

Review

Greed in Eguda's *The Kidnap of an Angel*, Turah's *Retribution* and Okediran's *Weaving Looms*.

¹Khadijat Alhassan Halilu and ²Markus Ishaku

¹College of Agriculture Jalingo, Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria.

²Division of General Studies, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Corresponding Author E-mail: madani6723@gmail.com

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This study is an examination of how greed is depicted in three Nigerian novels: Eguda's *The Kidnap of an Angel*, Turah's *Retribution* and Okediran's *Weaving Looms*. Greed is the selfish or excessive desire for more than is needed or deserved, especially of money, wealth, food, or other possessions. It is a prime source of all forms of corruption and violence. Many literary works in Africa have been carried out on the theme of greed but none has been done in the perspective of these novels. In order to actualize its objective, the paper adopts the Marxist critical approach which sees literary work from the point of view of class and ideology as they reflect, propagate and challenge the prevailing social order. Through analysis of the three novels and reviews of critical opinions, greed which has become endemic in the society, cutting across scopes of life is diagnosed. The concern of this work, therefore, centers on what actually elevated Nigeria, other African States, and indeed other states of the world, to a high level of corruption. So it digs deeper, to try to examine the roots of corruption and violence. The work identified greed as the root of the problem, so it goes further to conscientise its audience to be more proactive and eliminate it from the system.

Keyword: Greed, *The Kidnap of an Angel*, *Retribution*, *Weaving Looms*.

INTRODUCTION

Much of literature is based on the author's experience, because the creative writer lives in and is shaped by activities in his environment. His success is the function of his ability to re-create his sensibilities into an art form- drama, poetry or prose. Nigeria for instance, like most countries of Africa, has a history of being a land blessed with natural resources, but a few men infected and impoverished the land by their greedy activities. It turns into a land where political power is sought mainly as a guaranteed course to personal wealth and influence, where those in power measure their own height by the amount of cash stashed in foreign accounts and a land where greedy rulers, business community and select citizens live above their

means and a land where the only possession the masses have in abundance is poverty. This study examines the depiction of greed and its consequences in three Nigerian novels: Eguda's *The kidnap of an Angel* (1995), Turah's *Retribution*, (2005) and Okediran's *The Weaving Looms* (2005). *The Kidnap of an Angel* (1995) revolves around the world's most beautiful lady who is kidnapped three months after her wedding. For her to return alive, a ransom of Five Million Naira (₦5, 000,000) must be paid. *Retribution*, (2005) is about pursuit of power and wealth, which the central character engages in for his dreams of being the richest and the first citizen of his country. *Weaving Looms*, (2005) is concerned with greed which yields lust of varying degrees. The theme of

greed flows through the three novels, highlighting the sad pictures of poverty, ignorance, disunity and humiliation among the citizenry. This is further heightened by the growing sense of dissatisfaction among the intellectuals who represent the common people.

Many countries in Africa: Burundi, Chad, Liberia, Libya, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, to mention just a few, have witnessed violent changes of government through military coups and counter coups, religious, regional and tribal wars, consequent upon which some have been reduced to the status of almost failed-states, with more horrifying conditions than ever witnessed in history. These situations are often brought about, not by ideology or reason but by greed which turn leaders into warlords. Obviously, not everyone in business or political office is guilty of greed but these novels show that a good number of political office seekers, seek it as a sure way of getting rich. Greed among rulers does not arise much because of poverty, but because of the presence of money, mostly state revenues. Greed spur the motive of all those who scheme illegally to get money through arson, assassinations, violent politicking and robbery. The concern of this paper centers on what elevated African states and other countries of the world to a high level of corruption, so it digs deeper, to try to examine the roots of corruption and violence. The three novels under discussion not only capture the situation in their respective works but equally attempt to proffer solutions to the accruing socio-political problems that have become endemic in the society. This paper therefore, explores the theme of greed and its consequences through analysis of these Novels and review of critical opinions in line with the Marxist thought, so as to add to the clarion call against greed.

