

Portrayal of Characters in Fágúnwà's *Àdiitú Olódùmarè*

Olaiya, Oluwatoyin M. and Taiwo, Adekemi A.

Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *Literary writers always carefully and consciously depict their characters and places to reflect the roles assigned to those characters and places in their literary endeavour. Such characters and places are created to have the greatest effect on the plot of their literary work. Oftentimes, the names a writer assigns his fictional character and places are reflective of the characters' behavioral traits and antecedents surrounding the history of such places. In the light of the above, we examine one of Fágúnwà's classics, *Àdiitú Olódùmarè* and how the foremost writer who pioneered the Yorùbá language novel portrays his characters and places in the novel. His unique pattern of presenting his characters and place leaves a lasting impact on the mind of the readers. It also underscores the aesthetic quality of the novel as well as portrays Fágúnwà as an ingenious story-teller.*

KEYWORDS: portrayal, characters, Fágúnwà's *Àdiitú Olódùmarè*

INTRODUCTION

D.O. Fágúnwà (henceforth Fágúnwà) was a Nigerian novel writer of Yorùbá extraction. He pioneers the novel genre in Yorùbá Language. He was renowned for his Yorùbá fictional stories. He was notable as a Yorùbá Folklore writer with five classical literary works in Yorùbá to his credit. *Àdiitú Olódùmarè* (1963) was his fifth and last of his creative endeavours as the novel was published in the same year the novelist died. Fágúnwà, in each of his works, preaches morals from Yorùbá cultural perspective as well as Christian ethos. The five fictional works which can be classified as his classical creative endeavours were written between 1936 and 1963, and they essentially focus the Yorùbá traditional society. They are also in the category of the epic sub-genre of literature because each of the novels recants, in great detail and lucid diction, the odyssey and heroic feats of its protagonists. Undoubtedly, when authors using the Yorùbá linguistic expression

for their literary effort are mentioned, Fágúnwà arguably remains a major influence on such great writers as Amos Tutuola, Oládèjo, Òkédìjì and Kólá Akínládé, to mention but few.

Because of its popularity, versatility and profundity in its use of the Yorùbá language as well as its thematic predilection, Fágúnwà's writing has been widely researched and reviewed. Such reviewers include, among others, Ògún sínà (2006, 2009), Bámgbósé (1974, 2007), Ìrèlè (1975), and Adélékè (2011). Ògún sínà, for instance, examines the rich Yorùbá cultural ethos that underscore Fágúnwà's style of his writing and his dexterous handling of the Yorùbá is apt for pedagogy, stressing that the skillful deployment of the rich Yorùbá language in Fágúnwà's novels is capable of serving as a profound source of teaching Yorùbá to the future generation. In this paper, we examine the character portrayal in Fágúnwà's *Àdìitú Olódùmarè* (1963). Our observation is that Fágúnwà uses his creative ingenuity in assigning names to his fictional characters which portrays them in conformity to their behavioral traits. This unique technique is now what most writers in Yorùbá expression have been using as template for assigning roles to their imaginative or fictional characters. For our analysis of *Àdìitú Olódùmarè*, we divide Fágúnwà's portrayal of character taxonomies: names that depict the behaviours and attitudes of the characters, names that depict events and scenes in the novel and those that reflect the physique, looks and appearances of the characters in the novel. This special and unique skill of portraying the characters contributed immensely to the picaresque vividness, authenticity and aesthetics finesse of the novel.

Àdìitú Olódùmarè: A Synopsis

Àdìitú Olódùmarè, loosely translated as the (Mystery of the Almighty) is the fifth and the last of Fágúnwà's literary harvest. Written in 1963 shortly before his death, the novel chronicles the unfathomable mystery in the travails of the protagonist, Àdìitú Olódùmarè. It is pertinent to state that the title of the novel is the same name of the Protagonist. *Àdìitú Olódumare* is an epic that recounts the heroic odyssey of the protagonist as well as his march through the vicissitudes of life. The novel, like other written by the same author, belongs to the travelogue sub-genre. His father's name is Òbìrì-Ayé while his mother's name is Ìpónjùdíran. The names of Adiiu's parent are symbolic; his father's name epitomizes vicissitudes that characterizes life (Òbìrì-Ayé) while that of his mother personifies gnawing generational misery. Adiiu's name however, is by no means ordinary. From the outset of the narrative, Òbìrì Ayé is portrayed as a successful and wealthy farmer before debauchery, immoderation and ostentatious life style wrecked him woefully, Òbìrì-Ayé was in this abjectly poor condition when Adiiu Oludamare was born.

