

Aesthetic Attires and Aura of Nigerialization in Rihlat 'L-Bahth 'An Insaan (Travelogue)

A. O. Hashimi*

Abstract

Rihlat 'li-Bahth 'an insaan (Travellogue) is a play written and acted in Arabic Language. Language is the searchlight and vehicle through which social reality is beamed and shaped. Through language, a literary scholar communicates with the unknown readers and projects their thoughts and ideological dispositions. Therefore, the most significant items of any work of literature have been recognized to be channelled through words which reside in the particular range of meanings and attitudes which members of any society attach to their verbal symbols, the mode of writing and features of literary text that reflect some social practices in the society of playwright. In the light of the above, this paper examines the linguistic features of Rihlat 'li-Bahth 'an insaan, using a descriptive analytic method to depict the post-colonial context of Nigeria and Schleiermacher's Hermeneutic theory for understanding of the text was considered appropriate for the study. Rihlat 'li-Bahth contains important events that are common in the contemporary Nigerian society. In the aesthetic view and linguistic choice of the author, the words related to Nigerian society and its expressions were chosen to depict the state of Nation. The paper discovers that linguistic choice of the author and the contexts of the play reflect the state of Nation and the author of Rihlat 'li-bahth like other playwrights showcases the unresponsive nature of the ruling class. The study concludes that the author skillfully draws from a pool of narrative experiences and successfully established the social situation of his country, Nigeria

Key words: *Rihlat 'li-Bahth, aesthetic attires, socio-economic and political situation, Nigerialization*

Introduction

The root of Arabic literature is dated back to pre –Islamic era (Jahiliyyah) but scholars of various viewpoints have been vociferous on their position. What is certain is that there are elements of dramatic features in Arab culture and these are noticeable in the popular Arabic literature. Glimpses from Arabic literature, reveals that in the pre-Islamic Arabian society, a poet was an oracle, guide, orator and spokesman of his community. He was both a moulder and agent of public opinion, indeed, poetry is the public register (diwaan of Arabians). The idea of poetry as an art was developed afterwards and the pagan poet was the

* Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria, E-mail: hashimiabdaganiy62@gmail.com

oracle of his tribe, their guide in peace and their champion in war (*Nicholson, 1995*). In this line of argument, the antiquity of Arabic narratives is attested by the holy Qur'an, both in its condemnation and modification to construct moralizing narratives. This is followed by numerous genres of narratives in the medieval period which were catalogued in Ibn al- Nadim's tenth Century fihrist, who records the manners which foreign tales were introduced to Arabic literature.

The contacts of the Arabs with people of outside world increased their passion for it and later formed the basis for what is called Adab (Arabic literature) was built upon. On the other hand, there are evidences that showed that Arab nation were aware of Drama performances long before the rise of Islam. In this regard, the most significant evidence was given by Hassan b. Thabit (d.647 C.E), the prophet's poet who mentioned it in one of his poems the mayamisu Ghazzatin (the mime of Gaza), and the episode of 'Amr ibn. al- 'Az (d.663), a famous Arab merchant who frequented North Africa in pre-Islamic period. During his visits to Egypt, he attended celebrations in Alexandria where many plays were presented. In the same line of argument, Bustani, a Jewish conjurer from a village near Kufa performed various acts of buffoonery before Walid ibn al- 'Uqba, the governor of Iraq in 655C.E (Juliet, 1998). The Hellenic and Turkey Dramas played important role in the growth of Arabic Drama and spawned indigenous Arab Dramatists. By and large, the Arabs later built their own independent Drama, but with incursion of foreign elements. One of the earliest Arabic plays is hobby-horse (kurraj), accompanied by music and dancing, used to induce delirious and ecstatic state in mystical feasts. At this early period, the most popular Drama in Arabic literary work is morality play 'An imaginary trial of the Muslim Caliph'. The actor was ascetic teacher who intended to play the role of a preacher in the religious assembly; to enjoin what is right and prohibit what is wrong. The actor climbed a hill with a reed staff (Qasaba) accompanied by men, women and boys, and called for one Caliph after another, enumerating their good or bad deeds and sending them to paradise or lake of fire. Among the popular Arabic playwrights and literati who appeared in the 14th Century is Ibn Daniyal (d.1311) he composed three shadow plays. Another work of Arabic Drama worthy of note is mistarat khayal munadamat umm Mujbir. The play was

