



**JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND
COMMUNICATION STUDIES (GOSAJOLLCOS)**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY**

MAIDEN EDITION
November, 2020

©Department of English, Gombe State University

MAIDEN EDITION

November, 2020

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the Department of English, Gombe State University.

PUBLISHED BY:

Jos University Press Ltd.,
No. 15, Murtala Mohammed Way,
Jos Plateau State, Nigeria.

COVER DESIGN:

Saviour Bassey
Phone: 08068160241
E-mail: savior4real75@yahoo.com

Coronavirus Pandemic and Ecological Strain: A Material Ecocritical Interpretation

Joyce Onoromhenre Agofure

Abstract

Since December 2019 till date, attempts have been made by individuals, governments, non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations Organisation, World Bank, World Health Organisation and other health personnel to address the new Coronavirus / Covid-19 pandemic as merely a health and economic challenge. Little or no attention is given to the environmental hazards of the pandemic. It is against this backdrop, that, this study draws attention to new issues that are closely associated with the new Coronavirus outbreak. Prominent among these concerns are critical matters of environmental contamination, and the need for sustainable engagements. The paper makes the point that Corona virus, as hyper-objects shed light about the environment and what it means to be human and non-human in a world of constant viral configurations which intertwine with the well-being of local and distant places, peoples, animals and bionetworks. Accordingly, this paper deploys the interdisciplinary theoretical frame of Material Ecocriticism, which is a broad tool for literary and cultural scholars to investigate global ecological crisis. The theory offers new ways of approaching environmental literary studies; ecological degradation; viruses, animals and plants as ecological concepts. Material Ecocriticism also questions the idea of over consumption for profit, and the consequences of technological advancement, by circumscribing the extent to which every living creature, whether human, virus, fungus, or bacterium communicates statements of vulnerability, porosity, interdependence and annihilation. Thus, this broad-range discourse on contemporary events regarding the Covid-19 pandemic provokes a new understanding of the environment to which we are intimately connected.

Keywords: *Coronavirus, Covid-19, Hyper-objects, Material Ecocriticism, Ecological Strain*

Introduction

In examining the complexities of the present-day pandemic world, the environmental arts, humanities, sciences, history and related disciplines play a huge part to shed light on the impact humans and other bodily agencies have upon the earth. In fact, the new Coronavirus, named Covid-19 disease has created a problematic path on the endangered world (the environment). In this light, studies have shown that the new Coronavirus disruptions have led to health conditions such as fever, cough, pneumonia, acute cardiac distress and death worldwide. Besides, it has translated to widespread job losses, decline of economic activities and stock prices, increase in stock-price volatility, decrease in nominal interest rates-and a great deal of uncertainty attached to the eventual scale of the pandemic, gauged by the number of persons ultimately infected and killed. The full global economic implications of the pandemic and associated policy response have so far remained uncertain (<https://www.nber.org/papers/w26866.pdf>). Despite these, it is instructive to note that, not so much attention has been given to Covid-19 as an environmental

disquiet, apart from the report that, pollution and greenhouse gas emission have plunged across continents as industries, transport systems, and businesses have closed down; as world leaders strive to curtail the spread of the new Coronavirus and minimize the death rate.

This paper provokes discussion on the dire necessity for environmental reflections by expanding the understanding of human and non-human bodies and by stressing that, the Covid-19 occurrence is seen to illuminate human and non-human shared vulnerability. Hence, the renewed call for humans to take fundamental steps towards a sustainable relationship with non-human agencies, animal bodies, and other materiality. Corroborating this view, Pramod K. Nayar maintains that, “microbes, spaces, and interactions blend together...a contradictory but compelling story of the perils of human interdependence and connection. Our bodies, communities, even nation- of which we are so proud and which we police based on ethnic, racial and other identities are not bounded, guarded entities. We are all porous” (<https://www.academia.edu>). Therefore, life, as Stefan Helmreich writes, “materializes as a networked phenomenon linking the microscopic to the macrocosmic, bacteria to the biosphere, genes to globe” (ix). Everything about life discloses an environmental intimacy of connective matter articulated as “the co-constitutive materiality of human corporeality and nonhuman natures” (Alaimo and Hekman 9).