Haunting by the gnawing poverty of his parents, Àdiitú decides to leave Ìlákòṣe, his birth place, in search of a greener pasture. In his odyssey, he encounters a series of life threatening experiences. One of such pleasant encounters is that which he encountered at Ìfèhìntì town where he is falsely accused of theft, the penalty of which is death if convicted according to the extant law and custom of Ìfèhìntì town. But luck smiled on the hapless Àdiitú as the culprit, who is the King's second-in-command is apprehended and Àdiitú is released unconditionally. Upon his acquittal, Àdiitú decides to leave Ìfèhìntì town for a forest where he dwelt for seven years. During his seven years sojourn in the forest, Àdiitú becomes an intimate friend with a certain lion who later leads him to a place which has a huge deposit of Elephants' tusks. Upon his discovery of the rich deposit of Elephants' tusk, Àdiitú's joy knew no bound, and he swiftly seizes the opportunity which providence has offered him. Consequently, he begins to trade in Elephants' tusks in a town called Ajédùbùlè and the business fetches him huge profits. Later, he is connected to an affluent merchant in Ìfèhìntì town. The relationship pays off as Àdiitú, once a pauper, later becomes a wealthy merchant. Soon, he is married to Iyùnadá after an initial hiccup during courtship. His marriage to Iyùnadá produced six children. Àdiitú after nineteen years of marriage is conferred with a chieftaincy title. Back to Ìlákòṣe, Àdiitú's birth-place, Òbìrí Ayé and Ìpónjùdíran, Àdiitú's parents, have become aged and emaciated from the pangs of hunger and deprivation. Their pitiable condition, however, is unknown to Àdiitú. Spurred by an irresistible nostalgic feeling towards his parents, Àdiitú decides to visit his ancestral home. The state in which he meets his parents is very pathetic. Both parents are already dead in their miserable house unattended to. He only arrives to his ancestral home to meet the carcasses of his long-dead parents. He muses sadly that. 'I left you in flesh, but now find you in carcass'.

Naming In Yorùbá Society

Every creature of God was assigned a particular name. The Bible affirms it in the book of Genesis that at creation, God asked Adam to assign names to each of God's creatures (see Genesis 2: 19-20). The creation story as captured in Genesis underscores the awesome and methodical nature of the omnipotent God who ordered Adam to give every creature a distinct name. In Yorùbá culture, after the birth of a child, a naming ceremony follows. The naming ceremony is a very significant occasion, not only for its festivities, pomp and array. Rather, the occasion typifies a period when the infant is given a name. Giving name to a new-born baby is not fortuitously or accidentally given, because the Yorùbá believe that the name a child bears has a significant impact on his life. Besides, it is widely belief in Yorùbá culture that the circumstances that surround the birth of an infant determine the name that will be given to it. Two Yorùbá proverbs underscore this belief. Whilst one says that, Orúko ọmọ ni ijánu ọmọ (A child name is his/her tag), the second one says

that Ilé là á wò kátó soṃọ́ lórúko (The lineage/circumstance determines the name to be given to a child). Most of the names given to a child in Yorùbá land have deep meanings. That is the reason Yorùbá parents do not give names to new-born fortuitously, rather, they carefully observe the prevailing circumstances right from the conception to the birth of a child before they assign names to the new-born. A very important fact to bear in mind as regards assigning names to a new-born child in Yorùbá land is that a child is not given pejorative name. Rather, parents ensure that names that connote good omen are given to their children (Ladele et al, 1986:148)

