

Reinventing folklore in modern Nigerian film using Jay Franklyn

Jituboh's The Origin of Madam Koi Koi

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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DECLARATION

This project work is based on a study conducted by me in the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Mr Israel Meriomame Wekpe. All findings and analysis in the study are products of my personal research. The views, works and research of other individuals as used and expressed were duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was duly carried out by Otoabasi-Akpan David Aniete ART1901986 in the Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) in Theatre Arts.

Project Supervisor

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DATE

Head of Department

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God, who always gives me strength. And my family, they have been the best support system, their endless support has seen me through this process.

Acknowledgement

My first acknowledgement goes to God as He is my source of endless joy and peace.

Then I would acknowledge also my family for their support and encouragement in the things that I do. My mother and father Mr and Mrs. Otoabasi-Akpan and my siblings Michael and Stephanie of the same name.

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Abstract

This project looks at folklore, film and the performance of both. Understanding folklore and film for the sake of merging them together in a coherent work that would be both entertaining and educative. This work looks into folklore and helps its reader understand and apply it to film using Jay Franklyn Jituboh's Origin of Madam Koi Koi as a major case study.

Chapter 1

1.1 Background of study

"Folklore is a system of communication, a body of lore transmitted from one generation to another, expressed in a rich variety of forms: narrative, song, dance, drama, proverb, riddle, and so on" (Thomas A. Green, p7).

One of the best known explanations of folklore is found in Alan Dundes' brief essay, "What Is Folklore?" he disputes the notion that "folk" should be automatically identified with peasant or rural groups, or with people from the past. He argues that contemporary urban people also have folklore and suggests

that rather than dying out, folklore is constantly being created and recreated to suit new situations (Dundes, p2).

An article compiled by James Rex, vocabulary.com describes the word itself 'folklore' as "a compound of two English words 'folk'" the first half of the word was coined in 1846 by the Englishman William Thoms. The concept of folk has varied over time, at the time that Thoms first created this term, folk applied only to rural, frequently poor and illiterate peasants. A modern definition of folk as found in many sources, is that it is a social group that includes two or more people with common traits who express their shared identity through distinctive traditions. The website also mentions the second half of the word, 'lore', which it reveals comes from Old English *lār* 'instruction' describing it as "the knowledge and traditions of a particular group, frequently passed along by word of mouth". The word

may have been coined in 1846 but it has existed as a practice in many places worldwide.

While looking at folklore and its natures, another focus of this study would also include Nollywood also known as the cinema of Nigeria, which according to NFI.EDU's article "What is Nollywood? Everything you need to know" consists of films produced in Nigeria; its history dates back to as early as the late 19th century and into the colonial era in the early 20th century. The history and development of the Nigerian motion picture industry is sometimes generally classified into four main eras: The Colonial era (late 19th century - early 1960s), the Golden Age era (late 1950s - late 1980s), the Video film era (late 1980s

- mid-2010s) and the emerging New Nigerian cinema era (mid-2000s - present)

1.2 Statement of problem

Folklore is already an invented term, one that has been used for as long as the performing arts have been a part of society.

The nature of folklore is its connection with the folk and the lore of the society. Wilhelm Grimm and Jacob Grimm, active German scholars of their time, explored old and forgotten folktales, aimed to keep the oral traditions alive by retelling forgotten tales or popular ones from the known oral format to the literary format, which brought rise to the popularity of the

grimm's fairy tales. The Times have changed yet again and like Alan Dundes said it is time for folklore to "suit new situations" film and television is now the fastest way to connect with the folk of today and just like the scholars who adapted oral stories to literary text, it is time to embrace movements that would allow for folklore to be re-presented, film is one of those means and or else more adaptations like Jay Franklyn Jituboh's The Origin of Madam Koi Koi is embraced and encouraged, the unique and entertaining ways of folklore could get lost and forgotten in time.

1.3 Aim & Objectives of Study

The general aim of this study is to understand and appreciate the connection between folklore and film using Jituboh's Origin of Madam Koi Koi as a prime example.