Considered from this perspective, it becomes clear that environmental motivated discourse is a significant undertaking considering that, it directs human interests towards matters, which we need to consistently, think about in the natural world. In his book *Practical Ecocriticism: Literature, Biology and the Environment*, Glen Love has written that:

Ecocriticism fairly urges its practitioners into interdisciplinarity, into science. Literature involves interrelationships, and ecological awareness enhances and expands our sense of interrelationships to encompass nonhuman as well as human contexts. Ecological thinking about literature requires us to take the nonhuman world as seriously as previous modes of criticism have taken the human realm of society and culture. That would seem to be ecocriticism's greatest challenge and its greatest opportunity. (47)

Thus, ecocritics deal with the challenge of representing the planetary scale implication of relating with human and non-human phenomenon which includes the Coronavirus pandemic, and other agentive concerns. Rob Nixon, corroborates this view when he writes that, “we have ... entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. There is considerable evidence that humanity has altered the biophysical systems of earth, not just the carbon cycles...” (12). Just as “the viral

apocalypse rips apart the myth of a self-contained human form. The borders of the human, the regulatory defence mechanism of the immune system are both breached exactly as the virus breaches the national border” (<https://www.academia.edu>) and ecological spaces are encroached demonstrating that no man is an island. Small wonder, Worster Daniel holds that, the cause of ecological crisis is not worked by the ecosystem but by our ethical systems. This is not limited to academic scholarship, rather it occurs across diverse domains, as scientists, environmentalists- literary scholars more broadly; health practitioners, groups, and organizations accentuate the upsetting consequences of species, substances, agencies and things. In all their concern with ecocritical issues, it is hoped that:

Writer-activists can help us apprehend threats imaginatively that remain imperceptible to the senses, either because they are geographically remote, too vast or too minute in scale, or are played out across a time span that exceeds the instance of observation or even the physiological life of the human observer. In a world permeated by insidious, yet unseen or imperceptible violence, imaginative writing can help make the unapparent appear making it accessible and tangible by humanizing drawn-out threats inaccessible to the immediate senses. Writing can challenge perceptual habits that down play the damage slow violence inflicts and bring into imaginative focus apprehensions that elude sensory corroboration. The narrative imaginings of writer- activists may thus offer us a different kind of witnessing of sights unseen. (Nixon 15)

The obvious implication is that, the disease Coronavirus as hyper-objects has shown mankind what it means to comprehend human corporeality and the material world as agential, viscous, and active rather, than as passive and inert. Again, scholars such as Alaimo have traced the material interchanges across human bodies, animal bodies and the wider material world. Alaimo also holds that the human body cannot be viewed as separate from everything that surrounds it, that formulate the world hence, the notion that everything is connected to everything else. This opens up the discourse about the prevailing question of Covid-19 and how all creatures, species, objects and beings are implicated in each other's becoming. What this leads up to is the fact that, the Coronavirus disease and all its agencies represents “a dynamic ... world comes to be seen as a multiplicity of complex interchanges between innumerable agentic forces” (Alaimo 10) that brings humans closely towards a new modernity, a post-pandemic world, for Cory Doctorow, an era of “ecosystem of interruption technologies” (<https://www.locusmag.com/2009/01/cory-doctorow-writing-in-age-of.html>) of coexistence and interdependence.