Definition and Features of Greed

Greed as a subject has received attention from various scholars; for instance, Eef and Anders (2006) define it as a strong desire for anything that is more than required. According to them, greed makes people to take much (or everything) from an attractive resource meant for others leaving little (or nothing) for others from the resource. They further argue that greed is the prime source of the monster called corruption and is responsible for all violence and retaliatory violence obtainable in most parts of the world. According to Karl Marx (1971), greed has two dimensions which are: "Greed and desire" and "greed and acquisitiveness": The greed and desire phenomenon is where selfish interest

is expressed and plays a powerful role in many social institutions. It is an inevitable variable basis of human conduct. Greed and acquisitiveness here refers to wealth, especially capital that can be owned. He said that in capitalism, the ownership of the means of production is concentrated in the hands of the upper class that constitute a minor section of the society and the consequence is the emergence of a property-less class who sell their labour as a means of livelihood. Marxist approach seeks to expose the dominant class, to demonstrate how the bourgeoisie's ideology controls and oppresses the working class and to highlight the elements of greed in society most affected by such oppression. Greed has caused damages to the relationship of families and society in general resulting into societal disaffection and social dislocation. Greedy oppressors according to Marx consider inordinate things more valuable than people. Consequently greed has become a hot topic among literary artists. In his own definition, Jasper (1997) says greed is an excessive passion to have more of anything than one really needed or deserves. According to him, a greedy person is he who is so self-centered that all that matters to him is to have more and more of everything, he is never satisfied; the more he has the more he wants to have. The greedy individual is proud, full of himself and often ends in self-destruction. Jasper opines that the regimes of greedy rulers are often characterized by dishonesty, illegal enrichment and violence. They shed innocent blood, oppress and sacrifice the poor that they are supposed to serve. In the view of Scheneller (2009), greed is an attitude that leads to corruption and violence. The critic observes that political assassinations and religious violence are all too common. That in most cases, if one examines the motivation of most politicians seeking for public office the discovery might be because that is where one gets rich quick. Therefore, it appears greed thrives in most countries, so much not because of poverty, the poor economy, but because of the presence of money, mostly state revenues, which is often the object of desire, and where greed comes into play in most societies.

Along this line, Dike (2013) asserts that having a desire or ambition for a gain of money and power acts like a disease taking control of people and corrupting them and their decision making on any actions. He further argues that any ambition that is focusing mainly in gaining power and wealth will lead to eventual failure and drastic change as the individual involved becomes corrupt by his greed. The desire to satisfy ones greed leads to many irrational decisions, sometimes generating violent behavior. Along this thought, Aruwa (2015) decries the impunity with which the extremist sect-

Bokko Haram which is so far operating in parts of Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad as a product of greedy leaders who have some gain to make out of the sect's activities. The greed of few elements in society promotes the sect and other mafia groups to a status of 'lethal and dangerous' killing and destroying thousands of people and their properties. Aruwa maintains it is the actions and inactions of greedy politicians, conniving civil servants and unpatriotic security agents that serve as underlying factors responsible for the birth and sustenance of the extremist sect and other mafia groups.

Greed is a common theme of well-known authors in history and they all point to the fact that greed for money and power are the roots of most, if not all ills in society. The critics cited above are united in their condemnation of this phenomenon which corrodes people's conscience and promotes the desire for money and power even when the consequences of their action would be detrimental to society. This spirit is common among politicians, civil servants and security agents giving rise to a decayed system. The critics and writers cited seem to have a common position that greed is the inordinate desire to possess wealth, goods, objects or abstract value with the intention to keep it for one's self, far beyond what is needed for survival and basic comfort. And that the urge to have these things opened avenues for corruption and violence.

Greed in the Works of some African Writers

The theme of greed has been examined by quite a lot of African writers and critics who use their individual talents to decry the menace. Susie (2006) for instance, describes Odili in Achebe's *A Man of the People* as an amicable politician, a minister of culture whose public speeches represent everything a politician should be, but it is clear that Chief Nanga does not practice what he preaches. He uses the money meant for community development to build a four storey-building which he rents out for his own interest. This signifies that Chief Nanga, who is expected to stand up for the tradition and beliefs of the pre-colonial African culture by opposing the European oriented post-colonial intellectuals, is inadvertently drawn into corruption as a result of greed for material acquisition.

