

Rumour in Ethnic Warfare and Politics in Yorùbá Films

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Abstract

Warfare, ethnicity and polity are indeed tripartite cankerworm that destroy peace, love and stability within the society. Rumour is used as a vital weapon to facilitate and promote warfare, ethnicity and heat up the polity both at micro and macro levels while individuals, families and groups provide the fertile ground where warfare thrives. Data for this paper is drawn from three films: October 1, Túnmiṣe, and Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Ní Bò. The films are used for the analysis using the rumour transmission theory as a framework. The paper identifies pipe dream, bogie or fear and wedge driving rumours in warfare, ethnicity and politics and discovers that it gains momentum when there is general uncertainty in the society. The paper concludes that rumour has negative and devastating effects on targets and moves in single interaction chain or multiple interaction network. It also discovers that application of our critical thinking ability helps foster peace and unity, reduces warfare and ethnic violence, stems division or strife but helps to build a resounding polity which yields desired dividend for all citizenry.

Key words: Rumour, Warfare, Ethnicity, Rumour transmission, critical ability.

Introduction

Films elaborate meaning and provoke emotional responses from viewers/audiences through themes which are germane to contemporary issues and technique of rumour. Seeing rumour as a possible threat to societal peace and its psychological trauma on the human psyche, the film as a genre is used as cinematic representations to create awareness or intervention on the deleterious uses and possible effects. Yorùbá films therefore in performance of its functional and strategic role to the public and society, portray the use and effects of rumour in ethnic warfare and politics.

Many studies have been carried out on Yorùbá video films. Some of these include Àlà mú (1991, 2002), Adélékè (1995), Haynes and Okome (2000), Olújìnmí (2004), Adágbádá (2005), Olútúndé (2014), etc. Precisely, these works have investigated the origin and development, aesthetics, audience reception, gender issues, proselytisation in Christian films; to mention but a few. However, previous researches have not paid much attention to the use of rumour particularly in relation to warfare and politics in Yorùbá video films. This therefore constitutes the gap which this study seeks to fill.

Rumour is an important form of social communication, and its spread plays significant role in a variety of human affairs. The spread of rumour can shape the public opinion in a country (Galam, 2003), greatly impact financial markets (Kimmel, 2004) and cause panic in a society during wars and epidemics outbreaks. The information content of rumours can range from simple gossip to advanced propaganda. In its everyday usage, rumour is understood to mean any piece of information, or a story, that people talk about, but that may not be true since most of such information is unverified or unconfirmed. A rumour is also seen as a story which may not be true (www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/rumor). Oyewo (2001:57) submits that they are reflections of societal, individual and collective needs which are subject to variations with time, space and setting.

The term “rumour,” as Fine and Ellis (2010) note, is one that has been used in a variety of ways in popular discourse. In recent years, rumours have become an even more insidious political force that political parties, their supporters and cronies use against their opponents. In the World War II era, Allport and Postman (1947) noted that the main medium of transmission of rumours was word of mouth but we can confidently say that this has changed. The Internet has changed all that and today, anyone can publish on the web, instantly acquiring a degree of

credibility regardless of the quality of information they provide. As Sunstein (2009:4) argues, “In the era of the Internet, it has become very easy to spread false or misleading rumours about almost anyone...”

Rumour in Yorùbá context is sometimes referred to as *àhesọ* (unsubstantiated news), *ìròyìn tí ò lésẹ̀ nílẹ̀* (false news), or at other times *asọ̀rọ̀ òfegè* (unconfirmed news). A rumour can therefore be information that is true or false which contains half or partial truth. There is therefore a thin line between rumour and falsehood. Rumour within the society breeds suspicion, division and lack of trust, and occasionally could produce positive result.

Warfare in Yorùbá history dates back to the nineteenth century and was the most dominant theme during the period (Adéotí and Adéyẹrí, 2013). It is on record that Òwu, Ìjàyè, Ìbàdàn, Èkìtì Parapò and Ègbá were once at war. After this period, there have always been causes for warfare in different dimensions. Warfare in this paper does not refer to incidences, events or happenings in war time situation or located only on the battle field but implies any violent struggle, strife, quarrel, clash or argument between individuals or groups. Ethnicity however refer to issues relating to a particular race, nation or tribe including their customs and traditions.