defined by the author as comedy (hazl) and scurrilous mockery (huz' sakhif). The play has four characters. Al- Rayyis (captain), al- Qaila'I (Sailing master), al- maliha (the beautiful Girl) and umm mujbir (the Old wife). The captain who has married a beautiful lady after the death of his first wife was informed by the sailing master that his old, sick and lusty wife has returned from the dead. The husband (captain) could not believe what he heard, as he had buried her a long time ago, the old wife rebuked her husband for his new marriage, claimed that she was more beautiful and sexy than his young wife, she then invited her husband to make love with her, argued that she could make him forget his young wife. The play presents the eternal struggle between beauty and ugliness, new and old, present and past. The new has its own freshness and appeal, while the old has become obsolete and loses its role in life; yet old people cling to the present and try to prove they are more experienced and useful than the young (Scott & Starkey, 1998: 769).

The period of Abu Wuhay b Buhlul b. Amir al Sayrafi presented him as the most prominent and early Arabic dramatist. He lived in Kufa up to the time of Harun ar Rashid. (Badawi, et.al, 1970). Glimpses from Ibn Jawzi's work; *kitab al-qussas*. (1971) makes us to understand the importance attached to narrative literature. His work illuminates the roles played by the narrative genres in the history of Arabic literature. At-Thalabi the eleventh-Century Arabic scholar in his work *Qisas-l'anbiyaai*, draws on oral legendary traditions surrounding Qur'anic figures. He quotes verses from the holy Qur'an but then weaves around each an entire vividly executed narratives. The narrative techniques of quoting Quranic verses and then building a prose narrative around these sentences, while dramatizing the narrative with as much as visual detail as possible so as to hold the audience's attention is a common practice in Arabic literature. Arabic narrative literature also became a favoured type in Islamic community. Some of the most popular classics of medieval Arabic literature are '*Antar* and *Alf layla wa layla*, (Arabian Nights) *Sirat 'Antar* images have found a ready market in modern folk art. Other works of Arabic narrative literature are *Kalila- wa- Dimnah* (Animal fables) and *Maqamat*. The authors of *Maqamat* built their works on series of riddles. Also important is the work of Abu al-'Ala'al- Ma'arri which is riddled with riddles.

Nevertheless, the contact of the Arabs with the West through French occupation of Egypt in 1798 C.E., marked the beginning of modern Arabic theatrical tradition (Ahmad al-Iskandany and Mustapha Amin, n.d). Hence, the origins of the modern Arabic drama/plays were popularly ascribed to Lebanese figure Marun al-Naqqash (Badawi, et.al, 1970). He wrote three high-quality plays, mainly literary Arabic. The first Arabic play was *al-Bakhil (The Miser)*. It was performed at the end of 1847 C.E., on a stage in his country home Beirut. (Najm, 1967) His other two plays are Abu al-Hassan al-Mughaffal (Abu al-Hassan the Gullible) and Harun ar-Rashid, written in 1849 put in verse rather than prose in musical form and *al-Hasud as-salit*. (Landau, 1958) After the death of Marun al-Naqqash in 1855 C.E., his nephew Salim al-Khalil al-Naqqash developed on Marun's efforts and later formed his own troupe. In Damascus, Ahmed al-Qabbani staged a number of productions of Arabic drama/plays. Other playwrights followed, on the list are Najib Haddad (1867-1899), Muhammad 'Uthman Jalal (1828-1898), Salim Naqqah and Adib Ishaq. These playwrights imitated European playwrights in pattern and structures of their plays. The next significant steps in Arabic plays and theatre took place at Egypt. The first known Arabic play productions in Egypt were taken by Egyptian Jew Ya'qub Sanu' (1839-1912), who staged a number of plays in Egyptian colloquial between 1870 and 1872 C. E. (Moosa, 1974). The next theatrical performances in Egypt were staged by Syrian emigrants. In 1876, C.E., Salim al-Khalil al-Naqqash established himself in Alexandria and the Syrian theatrical activities continued during the 1880s and 1890s, with the arrival in Egypt of al-Qabbani, Iskandar Farah Antun, Juri Abyad and others.