In his own view Dibanjo (2012:12) states that greed is one of the universal evil practices found throughout the world. He sees Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* as a fearless warrior who should live above any sentiment, but fails to be the brother that he had been by refusing to share his meal with his childhood friend and

adopted brother. Okonkwo's greed for fame led him to essentially 'fall apart' and later dies in the struggle for it.

In his critical analysis of Ngugi wa Thiongio's *Devil on the Cross* and *The Contract* by Festus Iyayi, Fatunde (2008) traces the events in *Devil on the Cross* to Waringa, a working class girl in Nairobi who loses her job because she refuses to go to bed with her boss. She decides to go back to her home town, Imorog. On her way back, at a feast, she was told stories about how both greedy local and foreign exploiters became rich through stealing and thievery. He goes further to show the major feature of corruption in the novel by revealing how the collective labour of workers produces goods which are later stolen by a class of parasites. In Fatunde's opinion workers have not benefited from the fruit of their labour, instead, this class of parasites have immensely gained from this process of wealth production by the masses, for their selfish use. Similarly in *Contract*, Fatunde (2008) traces how members of Obala family collect government money but fail to carry out the work they collect the money to do. For Fatunde, this is an act of greed. Fatunde says that the state power is in the hands of dubious and greedy officials whose aim is purely to steal money coming from government revenue in order to enrich themselves and their families. He further maintains that the contractors are basically interested in exporting what they have stolen out of the country with the active collaboration of foreigners and the local exploiters in neo-colonies in order to enrich themselves and impoverish the working class.

Eileen (2003) names as examples Ngugi's *Petal of Blood* (1977) and *Devil on the Cross* (1982) as fictions, which treat greed for wealth and power and the betrayal of the Kenyan peasants and workers by the local leaders who collaborated with the international capitalists to siphon the wealth of the land. She further shows in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1966) a railway clerk, 'the man' who makes his way in a greedy and corrupt world. He presents 'the man' as a character who tries to keep himself from the greed and corruption that pervade the Ghanaian society, but feels guilty because he is not doing what everybody in the society is doing. He concludes that 'the man' himself becomes greedy and corrupt as a result of societal influence and pressure from his family.

Osundare's play *The State Visit* (2002) focuses on the attitude of the greedy political leadership in the country. Osundare explores the situation fully by evaluating the destructive and impact of greed. He shows how someone habituated in greed can be so heartless and insensitive to the plight of others. From the *The State Visit* one sees how desire for money develops

into greed in the effort of the people to get rich by all means. Okey (2014) observes that inequality in terms of wealth in Ngugiwa Thiongo and Ngugi wa Mirri's *I will Marry when I want* is a portrayal of an experience of the rich getting richer at the detriment of the poor. The novel suggests that hardships of the landless poor and the greedy arrogance of the ruthless wealthy land owners is one of the problems facing the society in many parts of Africa.

These African writers and critics have shown what greed is, the reason for the perpetration of corruption and violence by individuals and groups. It is these traits that this paper confronts and attempts to proffer solutions towards achieving a society that is greed-free.

Greed in Eguda's *The Kidnap of an Angel*

Eguda's *The Kidnap of An Angel* (1995) presents Paulina whose greed for materialism leads her to marry the multi-millionaire, Akintayo. She later arranges to be self-kidnapped to enable her run away with his wealth and enter a second marriage relationship with Linus, while she is still the legal wife of Akintayo. She pushes herself to murder others like Mrs. Adesua and Chucks for her selfish ambition to become rich. She also kills Linus for mere suspicion that he may reveal the secret about the deals of kidnapping herself. Paulina was Jane by birth and an identical twin sister of Elizabeth, but she kills her twin sister to replace her dead body as a wife to the millionaire Akintayo and also murders other characters like Linus to maintain that secrecy. The novelist comments on her greedy tendencies: "*And demanded for Five Million Naira as a ransom to return Paulina alive and that if the police were brought in, Paulina would be as good as a dead duck*" (87). Akintayo anxiously paid the ransom, and he is asked to go to shanty at Iwo Road within Ibadan by twelve midnight to pick her, but to his disappointment Elizabeth her wife's identical twin sister is strangled to death to replace Paulina (his wife). Therefore Akintayo loses both his money and wife.