The objectives are as follows:

- 1) To properly appreciate and appraise films that take inspiration from folklore, especially the Origin Madam Koi Koi and inspire more like them.
 - 2) To point out the significance and brilliance of folklore in our society, so that we understand the need for its continued relevance and reinvention.
 - 3) To enlighten readers on the true life of folklore and how film and cinema contribute to that
 - 4) To show the strong connection between folklore and modern society
-

1.4 Scope of the study

This work will look at, analyse and appreciate Madam Koi Koi as a film based on folklore, giving the reader an understanding of what folklore is, an idea of Nigerian film and its evolution, then settling on the role folklore plays in giving it life for a group of indigenes. The study will also look into the director's mind, initial goals, setbacks, and success following the film's streaming. We will also try to gain an understanding of how to apply folklore in film without misrepresenting the indigenous people who grew up respecting the myth.

1.5 Research Methodology

In this study I will make use of mixed method research a data collection method which utilises both quantitative and

qualitative research methods. Using John W. Creswell's mixed method research i will aim at addressing research questions from multiple perspectives and providing a more comprehensive understanding of the issue under investigation.

1.6 Significance of study

To highlight the sometimes hidden significance folklore has in film and other performing arts as a whole, this study will help the reader to properly understand and appreciate folklore and also help them to attentively search for and appreciate films that utilize folklore in their storytelling because, at the end of this study, I would have convinced the reader of the trendy magic folklore possesses in the entertainment world, as well as the educational significance it has in a society.

1.7 Definition of terms

Folklore: In the context of my work, is a flexible tool, vital for expression and the advancement of emotion, a tool used also to connect and bond with man's most basic self. To teach and enlighten, in this work, folklore is the stories of the folk, told to many other folks, mostly through oral means.

Nollywood(Nigerian film): An ever-evolving and ever-growing institution that keeps its focus on the Nigerian people, it is important to note that folklore is the inspiration for Nollywood so it must be held onto and not just left aside.

Chapter 2

Review of related literature

2.1 The Realm of Folklore

Folklore is an alluring force of great cultural relevance, an ember or flame that tells the audience of the nature, thinking, and art of living of a people who may no longer even exist. An online library by name library.illinois.edu brings up definitions on folklore saying that “folk” can refer to “any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the linking factor is-it could be a common occupation, language, or religion-but what is important is that a group...have some traditions that it calls its own” It is important to note that this definition drew its origins from Alan Dundes multiple definitions on folklore.

Maria Leach an American writer of the 20th century wrote twenty-one different known definitions of folklore, we will go through all 20.

The first is "Folklore as the knowledge and customs transmitted traditionally among the common people of a particular region" this definition uses the very imaginative word "transmitted" meaning to pass something from one person to another, so we now know that foundationally folklore was made to be passed on.

The second one "Folklore is the traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices of a people" Folklore is the practice of a people and is traditional in nature, but that doesn't mean it's no longer relevant to us but rather that it has been relevant for a long time and will continue to be long after now.

The third definition is "Folklore is the study of the traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices of a people" similar to the former but this one uses a key word "study" meaning folklore isn't just a practise of an art but the study of said practise, if something is being studied it means there is more to understand about it various dimensions of it yet explored.

The fourth definition is "Folklore is the body of traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices transmitted orally or by custom from generation to generation" Folklore is the body of traditional myths and tales meaning it is a tool like the human body that contains many things and is capable of many things.

Fifth is "Folklore as the traditional customs, beliefs, tales, sayings, dances, songs, and arts of a people" Folklore involves itself with all forms of performance including dances, saying etc.

Sixth "Folklore as the traditional stories, customs, and beliefs of a culture, transmitted orally or by custom" that is to say that folklore is a usual and habitual practise.

Seventh "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of a community" it is the practise of a people as well.

Eighth "Folklore as the knowledge and customs transmitted traditionally among the common people of a particular region"

Ninth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices of all groups of people"

Tenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of the world."