The twenty one century witnessed the rise of new breeds who wrote their plays with measure of originality. These playwrights include Ya'qub Sannu', Najib al-Rayani, 'Abd al- Rahmani al- Sharqawi, Najib Sunir, Taymur Muhamud (1894-1973), Taymur Muhammad (1892-1921), Farah Antun and Muhammad Tawfiq. They brought into fruition the concept of the Egyptian theatre the ground work laid down by 'Uthman Jalal and later developed by Farah Antun. (Scott & Starkey, 1998: 769).

The beginning of Arabic literacy in Nigeria dates back to the 11th Century in Kanem-Borno, where centres for Arabic scholarship were established. The first known reputable Arabic scholar of remarkable standing who acquired the skill of Arabic genre was Shaykh Ibrahim b. Ya 'qub al- Dhakwani al- Kanem (d. 1211 C.E.) He appeared in

the intellectual scene of Marakush in the 13th century. (Hunwick, 1995:1). This was followed by Muhammad Ibn Mani, who taught in the palace of Mais (Bornu rulers) for twenty nine years. (Al-Kali, 1983:108) The early Arabic centres in Kanem–Borno were followed by similar ones in the 11th and 14th centuries of Kano Hausa state through the aid of Arabic scholars and Muslim traders who traversed the major trans-saharan trade routes that connected the Central and Western Sudan. Both Kanem –Borno and Kano Hausa state remained the major intellectual centres of Arabic studies throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, before they were competed by Katsina which became intellectual centre and seat of celebrated scholars in the sixteenth century. (Kani, 1984) The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed establishment of several Arabic centres. Among the products and founders of Arabic learning centres in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were Muhammad al-Kashnawi known as Dan Marina or Ibn al-Sabbagh (d. 1665 C.E.), Muhammad dan Masani (d. 1667 C.E) and Abdullah b. Muhammad b. Salim known as ‘Abdullah Suka. Other Arabic scholars who established Arabic centres and flourished in the intellectual scene were Muhammad al-Wali b. Sulaiman al-Fullati (d. 1689 C.E), Al-Tahir b. Ibrahim b. Harun (d. 1776 C.E.), Muhammad Mudi b. Muhammad Mudi al-Dutawi Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Fullani al-Kashinawi (d. 1741 C.E.) and Jubril b. Umar and al-Qumati (d. 1773 C.E). These personages were scholars of Arabic studies, founders and proprietors of Arabic centres and authors of many reputable Arabic works. (Umar Jah, 1976) The nineteenth century jihad of Uthman b. Fudi and the establishment of Sokoto caliphate contributed to the establishment of private Arabic institutes. The jihad leaders and generation of Arabic scholars after then established Arabic centres. Among the most prominent Arabic learning centres were those of Sokoto, Gwandu, Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Bauchi, Borno, Adamawa, Bidida, Ilorin and Ibadan etc. The existence of numerous and various Arabic educational institutions in various parts of Nigeria in the period is an evidence of the widespread of Arabic studies in Nigeria.

The beginning of the second quarter of the 19th century saw the rise of many Arabic learning centres in Yorubaland. Ilorin and Ibadan had major private schools of Arabic studies. (Hunwich, 1995). Prominent proprietors and founders of private Arabic schools include Muhammad Mahmud b. Shitta b. Salih (d. 1891 C.E.), Muhammad b. Ahmad Begore (d. 1913 C.E), Busari b. Badr, Al-Din (d. 1915 C.E.), Muhammad Jum’a Alabi fondly called Taju al-Adab (d. 1923). Also

on record were Ahmad b. Abu Bakr al-Qasim Alaga (d. 1888C.E.) Muhammad Sanusi b. Harun (d. 1938C.E), Ahmad b. Rufai b. Muhammad Bello (d. 1971C.E) and Haruna matanmi (d. 19, 1995:1).35 C.E), Adam Abdullah al illuri (d.1992) and Shaykh Kamaldeen al Adabi (d.2005). Shaykh Salaudeen Apaokagi, shaykh Murtada 'Abdus Salam, Shaykh Mustapha Zugluul Sanusi and Shaykh Abdur Raheem Aminullahi Abata. These scholars were eloquent and versatile speakers of Arabic language, and many of them organized Arabic dramas in their respective Arabic schools.

Literature Review

A series of researched works on Arabic plays in Nigeria has studied and relevant-related works were reviewed. In the light of this, the following works were reviewed al-'Amid Al-Mubajjalby Oseni Zakariyya, *Tajir Sahib 'l-mut'amUstaz ragim anfah*by Mosuudi Abd Ghaniy, *Qadi Gharat al'najum* by Abd Ghaniy Adebayo andBaqau muqadar by Baari. It is worthy of note that other relevant accessible materials; published and unpublished Arabic books, documents, manuscripts, monographs, journals, periodicals, etc. were consulted and used in this study.