Coronavirus/ Covid-19: An Interpretation

The World Health Organization has pronounced Coronavirus/ Covid-19 a global health crisis which has led to the deaths of mostly elderly people and those with underlying chronic diseases. According to Cheng-wei Lu et al. (2020), Coronaviruses (CoVs) are so-called for the crown-like spikes on their surface and belong to the family Coronaviridae. Coronavirus broadly infect vertebrates including humans, bats, birds, snakes, mice and other wild animals ([https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30313-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30313-5) 28 February 2020). Until 2019, only six human Coronaviruses (HCoVs) were known that could be held responsible for respiratory diseases. Shajeea Arshad Ali et al, explains that, out of these four (HCoV-229E, OC43, NL63, and HKU1) are endemic globally and are the causative agents for 10%-30% of the upper respiratory infections. The other two, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (SARS- COV) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS COV) are known to infect the lower respiratory tract (<https://pdf.sciencedirectassets.com/277405>). In 2002, a pandemic of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) occurred endangering the lives of 8098 individuals with a mortality rate of 774 patients and the epicentre of the disease was Guangdong, China from where it spread internationally to more than twelve countries and it was assumed that bats were the natural hosts (Ali et al.). In 2012, a rapid-spreading infection MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) emerged in Saudi Arabia and bats were considered to be the natural hosts and the intermediate host was dromedary camels. A total of 2494 cases with 858 deaths were reported.

There are diverse views about how the new Coronavirus/Covid-19 actually originated. Some are of the opinion; that it began with bats and then got into humans. Some argue that, just as SARS (moved from bats to other animals, and then to humans), Covid-19 progressed from bats to another animal possibly pangolin then into persons. This could be the case in China market in Wuhan where exotic animals such as pangolins are traded. Another account holds that the virus escaped from a research laboratory in December 2019, in Wuhan Hubei Province of China and the virus is transmitted by close-person to person contact, aerosol transmission, and transmission by touch as mentioned by Yang et al:

The virus is thought to be transmitted to other people by respiratory during coughing or sneezing. Droplet spread can occur when an infected person sneezes or coughs, where upon virus containing droplets are propelled up to 3 feet through the air and are deposited on the mucous membranes of the mouth, nose or eyes of persons who are nearby. The other avenues for the spread of the virus are shaking hands with an infected person, touching an infected object/surface, frequent touching of the nose or mouth or coming into contact with patients ['] excreta. Another avenue is through “hidden

transmission” in which asymptomatic infected individuals or carriers unknowingly transmit the virus to unsuspecting contacts. (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaut.2020.102434>).

Nonetheless, not minding how the new Coronavirus originated, writers, scientists, environmental scholars, and specialists are of the opinion that its effects are determined by the environment in which they exist and subsist. For example, those who dwell in highly contaminated environments, degraded habitats, and regions are likely going to play key role in the proliferation of the Coronavirus. Understanding the circumstances of Coronavirus demonstrates how humans as casualties of slow violence- threats that take time to wreak havoc and what happens when human and biotic community's collusion are “beyond sensory ken in the planetary consciousness?” (Nixon 14). Using Material eco-criticism as an analytical tool, this paper illustrates how the devouring cultural practices such as, ravaging appetite for animals, species and non-human bodies have led to the worrisome outcome of Coronavirus infection on people and the contamination of the earth.

Explicating the Theory Material Eco-criticism

Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary study which calls for collaboration between natural scientists, writers, physicists, literary critics, anthropologists, historians, and more. Ecocriticism requests humans to examine themselves and the world around by critiquing the way humans represent, interact with, and construct the environment. As a literary and cultural theory, Ecocriticism has significantly broadened into other aspects such as postcolonial eco-criticism, material eco-criticism and eco-feminism. The widely known ecocritics are Lawrence Buell and Cheryll Glotfelty, Simon C. Estok, Harold Fromm, William Howarth, William Rueckert, Scott Slovic, Michael P. Branch and Glen A. Love.