Eleventh "Folklore as the body of traditional beliefs, myths, tales, and practices transmitted orally or by custom from generation to generation"

Twelveth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of all nations and civilizations."

Thirteenth " Folklore as the traditional stories, customs, and beliefs of a culture, transmitted orally or by custom"

Fourteenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of a community."

Fifteenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of all society."

Sixteenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of all cultures"

Seventeenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of mankind."

Eighteenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of a nation or civilization."

Nineteenth "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of humanity."

Twentieth Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of humankind.

Twenty-first "Folklore as the traditional beliefs, customs, and practices of all tribes and ethnic groups."

(Leach, p1, p2)

Each definition mentioned makes emphasis on different aspects and scopes of folklore within human cultures and societies. And it shows us that folklore stands as a tool that can be used in Infinite ways for the same reasons, to connect to the society.

The concept of folklore became more relevant to us during the 20th and 21st centuries, which is our era. This is because, in

contrast to how things were, we of this era now consider concepts like diversity more often and are interested in people who look nothing like us, one might even suggest that today's society is strangely drawn to things that look nothing like them.

The perspective that folklore remains relevant in modern times, and perhaps even more so, is a commonly shared view among scholars in the field of folklore studies, there isn't one particular scholar who holds this viewpoint. It is just a generally agreed upon view, folklore is not halted by technologies like film and television, they are tools that propel it even better than thought possible. "Despite technological advancements and societal changes, folklore continues to serve vital social functions and remains integral to human culture" (Dégh, 22) so no matter the changes our community undergoes, there is always a room that folklore occupies in it. The findings so far

have proven to be vital in helping us better express the term 'folklore' and use it in a different ways.

Communication Competence” (Mafela, pg 5) says “Folklore, to an anthropological folklorist, is an aesthetic product of society, mirroring its values and offering a projective screen that illuminates its fantasies” This implies that folklore is sometimes like a 'wet dream' that an entire community engages actively in and through that dream we would be able to see and better understand and appreciate the society it came from.

In today's world, folklore has begun to play a major role in entertainment, following the popular marketing of characters in folklore from the Norse, Greek, Japanese, Korean, British, Native American, African, Nigerian communities and many others. Characters in folklore are rich and have cultural

significance, understanding the character or the story that revolves around them will give you a good understanding of the natives of that land and how they function.

Folklore has a different significance to those who experience it as indigenes and those who experience it as outsiders or non-natives of the land. To indigenes folklore is seen as something more sacred, some remember the foundations on which the stories were told and they appreciate it, others may not know the foundations but they appreciate what they know it represents for their community. For the non-indigenes, they are always fascinated by folklore, more of them tend to fanaticise and romanticise the tales hoping to somehow understand the way of thinking the indigenes had and satisfy their curiosity.

The nature of Folklore is to protect the life and thinking of the natives, boxing it all up to a story, legend or myth, and if you're a native's descendant or a non-indigene, there is still a way to appreciate and enjoy folklore.

2.2 Popular Ideologies and Misconceptions on Folklore

Folklore, like everything that has been around long enough, has a lot of misconceptions that often steal from audiences the privilege of appreciating the art. If we are to properly appreciate folklore and reinvent our general understanding of it, we must first address what these ideologies and misconceptions are and why they may be right or wrong.

One of the first arguments that comes to mind is the statement that folklore is primitive and old school hence stiff and

inflexible, aged, dead or dying as an art form but Richard Dorson a folklore enthusiast, wrote in his work "Folklore and Folklife" about the perpetuity of folklore, here is what he said, "Folklore is not fossilized, dead, or dying; it is a dynamic force in the life of the folk, ever renewing itself as it responds to new stimuli and new ideas" (Dorson, 12). That should help us better understand that folklore has an eternal hold on society as it evolves folklore and its endless stories will evolve with it both in meaning, nature and expression.