Arabic Play in Nigeria

Drama/play is a popular genre in literature. There are various types of drama as it is classified in Arabic literature. Ma'sat (tragedy), Malhat (comedy), Mishjat (melodrama) and Naktah (Farce). The basic elements of drama are plot, characters, action, acts/scene, while dialogue serves as its distinguishing style. Characters are the persons that the playwright has created in the play and they are referred to as dramatic personae.

There are numerous scholarly works on Arabic literature in Nigeria, but there is paucity of writing in Arabic play or Drama of Nigerian authorship, in comparison with Arab countries, the writing of Arabic play in Nigeria is slow to develop in both popularity and originality because competent scholars did not see a need to write in that field and for theological reasons that prevalent in all Islamic communities. For example Greek plays were fraught with polytheistic ideas which Islam abhors. According to Oseni, (2002:37), al-'Amid Al-Mubajjal is the only published Arabic play in Nigeria up to year 2002. This was followed byTajir Sahib 'l-mut'am by Oseni Zakariyya, *Ustaz ragimanfah* by Mosuudi Abd Ghaniy, *Qadi Gharat al'najum* by Abd Ghaniy Adebayo and *Baqau muqadar*by

Baari. (Barri, 2005:7). There is no much work on literature in Nigeria that deals with Arabic plays/dramas. Nevertheless, *Rihlah 'I-balith 'an insane* is among the few works produced on Arabic play in Nigeria. Therefore, this study intends to examine the work in the aspect of language.

Methodology

A descriptive- analytic research method was employed in carrying out this study. It is appropriate because the aim of the study was to examine the linguistic features used in the text of *Rihlat 'li bahth*. The literary scholars deal with the use of language in religious assembly and the employment of rhetorical devices in communication are important. *Rihlat 'li bahth* was studied within the premise of linguistic, grammatical and semantic contexts. On the other hand, the sociological, economic and political dimension focuses on human relations between the political class, the public office holders and the echelons of the Nigerian society.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories underlie the work of literature, especially Drama/Play, however the study hinges on Schleiermacher's Hermeneutics theory. He posits that Hermeneutics is the art of understanding of linguistic communication. This theory deals with understanding the meaning of text or discourse and avoiding misinterpretation. Bowie (1998) further highlights the view of Schleiermacher that the linguistic depends on the interpretation of language which involves the discovery of meaning in words and grammar that form the discourse in a particular communication presents. He adds that psychological interpretation involves an understanding of the intention and meaning of the author of the text; what the author communicates by his writing. In the view of Schleiermacher whether a spoken or written utterance is truthful depends on one's understanding of its meaning, this is possible if the source can be determined. In addition, correct interpretation can be achieved only if the interpreter acquires a good knowledge of the historical context of a text. Therefore grammatical and psychological understanding of one helps the other. Thus grammatical interpretation shows meaning through understanding of words and syntax of a particular text with its text whereas psychological interpretation shows the intent of the author. This theory seeks to interpret and explains the literary texts; it is therefore apposite to our study.

Conceptual Classification

- i. Concept of Language: From the sociological approach, language is regarded as a means of socialization, through communication; it is a means of interaction. However, linguists define language as a systematic body of arbitrary symbols employed in the process of communication. This shows that language is made up of a system of symbols (sounds and words). These are grouped into certain patterns such as phonology / phonetics, morphology, lexis syntax, semantics and stylistic established on rules and principles. (Dairo, 2015:3).
- ii. Concept of Aesthetics: The word aesthetic is a much debated term. It is a word that is used differently, depending on the discipline and the angle one views it. To some scholars, it is like 'beauty' that lies in the eye of the holder. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines aesthetic is an adjective concerned with beauty and art and understanding a beautiful things. It is a branch of philosophy that studies the principles of beauty.
- iii. Nigerialization: The word Nigerialization is a coinage rather than a concept. It is an attempt to examine the manner that the author of *Rihlat 'li-Bahth 'an insaan* embedded his work. From linguistic points of view, the use of lexemes, the style, diction, rhetoric and vocabularies in *Rihlat 'li-Bahth 'an insaan* informed the idea of Nigerialization of the work, because words and expressions related to Nigeria are used in the play.