According to Varshney (2002:12), ethnic warfare is expressed as a conflict between two or more contending

ethnic groups. Such group have reasons to doubt, fear, and suspect the other group which may result in violent demonstrations or hostility. The source of such conflict may be political, social, economic or religious (Kanfman, 2001:17). Tribalism is expressed as:

the state of existing as a tribe, loyalties that people feel towards particular social groups and the way these loyalties affect their behaviour and their attitude towards others.

<http://www.bigthink.com/risk-reason-and-reality>

The existing loyalty to a tribe or an ethnic race controls our reason and behaviour and sometimes override our reasoning or fair judgement. Mismanagement could lead to disunity and disintegration. In any nation, community or association where peace, love and harmony exist, tribalism or ethnicity is alien.

In Yorùbá polity, the traditional structure of the political system is monarchical where power lies with the kings and chiefs. Akíntóyè (2004:3) states that every significant Yorùbá settlement before the nineteenth century had a monarchical political structure. The kings became the custodian of the land and the protectors of the boundaries of their kingdom. After the colonial era, modern polity became operative where a particular party is in control. Political organisation exists in form of political parties where people are expected to elect their leaders through voting or elections.

Rumour is admittedly a vital weapon in social communication jointly used in ethnic warfare and politics to promote a fair or selfish cause. The society thrive through information or news passed 'from mouth to ear' from one individual to another. Rumour however in this paper is seen as an unverified/unconfirmed news or information that is uttered or spread by individual or group of people which in turn provoke or elicit a form of action or reaction from the recipient or hearer.

Characteristics of rumour

Three basic characteristics of rumour identified by Knapp (1944) are that: they are transmitted by word of mouth (transmission), they provide "information" about a "person, happening, or condition" (content) and they express and gratify "the emotional needs of the community" (reception). Oyewo (2007:7) further identifies other characteristics which include that: it generally soothes the ego as well as relieves individuals of excessive anxiety, generally evocative, drawing largely on the affective nature of communication, emanates in variation with time, thrives more on the importance or relevance of the object of rumour to individuals, gains momentum when one feels a state of apprehension about an impending negative outcome, spreads very fast, dies and resurrects and also aggravates tension and creates disorders.

Types of rumour

Knapp (1944) divide rumour into three types: pipe dream, bogie or fear, and wedge-driving rumours. Pipe dream rumours reflect public desires and wished-for outcomes.

Oyewo (2007:8) states that:

it possesses a positive outlook and has soothing effect which often borders on 'wishful thinking', fantasy or delusion which usually lies on matters of general concern and peoples expectation.

Issues identified as attracting this rumour type are: bonuses, promotions, postings, termination and others. Example is the speculation of bail-out by the Federal Government to States which will enable them settle arrears of salaries, pensions and allowances to workers.

Bogie or fear rumours reflect feared outcomes. It could also be referred to as 'dread rumour'. This is a maliciously motivated rumour propelled by fear. Example is a rumour circulated on March 17, 2016 of Hon. Àkànbí Afólábí an Èkìtì State House of Assembly member, arrested by the Directorate of State Security (DSS) and reported to have slumped and died in their custody. Wedge-driving rumour is one whose sole aim is concealed and veiled from the target. It is laden with malice and the major concern is to bring discord and separation in seeming loving/friendly relationship in the nuclear, extended and circular settings.

Rumour of infidelity, cheating, unfaithfulness or fraud can suffice here.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2012) further identifies some other forms of rumour as: widespread rumour, persistent rumour, strong rumour, wild rumour, malicious rumour, unsubstantiated rumour and scurrilous rumour (damaging and false).

A new form of rumour motivated information in contemporary time, often associated with its deleterious use is hate speech(es). This is often found among political opponents or people with opposing ideals, ideas or concepts. Such speeches, proclamation or information are laden with malice, bitterness or sometimes escalation of past/forgotten evil deeds of the so called accused. The information may be the truth, half truth or complete lie/fabrication by the rumour monger.