Another common argument is that folklore is common superstition and hence has no real societal effect outside our imaginations and dreams, rituals.

While some scholars may view certain elements of folklore as rooted in superstition, it's essential to recognize that folklore

encompasses a wide range of beliefs, customs, and practices, not all of which are considered superstition. Superstition often refers to irrational beliefs or practices based on supernatural causality, in a quote from Encyclopedia of Superstitions , Edwin Radford says "Superstition is a belief or practice which, though not based upon reason or knowledge, has been accepted either instinctively or through some arbitrary decision as possessing a certain claim to validity." (Radford, 11) this is a dimension of folklore yes, but a very small one, folklore does not only hold the prints of the crazy superstitions of our ancestors but folklore also includes traditions, narratives, and rituals that may have complex social, cultural, or symbolic meanings beyond mere superstition.

Some scholars however, have studied folklore with a focus on its connections to superstition or supernatural beliefs. One

example is E. E. Evans-Pritchard, a British anthropologist known for his work on African societies and witchcraft beliefs. In his studies, Evans-Pritchard explored how folklore, including myths, legends, and rituals, intersected with notions of magic and superstition within specific cultural contexts, that is not to say that they are simply superstition but that they do indeed start that way but end up being more than simple Superstitions.

It's also important to approach the study of folklore with nuance and recognize the diversity of beliefs and practices within different cultural frameworks. While some aspects of folklore may overlap with superstition, folklore as a whole encompasses a rich tapestry of cultural expression, tradition, and meaning.

American folklorist Alan Dundes, in his work “Interpreting Folklore” (Dundes, 8) writes about the functionality of folklore he argues that folklore serves various functions within a culture beyond superstition. It can act as a means of social cohesion, transmitting cultural knowledge, reinforcing group identity, and expressing collective values and beliefs. He also delves into symbolism in folklore he draws emphasis on the symbolic richness of folklore, suggesting that folk narratives, rituals, and customs often carry deeper meanings related to social dynamics, psychological truths, and existential concerns. Viewing folklore solely as superstition overlooks these complex symbolic dimensions.

With these, we have concluded that folklore is indeed adaptable, eternally relevant, mature, real, and vital for the very simple but wide goal of societal change.

2.3 Nigerian film and television

This refers to the films and television series that are published directly in Nigeria and often feature Nigerian superstars or celebrities.

The term "Nollywood" was coined by the New York Times journalist Norimitsu Onishi in an article titled "Step Aside, L.A. and Bombay, for Nollywood". Still, due to evolving meanings and contexts, there is no clear or agreed-upon definition for the term. But in his article, he talks about the growing meaning and relevance Nollywood has in transforming African society as a whole by saying "Nigeria's pulp movies have had a wide influence on African popular culture -- so much so that they have suddenly made acting an attractive profession in Nigeria

and have transformed Surulere, an otherwise drab neighbourhood of two-story businesses and houses, into a crucible of dreams and desires” (Onishi, 3) simply saying that Nigerian film is a movement that has been and will continue to transform and improve the lives of the native people it entertains.

2.4 Common Discussions on Nigerian Folklore and Film

Nigeria, just like every other country in Africa and around the world, has its own rich and lively folklore that it tells, one that is unique to the people and their communities. Nigerian folklore existed long before the nation itself did, this refers to precolonial Nigeria where the local man told morality tales to train their young and teach his society, or when he expressed

spirituality all through the tool called folklore, and from then till now the natives of this great nation still indulge heavily in folklore as a means of understanding and expressing his views for society. In the times that followed the practice of film was more rampant and trendy, Nigerians began to follow in the footsteps of their colonizers, especially in the realm of entertainment, but thankfully Nigerians still make use of things that make them unique in comparison to them.

Here are some common discussions on Nigerian folklore and film

Cultural Representation: Scholars tend to analyse how Nigerian folklore is portrayed in films and the extent to which these representations accurately reflect traditional beliefs, customs, and values and the contemporary evolutions mixed in.