The typology of Yorùbá names, can be divided into four parts. They are: Names given by the parents of the new-born (orúko àbíso), those that the new-born are believed to have brought from heaven by virtue of the circumstance of their birth (orúko àmútorunwa), those that are given to a child born only to die shortly after birth repeatedly (orúko àbíkú), family names, names that allude to Chieftaincy, royalty matters, names that belong to worshippers of Yorùbá god and goddess, as well as appellations (orúko ìnagijẹ̀ tàbí àlájẹ̀) which have been established as names (Dáramójà and Jéje 1975:61-64; Adéoyè, 1982:57; Ládélé et.al 1986:163) Usually in Yorùbá culture, naming ceremonies which herald the birth of a child used to take place on the sixth day after the child is born, although there were variations in accordance to the gender and number of the new-born. For instance, whereas a female child was named on the seventh day of birth, a male child usually had its name on the ninth day while a set of twins were given their names on the eighth day of their birth (Ládélé et. Al, 1986:141). However, civilization has eroded this primordial practice as naming ceremonies take place nowadays on the eighth day regardless of the gender or number of the new-born.

Portrayal of Character's Name in *Àdìtù Olódùmarè*

The trend of portrayal of characters in *Àdìtù Olódùmarè* is not markedly different from the trend which the Yorùbá give names to their children as enunciated in the previous section of this paper. In *Àdìtù*, circumstance dictates the portrayal of characters and places in the novel. Watt (1957:19-20) submits that authors do not assign names to characters in their fictional works fortuitously. Rather, they meticulously assign name to their character and place based on the roles the author want their characters to play in the fiction. In this manner, there exists two ways an author want to portray his character through the names they bears. The first is when a character is given a proper name (orúko àbíso) while the second categorization is an appellation, a nickname or an alias, depending on the role(s) assigned to such characters in a fictional work. The manner in which Fágúnwà assign names to his characters as well as their location in his novels (setting) depicts their

behavioral pattern, character, circumstances, and appearances. In the next section, we shall discuss Fágúnwà's taxonomy in the assignment of names to his fictional characters.

Names That Depict the Behavioral Pattern

Àdiitú Olódumarè is a folklore that teaches morals. *Àdiitú Olódumarè* is a fictitious narrative which is intended to enforce some useful truth and convey some moral lessons through the portrayal of the characters and settings. The novel is replete with a number of mysterious creatures and events. Although, most of the characters in the novel are cast in the form of humans, yet they play extraordinary feats which are beyond human comprehension. Similarly, Fágúnwà's assignment of names to place in the novel is suggestive of the nature of such places. In other words, the names Fágúnwà assigns places in *Àdiitú* are a reflection of the etymology of such towns. Names of such place in the novel include *Aiyèdèmi Ògo Olúwa* (Life is pleasant to me, glory of God) (39), *Òòtókorò* and *Èkésúbú* (Truth is bitter and Falsehood has fallen) (40), *Adémètó* (The crown knows the right) (57), *Èsù-lèhìn-Ìbejì* (The devil behind the twins) (86), *Oba Òkònkò-lójú-abe* (The blunt king), *Ìlòrí Ètò-ayé* (*Ìlòrí* the world structure), *Àjàlá Olódodo* (*Àjàlá*, the righteous) and *Òyepò, Ogbòndiran* (Plenty-of-Knowledge Lineage-of-wisdom). Other characters in the novel whose names are reflective of their behaviors include: *Oníbàjé, Okùnrin* (a perverse man) (139), *Aláyélúwà Òfintótó* (His royal highness The meticulous) (19), *Eboṛa Ìjàngbòṅ* (Troublesome gnome) (14), *Ìtójú Èmi* (care of the soul) (47) as well as *Kòtémilòrùn* (I am not satisfied) (109).

