



Research Paper

Contemporary Slavery in African Fiction: Analyses of Darko's Faceless and Agyei-Agyiri's Unexpected Joy at Dawn

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ABSTRACT: Slavery is one of the harrowing experiences encountered by Africans. It was declared illegal in 1948 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, stating that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude, and that slavery and slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Although the transatlantic slave trade of the last centuries had been formally abolished by different countries and world powers, other forms of slavery, which encompass the use of coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation, still persist. This research explores the different forms of contemporary slavery in the selected novels which include child sex trafficking, forced labor, domestic servitude, forced marriage, forced criminality and others. The research adopts trauma theory with the aim of capturing the psychological effects of the ugly phenomenon on the victims. It is discovered from the selected novels that contemporary slavery is a corollary of poverty, lack of education, immigration and government's canny and unplanned policies. The research concludes that contemporary slavery involving violent coercion and exploitation of individuals is still pervasive in different African countries nowadays.

KEY WORDS: Slavery, Contemporary Slavery, Trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, African Fiction

Received 10 Dec., 2022; Revised 23 Dec., 2022; Accepted 25 Dec., 2022 © The author(s) 2022.
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I. INTRODUCTION

Historical Survey of the Patterns of Slavery in Africa and their Representation in Literature

Slavery is one of the harrowing experiences encountered by Africans. It had existed in Africa even in the prehistoric time. Nathan Nunn stated that "Africa's history is intimately connected with slavery" (1). In Africa, early slavery resulted from captives taken from warring groups. Such captives were often sold and transported to more distant places. Apart from warfare, another reason for the practice of slavery in Africa was to provide the needed workforce for agriculture. In many African societies, slavery represented one of the few methods of producing wealth available to common people. To increase production, a family had to invest in more laborers and thus increase their agricultural production. The simplest and quickest way to do this was to invest in slaves. To help service this demand, many early African societies conducted slave raids on distant villages. Traditionally, African slaves were bought to perform menial or domestic labor or to enhance the status of the slave owner. This form of slavery in Africa is called domestic slavery and it was represented in the work of John Kohoso Kargbo entitled *Let me Die Alone*. In the text, Lansana is one of the slaves Gbanya acquired during the war. Again, one of the reasons why Madam Yoko, Gbanya's wife, encourages the warriors to go to war is to get more slaves that will help her in the farm. More so, Ndapi, one of the warriors, once boasts of slaughtering a whole village and dragging others into slavery.

The traditional African practices of slavery were altered to some extent beginning in the 7th century by two non-African groups of slave traders: Arab Muslims and Europeans. From the 7th to the 20th century, Arab Muslims raided and traded for black Africans, sending thousands of them to North Africa and some parts of Asia. From the 15th to the 19th century, Europeans bought millions of slaves in Africa and sent them to Europe, the Caribbean and South America. The African slaves in America represented their ordeals in their writings. According to Audrey Golden, "the first published works of African American literature came about in the 18th century, at a time when the United States was just coming into being and when newly recognized citizens, with clearly defined rights and freedoms, owned slaves." He added that "the conditions of slavery produced a certain genre of writing, which we've come to describe as slave narratives" (1). Such narratives include "The

Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa," the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and many others. The narratives explored the ordeals and crucibles of life under slavery. African American writers like Phillis Wheatly, Maya Angelou, Harriet Beecher and others represented this period of slavery in their works. Apart from the Africans in Diaspora, writers like Achebe and others denounced slavery in their works. According to (Osinubi 1):

Achebe responds to these situations of competing pluralizing forces by embedding African articulations of slavery within rival moral frameworks in his first three novels: *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease*, and *Arrow of God*. Achebe places slavery in an ongoing process in which the onslaught of colonialism uncovers and also radically transforms the moral and legal dispensations in which African slavery was worlded. These novels are thus narratives of loss and alienation; the afterlives of slavery become an intimate but deeply perturbing part of postcolonial heritage.