Identity and Nationalism: There's a focus on how folklore and film contribute to the construction of Nigerian identity, both domestically and internationally, and how they reflect nationalist narratives, hammering on a certain issue the community faces, because as we all know, we live in a communal society, and nothing fixes communal problems for us better than a good story.

2.5 Practitioners of Nigerian Folklore in Film

The known practitioners of any field give us an insight into the nature and workings of that field. So if we aim to gain a better understanding of folklore then we need to know its practitioners and loyal disciples.

Apart from the ones mentioned previously like Richard Dorson and Alan Dundes, Edwin Radford, Maria Leach and so on, there

are other scholars known for their academic approaches, discussions, and uses of the art form, some of those practitioners include;

Prof. Wole Soyinka: A writer of great renown in spaces even outside Nigeria, Soyinka's works are best known for their spiritual and communal nature, but most of all, he is known for his deep reference to Yoruba folklore and mythology, it is with that inspiration that he wrote on the theory of the fourth stage and his many other plays, which are greatly inspired by folklore.

Chinua Achebe: Though primarily known for his novels like "Things Fall Apart," Achebe also incorporated Igbo folklore and proverbs into his writing, enriching his narratives with cultural depth.

Zulu Sofola: A playwright known for works like "The Sweet Trap" and "The Wizard of Law". Sofola, like Soyinka, drew

inspiration from Yoruba folklore and traditional Nigerian society in her plays.

Fela Kuti: While being the only musician on this list, Fela Kuti like his cousin Soyinka, engaged with our society both politically and spiritually through the use of Yoruba folklore, by doing this he created many timeless artworks and left us with a genre of music known as Afrobeat.

Hubert Ogunde: was a significant figure in Nigerian theatre and folklore. He was a playwright, actor, musician, and director who played a crucial role in the development of Nigerian theatre and popular culture. Ogunde's contributions to folklore are multi-faceted. He is one of the earliest filmmakers to adapt folklore into film, and is often referred to as the father of Nigerian theatre and cinema. Ogunde produced and directed

several films that drew heavily from Nigerian folklore, mythology, and traditional storytelling.

One of Ogunde's most notable films is "Aiye" (The World, 1967), which incorporates elements of Yoruba folklore and explores themes of morality, destiny, and societal change. The film features traditional Yoruba music, dance, and costumes, providing a rich cultural tapestry that resonated with audiences across Nigeria. His work continues to inspire filmmakers in Nigeria and beyond to explore the rich cultural heritage of the country through storytelling on the silver screen.

Mr. Jay Franklyn Jituboh: A director and an artist in his own right, Mr. Jituboh earns a spot on this list due to his film and its nature, which embodies folklore in a fresh, new and different

medium. He is not new to the world of film making and has made movies such as The House Wife (2018) Dinner (2016), Once (2015) , Dis'e's Secret (2015), Made In Heaven (2019) etc but his film "The Origin of Madam Koi Koi" is his first venture into the world of folklore and film. He uses it to push multiple messages about society , culture and religion, along with many other things that are open to interpretation. His work gives those of us familiar with the feeling of nostalgia and uses that feeling to insert new emotions into us about our society and our community that hopes to encourage a sense for change just like how folklore is meant to.

Chapter 3

3.1 Madam Koi Koi as Folklore

Introduction

Madam Koi Koi is a popular character in Nigerian folklore, although she is also known in other parts of the African community. The name "Koi Koi" is derived from the Yoruba word "koi," which means to tap or knock, but she is also known to be called by other names like Lady Koi Koi, Miss Koi Koi in Nigeria, Madam High Heel or Madam Moke in Ghana and Miss Konkoko in Tanzania. Madam Koi Koi is often portrayed as a mischievous spirit or ghost known for making knocking sounds on doors or windows, usually late at night, haunting the lives of the young students who fear her (simisola2, seemingly.com).