Material eco-criticism is the study of ways material forms-bodies, things, elements, toxic substances, chemicals, organic and inorganic matter, landscapes and biological entities- intra-act with each other and with the human dimension, producing configurations of meanings and discourses that we can interpret as stories. Material ecocriticism conveys a distributive vision of agency, the emergent nature of the world's phenomena, the awareness that we inhabit a dimension crisscrossed by vibrant forces that hybridize human and nonhuman matter and finally the persuasion that matter and meaning constitute the fabric of our storied world are the basic premises of material ecocriticism (Iovino and Oppermann 5). It upholds critical posthuman visions and delegitimizes human exceptionalism. Eileen Joy and Christine M. Neufeld have written that “much of the contemporary debates over posthumanism have mainly focused on the ways in which new biotechnologies and new findings in the cognitive sciences have complicated how we conceptualize and

enact our human identities, ushering in the language of crisis over the supposed destabilization of the category “human” in its biological, social and political aspects (171). The main advocates of material ecocriticism are Stacy Alaimo, Serenella Iovino, Serpil Oppermann, Jane Bennett, Susan Hekman and Karen Barad.

In their study, “Material Ecocriticism: Materiality, Agency and Models of Narrativity” Iovino and Oppermann state that:

Material ecocriticism encompasses both human material discursive constructions and non-human things: water, soil, stones, metals, minerals, bacteria, toxins, food, electricity, cells, atoms, all cultural objects and places. The characteristic feature of these material configurations is that they are not made of single elements, isolated from each other. Rather, they form complexes both natural and cultural, and in many cases human agency and meanings are deeply interlaced with the emerging agency and meaning of these non-human beings. (83)

By so doing, Material ecocriticism focuses on the way bodily natures and the discursive forces draw critical attention towards the representations of nature's agentic powers and material vitality. Thus, whether visible or invisible, socialized or wild, they are all material forms emerging in combination with forces, agencies and other matter. Entangled in endless ways, their “more- than human” materiality is a constant process of shared becoming that tells us something about the “word we inhabit” (Iovino and Oppermann 1). In a similar vein, Timothy Morton has written that, all forms of life are connected in a vast entangling mesh. This interconnectedness penetrates all dimensions of life. No being, construct or object can exist independently from the ecological entanglement, nor does nature exist as an entity separate from the uglier or more synthetic elements of life. Morton describes a mesh of deeply interconnected life forms- intimate, strange and lacking fixed identity. The integral ways of thinking not only discourse and matter but also human and the non-human natures together illuminates the vitality of things in all natural-cultural processes.

Material eco-criticism holds that:

the world's material phenomena are knots in a vast network of agencies, which can be 'read' and interpreted as forming narratives, stories. Developing in bodily forms and in discursive formulations and ...arising in the air we breathe, the food we eat, in the things and beings of this world, within and beyond the human realm. All matter, in other words, is a 'storied matter'. It is a meaning, properties and processes in which human and nonhuman players are interlocked in networks that produce undeniable signifying forces

(Iovino and Oppermann 2).

Taken together, global and local, rural and urban places share a vulnerability of what Ulrich Beck has amply and perceptibly illuminated:

Threats from civilisation are bringing about a kind of new shadow kingdom comparable to the realm of the gods and demons in antiquity, which is hidden behind the visible world and threatens human life on their earth. People no longer correspond today with spirits residing in things but find themselves exposed to “radiation”, “ingest toxic levels” and are pursued into their very dreams by the anxiety of a nuclear holocaust....

Dangerous hostile substances lie concealed behind the harmless facades. Everything must be viewed with a double gaze, and can only be correctly understood and judged through this doubling. The world of the visible must be investigated, relativized with respect to a second reality, only existent in thought and concealed in the world. (72)

Inherent in the quotation is the fact that the modern world is continuously imperilled with toxic and radiological hazards and threats brought about by the unrelenting advancement in technology creating a world of “environmental politics of permeation” (Nixon 63). Ecological science shows us that nature is not an assembly of separate species all competing with each other for survival but that organic world is made up of many communities of diverse beings in which the species all play different but essential roles (98). Central to the ecosystem is the notion that living organisms continually engage in a set of relationships with every other element. Therefore, the storied narrative of Covid 19 pandemic demonstrates the extent to which human and non-human bodies can engage in a play of signification to produce intra-active relations with dire consequences.