The Authorship

Rihlah 'I-bahth 'an insani was written by Professor K.A. Balogun. The author was born in 1951 in a family that has a long history in promoting the teachings of Islam and organizing Qu'ranic school. He had his primary education in 1962, at Ita Iyalode, Owu Abeokuta, and the present capital of Ogun State, Nigeria. He studied the holy Qur'an and works of Islamic sciences under the feet of the late Alhaji Shaykh 'Abd Azeez Olorungbo in his home town, Abeokuta. He attended al-Azhar Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, between 1965 and 1970. He went on scholarship to Egypt and studied languages and literature at Al-Azhar University, Cairo and graduated in 1979. He obtained an M.A Degree in 1982 and PhD in 1990 at University of Ibadan. He worked and retired from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Professor Balogun as a teacher, supervisor and mentor has sired many academic offspring, some of whom have become professors, and many more on the way to attaining this enviable status. He has written

many works both in English and Arabic languages, which ***Rihlah 'I-bahth 'an insani*** is one of them.

About the Work

Rihlah 'I-bahth 'an insani is indigenous work of Yoruba- Nigerian authorship. The work was written and designed in form of a play, a branch of literary genre in Arabic literature. The work demonstrates the state of the Nation and discusses the socio- economic and political situation of Nigeria. From the account of the play, Nigeria's leaders are reckless in leadership, corrupt in administration and arrogant before the law, wanting in accountability and become object of disgrace after their tenure in office. Consequently, the masses wallow in abject poverty. The rate of unemployment is very high; the youths are sneaking out of the country to abroad seeking for green pastures, while the criminal activities by armed hoodlums are alarming. Rihlat 'I-bahth therefore attacks Nigerian politicians of all persuasions for their corruption and inefficiency. The author places his reader right in the midst of a Nigerian society, and proceeds to elaborate on socio-economic and political situation of his country.

Rihlat 'I-bahth 'an insaanis the work was designed and organized into ten (10) acts, opened with prognosis, that announcing the inception of the journey embarked upon by the chief characters of the play, As-Saahil and Al-Mas'uul, who searched for a man of impeachable character.

Title of the Play

The title of the play is *Rihlat 'I-bahth 'an insaan (A Travellogue)*. *Rihlat' I-bahth* is a literary work of Arabic play/drama (*masrihiyyah*). It is a quest journey of discovery for a man of impeccable characters embarked upon by the chief characters in the play that bear the epithets; *As-Saail and al-Mas-ulu*. The play consists of ten acts, introduction and prognosis. The author describes each stage of the journey with powerful evocative conceits and employed an effective way of passing to his audience.

Themes of the Play

The play has various themes in its component, but the central themes deal with socio-political and economic situation of the community or nation which the play represents **Prognosis** نقطة انطلاق {

It is important to provide background information of the play. The play begins with the chief characters *as-Saailandal-Mas-ulu*, getting up one morning and leaving their home carrying their lantern with them, looking for a man of impeccable characters.

Act I: In the Court. {في المحكمة}

After long searching and hesitation, they halted at the court of law. The scene manifests a pale picture and a faith echo of judiciary in Nigeria.

Act II: In the Motor Park. {في الموقف}

The scene shows many penetrating insight into aspects of moral decadence in the contemporary Nigerian society this is noted by flaw expressions, hard heartedness and insecurity of properties, demonstrated by the unruling conduct, cheeky and fraudulent manner of rascals in motor parks.

Act III: In the Hospital {في المستشفى}

There is a report of motor accident on the road and the eye-witnesses made spirited efforts to rush the victim to hospital. At the hospital, the uncared attitude of Doctors and nurses is not responsive. Hence there are many people passing on because of lack of medical attention in the time of need.

Act IV: In the Residential House {في البيت}

The central focus of the scene is on insecurity of lives. This is occasioned by armed robbers who send many innocent people into graves. Also important in the scene is obnoxious increment on the house rent which makes many tenants suffer untold hardship from the hands of landlords. As the chief characters relaxed in their slumber when subsequent development followed that intercepted their sleep, this was arrival of men of armed hoodlums in the neighboring house, demanding from the dwellers their possessions that possessed none but, three Naira. The head of the house was shot on account of his abject poverty.