The folklore surrounding Madam Koi Koi is a blend of mystery and a cautionary tale. The story is often used to warn children about the consequences of disobedience or wandering outside at inappropriate times. The character's presence is associated with death, loss and the eerie clicking sounds from her iconic red heels, creating a sense of fear and intrigue.

While Madam Koi Koi's specific characteristics and stories may vary, the overarching theme involves a supernatural figure associated with nocturnal sounds, serving as a cultural way to impart discipline and obedience among children.

In an article by Pulse NG published in October 2016, Mr. Ayomide Tayo wrote an article on the mythical figure titled "The Legend of the Dead Teacher Who Haunts Secondary

School Students" he talks of the story of Madam Koi Koi and claims that it is one of the most popular modern folklore in Africa, one that still has relevance to the community that birthed it, and one that also develops intrigue in the mind of those who are non-indigenes in our society, this would explain why a film on the character was well received in the world-renowned streaming site called Netflix and not only did it find a space there, it dominated the top spot, this testifies to the lore that the story of Madam Koi Koi has.

Additionally, the "Madam Koi Koi" legend may have been influenced by cultural practices, historical events, or local superstitions prevalent in our society at the time. It's also worth noting that folklore tends to evolve and adapt over time, with new elements being added and old ones being modified or reinterpreted, so the exact origins of the legend may be difficult

to pinpoint definitively, but as an introduction it is good to know all that has been said so far as it helps equip you with a solid idea on the legend.

3.2 The Significance of the film Madam Koi Koi in contemporary society

Madam Koi Koi is a well-known urban legend that refers to a figure who haunts schools at night, it is a legend that started in the halls of local boarding schools in the 1990s and still holds its relevance in society today. Looking critically at the story of Lady Koi Koi we would find that it was simply an imitation of traditional folklorist storytelling technique applied in a modern setting, and children who grew up hearing the tale of her horrific heels are now adults and those adults run and dominate Nigerian society today, one of such people being the

director of the film “The Origin of Madam Koi Koi” and his cast and crew members, as well as most of his audience. They, along with many Nigerians are impacted by the folklore and would actively appreciate it whenever it is mentioned.

Those asking for the relevance of such a story or those who simply see it as a horror film and nothing else are missing the point of the work that Mr. Jitubor created. The world as we know it is lawless and many evils go unpunished, proof of this can be seen in our faulty and broken system, but this film shows us that those people may have been able to escape physical consequences but they are not entirely safe from the spiritual penalties that appear, thus gives Nigerians hope that their oppressors could also be haunted by this force that doesn't discriminate.

3.3 A Comparative Discuss and Analysis of Folklore and Film

Alan Dundes defined folklore as "artistic communication in small groups." Dorson describes it as "the unwritten literature of the human species, the tale that endures when all the books have crumbled to dust"

André Bazin described film as a medium that has the unique ability to capture and preserve reality. He believed that cinema, through its use of photographic images and long takes, could present a more objective and truthful representation of the world compared to other art forms. Bazin argued that the essence of cinema lies in its capacity to record and reproduce reality.

Folklore is an eternal art form that carries the soul of our reality through stories, while film and cinema is an art that retells the

story of our reality on screen, they both concern themselves with presenting an idea that is relevant to the people and community in which the art is found and both aim to eternalize it.

3.4 An inside look into Jay Franklyn Jitubor's thoughts throughout pre-, during-, and post-production

Jay Franklyn Jituboh (Born February 19th) is a Nigerian filmmaker, Author and Entrepreneur from Delta state, born and raised in the southern part of Nigeria. As a teenager, he had a passion for art, technology and storytelling; he spent most of his time creating characters, drawing comic books, learning computer applications and writing short stories.

In 2004, he wrote his first book, "The Sin Theory" and a couple of other short stories (unpublished). He always had a passion

for film and cinematography and in 2011; he made his transition from a novelist to a screenwriter, when he started a full circle entertainment company called "5-6-7 Entertainment", under which he wrote his first TV series titled "The Label" with 13 episodes. In 2012, he wrote his first feature length film titled "Keeping Up" and a short film titled "Caught", which he later went on to produce and direct in March 2013. The movie had over two thousand (2000) mobile downloads in the first 18 hours of release. He has since then released a couple of documentaries including "Sensitive Skin", "Keepers Of The Sun", a couple of short films and Film for TV (Dise's Secret - 2015), (Once Upon a Wish - 2015) and music videos.