Causes of rumour

Rumour, as an unconfirmed story or information at the time of transmission, has some remote causes, some of which bring about more damage than good while some are just woven to bring others down. We need to note that individuals, groups and families provide a fertile soil on which rumour thrives. Imputed motives, secret desires, repressed feelings, inhibitions and biases play a significant role in rumour generation and transmission (Oyewo, 2002: X). Other causes or issues that provoke rumour are:

uncertainty, anxiety, feeling of relevance, poor communication system (when information is hoarded, people get information from unauthenticated sources and spread it), lack of real information, boredom, wishful thinking, fear surrounding bad news especially about policy changes (such as reorganisation, transfers, layoffs, promotions, etc.), envy, speculation, blind repetition (stories we repeat blindly without verification), etc.

However, as Bernardi, Cheong, Lundry and Ruston (2002) notes, "... rumours can be created and planted by nearly anybody, require limited resources to utilize, can be deadly for those in its direct path, and can instill fear".

Common expressions usually used in consonance with or that allude to rumour are: from the grapevine, do not say I told you, have you heard? for your ears only, etc.

Theory of rumour transmission

Theory of rumour transmission came into being in 1965 with the publication of Buckner's work, and this provided a spring board on the study of rumour along transmission channel. Buckner (1965:57) state that "a rumour is an unconfirmed message passed from one person to another in face-to-face interaction that refers to an object, person, or situation rather than an idea or theory". We agree with this submission in part. We admit that "a rumour is an unconfirmed message involving two or more people". This

part is also in tandem with the two patterns of rumour movement or spread identified in the rumour transmission theory, which makes it appropriate for the analysis. But the status of the face-to-face interaction can no longer be generalised in the face of modern media networking which this theory has also taken care of. The individuals can maintain their distance within the global world and still be connected in spreading “unverified” news or information through any of the networks available to them.

On the theory of rumour transmission, Buckner identified three different orientations in which an individual may find himself in a rumour situation. They are a critical set, an uncritical set or a transmission set. The theory of rumour transmission states that, by the influence of rumour, an individual may find himself in an orientation or reorientation, and the situation may cause the individual to take either of these three positions toward it.

A critical set is observed when the individual is capable of using “critical ability” to separate the truth from the false in rumours he hears. This is only possible if firstly, he is knowledgeable about the subject matter through his background and experiences, which may have provided him with the framework and relevant information. This will help him to separate the truth from falsehood. Secondly, on the basis of past experiences, he will know what to expect, since he is familiar with the situation and

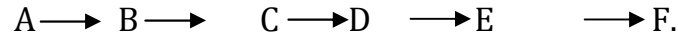
thirdly, due to a stable interaction system, if the rumour is from a friend, he can check on the reliability of the teller but he cannot evaluate if it is from a stranger.

Summarily, Buckner posits that one who exercises critical ability upon a rumour is able to pass on the most important parts of the rumour dropping off the irrelevant, detect misinformation in the rumour and eliminate it, and finally transmit the rumour without change if he can detect no irrelevant or false information. Upon hearing a rumour and the individual is unable to use his/her critical ability to test the truth of the rumours he hears, it means he/she has taken an uncritical set

The transmission set Buckner claims means the content of the rumour is irrelevant to the person and by implication his critical ability is irrelevant. His only interest is to be a “neutral transmitter” who is likened to a child told to carry a gossip he does not understand, but whose commitment lies in passing it on. An individual with transmission set will eliminate a part of the message until it makes sense to him, assimilate it to his linguistic habits, forget some of the information perhaps selectively, transmit the message as instructed and would neither distort nor correct the message in a purposive manner.