Linus in *The kidnap of an Angel* is so greedy for material possessions so he collaborates with the new bride of Akintayo to kidnap Paulina and kill Elizabeth. Linus is warned by his friends but he refuses to listen to their advice. One of Linus' friend's Chucks advises him: "*She was always thinking very big and trying to push Linus to get her the things she wanted. I used to warn Linus that if he didn't take his time, she would send him to his grave one day...*" (p.176), but because of his greed he refuses to heed to it. Linus, a rift-raff criminal who is to be the instrument for the implementation of Paulina's

plans ends up marrying her to enable him share the Five Million Naira. Linus is not wise enough to discover the consequences, and so blinded by greed for materialism and worldly possessions actually ends up in grave.

Monica in *The Kidnap of An Angel* (1995) wants to reap where she did not sow; a street prostitute in the hotel where Emmy spends a night on his way to Ugbomaka. Monica confirms to Emmy, the journalist that "*dangerous animals dey for the road*"(91). But because she is hungry for money, she accepts the offer of Two Hundred and Fifty Naira to accompany him to the village. The fact that Monica risks her life for such a meager sum shows the level of her poverty. According to Emmy "*The lion finished devouring Monica. From where I was perching, all I could see of Monica were just her head and a few bones. God! I couldn't believe it. But it was real*" (98). Monica's speech in Pidgin English shows that she lacks basic education. The novelist presents her lack of education and her prostitution as symptomatic of poverty resulting from activities of greedy leaders who do not invest much in education of the citizenry.

Elizabeth and Paulina symbolize those young women who are pushed into prostitution as a result of poverty and ignorance. Through symbolisms, the novelists arouse the consciousness of readers against the effects of greed, and condemn the subject and its associated vices like corruption, poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and violence.

Greed in Turah's *Retribution*

Turah's *Retribution* shows greedy politicians; exploitive, murderous and involved in human sacrifices to retain their seats. These greedy people who struggle for power and wealth include Gomez who is determined to rule the country at all costs. Gomez is a symbol of clear of politicians that are so naive and want political offices to make money for their selfish end. He kills his humble wife and daughter as a means of attaining the status of the president of the country. He says he does not want to walk on this earth as a poor man: "*This is the chance to coin money*". The death of his wife, Sarah and daughter, Karen do not disturb him much because he has already said "*I will do anything ... eyes gammy with greed*" (12). Although Gomez does not kill Sarah his wife directly, Dr David confirms that it was the shock of Karen's death that kills Sarah: "*Sarah didn't bat an eyelid. She was just there as though sleeping. Finally, disappointed...Dr David tried all his tricks but could not wake Sarah...*" (10). Dr. David confirms that she dies of cardiac-arrest because the shock is too much for her. Gomez creeps out of his bed in the midnight and drives

outside of the town to Golo, the fortune-teller that asks him to offer his daughter for his ambition: "*Youngman' ... You want the presidency, am I right? ... Your daughter...take this, call her name several times. Her ...image will appear on the blood, stab several times with the quill*"(13). Because this is not a direct murder Sarah does not know that Gomez, her husband is responsible murder; she ignorantly calls for his help when Karen is dying (p18) that is an irony in the novel. Gomez agrees to sacrifice his only daughter, for his selfish ambition saying: "*I...I'll do anything, he blurted a determined guilt in his voice*"(13).

Another character is Becky in the *Retribution* who wants to enrich herself, so when Gomez says, he is going to buy her clothes, a house and a car, and immediately gives her a well-furnished house, a key of a Honda CRV, she almost faints for the surprise gifts and goes to pack her belongings from the poor John who cannot afford to give her those things. She tells John, "*Don't darling me*" and confidently adds "*If you'll excuse me. I am busy that is your way out she pointed at the door*" (36). To Becky's disappointment, Gomez is later haunted and killed by the hired killers of his opponent Dele Akinsola, who disguise themselves as pressmen and after the death of Mr. Gomez, his lawyer, Churchill comes to Becky to claim all that have been given to her, except her clothes. "*This house, the furniture, the car are mentioned in the will everything except your clothes goes to charity let me read the will to you*" (69). Becky is shocked on getting to hear this. She shakes her head in disbelief. *The Retribution* revolves around the characters of Gomez and Becky who show greedy traits and people who can go to any length for more power and wealth.