A critical look at the meaning and significance of the names of each character and places in the novel confirms Fágúnwà's masterly portrayal of characters and places in fictional work. The name of the protagonist in the novel is the same as the title of the book. The protagonist is named *Àdiitú Olódumarè* (God's mystery) because of the circumstances of his birth, and his odysseys through the labyrinths of life are all embedded in mysteries. Etymologically, *Àdiitú* in Yorùbá connotes secrecy, that is, a phenomenon which is shrouded in such mystery that is hidden from human understanding. The Yorùbá strongly believe that God himself personifies mystery, because he works in miraculous ways. The life and times of *Àdiitú Olódumarè*, right from the beginning of the novel to its end, is shrouded in mystery. Fágúnwà in the novel makes his readers to understand that wisdom, knowledge and understanding all emanate from God as they all supersede human comprehension. The Bible confirms this fact when it says that human wisdom is but folly to God. Perhaps, this biblical injunction finds its relevance in the belief of the Yorùbá that only God has the perfect understanding of all events and is the controller of all circumstances. This philosophy aptly captures the portrayal of the protagonist, *Àdiitú Olódumarè*, in the novel. In the beginning

of the novel, Fágúnwà philosophically reflects on the mystery that surrounds existence as the Almighty God is the only answer to all the mysteries in life.

Ènyin omo enia, bayi ni a ó parí iwé itàn ti eleyi si, mo si fẹ́
kí e wo orúko, òkùnrin tí ó sẹ̀ pàtàkì nínú iwé na, Àdiítú Olódùmarè.
Aiye wa yi, kiki àdiítú ni, ogunlógò òkẹ̀ àimoye nkan ni o wa
nínú aiye wa yi tí ó jẹ̀ pé Olódùmarè nikan ní ó mọ̀ itumọ̀ wọn.
...Tani lè sọ̀ idí rẹ̀ tí ó fi jẹ̀ pé Iyúnadé kò lóyún tí tí ó fi di
omọ̀ ọ̀dún marundilaadọta tí ó sì wá jẹ̀ pe ó tún di ọ̀lómọ̀ mẹfà?
Njẹ̀ Àdiítú tí ó kúrò lódò enia rẹ̀ pẹ̀lú aṣọ̀ tí ó dàbí jòwòlò ọ̀gèdè
fún àkísà le mọ̀ pé on tún lè di enítí nla, enítí nlu, enítí nni ilé,
enítí nni ọ̀nà, enítí n ní mótò kítikìtì? ... Gbogbo iwònyí kún
fún àdiítú tí Olódùmarè fúnrarẹ̀ di èyítí ó sì jẹ̀ pé Ọ̀lorun ọ̀ba tí
ó di nikan ló lè tú u. (147-148)

The people, in this manner we will end this story, I want you to
look into the life of the main character in the book, Àdiítú Olódùmarè.
This our life is full of mystery, there exist countless things in this
our world that are beyond our understanding and only God
knows their significance.

... Who knows why Iyúnadé was barren until she clocked fifty- five
and later went on to give birth to six children?

Who could have predicted that Àdiítú, who left home with
nothing wearing rag would later come into affluence, having
properties, land and all kind of vehicles? ...All this signifies that
only God who is the author of all mysteries can solve them (147-148).

The above excerpt underscores Fágúnwà's artistic ingenuity as an ace folklorist. Fágúnwà does not just casually or fortuitously assign names to his characters and places in any of his literary works. Rather, his portrayal of characters is binged on circumstantial events. This is why readers of any Fágúnwà's writings should be careful not to ascribe ordinary meanings to names used in any of his writings. The series of adventures encountered by Àdiítú shortly after he left his poverty-stricken parents, how he was falsely accused, how he sojourned in the forest where he met with a lion that introduced him to elephant tusks deposit, how he made his wealth and how he got married to Iyúnadé are all hid in deep mystery.

Another instance of Fágúnwà's iconic portrayal of characters and places in his novel is in the name of a town in the novel – Ìlákòṣẹ town (ilu Ilakose). Ìlákòṣẹ in Yorùbá belongs to the family of snails, but not as big as common snails). Ìlákòṣẹ town (ilú Ìlákòṣẹ) does not depict a town where development and progress are as slow as the snail. The town is portrayed as a dead-end where progress is anything but attainable. Inhabitants of this hapless town are not spared as they are also holed up in stagnation.