Coronavirus as Hyper-objects: The Ecological Strain

The impact of meat-eating on the environment is significant. According to Joe Myers, “China eats over 28% of the world's meat. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates that between 10 and 20 million dogs are killed in China for their meat annually, while Asia puts the figure for cats at around 4 million per year” (<https://www.weforum.org>). The obvious implication is that, in the era of Coronavirus and internationally transmissible viruses, it has become apparent that viruses do not respect borders hence, the over consumption of non-human inhabitants such as pangolins, bats, dogs, cats and other species which harbour viruses triggered the Coronavirus pandemic. As a result, the contamination of the air and surroundings has been connected to the broader question of how Coronaviruses as hyper-objects are transmitted over considerable distances to other places globally. In other words, there is a parallel between human activities, air pollution and the Coronavirus spread. The Coronavirus pandemic narratives bring

to light the extent to which the permeability among bats, pangolins, cats and other creatures culminate in the subject of porous interfaces of all things as illuminated in Material Ecocriticism Theory.

In an attempt to buttress the concept of hyper-objects, Timothy Morton describes “hyper-objects as agents, massively distributed in time and space and are relative to humans” (1). Stephen Muecke “hyper-objects exceed human apprehension...they challenge our assumptions of human mastery over things” (<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hyperobjects>). It is in recognition of all these that Percy Shelly states that hyper-objects are the “awful shadow of some unseen powers” (qtd in Morton 1). As hyper-objects, the Coronavirus pandemic in its corporeality stands out as a powerful non-human agency that resists human attempts to control its vivacity. Agreeing with this position, Muecke maintains that, they are harbingers for a new epoch, assisted by the general consensus in relation to the anthropocene- the current epoch of human induced planetary change.

It becomes clear that, the excessive human burden on the environment and its inhabitants through over exploitation has drastically increased the demand for food production, the use of resources which have transmuted to the loss of biodiversity and the formation of infectious disorders such as Covid-19 and its consequences. Thus, the need to reconsider human interactions, and innovations targeted at non-humans for consumption and profit since, the human and non-human agencies are inseparable from the very material world within which they intra-act. “These things speak in a world of multiple interacting processes, such as climate change or the systems of production and consumption of global capitalism, entailing geopolitical and economic practices and thus reminding us of the fact that linguistic, social, political and biological are inseparable” (Iovino and Oppermann 83-84). Again, Al Gore has clearly drawn attention to the danger posed by such viciousness when he insists that humans have quadrupled the population of the world in the last 100 years:

We have magnified the power of our technologies a thousand fold and the combination has radically transformed the underlying relationship between the human species and the earth. We are now capable of having a destructive impact on the ecological system of the entire planet. We are the largest force of nature now and we have to take that into account in the way we relate to the environment. (34)

It is obvious that, the present-day human interference with the non-human world is disproportionate and the situation is deteriorating exceedingly with obliterations and annihilation activated by the new Coronavirus infections and threats.

It is no longer news that the Covid-19 contagion has taken a huge toll on lives, health, jobs and economic services. Thus, humanity's day to day over exploitation of other bodies is getting complicated and in need of close attention. It is time to dutifully observe the self-isolation, social/physical distancing approach to take stock of human reckless actions of exploitation and over-consumption towards the non-

human world. Policies must change, to affect basic economies, and technological structures. Thus, Material ecocritical theory points the way to a moderate and sustainable attitude on the part of humans towards all identifiable entities. Humans have no right to manipulate other life forms. Just like Al Gore proposed, ethical and proper ways for humans to engage with bodies, animals and species must be promoted.