In 2014, He directed a short film Titled "Once" in the Afrinolly Cinema4Change project; a collaboration between Afrinolly and Ford Foundation. The film deals with religious intolerance. In

2016 he released his first feature length movie in the Nigerian Box office titled Dinner, which will end up on the top 10 highest grossing movies for 2016, and will later on become the first Nigerian film with a theatrical visa to screen commercially in France. He has since produced and directed two film for TV projects (Before Dawn - 2021) and (Stuck - 2022).

And he is now known around the nation for his film "The Origin of Madam Koi Koi" of which we are studying and paying attention to.

One of the key aspects of any performance is the pre-, during and post-production which depending on the director's approach to things, could change the entire trajectory of the production of the film. While looking at the film "Origin of Madam Koi Koi" by Jay Fanklyn Jituboh, if we aim to understand

the work we must understand his view during the production process.

During a one-on-one interview with the director, which came to be as a result of an academic exercise, under my Dramatic Theory and Criticism course, which prompted us to attend Edo State Film Festival (ESIFF), i was opportune to ask him a bit about his point of view concerning the production process.

When asked what the most challenging part of the production process was, Mr. Jituboh had this to say “a lot, to list some obvious ones, the location, props, timeline, funding and so on.

All of these had their problems which led to more problems that took time to solve” He also says on the matter of his timeline, his idea drafting started in 2020, which involved writing and planning, and the shooting began in 2021. And on

the price, cost and overall funding of the project, the price of all production-related matters ranged from 50-170 million naira.

Then he mentioned the musical aspects which he said were original and took 4 years to prepare and perfect.

When asked if he created the film based on preexisting ideas, he responded by saying “Yes and no, most of the ideas in my film came from popular beliefs but they didn’t belong to any one person and other ideas were as a result of my creativity and that of my co-writer Dale Falola” this finalizes the idea that one truly cannot make a film with only tales alone, adapting folklore to film takes originality and creativity.

He was also asked what influenced the visage of Madam Koi Koi that was used during the film production process, he said “she was made to look like how she died, she was a product of her

time and circumstance so the image suited that” we can see this in the film, if we look closely at her figure we would see the marks and scars on her face and body, and the decay on that shows on those marks which indicate that she died a violent death.

Having heard about the importance of sprouting a unique and fresh idea, finding a fitting location for setting, outlining fundings and applying patience to the process, we can surmise that the director’s views and ideas are what spearhead the production to a healthy conclusion, this means that to reinvent folklore in film, the head of the team (director) must be well indoctrinated.

In the matter of post-production, the director was asked what kind of influence he believes his film to have had on society

after public streaming, he had this to say “I believe the impact to be positive, using this familiar legend, my crew and I were able to create a huge buzz online about consent, rape, abuse not just from men and not just sexual, this makes me believe that so far my film has been a positive influence on young minds today.

3.5 Investigating some iterations of Madam Koi Koi

One of the key elements of folklore is its variety in iterations.

Due to their oral nature, folklore stories tend to have multiple differences in details of storytelling but usually, the general idea behind the tale tends to be intact.

In the schools that know of her as a legend, Madam Koi Koi was a ghost that came when you stayed in school after hours, when all the teachers were out, many of us swore they heard the

sounds of heels in the halls, a dead teacher come to teach us not to stay in school so late, but then some other sources say that she haunted teaching and non-teaching staffs not just students alone.

But when adapting such a tale into film and cinema, all those sources have to be amassed into one figure, Jay Franklyn Jituboh made a practical example with his film by taking all the common unifying factors that all tales of Madam Koi Koi has, like her red heels, her ghastly appearance, and her attachment with boarding schools. So for the sake of future folklore films, the willing practitioners should do the same to encourage continuity.