Greed in Okediran's *The Weaving Looms*

Okediran presents women and children as victims of greedy desires in *The Weaving Looms*. Mr. Kasali and the Ogboni chiefs resort to corrupt ways to enrich themselves at the detriment of the poor children -Cletus, Mathew and Peter, by disinherit them of their late father's estate. Okediran uses a character like Mr. Kasali who tries to manipulate the law to his advantage at the detriment of his late brother's children. The death of Mr. Josiah Bature brings about scramble for a burial right and an endless crisis in Eleyin's Community. Mr. Josiah does not disclose his reasons for involving himself in dual-faith. He may be acting as Ezeulu in *Achebe's Arrow of God* (1964) who does not welcome the Missionaries and the new religion (Christianity) but wants his son, Oduche to remain in the Church as his eyes. He decides to send his son to the Church out of

greed so that if there is something good in the Church, the son should bring his share. This attitude is characteristic of a greedy person who wants to grab everything from all angles for himself. According to Christian practice, after Josiah Bature's death his corpse should be taken to the Church for funeral service, but the traditional religion sees it otherwise. This poses a dilemma in the community between traditional religion and Christianity. His children become the victims because they are tasked by the Ogboni chiefs: "*you will now bring four white cows plus two gallons of palm oil which we shall use to appease the gods. You must bring all these before we allow you to bury the corpse*" (35). The Ogboni chiefs exploit Josiah's children especially Cletus who knocks down chief Dende when rushing to catch up with the funeral service fixed by the church. The novelist, through this exposition shows how society is saturated with greed and how people manipulate religion to achieve their selfish ends.

Mr. Kasali, the elder brother of late Josiah Bature decides to take over every important thing Josiah left behind; the weaving looms and wives. Josiah has trained one of his sons, Cletus, to come and continue with the looms for the development of the community. But out of greed Mr. Kasali disinherited them of their father's wealth. Kasali moves his children and wives to the bungalow of Josiah and takes away the Weaving Looms and the cassava farm. The children clearly declare that *Kasali ... is a devil. Someone who is supposed to take care of us now stealing our property... He's just greedy that's all*"(p.54). The three young in anger, defiantly face their uncle: "*Baba is too greedy and by far smarter than handing over the looms to us... instead he would pass the place on to his children*"(55-83). Kasali's attitude is an attempt by the novelist to show how people in the traditional setting take undue advantage over their dead relations' widows and children to exploit them.

Kasali cunningly instigates the chiefs to deal with the children by charging or making them to pay a lot of damage for knocking down chief Dende. Therefore Tota, the eldest of the chiefs continues to exploit Cletus through unnecessary demands, "*We need two cows, white goats, a drum of palm oil and one hundred yards of aso-oke cloth for the rituals which has to be performed to save Dende from dying*"(77). One of the ironies of the novel is that Tota, the oldest chief in the village is supposed to be the custodian of the tradition which is supposed to stand for the truth which the younger generation should emulate. But he turns round to be greedy. A society with elders like Tota is doomed to destruction.

Another instance of greed in *The Weaving Looms* is the attitude of Peter and Mathew. They are jealous of Cletus because their late father Mr. Josiah has indirectly given out the Looms to him by sponsoring him to study textile technology i.e modern weaving techniques. Peter's observation proves this, "You know how much father wanted Cletus to take over and modernize the place. Don't forget it was this reason he send him to study textile technology" (54). Cletus leaves his work in Lagos for Eleyin to take care of the Looms. He changes the hand Looms into automatic machine which reduces the workforce to minimum. His effort is frustrated by his two brothers, Peter and Mathew, who tell the workers that the work they are supposed to be doing is now being done by machine and that they will all be sacked by their brother Cletus. Then one of the senior weavers remarks "But why does he have to sack all of us because of ordinary machine? How does he want us to take care of our families?"(66).