Act V: In the Village or Rural Area {في الرّيف}

After much heart searching and hesitation by the major characters, their hearts are filled with the thought of the rural area. The chief characters never recovered from their imaginative thought when a noisy siren vibrates, symbolizes the arrival of uniformed police men who came for criminal investigation on the ritual killing. But to their

dismay or chagrin, the scale of atrocities in the village is truly shocking. There is no difference between urban life and rural life.

Act VI: In the Pension's Office {في مكتب المتقاعدين}

The scene reveals the experience of the nation's workers of what they pass through after long years of dictated service to their fatherland. Their gratitude, pension and allowances are not paid to them on record time. They are subjected to bad experience, pain, agony and unnecessary queue at pension's office and given unrealistic appointments. Many of them died in the process of collecting their dues.

Act VII: In the Airport (في المطار الدولي)

The scene discusses the attitude and love of the youths to travel abroad, because they believe it is profitable to do so. Through interrogation, it is discovered that many people who travel abroad engage in dirty jobs which have no good image for human dignity. But, the home government should be blamed for not providing jobs for her citizens.

Act VIII: In the House of Legislators {في البرلمان}

The scene discloses the attitude and self-centeredness of the political office holders; they are only interested in their own political proceeds. This is realized from the increment on various items such as furniture allowance, visitor entertainment allowance, cooking allowance etc. They involved in budget padding, filibustering, legislative rascality, sabotage of national interest, among other criminalities. This attitude of the political office holders prompts chief character of the play, *al-Mas-ulul* to pour scorn on the certain aspects of behaviours of legislators and makes a vituperative and blistering attack on the law makers.

Act IX: In the Market (في السوق)

The scene discusses the socio-economic situation of the community of the author; **the** prices of commodities are not stable, while the measure used for commodities is of different kind. Furthermore, there are different measures for the same item. In nutshell, market activity is marked by dubious and flaw characters. Police is largely blamed for inflation because of undue bribery collected from merchandise and motorists on Nigerian roads.

Act X: In the University Campus {في حرم الجامعة}

The scene is a pale picture of campus life, which is ravaged by disease of shamelessness. The bully-attitude of University students is very disturbing to average minds. The female students wrapped their buttocks in trousers and the male students put on ear-rings and dressed in tattered trousers. This is evidence of the negative impact of erosion of shared moral values and standards in University. The central square in the scene rooted on two things. The mode of dressing of most students is mediated by foreign culture and civilization, occasioned by short sighted mentality that views western civilization as a source of individual freedom and liberation. It is also realized that lecturers are not passionate enough to discharge their professional responsibility. In summary, the import of the scene is a biting condemnation of the campus life.

Discussion

Literary Analysis and Devices Employed

Tadmin {تضمين} Qur'anic Diction

Literary imagery, style and diction generally dominate the play. There are frequent uses of images, ideas and dictions borrowed directly from the holy Qur'an. Therefore *Rihlat 'l-bahth* is loaded with several verses of the holy Qur'an. The verses could be found on the text of the plays on the following pages 13, 14, 27, 42, 52, 76, 77, 88. Some of the verses are employed directly, while some are employed in the form of allusion. The author uses Quranic verses to embellish the plays, using them to derive his point home. This shows that human beings are created naturally honoured, highly placed by God and charged with responsibility, but failed to discharge assigned responsibility. For instance the author quotes the following Qur'anic verse to begin his discussion as illustrative example.

{ولقد كرّمنا بني آدم وحملناهم في البر والبحر ورزقناهم من الطيبات وفضلناهم على كثير ممّن خلقنا تفضيلاً} سورة الإسراء
{والله على ما نقول وكيل}... سورة يوسف

Stereotyped Expressions borrowed from some Indigenous Languages

These can be divided into idioms, sayings and other stereotyped expressions.

For instance *الهيم قتل الهرة* (*the solution to the matter is bleak*) (*Rihlat*, p. 18, 27). This expression is employed by members of Yoruba speech community at a point of dilemma when discussion on a particular

issue seems difficult and situation seemed intractable. It is said to the effect that whenever a matter or occurrence gets too overwhelming or sinister.

فالفيران لا تلعب إلا عند تغيب الهرة

(The rats do not play openly only in absence of cat) (Rihlat, p. 20).

This Yoruba expression is uttered at occasion, where issues of discipline arise. Moreso it is an exhibition of pride.