Buckner, also identified two patterns of rumour movement or spread which are also found viable and domicile in Yorùbá films: First is rumour chains and

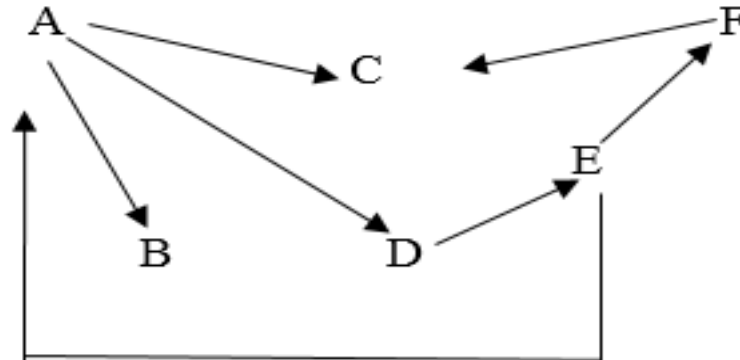
secondly is the rumour network. Rumour chain is observed when rumour moves from person to person in a serial manner in a series of single interactions. e.g.



Source: Buckner 1965

The above diagram shows rumour movement on a straight line course. It moves from one person to another. The first person tells the second, second to the third and on and on till it gets to the supposed last person.

Rumour network however is a multiple interaction network, where many people hear the rumour from more than one source.



Source: Buckner 1965

The above networking pattern shows that individual A gives the information to persons B,C,D. D takes the news to E and E in turn takes the information to F.F also gives the information to C and he also takes the news to someone to continue the networking.

Both patterns of rumour movement identified above occur in any community situation but the basis for interpretation varies. Rumour however rides on importance/interest with ambiguity as prerequisites. But going by All port and Postman's (1947:33) postulation, if importance/interest and ambiguity is zero, then rumour cannot take place.

Reflection of rumour in ethnic warfare in *October 1* film

Ethnicity is the act of being loyal to an ethnic group or tribe; language or society. It is also described as tribal consciousness and loyalty especially exaltation of the tribe above other groups or a strong sense of loyalty to a tribe or group (www.merriam-webster.com). Rumour could be used positively to foster unity among tribes or on the other hand a volatile instrument of destruction among them. Where there is love, trust and unity, negative rumour may not suffice but where suspicion, disunity, lack of trust, revenge and ill feelings thrive surely rumour is a great weapon that both parties can wield on each other to achieve its devastating purview.

In *October 1*, after the killing of Chidinma the nineteen year old Igbo girl in Àkótè and the arrest of a Hausa trader and traveller as the suspected killer, rumour begin to fly around about likely perversion of justice. While investigation, torture and questioning by the police of the

arrested suspect: Usman Dangari at the police station is ongoing, tribal war also looms. There is noise, uproar and protest outside the police station showing the Igbo community consumed with anger and rage.

Igbo people: Listen, release him now or we'll...

Inspector: What is this?

Sergeant: Na Igbo community

Igbo spokesman: Sergeant, your ògá here and the Hausa killer, they are brothers, we no trust am. No be your brother, no be so?

Inspector: But he being my kinsman has no bearing to this case.

Igbo spokesman: We don hear your story for Enugu. You send our brother to hang for killing Òyìbó. You, you don't like us Igbo. You no like us at all, Cha! Cha! Cha! Release him now or we take him by force.

The excerpt above is the result of a rumour network going round about the status of Inspector Danladi, a Hausa man alleged to hate the Igbos. His explanation on the Enugu case shows that the rumour is unfounded and a wedge driving one. It is laden with malice to bring about discord and hatred between all the tribes who have been living peacefully together in Àkótè before the advent of the serial killings. The rumour is false and baseless. The Inspector is although accused of tribalism but we can re-assess him

from his explanations to people at the bar who care to find out his own version of the story:

- A man: Inspector sir, can you tell us about the man they beheaded in Enugu.
- Inspector: It was not my finest hour.
- Sergeant: Ha! ha! ha! ògá, what do you mean? You solve big problem, your name in all newspapers pátápátá, àbí.
- Others: Bèè ni!!!
- Inspector: Sergeant Àfònjá?
- Sergeant: Yes
- Inspector: Yes, I received commendation, medals and promotion. But nobody wanted to know the motive behind the killing of the white man by the Igbo man.
- One man: Há! hà! But they say the Igbo man was mad.
- Others: Bèè ni! bèè ni! bèè ni! Yes
- Inspector: No, no. He was not mad. He was only seeking justice as would anyone of you here if your father was flogged to death for merely stealing a chicken from a poultry.