Peter and Mathew out of greed want to continue looting the center for their selfish benefits, especially when Cletus is away to Lagos. They use all the money acquired from the weaving Looms to finance themselves and build two bungalows and lie that Dende died and the rioting people have set their house ablaze, including the Eighty Thousand Naira kept in the house by Cletus for the payment of the workers, which is also a lie. They plan an industrial unrest by taking the workers' salary and reported to same group that Cletus has spent it. Mr. Kasali, Chief Dende, Peter and Mathew become symbols of greedy people in the society who lie, cheat and destroy to satisfy their greed.

Comparative Analysis of the Depiction of Greed in the Three Novels

This section highlights the different ways greed is depicted in the three novels in order to establish their general characteristics as distinctive works that deride greed. The comparison is based on the differences and similarities of how greed is related to the general thematic and stylistic patterns identified in the novels.

An overview of the novels shows that Eguda's *The Kidnap of an Angel* (1995) is about greed that leads to vigorous search for material possessions. The moral values that tend to be the guiding principles in traditional societies are disregarded, giving room for immoral acts, exploitation and murder. Paulina, in Turah's *Retribution* represents the deplorable condition of a contemporary society under an oppressive, morally debauched, and insensitivity of greedy leadership to the plight of the citizenry. In the *Weaving Looms* Okediran

depicts Mr. Josiah as a greedy character deeply involved in dual-faith. In normal way of life, a person has faith in one religion, but contrary to this norm, Mr. Josiah belongs to more than one religion. His greedy trait and selfish desire for comfort makes him to become "seemingly a devout Christian" and also one of the Ogboni traditional chiefs. His greed leads to the cause of the crisis experienced in Eleyin's community. Mr. Josiah's burial becomes a troublesome dilemma to both the traditional chiefs and the Church.

The Kidnap of an Angel (1995) presents Paulina as a woman who practices polyandry, kills people and keeps their skeletons for diabolical rituals that fetches her money. She is a symbol of the greedy women who marry businessmen and government officials for their greedy ends. These types of greedy women encourage their corrupt husbands to steal public funds for the comfort of their wives. Linus also exhibits greediness by conniving with Paulina to kill Elizabeth and places the dead body for Akintayo in place of his real wife. Linus does that out of greed and he in turn also is killed after being used by Paulina. She kills Linus and keeps the money to herself. Paulina symbolises the greedy people who kill others for the sake of wealth. Their consciences have been destroyed by their greed for materialism. The novelist observes that the marriage of Paulina to Akintayo is not for love and sexual satisfaction but for the apparent affluence and wealth of Akintayo.

Turah's *Retribution* presents Gomez who out of greed kills his only daughter to make sacrifice for gaining the position as the president of the nation. He does that to give him more power and wealth. Turah exposes the force and ruthless means devised to rule the people through crime and greed. Turah is dissatisfied with the politics of profit making in a rough and chaotic society as an avenue to wealth as illustrated in the characters of Gomez and Mr. Dele Akinsola when they were contesting for election. Prior to his death, Gomez would have killed several of his opponents because he sees politics as an investment to be protected at all cost.

Turah also observes that greed is the main motive behind the politics of this country. The greed for wealth and power in the veins of Gomez and Dele Akinsola is the spirit behind the contemporary politicians. They are symbols of bad leaders who want to rule others at all cost. This is artistically depicted as a way of exposing politicians, both young and old who have the ambition of making more money even when they have enough. The novelist condemns this act and rather advises this category of politicians to think of using their office to salvage the masses from the clutches of poverty.

In *The Weaving Looms* Okediran shows that leaders like Mr. Josiah and Kasali cannot rule this country

because they would siphon the wealth of the nation for their personal accounts. Okediran does this by using the example of the project loan of Ten Million Naira that is collected from the World Bank. They later claim that the money is not enough for the slated projects so they abandon it. This explains why subsequent regimes in Africa and in other parts of the world, both military and civilian leave behind huge debts and abandoned projects after their tenure. These set of rulers plunge their countries into huge debt and abandoned projects through loans which they collected. The borrowed funds are often diverted to the private pockets of the privileged few and their expatriate collaborators leaving the generality to wallow in poverty, thereby worsening the already bad situation.