Borrowings from Foreign Languages

The items borrowed from foreign languages are terms which have been incorporated into Arabic language. They occur freely in the plays (Rihlat). Here the author displays his aesthetic view and choice of words and expressions related to Nigeria, termed 'Nigerialization'. Suffice are the following words and expressions.

Rihlat, p.63 (Philosophy)	فلاسفة
Rihlat, p. 64,(Bank)	بنك
Rihlat p 33, 34, 91, 93 (Doctor)	دكتور
Rihlat, p. 25 (Omojoba)	بنت الحكومة
Rihlat, p. 26(Babake)	بباكي
Rihlat, p 78, 29, 56(Kobo)	كوبو
Rihlat, p. 43, 81 (Police)	بوليسنا
Rihlat, p. 29 (Petrol)	بترول
Rihlat, p. 69(Democratic)	لديمقراطية
Rihlat, p. 69, 71 (Allowance)	علاوتن
Rihlat, p. 77 (Tomatoe)	الطماطم
Rihlat, pp. 84, 86, 90 (Modern)	المدنية
Rihlat, p. 90 (Orobo)	أوروبو
Rihlat, p. 93 (Bravo)	برافو
Rihlat, p.60 London-	لندن
Rihlat, p. 93 Beirut	بيروت
Rihlat, p.63America	الأمريكية

Islamic Religious Expressions

In the use of language one finds concession to colloquial usage. The Islamic background of the author is hinted at a number of references to the Islamic religious common expressions. The followings serve as examples.

Rihlat, p. 38	لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله
Rihlat, p. 36	فإنّا لله وإنّا إليه راجعون

Rihlat, p. 84	سبحان الله معاذ الله
Rihlat, p. 84	إن شاء الله
Rihlat, p. 86	الحمد لله
Rihlat, p. 86	السلام عليك ورحمة الله

Usage of Wise Sayings and Wisdom

In the use of wise sayings and wisdom, one finds concession to Arab usage, root down to local or indigenous ones. The followings serve as examples:

Rihlat, p. 65	لكلّ داء دواء
Rihlat, p. 66	من جدّ وجد
Rihlat, p. 85	عنك أشياء علمت شيئا وغابت
Rihlat, p. 72	فليس الخبر كالمعاينة
Rihlat, p. 31	فمن شبّ على شيء شاب عليه

Employment of Popular and Common Arabic Proverbs

Some Arabic proverbs are used, this purposely for aesthetic attires.

For instance:

Rihlat, p. 17	الناس أجناس ولكن أكثرهم أنجاس
Rihlat, p. 17, 50, 67	زدني إيضا
Rihlat, p. 19, 27	وقيت الشرّ، ما لقيت ما بقيت ضرا
Rihlat, p. 41	فاليوم خمر وغدا أمر
Rihlat, p. 35	منزلة بين المنزلتين
Rihlat, p.44	ولا معين ولا معين لم يبق صاف ولا مصاف وفي المساوى بدا التساوى فلا أمين ولا ثمين

Usage of Rhetorical Tropes

The play has series of rhetorical tropes as intentionally employed by the author. An example of this is paronomasia.

i. *Jinas* (paranomasia)

Rihlat, p. 29, 36	أنست أنّ الدراهم بالدراهم تكسب
Rihlat, p. 57	ولا يهملفان الله يمهل
	دارهم مادمت في دارهم
	وجارهم مادمت في نوارهم

ii. Rhetorical Questions

The author's approach to rhetorical questions is very clear from the individual scenes of the play, many of which take the form of questions. Rhetorical questions are questions expect no answers; the

answers to such questions are self-evident. The following are examples

- Rihlat, p.30 أليست الشجرة يدل عليها ثمرها؟
 Rihlat. P.58 ؟ أفلا نكتفي بهذا
 Rihlat. P.81 فأين الإنسانية؟
 Rihlat, p.93 أترجون شيئا أكثر من النجاح
 Rihlat, p. 37 فأين القلب العطوف الرحيم من هذا الطبيب وأمثاله في مجتمعنا اليوم؟

Employment of Popular and Common Expressions in Arabic Literary Works

The author draws his ideas from various works of literature to embellish his plays. The quotations comprised poems, artistic prose and *maqamat genre* written by famous poets and playwrights. The first one to be considered is *maqamah al-Hariri*. Here the author incorporates three different expressions of *al-Hariri* in the plays.