Fágúnwà's ingenuity as a master folklore unveils in the depiction of the two characters in Àdìitú Olódùmarè who are entrusted with the allocation of the wealth of Ayédèmí Ògòolúwa (Life-is-comfortable-for-me, Glory-of-the-Lord), the wealthy elephant tusks merchant. The names depict their impeccable penchant for transparency. Of course, a dubious character cannot be entrusted with such a huge assignment where money is involved. The name of the wealthy elephant tusks merchant is symbolic of his prodigious wealth – a life of paradisiacal bliss which is embedded in the glory of God.

Ayédèmí's arrangement of how his will should be distributed to his relations and how he treats Àdìitú as his own child are indication of the man generosity as well as his belief that givers never lack. The Yorùbá believe that it is only God's blessing that makes one rich without adding sorrow. Òòtòkorò (truth is bitter) and Èkésúbú (deception is crest fallen) (40) are the two trustee Ayédèmí Ògo Olúwa entrust with the distribution of his wealth upon his demise. The two names depict transparency of character. It will only take a person of extreme transparency to be entrusted with the execution of will to the deceased family. The executor(s) of such a will must be blunt, forthright and righteous, hence Òòtòkorò (truth is bitter) and he must be above board in his dealings, hence, Èkésúbú (falsehood/deception is crest fallen). Both characters in the novel depict high level of moral rectitude.

Another character whose name depicts a high level of moral rectitude is Adémètó (Crown knows the right) (57). Adémètó is Àdìitú's intimate friend and is the elder brother of Iyúnadé, Àdìitú's fiancée. Adémètó is portrayed as a circumspect and thorough-bred person whose name captures the essence of his personality. Adémètó's role in the novel underscores this description. In other words, his name perfectly matches with his unbiased mien. His mediating role in the relationship between Àdìitú Olódùmarè, his friend and Iyúnadé, his younger sister is an eloquent testimony to his transparent conduct. In Yorùbá land, the role of an intermediary is a crucial one in the consummation of marriage between husband and wife. In the traditional Yorùbá culture, it is customary that when a male child of marriageable age declares his interest to his parents, an intermediary will be chosen for the would-be-husband. The role of the intermediary, among others,

is to facilitate a harmonious, fairness, equity and transparency relationship because the intermediary is expected to mediate without favour between the two lovers. This is the role played by Adémètó in the novel. While playing his intermediary role, Adémètó does not hesitate in correcting either Àdìitú or Iyùnádé whenever either of them takes a wrong step. It is this unbiased role that culminates in the hitch – free consummation of marriage between Àdìitú and Iyùnádé.

The portrayal of Èsù-lẹ̀hìn-Ìbejì in the novel underscored the ingenuity with which Fágúnwà depicts his characters. Èsù-lẹ̀hìn-Ìbejì (devil behind the twins) is portrayed as an odious, evil and devilish character. In Yorùbá, the birth of a set of twin is often welcome with ineffable joy. Quite apart from the fortune which their arrival is presumed to bring, they are also considered as mysterious gift from the gods because of their unique and uncommon birth. Their arrival is often greeted with ambivalence. To their parent and other well – wishers, the birth of twins in a family often usher in joy because they are considered as a bundle of pleasant things to happen to the family. On the other hand, they are considered as harbinger of evil by their envious detractors. One of the panegyrics of the twins underlines this fact: Wínní wínní lójú orogún, èjì wọ̀rò lójú iyá rẹ̀ (Mere worms to their envious step-mothers, because of their diminutive sizes, but two-some gracious gifts in the sight of their mother). Ìdòwú, in Yorùbá, is usually a child born after the birth of twins. It can be male or female. The unending unhealthy rivalry or supremacy tussles that occasionally used to ensue between the twins and Ìdòwú earned the pejorative nick name, Èsù lẹ̀hìn ibejì (devil behind the twins).