The sub-Saharan and the transatlantic slave trade differed from the previous practices of slavery in Africa especially in its huge scope. James L. Newman stated that "slavery and other forms of involuntary human servitude had long been features of African economic life" adding that "slaves had been marketable commodities for centuries in the trans-Saharan trade, but the European Atlantic slave trade introduced a much larger scale to the trade in human beings" (Newman 7). On this, (Angels 3) maintained that "slavery is as ancient as the first large civilizations and has been present in some form or another in most if not all human societies until the late 19th century," and that "the major characteristic that set the transatlantic slave trade from the traditional form of slavery is its magnitude." Speaking on this, (Wright 15) maintained that "the traditional African slavery was practiced largely to help African communities produce food and goods or for prestige and that the global economic demand for African slaves altered African practices of slavery such that slavery became a more central, structural element of African life, as rulers and wealthy elites sought to accumulate more and more slaves, for sale as well as for their own use."

This mode of acquiring slaves for economic gains continued into the 20th and the 21st centuries but in a more subtle and sophisticated form. With the advent of modernism, slavery by descent or chattel slavery where the enslaved person was considered the personal property (chattel) of someone else, and can usually be bought and sold gradually died out. Such slaves, as we have said before, were either from conquest or from slave raiding. In the 21st Century, almost every country has legally abolished chattel slavery, but the number of people currently enslaved around the world is far greater than the number of slaves during the historical Atlantic slave trade. The modern or contemporary slavery according to (Allain 3) entails "control exercised in such a manner as to significantly deprive that person of their individual liberty. Normally, this control is exercised through violence, later through threats of violence or coercion, but may also emerge through deception and/ or coercion." As chattel slavery has been abolished by different countries, enslavement no longer revolves around legal ownership, but around illegal control usually for the controller's benefit. This usually manifests in the form of child sex trafficking, forced labor, domestic servitude, forced marriage, forced criminality and others. This form of contemporary slavery is represented in Darko's *Faceless*, Agyei-Agyiri's *Unexpected Joy at Dawn* and many other works of postcolonial orientation.

This paper will explore the different forms of contemporary slavery in Darko's *Faceless* and Agyei-Agyiri's *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*. In the analyses, trauma theory shall be deployed to underscore the fact that enslaved victims are traumatized individuals.

II. CONCEPTUAL EXPLORATION

Slavery is a social institution defined by law and custom as the most absolute involuntary form of human servitude. It is a condition in which one human being was owned by another. A slave was considered by law as property or chattel, and was deprived of most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons. It is on this basis that (Elitis and Engerman 1) stated that "slavery is generally regarded as the most extreme form of dependency and exploitation." Slavery refers to a condition in which individuals are owned by others, who control where they live and the work they do. Based on this, (Kolchin 3) stated that "slaves have served in capacities as diverse as concubines, warriors, servants, craftworkers and tutors." Their labor or services are obtained through force; their physical beings are regarded as the property of their owner; and they are entirely subject to their owner's will. For this reason, (Wright 1) refers to slavery as "involuntary human servitude." Slaves could be bought, sold, traded, given as a gift, or pledged for a debt by their owner, usually without any recourse to personal or legal objection or restraint. To be a slave is to be owned by another person.

Slavery is also defined as "a state marked by the loss of free will where a person is forced through violence or the threat of violence to give up the ability to sell freely his or her own labor power" (Bales and Robbins 32). Following the same trend, the League of Nations Slavery Convention of 25 September 1926 defined slavery as "the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised" (art.1(1). The convention, among other things, implicates the right of ownership, that is, the ability of a person to own another. For (Rennie 1), the term slavery encompasses: "forcing people to

work against their will; treating people as a possession; restricting their freedom of movement; dehumanizing a person and defining someone as owned by another.” Following this, UNESCO states that slavery is “identified by an element of ownership or control over another’s life, coercion and the restriction of movement and by the fact that someone is not free to leave.” Through this definition, the U.N. declared in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights that every type of slavery is prohibited. Though it has been decades since the domestic, sub-Saharan and transatlantic forms of slavery were prohibited, another form called contemporary or modern slavery rears its ugly head.

III. CONTEMPORARY/MODERN SLAVERY

Contemporary slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labor, criminal exploitation and organ harvesting. According to the International Labor Organization, about 21 million people are in forced labor, trafficked, held in debt bondage or work in slave-like conditions in the world.