Mr. Kasali in Okediran's *Weaving Looms* is an example of rulers who perpetrate themselves in power by subjecting the masses to untold hardship. The children and women are pushed into severe hardship due to Kasali's selfish interest. He would have also embezzled the church finances had death not taken him earlier before his appointment as a Deacon. Deacons in the Church are those who take care of the finances and property of the Church like tithes and offerings. He symbolizes those greedy deacons who divert the wealth of the Church to their personal use instead of sharing it to the widows, orphans and other members that are actually in need. Mr. Josiah is also a symbol of those who hold two different offices or ministries without concern for others. In fact, they also contribute to the high rate of unemployment of their countries.

The three novelists, through characterization make a statement that the society at large suffers from the greedy attitudes of few corrupt people. But that the hope for liberating the society from such greedy and corrupt situation hinges on the educated elites. The novelists are optimistic that with the caliber of patriotic educated elites greed will be eradicated. The three novelists give the educated elites; Emmy, in the *Kidnap of an Angel*, John in the *Retribution* and Cletus in the *Weaving Looms* special recognition. These people seem to be the hope for the emancipation of the society from the hands of greedy elites. The novelists are also united in taking a position that exposing greed will eliminate corruption and to restore hope in societies. This is evident when Akintayo gives Emmy Oscar, the journalist a bribe of Ten Million Naira to stop him from publishing the issues surrounding the death of Elizabeth. The journalist turns down the offer because, according to him, bribery and corruption runs counter to the ethics of the journalism, which is concerned with truth and social justice. He feels if he collects the bribe, this salient truth will not be revealed and that he would have failed in his

responsibility to the society and the ills would not have been corrected. In the same vein they also stress that unless corrupt leaders who are exploiters and parasites are eliminated, greed and its associated evils of corruption and violence will continue. They believe that the solution to the present day problems should be viewed from the Marxist theory i.e. that greedy capitalists and the parasites regimes must be overthrown to achieve equality.

Language and Style of the three Novels

There is no much variation in diction and style of the three novels, even though they maximise their individual talents in taking a position on the subject under discussion, the tone with which they carry out their battle sounds uniform. And the harmony of their language is found in the similarity of characters, images and symbols that build up the ugliness and consequences of greed. Eguda exposes the ills of the country through presentation of characters that do not seem to have vision for the nation such as Paulina, Linus and Akintayo. These characters symbolise the greedy people in the society while Elizabeth becomes victim of her greedy tendencies. Emmy Oscar is the patriotic journalist who sacrifice his life for the society to be a better place to live in. His action portrays the ideal and role model to other journalists. He is made out as a replica of the Nigerian Dele Giwa, Tunde Thompson and Nduka Irabor who sacrificed their lives during the military era for the course of justice. These crops of journalists symbolise hope in a decaying society. The novelist hopes that with the presence of patriotic citizens like Emmy Oscar, greed and corruption will be reduced to barest minimum if not eliminated totally.

Turah uses Gomez and Dele Akinsola as symbols of the greedy politicians who being desperate for power, kill and offer human sacrifices so as to achieve their ambitions. Karen and her mother are pictures of the innocent people who die as a result of actions or inactions of greedy politicians. John is educated; he is a nephew of Gomez. He refuses to employ the young John, describing him as a "Church rat", but instead snatches his girlfriend. Through these characters Turah makes a statement of morality against greed in politics and politicking.

In the *Weaving Looms* Josiah, Kasali and the Traditional Chiefs represent people who use religion to achieve their selfish ambition. Josiah's widowed wives and their children stand as the victims of greedy tendencies of such politicians. The novelist gives the educated elites like Dr. Dixon a pride of place in this

novel. He sees him as a beacon of hope in a decaying society. As a result of attitudes of people like Dr. Dixon, peace and harmony are restored in Eleyin community despite their differences in faith. Okediran also observes that religious leaders who should stand for the truth are involved in greed for material wealth. He uses a harsh tone on the character of the Ogboni chiefs for struggling to covet Mr. Josiah's estate when he died.

