, storms Chief Erekosima’s coronation, abducts the Chief and hangs him to death. Eventually, the Suicide Squad who hanged Erekosima is condemned to death by hanging. Incidentally, the prison hangman- Yekinni revolts, and refuses to hang them. Yekinni’s revolt is symbolic he identifies with the Squad despite all the bullying from the bourgeoisie class- the Doctor and the Superintendent to force him into the hanging room. It marks the beginning of the collective will of the oppressed to confront the oppressors.

Irobi offers this sudden unity of the masses and resistance of the manipulation of the leadership class as a solution to the conflict between the rulers and the ruled. Unfortunately, the ruled is yet to recognize and utilize it because the conflict is yet to be approached creatively. The masses are yet to understand that there are only two constituencies in our world: that of the rulers and the ruled; if they realize this the way Tamara made the squad conscious of the delineation, there will be no Boko Haram. In the foolishness of the ruled, they fail to understand that, religion is only but a colonial and neocolonial tool which enables the leadership class to use the oppressed against the oppressed. Who are the beneficiaries of Boko Haram, what does the common man stand to gain from religious war. Which sect or religious group is fighting for the Gordian religion and the rest of animist religions in Africa?

Conclusion

Lewis Nkosi in *the Rhythm of Violence* presents alienation in more affective terms, stressing the way the condition of the Black South African mind is affected in his subjugated position which eventually makes him feel alienated and threatened that even in post apartheid South Africa, he resorts to xenophobic attacks for security. He also portrays the use of violence by the oppressor and oppressed and justifies the use of violence by the oppressed since violence begets violence.

In each of these situations, violence is justified. The ruling White class sees violence as legitimate means of sustaining and safe guarding the one dimensional status quo. Thus, the researcher deduced from analysis of the play that the deplorable conditions of the alienated colonial South African society was a deliberate strategy to subjugate and alienate the Black South African in his fatherland. The feeling of inequality and humiliation, the perception of the dichotomy between the standards and qualities of living quarters and separate residential areas as portrayed by Lewis Nkosi could not but reinforce the feeling of alienation, marginalization and frustration.

The consciousness of cleavages within the colonial South African society; especially between the two major racial groups, indicate that they were diametrically differentiated.

However, since the Blackman was at the receiving end, he felt the pinch of the differentiation more. The White minority was basically individualistic and tyrannical; they protected themselves and unleashed various acts of violence, divide and rule on the other races especially the Blacks. The play shows how the apartheid regime mobilized all the agencies and institutions of oppression and violence to unleash terror on the Blacks. Hence, the guerilla attacks on the Whites; Knife stabbing and farm murders were boomerangs of their own acts of violence. Even though these approaches led to the resolution of the conflicts, the researcher is of the opinion that they failed to restore lasting peace to South Africa.

The Nigerian situation unequivocally reveals that most colonial masters' midwived nation-states in Africa are synonymous with oppression and crises. Case studies analyses of the researcher also confirms according to Victor Dike that African leadership class especially in Nigeria has, "... no positive socio-political agenda other than maintaining themselves in power with self-enrichment ambitions ... the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of broader national interest and needs."⁴⁴

Therefore, the study shows that exploitative tendencies, dictatorship and divide and rule strategy of the colonial masters interplayed with the recklessness and anti-people policies of the postcolonial leadership class to first of all alienate the people, marginalized them and generated socio-economic maladies such as unemployment, poverty, armed robbery, social inequality, youth restiveness, gender violence and vindictiveness. Irobi shows in *Hangmen Also Die*, that these products of oppressive regimes widen the gulf between the 'have' and the 'have not' and perpetuate the conflict between the two groups.

The case studies reveal that violence is seen as the most efficacious means of protecting the social, political and economic interests of the ruling class. Similarly, the use of violence is also seen by the Blacks and opponents of the Pretoria regime as an instrument for use in their duty to protect themselves as co-sufferers from apartheid and a duty to the Black society whose interests is trampled upon by the Whites. Violence for the oppressed masses in Nigeria is also a positive strategy for putting an end to the tyranny of the few who oppress the majority and resolve the endemic conflict between the two classes. However, the study proved that violence and the win-lose destructive approach to conflict resolution has not succeeded in restoring lasting peace to Africa. Hence, the researcher recommends that participants in these conflicts should see the conflicts as mutual problems and therefore cooperate and adopt constructive approaches that will enthrone lasting peace in Africa for the resolution of the conflicts.

Analyses, proper diagnosis and understanding of the colonial conquest in Africa which created a deep sense of alienation are important in the understanding of postcolonial Africa and its marginality. The knowledge garnered from both should be creatively used for lasting peace building process in Africa. The earlier the resolution of these conflicts takes a fact finding approach of understanding the past, the better for the future of Africa and the Diaspora. Thus, the present competitive and destructive process rooted in colonial alienation and postcolonial marginality has not enabled enthronement of lasting peace through the experimented peace initiatives. The implication is that, peace initiators have not been creative enough in their initiatives and have only succeeded in securing temporary peace through targeting ripe time. Finally, alienation and violence are imperative instruments of conflict resolution, but they are not capable of ushering in lasting peace. However, the researcher's candid opinion is that what happened in times of war and crises should be taken cognizance of during the peace building processes.

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