The above excerpt shows that the rumour about the Inspector being tribalistic is untrue and false. He is not against the Igbo man but justifies that anybody will do what he did under the provocation he was subjected to. This

shows us that the people were hasty in their judgment and falls within the uncritical set who do not apply their critical ability to the rumour before accepting it. The inspector is also accused of trying to shield his kinsman Usman Dangari from being prosecuted. This rumour also have tribal connotation which could disrupt peaceful co-existence of the tribes communal harmony. In furtherance of the rumour outcome, the Inspector is also no longer trusted within the rank and file. In his discussion with his assistant, Sergeant Sunday Àfọ̀njá about his findings and feelings about the killer and the wrong accusation of the Hausa man being the killer. The sergeant believes the rumour which has already shaped his opinion. This we can deduce in the conversation below:

- Sergeant: Ah!ah!ah! no! no! no! not possible
ọ̀mọ ọ̀ba, Prince Adérópò, the killer?
Ah! no! no! no!
- Inspector: Yes, he knows that I know that he is
the killer, yet he mocks me because I
don't have enough concrete evidence
to arrest him.
- Sergeant: No evidence can prove that Prince
Adérópò is the killer. Usman
Dangari gan is the killer. Prince
Adérópò is a University graduate
- Inspector: So University graduate do not commit crime?
- Sergeant: Èn hén, you see, o.k. another thing.
Usman Dangari is the killer, Prince

Adérópò is not the killer. Because he's a Hausa man like you, that is why you won't accept. And, case closed. This is the time for you to leave Àkótè, sir.

The conversation above shows that the sergeant's opinion about his superior officer has been manipulated and eventually changed. He no longer reasons like a trained policeman but is biased by rumour and tribal sentiment. He even has the effrontery to tell the senior officer and his supervisor that he has outlived his usefulness in the investigation of the said case, so he should leave.

More than this, the Hausa man is eventually murdered in revenge and retaliation by Okafor the father of the raped Igbo girl while still riding on the suspicion that he is the killer. Thus confirming that when rumour starts, like a ravaging fire, you cannot predict or measure the extent of its destructive spread and power. Okafor demonstrates irrationality and uncontrolled expression of his emotions because of the tribal connotation attached to the rumour which eventually was a false one.

The rumour networking within Igbo community against Inspector Danladi Waziri as hating the Igbos fuel the insinuation that he will pervert justice to favour his Hausa kinsman. The Igbos in Àkótè community thereby come together as a formidable force to counter the rumour

so that it will not be effected by the police inspector. This is inciting, whipping up underlying, deep-seated emotions of the desire for self-preservation and brotherliness into action. The Igbos come out in protest with clubs, machetes and other weapons demanding justice. The first rumour against him is that:

You send our brother to hang for killing Òyìnbó

You prosecuted our brother and he was
hanged for killing a white man.

This accusation against him is enough to serve as springboard and fuel the second rumour of attempt of perversion of justice and to make it thrive. The communality of the rumour makes it stronger and fearful.

Rumour and the political stratum in *Túnmiṣe* and *Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Ní Bò*

Rumour is a viable tool within the political class to weaken opposition, gain the sympathy of the electorate, urge elected officers to fulfil electoral promises, provoke accountability and make people get real information about burning issues. Members of the political class in the past and present are manipulators of rumour, using it at will to suit their selfish interest at any particular time.

In contemporary political setting where eligible candidates are voted into power by the electorate to different posts through the ballot system, rumour is also a

strong weapon. In *Túnmiṣe*, there is a rumour going round that one of the political parties, the United Movement Party (UMP), in their bid to win the governorship post is spending so much and distributing money to people to buy/get their votes. This prompted one of the key leaders from Democratic Front Party (DFP) to quickly run to their gubernatorial candidate where the conversation below ensued.

- Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: *My Governor to be*
 Ọ̀túnba Adéṣínà: *Ṣé kò sí wàhálà?*
- Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: *Ah! iyonu wà o*
 Ọ̀túnba Adéṣínà: *Ah, níbo?*
- Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: *Àwọn ẹ̀lẹgbẹ̀ wa kejì,
 Governor, wọn dábírà,
 wọn n ẹ̀ ẹ̀bẹ̀ gidi. Mo gbó,
 wọn n fọ̀nwó nii*
- Ọ̀túnba Adéṣínà: *Wọn n fọ̀n ọ̀n?*
 Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: *Ah, wọn ná owó*
 Ọ̀túnba Adéṣínà: *Màrá Alákijà*
 Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: *Wọn ná owó. Tí ẹ̀ bá rii bí wọn
 ẹ̀ n ẹ̀ owó, gbogbo ward
 bá yí ni wọn ní wọn ti fọ̀n owó
 sí. Wọn n fọ̀n ọ̀n ni, ní gidi gan
 tí ò n ẹ̀ kékeré, bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni mo sọ
 fún un yín.*
- Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: *My Governor to be*
 Ọ̀túnba Adéṣínà: *Hope there is no problem?*

- Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: Oh, There is trouble
Ọ̀túnba Adéşínà: Oh, where?
Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: Governor, our opposition party are showing off, they are performing a wonderful feat. I heard they are seriously distributing money.
Ọ̀túnba Adéşínà: They are seriously distributing what?
Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: Oh, they spent money
Ọ̀túnba Adéşínà: Mrs Alákijà!
Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: They spent money. If you see the way they handle money, I was told they have distributed money to all the wards. They are just dashing it but seriously. Yes, I am sure of it.

The above excerpt paints the picture of what happens during elections in contemporary society where politicians use money to entice voters. The electorate also expects that money will be exchanged for their votes. However, when rumour like this fly around, opposition becomes jittery and wants to outshine the other party in the money bonanza. The electorate or recipients also participate in spreading such rumours peradventure it can bring in more dividend from contestants or parties. This they believe is their only gain.

The excerpt below picture the inner thought and intention of political office contestants and aspirants as exposed by Chief (Mrs) Alákijà:

Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: Ìyẹn ni mo ẹ wá wò ó pé hà! ẹ jé káwa náà wá tètè, káwa náà wá mú owó, bó ẹ yíyá, my governor, káwa náà yá.

Ọtúnba Adéşínà: Káwa náà máa fón owó?

Olóyè Arábìnrin Alákijà: Ká máa fón ọn, kọn lè mò wí pé àwa ò kí n ẹ ẹgbẹ baba nílá baba wọn. Ntorí owó ló n ẹohun gbogbo....

Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: That is why I now looked at it that we should also quickly get money, if it means borrowing, my Governor, we should borrow it.

Ọtúnba Adéşínà: We should also distribute money?

Chief (Mrs) Alákijà: We should also give out money so that they will know that we are no mate with their forefathers. Because money is the answer to all things.

The reality principle comes to play in the above conversation. Since others are doing it, it is better to join them and plan to beat them at their own game. This is pipe dream rumour, reflecting wish for outcome, while anxiety

for success and fear surrounding losing at the poll is the cause. Even though the authenticity of the rumour is not verified, yet it is the truth and it therefore prompts Chief Mrs Alákijà into action. This confirms that rumour could be information that is true. It also pictures the desires and drives from the society where we believe in the power and influence of money on human decision. This also affirm the Yorùbá adage that says *ohun owó máa dá sílẹ̀, apá owó ò ní ká a* (The problem money would cause, money will not be able to curtail it).

Rumour is used in another dimension on the political class in *Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Ní bọ̀*. In politics of today, it is not out of place to hear of embezzlements, padding of contract or budgets and cases of abandoned projects earlier paid for by both current and past administrations. But when rumour of probe or investigation spreads, surprise projects, unexpected bill boards and stalled allowances to workers, outstanding salaries and other emoluments hurriedly surfaces and are paid. People are no longer shocked at such outward show of shamelessness and lack of integrity on the part of so called leaders. In *Yéèpà! Ṣólàárín Ní bọ̀*, immediately the rumour of the impending visit of the Public Complaints Commissioner hit the town, everything was no longer at ease. The Chairman informs his council members:

Alága:

Bí mo ẹ̀ fẹ́ wí ojàre, ẹ̀ ẹ̀ròyìn ti kàn yin?