According to Bales, contemporary slavery is “the complete control of a person, for economic exploitation, by violence, or the threat of violence” (21). Using this definition, it is possible to explore the economic links that all forms of slavery, despite their unique characteristics, share and so, “economic conditions are decisive in the formation of slavery” (Guay 17). According to (Bales and Robbins 32), three aspects characterize contemporary slavery: “1. possession of one individual by another; 2. appropriation of the workforce; and 3. the imposition of these conditions through violence and coercive mechanisms.” On this, (Craig 12) examines “the scope of modern-day slavery by identifying the elements of the exploitative relationship between one human being and another that constitute slavery. These are essentially threefold: they involve “severe economic exploitation; the absence of any framework of human rights; the maintenance of control of one person over another by the prospect or reality of violence.” For (Bales 21), contemporary slavery is “the complete control of a person, for economic exploitation, by violence, or the threat of violence. In the same vein, (Rennie 1) states that “unlike traditional slavery, modern slavery does not often entail the direct ownership of the victim. Instead, it encompasses the exploitation of individuals and comes in numerous different forms which include human trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced criminality, forced marriage, domestic servitude and so on.”

IV. REPRESENTATION OF CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY IN THE SELECTED TEXTS

One of the functions of literature is the representation of human actions. It is on this basis that some literary scholars postulate that literature is a mirror of society. AyemAgye states in (Emenyonu 129) that “literature as a means of intellectual and imaginative communication, is itself a form of social consciousness, an important weapon in ideological struggle of classes.” Different aspects of contemporary slavery are represented in the texts.

4.1 CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY IN DARKO'S FACELESS

4.1.1 Child Sex Trafficking/Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is a form of labor exploitation specific to work in the sex industry. This includes online sites, brothels, pole dancing clubs, adult entertainment services and street prostitution (Reinne 3). This manifests mostly in the character of Baby T. Baby T is a young girl of sixteen whose mother sends into prostitution. She is a victim of child sex slavery. In a bid to take her away from Onko, who has deflowered her, her mother, Maa Tsuru, gives her away to MaamiBroni. MaamiBroni is a retired prostitute from Ivory Coast’s red-light district. Having become old, she comes back to Ghana to continue her business, though in a different way. Like other retired prostitutes, MaamiBroni attaches Baby T to herself to service her customers. MaamiBroni is under the protection of Poison, the street lord. MaamiBroni, who enslaves Baby T in her house, plans it in such a way that all the money Baby T is making from the prostitution is shared between her (Mami Broni), Poison (the street lord) and Maa Tsuru (Baby T’s mother). Later, Kpakpo, Maa Tsuru’s husband, begins to take advantage of Maa Tsuru’s own share by diverting it to his private pocket. Baby T does not have any share in the money she is making from prostitution. Mami Broni, who is in custody of the money, shares it accordingly and she (Baby T) dares not question it. Baby T is a money producing machine for them. This is an example of child sex labor.

4.1.2 Forced Labor/Labor Exploitation

According to (Reinne 2), “labor exploitation is where slaves are forced to work for no money, or any money they earn is transferred straight to their ‘owner.’” This is another form of slavery in the novel. It still manifests in the character of Baby T and other young girls Mami Broni, Poison and Mama Abidjan attach to themselves to be making money for them. The young girls are forced into prostitution against their will and to make the matter worse, the money the young girls are making is not theirs but their custodians. The girls are

completely under the control of the “owners.” They are incapable of independent actions and cannot leave their ignoble profession because their custodians will not allow them. Baby T’s tragic death is as a result of her refusal to serve Onko with sex. So, Baby T and the other young girls Mami Broni and Mama Abidjan attach to themselves are victims of forced labor.

4.1.3 Forced Criminality

Forced criminality is the act of coercing people to participate in criminal activities, such as begging, prostitution, theft, organ harvesting and cannabis cultivation (Rennie 4). This is another form of contemporary slavery in the text. Forced criminality in the text is primarily caused by parental irresponsibility or absentee fatherhood. According to (Eze 398), “absentee fatherhood embodies a situation where a man gives birth to children and does not stay with the wife to bring up the children. Such fathers disappear to unknown destinations, leaving to responsibilities of taking care of the children to their mothers alone.” And the mothers being unable to carry these responsibilities alone, they offer the children to the streets to cater for themselves. This absentee fatherhood is the major cause of crimes in the text. Most of the street children – Baby T, Fofu, Oderley, Poison, Macho and others are victims of absentee fatherhood. As they are not taken care of in their homes, they are pushed to the streets where circumstances force them into different forms of criminality. Poison and Macho are thieves and rapes. Fofu is a pickpocket. Street circumstances force some of the children into prostitution and some into robbery. Fofu is nearly killed by an angry mob for trying to steal from Kabria.