- i. The use of زدني إيضاحا

This expression is drawn from *maqamah kufiyah* in the text of *maqamah al-Hariri*. It runs as thus:

فقلت له زدني إيضاحا عشت ونعشت

This expression is found on pages 17, 50, 67 of *Rihlat*.

- ii. The use of the following expressions is also noticeable in the play.

ما لقيتُما ما بقتُما ضرا يا أهل ذا المغني وقيتم شرّ
 ولا لقيتم ما بقيتم ضرا

Maqamah Hariri. P.41

The Incorporation of Poetic Verses

The author of *Rihlah* incorporates poetic verses from the text of *maqamah* into his work. It runs thus:

لم يبق صاف ولا مصاف ولا معين ولا معين . 44 Rihlat, p.44
 وفي المساوى بدا التساوى فلا أمين ولا ثمين

This is also found in the text of *Maqamatal -Harir p.64*.

The author of *Rihlah* also incorporates Imru Qays's Expressions in the plays. It runs thus:

فالיום خمر وغدا أمر

This is also found in the text of (al-mufasal, n.d, 51) & al-lskandari. (1916:61)

الناس أجناس ولكن أكثرهم أنجاس

People are of variety, but many are not descent.

This expression is a common expression among the literati. The author of *Rihlat* uses this expression in the play. (*Rihlat*, p. 17).

Nigerianization of the Play

There are some words or expressions used in the play that are related to Nigerian words and expressions. These suggest that the work discusses the socio-economic and political situation of Nigeria. Such expressions or words occur freely in the play.

The use of words such as:

Kobo {كوبو}	Naira {نيرا}	Rihlat, p.27,29, 40
River Niger {جسر نيجر}		Rihlat, p.35
Awolowo {أولوو}	and Sardauna {سردونا}	Rihlat, p. 69
Kakanfo {كاكنفو}		Rihlat, p.87
Orobo {اوروبو}		Rihlat, p.90
Lagos {لاغوس}		Rihlat, p.29

Literary Appreciation

The Arabic play under study operates on multiple levels of meaning and can be approached from various angles. The Islamic background of the author is hinted at a number of references to the holy Qur'an, *Sunnah* and Islamic slogans. In his use of language, one finds concession to colloquial usage and Arabised foreign vocabulary. The author makes allusion to classical Arabic works, his own oeuvre and draws on a celebrated *qasidah* from *maqama* Hariri (d.1122). The play is prosaic work, but snatches of poetry also appear in a stylistic pattern where rhetorical figures abound. As work of Arabic play of Nigerian authorship, the author is breaking entirely new ground, in using Qur'anic material as a basis for his work. He is introducing previously unknown ideas into the Arabic play.

In the overall structure and meaning of the work, the themes play only supportive part; much more central is the psychological significance with which the characters and events are invested. Thus, the play has a uniqueness of its own and a hidden beauty. The primary feature of this work is the loving attention which the author devoted to the description of his country. This is understandable from the text.

اليوم؟ فأين القلب العطوف الرحيم من هذا الطبيب وأمثاله في مجتمعنا

Where is kind-heartedness in this doctor and his like in our society today?

Where is humanness? فأين الإنسانية؟

The author of *Rihlat 'I-bahth* shows his most shrewd understanding of Nigerian society and its changing values. He uses his knowledge of metaphorical processes to make his queries, a rhetorical trope that requires no response; the answer is self-evident.

Conclusion

It is indeed a tribute to the author of *Rihlat*, for his great power of imagination, inter-textual playfulness and inventiveness, and his skill in writing what represents the society he skirts. The author draws his inspiration from various works of literature to cast his ideas. He employs various literary genres such as stylistic devices and rhetorical tropes. He draws from Arabic wise sayings, Islamic Religious expressions and borrowing ideas from foreign languages. In addition, he uses stereotyped expressions borrowed from indigenous languages to embellish his work. *Rihlat 'I-bahth* deals with political and social issues in Nigeria, it exposes social ills, and promotes thought and discussion. It is a struggle between a protagonist and antagonist, an issue between the social crusaders, the major characters and the ruling class, the political office holders.

We now conclude in this paper that *Rihlat 'I-bahth* presents a true picture of the Nigerian society. While the themes of the play echo the voice of Nigerian people. In conclusion, the play is in class of its own and the author is a literary figure to be reckoned with, his work *Rihlat 'I-bahth* is an eye-opener to Nigerian society.

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