In the novel, Èsù lẹ̀hìn ibejì is portrayed as being close to Àdìitú as he is in charge of most Àdìitú's enterprises (86). Àdìitú regards him as his intimate associate. But, quite unknown to Àdìitú, Èsù lẹ̀hìn ibejì is a devil incarnate. He surreptitiously conspires to eliminate Àdìitú so that he can marry Iyùnádé, Àdìitú's fiancée and take over his flourishing business, but, his conspiratorial deed backfires as he is sentenced to an agonizing death by King of Ajédùbúlẹ̀ (90-91). Fágúnwà portrays Èsù lẹ̀hìn ibejì as an odious and despicable character to serve as a moral lesson to the readers that appearance can, sometimes, be deceptive. Fágúnwà describes people that behave like Èsù lẹ̀hìn Ìbejì thus:

...àwọ̀n wọ̀nyí kò sí fún ilọ̀síwájú fún ẹ̀nikẹ̀ni, wọ̀n wà fún ibàjẹ̀,
wọ̀n ní igi ẹ̀gun, igi ọ̀súsú láàrín ọ̀mọ ẹ̀nià, púpọ̀ nínú àwọ̀n ọ̀kùnrin
ní wọ̀n tí sọ obìnrin ànfàní nù nítorí nwọ̀n tí bó sí ọ̀wọ̀ àwọ̀n igi ẹ̀gun
wọ̀nyí. Èsù lẹ̀hìn ibejì pọ̀ lọ̀ suu (91)

... these are not concerned about anyone's progress, they are perverse,
like thorn in the flesh, an infectious disease. Many men have lost good

wives because of such perverse fellows. Such cancerous men like Èsù léhìn ìbejì abound in number in our society (91).

Another instance which attests to the skillful manner in which Fágúnwà depicts his characters in Àdìitú is the portrayal of Oṃo-owú, a co-wife to Èsan mbò. Polygamous homes are usually a bedlam as frequent bickering characterizes such homes. Unhealthy rivalries are a common feature of most polygamous homes. This rivalry plays out in the relationship between Oṃo-owú (child of envy) and her co – wife, Èsan mbò (vengeance is imminent). Both are the queens of king Òkònkò-loju-abe. Oṃo-owú in the novel is depicted as a vile, vicious and wicked character who does not value human life. Fágúnwà assigns the name, Oṃo-owú, to her because of the unsavoury and treacherous role she plays in the novel. Oṃo-owú in Yorùbá can either mean an anvil which is a tool used by a blacksmith or a child of envy. In either case, the character is recorded in the novel to have made failed attempts on the life of her co – wife. But, after the series of failed attempts, vengeance quickly comes for Èsan mbò as Oṃo-owú eventually meet her Waterloo and triumph comes the way of Èsan mbò who typifies her name. Similarly, King Òkònkò-lójú-abe (the king with a fiery, acerbic nature) typifies insufferable arrogance and sheer despotism that characterize the nature of some Yorùbá monarchs, especially in the old days. In the old days when civilization had not yet eroded the paramount roles of the Yorùbá monarchs, Kings were held in high esteem; they were truly referred to as ‘Aláse èkejì òrìsà’ (he who has stupendous authority and second in command to the deities). King Òkònkò-lójú-abe’s name typifies limitless authority as he bestrides his kingdom with despotic assertiveness.

Names that Depict Event in *Àdìitú Olódùmarè*

As earlier mentioned in this paper, Yorùbá carefully and selectively assign names to people, places and events. Fágúnwà’s deep knowledge about Yorùbá tradition and belief system has greatly enhanced the aesthetic quality of *Àdìitú Olódùmarè*. Apart from the apt portrayal of the character that play to type in the novel, Fágúnwà also makes use of name that reflect event and happening in his fiction. Such event can either be a permanent feature or occurrence in the lives of his characters or a mere happenstance or sheer coincidence. Such names include Àdìitú (mystery), Òbirí-ayé (vicissitudes of life), Ìpónjùdiran (generational tribulation), Alábápàdé (tryst), Àgbélébù ènìyàn (man’s cross) and Àrà Oṭò (unique dimension). Equally, many of the names of the locales or settings in the novel depict situations that are characteristic of the etymology or historical antecedent of each of the places. Examples abound in the novel, but we will take just a few names as illustrations. Towns and communities such as Ìlákòṣe (middle size snail) (4), Ìlú Ajédùbùlè (a