4.1.4 Abuse of Vulnerability

This is another form of contemporary slavery in the text. It manifests in the character of Maa Tsuru. Maa Tsuru is vulnerable and his vulnerability is often abused by men. To start with, she is forced to marry Kwei even without performing the final marriage rites. Kwei is twenty-three years old when he impregnates Maa Tsuru for the first time. He disappears as soon as Maa Tsuru becomes pregnant and comes back to make her pregnant again. This continues until he gets four children from Maa Tsuru - two boys, Baby T and Fofu. He finally abandons Maa Tsuru with four children to cater for.

Still in her vulnerability, she accepts NiiKpakpo into her life. Kpakpo uses her as a sex machine just like Kwei. He later gets two sons from Maa Tsuru and later abandons her with the two sons for good. Kwei and NiiKpakpo abuse Maa Tsuru’s vulnerability. She is parentless. Her mother dies while giving birth to her while her father is an absentee type. And apart from that, she is said to be carrying a curse from her dead mother. These situations make her vulnerable and incapable of helping herself. Kwei and Kpakpo abuse her vulnerability and make a slave of her.

4.2 CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY IN AGYEI-AGYIRI’S UNEXPECTED JOY AT DAWN

4.2.1 Forced Labor

This manifests in the characters of Nii, Aaron and the carpenter. We see this in the way Inspector Paleo treats Nii and his colleagues. Inspector Paleo arrests them as illegal immigrants and instead of taking them to cell or to deportee camp, Paleo diverts them to his Miliki home to work in his cassava farms and to run other businesses for him. He puts them under a caretaker who treats them just like slaves. Aaron complains of blisters on his palms and Nii replies: “Damn it! We are now in slavery.” The caretaker complains of their laziness just because they take some time to rest, saying: “No rest until you finish the day’s work. That’s that.” Nii replies: “You mean we should work like slaves?” Paleo uses his power as an immigration officer to enslave Nii and his colleagues.

4.2.2 Financial Exploitation

Financial exploitation is the targeting of vulnerable people by trusted individuals e.g. relatives, caregivers and friends (Rennie 2). This manifests mostly in the reaction of Amen Kristi members about Mama’s marriage proposal. Until then, Mama does not know that some members of the Corpus Kristi are hypocrites who enslave her in the church just to exploit her resources. The position of treasurer they give her in the church is to yoke her to the church for her to continue financing the church projects with her wealth. When Mama informs them of her proposed marriage to Joe, a Ghanaian, most of them object vehemently to the marriage. The chairman openly says: “If I’ll be permitted to advise you, I’ll say that distance and tribe count.” When Mama asks: “Why do we preach about the oneness of the tribes, nations, peoples and races?” The chairman replies: “I know that we do, but I’m an elderly man and know a few things you need to learn.” Among the Corpus Kristi members, only the secretary and Ibuk are on Mama’s side. They refuse to give their consent to the marriage not because they do not know what they preach but because if Mama marries Joe, she is likely to move to Ghana, thereby withdrawing the financial assistance she usually renders to the church. Mama Orojo is a victim of financial exploitation in the novel.

4.2.3 Abuse of Vulnerability

This relates to the above two examples. To start with, Inspector Paleo abuses Nii and his colleagues' vulnerability as helpless and illegal migrants. He arrests them but instead of following the due process, he decides to take advantage of them by diverting them to his Miliki home. In Paleo's Miliki home, he places Nii and his colleagues under a caretaker and forces them to do his domestic chores for a very meager wage. Inspector Paleo enslaves them in his house until they summon up the courage to escape. Inspector Paleo's treatment of them could also serve as domestic servitude.

Again, the corpus members of Amen Kristi abuses Mama Orojo's vulnerability as a devoted Christian. With her faith and devotion in the church, she continues to finance most of the church's projects. Mama Orojo does not know that she is allowed the position in the church in exchange for the financial supports she renders to the church. When she comes up with her marriage proposal that is likely to take her away from Nigeria, most of the corpus members of the church oppose to that vehemently for their individual selfish gains.