Arábìnrin Anímáṣaun: Bẹ̀ẹ̀ nì mo ti gbọ o ...

Alága: Ladies and gentlemen, mo ní sẹ̀ ìròyìn ti kàn yín? Mò ní gbìyànjú láti sọ fún un yín wí pé a ti wọ ìjàngbọ̀n, terrible mess. È ẹ̀ kọ̀bi ara sí mi

Ayọ̀kànmí: Sẹ̀ lóòótọ̀ lo dárúkọ public complaints Commissioner

Alága: Hm! Ìròyìn tó dájú gidi ti kàn mí pé, ín, ín ǹbọ̀ ǹ bí

Gbogbo wọ̀n: Ah!

Ayọ̀kànmí: Sẹ̀ Sólàárín?

Alága: Tí ò bá tiẹ̀ tì dé pàápàá, I don't know for sure, wọ̀n sàà pé wọ̀n ti ní rán ẹnìkan bọ̀ láti endquarters, olúwarẹ̀ ò sì lo oókọ̀ ara rẹ̀ rárá. *Incognito* ní ǹ bọ̀

Gbogbo wọ̀n: Ah! ah! Incognito kẹ̀?

Ayọ̀kànmí: Sànpọ̀nná ò! Ó ní láti jẹ̀ Sólàárín ...

Chairman: As I wanted to say, has the news gotten to you?

Mrs. Anímáṣaun: Yes, I have heard...

Chairman: Ladies and gentlemen, I said, have you heard the news? I am trying to tell you that we are in

- trouble, terrible mess, yet you are not concerned...
- Ayòkànmí: Is it true you mentioned the Public Complaint Commissioner?
- Chairman: Yes, the news have been confirmed that he is coming here
- All: Ha!
- Ayòkànmí: Is it *Şólàárín*?
- Chairman: That is if he has not even arrived. They just said that they have sent someone down from the headquarters. The person is not using his real name. He is coming incognito.
- All: Why incognito?
- Ayòkànmí: Oh God, it has to be *Şólàárín*.

The above excerpt shows that rumour of *Şólàárín*'s visit makes the leaders jittery which confirms the truth of *Şólàárín*'s character. They make confessions of all the numerous atrocities they have committed out of fear and seek for strategies to coverup their tracks. It also shows that political leaders also live in fear and any news or rumour about their activities affect them. Rumour here is referred to as '*iròyìn*' news which is not confirmed. The Yorùbá adage that says *Èni tí ò şohun itùfù kìí kiyèsékùlé* (he

who does not have a skeleton in his cupboard is not afraid) is apt about this situation. Their past deeds have come to haunt them through bogie or fear rumour.

Findings

Going by the analysis of the Yorùbá films some of the reactions rumour elucidates are: worry, anxiety and fear in *Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Níbò* and *Túnmiṣe*; hatred and anger in *October 1*; aggravates tension in *Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Níbò* and *October 1*; creates disorder, unrest and activates communal warfare as found in *October 1*. Other effects of rumour mongering identified in the study are: loss of trust and reputation in *October 1*, and finally suspicion and untimely death also found in *October 1*.

Rumour movement pattern is identified to be either in a series of single interactions (chain) or a multiple interaction (network). In *Túnmiṣe* and *Yéèpà Ṣólàárín Níbò*, we identify both single and multiple networks in the rumour transmisson, while *October 1* contains multiple interaction network.

We can stem or control rumour mongering only when we apply our critical ability objectively. We therefore need to be pro-active in making our society rumour free, remove (if not completely) reduce ethnic warfare, play healthy politics which will eventually make our nation a peaceful place to live in. This we can achieve by

encouraging only news, information and tales that are verifiable.

Conclusion

Rumour has been identified as a strong tool in ethnic warfare and politics in Yorùbá films, which is a replication of occurrences within the societal milieu, and can be manipulated by the rumour monger to achieve his purpose. The psychological effect of rumour in the society is expansive. Rumour itself is a sociological tool which could be a menace if not curbed or channelled appropriately.

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