Turah employs monologue technique when Gomez regrets his contribution in the death of his wife Sarah; it is because of the shock of the daughter's death that she died. "Just now what have I gotten myself into... his head in his hands Gomez wept" (P 29). Through the use of monologue, the reader gets to know what goes on in the mind of the actors. When the hired assassins turn on Dele Akinsola, in his last breath, his wife regrets his joining politics and says "Dele my husband... I warned but you wouldn't listen now, you have to die and leave me with the children" (9).

The three novelists use dialogues in their narratives. It is through dialogue that the characters discuss the evil effect of greed. For instance, it is through dialogue that Emmy in *The Kidnap of an Angel* gets to know the multi-millionaire Akintayo. He has a discussion with his friend who invites him to the wedding where he meets Paulina face to face before he takes the advantage for the proof that Akintayo demand.

The three novelists are optimistic that education could be a panacea to the problem of greed that is prevalent in the society. This explains why characters like Emmy Oscar in the *Kidnap of an Angel*, John in the *Retribution* and Dr. Dixon in the *Weaving Looms* are presented as the sources of hope. The tone of the novels of this study is that of hope. The hope for the eradication of greed in the three novels of this study is education. Through juxtaposition, symbolisms, monologue, dialogue and the tone of hope the novelists suggest that with education and enlightenment, greed will be eradicated.

CONCLUSION

The theme of greed is revealed through the main characters, namely: Paulina and Linus, Gomez, Dele Akinsola and Becky, Mr. Josiah, Kasali and the Ogboni chiefs. *The kidnap of an Angel* focuses on characters that are so desperate to make money and do everything within their power to satisfy their greed. The book proffers solution through educated elite like Emmy who stands out as an apostle of social justice. Through characterization, the novelist makes the statement that with proper education and awareness people will be

conscious of the evils of greed and will become advocates of truth and social justice. In *The Retribution*, Turah makes the statement that insatiable greed for money and power is evil. He means to sound a warning to the politicians who want to rule their country through corrupt means for self-enrichment to desist from such acts. In the *Weaving Looms* Okediran, exposes the excesses of people who use religion as a tool for exploitation rather than safeguarding the interest and well-being of the community. Okediran has exposes the self-centeredness and manipulation of the traditional rulers who do not have the interests and the love of their subjects at heart. He has also tried to raise the consciousness of the people by exposing the evils perpetrated by the traditional institutions. The novelist is optimistic that characters like Dr. Dixon, through their spirit of transparency and selfless attitude will bring about the needed change, where negative tendencies like greed and selfishness would be brought to their barest minimum. The tone of the novel, as stated above is that of optimism, they are hopeful that with characters like Dixon and John, greed and its related vices like corruption and violence will one day be a thing of the past.

Finally, most African states are confronted by the menace of corruption often perpetrated by greedy leaders. This leads governments of these states to establish anti-corruption and anti-graft institutions but no real solution has ever been found for corruption. Eguda, Okediran and Turah, using their individual talents argue that greed is at the root of the problem. Through symbolic characters, the three novelists expose the ills of corruption and attempt to correct same by using characters that are not greedy. The plight of the victims of greed is also made bare in the characters of children, women and youth who are often vulnerable in such corrupt systems. The conclusion points to the fact that corruption and violence could be checked in the society if the tendencies of greed are crushed. The novelist state that it is not enough to establish anti-corruption institution or embark on anti-graft campaigns, but the true solution rests in concertizing the populace to free themselves from the spirit of greed, which could be achieved through realizing and respecting the needs of others. This is easier achieved when religions preach and practice love; traditional leaders serve as role models and custodians of our cultural values and politicians practice politics within the confines of true democracy. Lastly the novelists make a statement for the need of concerted dialogue; interreligious dialogue, dialogue in the political arena, dialogue at family levels and dialogue at national levels to discuss tendencies

that could possibly check the greed of individuals that often yields corruption and violence.

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