V. TRAUMA THEORY AND THE ENSLAVED VICTIMS

This theory is suitable for this study because the 21st Century is a century of traumas. Trauma has an enormous impact on both individuals and society as a whole. All the traumatic experiences of the century reflected in the works of different writers. According to (Balaev 1), "the field of trauma studies in literary criticism gained significant attention in 1996 with the publication of Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* and Kali Tal's *Worlds of Hurt Reading the Literatures of Trauma*." The theory stems from Freud's works: *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). This theory links the experiences of trauma to the human experiences. Literary trauma theory mainly investigates how traumatic experiences appear in works of literature and how such experiences affect the victims in particular and the society in general. Accumulated experiences of trauma cause post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which is a serious debilitating syndrome with significant personal, social and economic consequences. People with PTSD experience one or more major symptoms that include flashbacks and paranoia, difficulty in interpersonal relationships, and problems engaging in work and activities of daily living. In severe cases they can harm themselves or others; but these events are preventable by appropriate therapies.

Baby T is one of the traumatized characters in the novel. She is first traumatized by the circumstances of her family background. Their father, Kwei, abandons them to an unknown destination, leaving them in the mercy of their helpless poor mother. Unable to take care of the four children, Maa Tsuru pushes them out to the streets to beg. There, she is sexually abused on several occasions before her mother finally sells her to prostitution. Her death is as a result of the traumatic experience she has suffered with Onko who took advantage of her innocence and deflowered her. When Onko comes again for her to service him sexually in her place of prostitution, she refuses vehemently. Her struggle with Onko results to her death.

Fofu is another traumatized character presented in the novel. When they are sent to the streets to beg, she narrowly escapes being raped by Poison, the street lord. In her helplessness and despair, she desires to see the government. And in order to escape further assaults from the street lord, she forms the habit of disguising like a boy. The traumatic experiences will have claimed her life but MUTE intervenes to rehabilitate her.

In *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*, the major characters are traumatized individuals. As a result of the Aliens Compliance Order, Nii is abandoned by his relatives and left in the mercy of a family friend in Ghana. The failed Ghanaian economic situation worsens his condition. Though he is working in three different places, he could not afford himself a decent lifestyle neither could he cater for his wife's medical expenses. On his wife's death, he abandons her in the mortuary and travels to Nigeria in search of her sister, Mama Orojo. His traumatic experiences alienate him from others and he is nearly mad. He will have died of trauma if luck has not smiled on him and he eventually finds his sister, Mama Orojo.

Aaron seems to be the most traumatized character in the novel. What do you expect of a soil scientist with a PhD and a viable Anthill project with no job and no government assistance? He later dies a shameful and ignoble death.

VI. POSTMODERN SLAVERY

There seems to be an emerging form of slavery that may be termed postmodern slavery. It differs from modern slavery in a number of ways. To start with, the victims in modern slavery are usually poor, uneducated and vulnerable individuals. Speaking about modern slavery, (Parente 2) states that "it is characterized by fragile labor laws, low educational level of the population and low production costs." Speaking on the same matter, (Bales and Robbins 32) maintain that it is "a state marked by the loss of free will where a person is forced through violence or the threat of violence to give up the ability to sell freely his or her own labor power." In postmodern form of slavery, the victims are neither uneducated nor vulnerable. They are victims of the society's failed system. In Darko's *Faceless*, we have this in the characters Kabria, Dina, Vicky and Aggie. They are all educated but the society's failed system has refused to grant them sustainable job opportunities. They end up in

MUTE, a non-governmental organization basically into documentation and information build-up. These characters are not so poor that they cannot feed themselves but they are not viable enough to meet their basic needs. Kabia's inability to change *Creamy*, her rickety old car demonstrates this.

We have this type of victims in Agye-Agyiri's *Unexpected Joy at Dawn* in the characters of NiiTachie and Aaron Tsuru. Nii studied accounting after which he is employed at Expense Bank as assistant manager in Ghana. His pay as assistant bank manager is nothing to write home about that he has to merge his bank job with other jobs – collecting money for the Susu Credit Union and teaching in an A/O Level preparatory school. But in spite of all these, he still remains poor. He lives in a slum and unable to pay his wife's medical expenses. The wife eventually dies of the intractable sickness and when he is unable to cater for her burial expenses, he abandons her remains at Koforidua mortuary and leaves for Nigeria.