town where wealth is in abundance or a prosperous town) (38), Òpópó-èké-fẹ̀hìntì (a highway of deceit) (7), Erékùsù àìmò (island of ignorance) (79), Erékùsù ikúpàdé (island of inevitable death) and Ìbàjẹ̀-òde (a community of moral depravity) (133) are allegorical and typify the antecedent places.

Names that Depict Appearance in *Àdìtù Olódùmarè*.

In *Àdìtù Olódùmarè*, Fágúnwà depicts some characters in accordance to their appearances. It is a generally held axiom that an individual is addressed by manner of his/her dressing. It is believed that gorgeous attire is a reflection of the status of the wearer in the society. This explains why *aso wíwò* or mode of dressing is a crucial aspect of Yorùbá culture. In the tradition Yorùbá society, some set of fabrics used to attract a high prestige in the colony of fabrics. Highly prized fabrics were meant for the kings and the nobles in the society. Once these categories of people emerge, they are accorded their respect. Similarly, beauty is mostly cherished in ladies. It is seen as a natural endowment from God and any lady that possesses this natural endowment is always the pride of her parents. *Iyùnadé* typifies this rare beauty. A morphological agglutination of her name gives us *iyùn* (a local bead) and *adé* (crown). Both the coral and the crown are precious ornament that are cherished and coveted by people because possession of one or both of the ornament is considered as a rare and golden privilege. Fágúnwà's vivid description of *Iyùnadé* underscores her elegance and striking beauty. She is likened to the precious coral bead. She is graphically portrayed in this manner:

.....*iyùn jẹ̀ ilẹ̀kẹ̀ tí ó lẹ̀wà púpọ̀, a kò nsai rí i ní ilé àwọn ọ̀ba...*
Iyùnadé dára lómọ̀bìnrin, ègàn ló kù. Ó pupa róbótó, gbogbo
ara rí mìnijò, kò sanra bàkìtì lásán.....gbogbo ǹnkan tí ob̀nrin fì
íwu ni ní ó ní gbogbo A! Ojórùn dá omo na ní àdápé. Kò sí nkan tí
Ejédà fì du omo na.

Coral is a precious bead commonly found in palaces. *Iyùnadé* is a beautiful woman without doubt. Light in complexion, fleshy with all curve perfect, not overtly fat, a perfect woman appealing to the eyes in every way. Oh! God created her perfectly without blemish (57-58).

The above excerpt captures vividly Iyùnádé's quintessential beauty among other women in the town. Coupled with her beauty is her good nature just like the coral beads which is quite expensive and of high quality.

Similarly, the name of a locale in the novel gives an indication that Fágúnwà depicts his characters and places in accordance with the inherent qualities they possess. In Àdìitù, Fágúnwà captures the abundance of kolanut in a particular farmland of his creative imagination and names it Oko onígàṅja (a farmland in which kolanuts are in abundance). Although many of the names of people and places in the novel may be regarded as mere appellation or aliases, it is important to stress that the overall objective of this unique technique of assigning names to people and objects is meant to convey and instill moral in the minds of the readers. This unique manner of assigning names by Fágúnwà is not peculiar to Àdìitù alone. It is also observable in all his other works, most especially *Ògbójú Ode Nínú Igbó Irínmoḷẹ̀* (Brave Hunter in the Forest of Thousand Demons).

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we examined how Fágúnwà portrays his characters and setting in his fictional novel, *Àdìitù Olódumarè*. We observed that names play significant roles in the traditional Yorùbá setting; as a result, events, circumstances, appearances, and character traits are largely responsible for the assignment of names to their bearer or referents. We equally observed that all name given to people and places in the novel can be categorized as appellation, artfully strung together to form proper names, and which perfectly depict the appearance and character traits of the bearers of the names.

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