3.6 Popular ideas in folklore and how they fit into film adaptations

Sam Ukala, one of the practitioners of folklore in Nigeria talks extensively about his theory of folklore in Nigerian performance art. He says “In all, it seems clear that a thorough going application of the aesthetics of the African folktale may remove or reduce the shortcomings of Nigerian literary drama. Such an emergent aesthetic principle may be called 'folkism': the tendency to base literary plays on the history, culture, and concerns of the folk and to compose and perform them by African conventions” (Ukala, p.g 285). From this, according to Sam Ukala himself, one of the running ideas of folklore is that it is made for the sake of the people and community. For this reason, it is important also that it possesses another trait, morality which is the aim of Folklore in its simplest form, to teach morals to the young and old. Then Sam Ukala also mentioned in the same work that the Folklore appeal lies in its

simplicity, telling a complex idea in a simple and easy-to-understand manner and in a way that is relevant to the people watching it because the moral standards of us now as a community is not the same as it was with our ancestors, therefore film practitioners should be wary of the ideas the tales they adapt present to the contemporary society.

In Jituboh's film, we see the applications of subjects like consent, love, discipline, parental care and many other subjects relevant to this generation. We also see a use of simplicity in the film, where the ideas and intentions of the characters are clearly stated and easy to understand.

It is therefore vital in the process of adapting and reinventing folklore in film, that we do not miss the little things that would make folklore what it is.

3.7 The power and influence of folklore in an African community

When Jituboh was asked about his motivation behind directing this particular story, his response was “The popularity, almost every individual in Gen Z (born between 1995 & 2009) and Gen Y or Millennials, (born between 1982 & 94) know and love or fear the story of Madam Koi Koi, no matter the emotion they feel, they react strongly to the name and it’s contemporary meanings”. As mentioned by the director and by myself multiple times in this work, folklore is not a lost medium, it still holds its relevance very strongly in our community and the representation of it in film will bring a new, different life to the community familiar with its stories, just the same way the film Madam Koi Koi had done for us, many would agree that its popularity in streaming site "Netflix" is due to the fame with its

people beforehand, what turning that to a film does is it amplifies the already generally recognized medium, freshly presenting it to a new and old audience.

Chapter 4

Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations and Work Cited

4.1 Summary

There have been many instances where folklore has found its way into the world of film and television as a sub-theme or a reference to an ideology, but not often have there been cases where folklore has been the central topic as Mr. Jituboh had made in his film, I believe this is because of the lack of understanding of the nature of folklore, its nature to adapt and reinvent, this work has been aimed at bringing every research, reference and quote available from scholars who argue that

folklore is indeed relevant and worth banking on in the world of film.

Jituboh in a program called Edo State Film Festival (ESIFF) that the researcher attended as an academic exercise for a course on dramatic theories and criticism, said to the room of directors that folklore in film isn't only relevant to the indigenous people, he said the story he aimed at telling is "a story that resonates with Nigerians and extends globally".

He talked again about the horror genre and how it is not mainstream yet in Nigeria despite many creepy figures existing and untapped in Nigerian folklore like "mami wata", "bush babies", "Oroma, The Headless Girl Who Braids Her Hair" and many other legends that have yet to be projected in film and television, using the cinematic languages of film, it is possible to

tell a story that can reach the global stage like Mr. Jituboh's work has.

4.2 Conclusion

Now having amassed this knowledge on folklore, film, and production process, we would then look to the application of all of this. To get a better understanding of this we should look once more at what was said by Jituboh during the Edo State Film Festival (ESIFF) meeting where he said "Find something strange about something familiar" called the strange attractor, this is what will help you properly represent a unique idea of folklore in film. This way when we are adapting folklore in film, we'd find more unique ideas of representation rather than just simple and cheap presentations of familiar concepts, that would only cause the opposite effect on the community.

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