Aaron is another victim of a failed society system and another case study of postmodern form of slavery. He is a soil scientist, a building technologist engaged in soil research and hoping to go into estate development. He has a diploma in project management and a PhD as well. Aaron is the inventor of Anthill Project which is meant to be a suitable alternative to cement. He hopes that if well-funded, the project will help to provide cheap houses for workers. He submits the project proposal to Expense Bank for assessment. After going through the project and finding it viable, Nii recommends it for approval but the manager rejects it. The frustration occasioned by this makes Aaron travel abroad. He and Nii meet when they are about to cross the border. He suffers all the ordeals with Nii and in the end, he dies after he has jumped down from Mama's uncompleted building.

From the foregoing, we see that one of the major differences between the victims of modern and postmodern slavery is that as the former suffers from the antics and exploitative tendencies of their overlords, the later suffers from the impact of the society's failed system.

Another issue implicated in the above is the victims' attempt to escape from the immediate environment in search of greener pastures. In *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*, NiiTachie and Aaron Tsuru travel from Ghana to Nigeria in search of greener pastures. Before now, Nii Tachi's other two brothers had travelled abroad for greener pastures.

In the modern form of slavery, the slave owner is usually a single person or a group of persons but in postmodern slavery, "the slave owner" could be the government, a powerful institution or a powerful country. In Darko's *Faceless*, it is the Ghanaian government. At the beginning of the story, we see Fofo saying that she wants to see the government. The young girl could not believe that there is still a government in Ghana while everything is on the verge of collapse.

In *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*, the "slave owner" is still the Ghanaian government with her obnoxious policy of Alien Compliance Order. In Nigeria, (as the novel has two major settings: Ghana and Nigeria) "the slave owner" is the Nigerian government with her own Deportation of Aliens policy under Alhaji Shehu Shagari's regime in 1983.

Lastly, unlike in other forms of slavery where explicit coercion is noticeable, the act of coercion in postmodern slavery is subtle and almost unnoticeable. Most of the time in the case of postmodern slavery, the victims engage themselves in the maze of the phenomenon and so will not notice that they have enslaved themselves.

VII. CONCLUSION

Slavery as one of human activities has evolved from the crudest to the most sophisticated form. It has evolved from domestic to sub-Saharan/transatlantic to modern and then to what could be termed the postmodern form. And as slavery continues to evolve, it becomes more expansive and all-involving. The 21st Century is a century of tremendous advancements in all human endeavors. The advancement in the phenomenon of slavery has gone to the extent that many people have become victims in one way or the other. And as we know that enslaved victims are traumatized individuals, could we then say that the troubles of the 21st Century could have one connection or the other with the phenomenon of slavery, modern or postmodern?

VIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study has implicated a number of issues and critical questions to be looked into by further researchers. To start with, as slavery in all its forms deal with human rights denial, further researches could be conducted on the phenomenon of slavery and human rights denial.

Again, as slavery tries to keep pace with human development and advancement, further researches could be conducted on postmodern slavery and its characteristic features.

As the government plays an active role in postmodern slavery according to this research, could we say that the government's act of poor remuneration of the civil servants (especially in the third world countries), insensitive to their plights and its unwillingness to create more jobs for the populace are acts of slavery? The governments and institutions in the selected novels provide limited job opportunities and remunerate those in

service poorly, knowing that they (those in service) are not likely to quit their jobs. Could these antics serve as slavery? Researches could be conducted on government/civil service and the issue of slavery.

Sequel to the above, as slavery has shifted from the hands of individuals to those of the governments and world powers, could we detect any act of slavery in the current Covid 19 pandemic? Researches could also be conducted on Covid 19 as a postmodern form of slavery.

In *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*, Mama Orojo is gravely exploited by Amen Kristi Church. Could we then say that the influence of our churches on us, despite our faith and devotions, could sometime amount to slavery? If that could be the case, researches could also be conducted on churches and modern/postmodern slavery.

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