Taken together, we may agree with Hupert Zapf that, “the environmental crisis of our time is at root a discursive phenomenon. It comes about through a shift in our ways of seeing and assessing what we see, made possible by the taking up into our discursive resources new vocabularies, new judgemental categories, new metaphors and analogies that have promoted awareness of much that was previously overlooked” (3-4). In examining the complications relating to Coronavirus pandemic in the global world, environmental literary studies, humanities, sciences, and related disciplines play crucial parts in explicating issues about the dynamics of human intersections with other bodily agencies manifesting as the new Covid-19 disease endangering the earth today.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates the extent to which Coronavirus/ Covid-19 could be conceived beyond health or economic challenges but also as a consequence of environmental abuse manifested in the fissure of human and non-human interface. The dishevelled unease for over consumption of other species has brought about the deepening chasm and environmental strain on local, urban, regional and global

Works Cited

- Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Indiana UP, 2010.
- Alaimo, Stacy and Susan Hekman. “Introduction: Emerging Models of Materiality in Feminist Theory” Eds. Stacy, Alaimo and Susan Hekman. *Material Feminism*. Indiana UP, 2008.
- Arne, Naess. “Politics and the Ecological Crisis: An Introductory Note” *Deep Ecology for the Twenty- First Century*. Ed. George, Session. Shambhala, 1995.

- Beck, Ulrich. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage, 2005.
- Cheng, Wei Lu., Xiu, Fen Liu., Zhi, Fang Jia. "2019-nCoV Transmission through the Ocular Surface must not be ignored" *The Lancet* 28 Feb. 2020. Web. 31 May. 2020. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30313-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30313-5)
- Doctorow, Cory. "Writing in an Age of Distraction" *locusmagazine* 5 Jan. 2009. Web. 10 May 2020. <https://www.locusmag.com/2009/01/cory-doctorow-writing-in-age-of.html>.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll and Harold, Fromm. (Ed) *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- Gore, Al. *Earth in the Balance: Forging a New Common Purpose*. Earthscan, 1992.
- Helmreich, Stefan. *Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas*. University of California Press, 2009.
- Henriques, Martha. "Will Covid-19 have a Lasting Impact on the Environment?" 27 March 2020. Web. 31 May 2020. <https://www.joliet.org>
- Iovino, Serenella and Oppermann, Serpil. *Material Ecocriticism*. Indiana University Press, 2014.
- Joy, Eileen and Christine, M. Neufeld. "A Confession of Faith: Notes Towards a New Humanism". *Journal of Narrative Theory*. Vol. 37.7 (Summer 2007), pp. 161-190.
- Love, Glen. *Practical Ecocriticism: Literature, Biology and the Environment*. University of Virginia P, 2003.
- Morton, Timothy. *Hyper-objects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
- Myers, Joe. "China Consumes more than a Quarter of the World's Meat. The

- Government wants to Change That” World Economic Forum Covid Action Platform. 21 June 2016. Web. 8 June 2020. <https://www.weforum.org>
- Muecke, Stephen. “Global Warming and other Hyper Objects” Lareview of books 20 Feb. 2014. Web. 29 May 2020. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hyperobjects>
- Nayar, K. Pramod. “Pathogens without Borders” Telangana Today 4 April 2020. Web. 1 June 2020. https://www.academia.edu/42607934/pathogens_without_borders Nayar, K. Pramod. Posthumanism. Polity, 2014.
- Nixon, Rob. Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Shajeea, Arshad Ali., Mariam, Baloch., Naseem Ahmed., Asadullah, Arshad Ali., Ayman, Igbal. “The Outbreak of Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID 19) - An Emerging Global Health Threat” Journal of Infection and Public Health 23 Feb. 2020. Web. 30 May 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jiph.2020.103434>
- Yang, Yongshi., Peng. Fujun., Wang, Runsheng., Kai Guan., Jiang Taijjiao., Xu, Guogang., Sun, Jinlun., Chang, Christopher. “The Deadly Coronaviruses: The 2003 SARS Pandemic and the 2020 Novel Coronavirus Epidemic in China”. Journal of Autoimmunity 10 May 2020. Web. 1 June 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaut.2020.102434>.
- Worster, Daniel. The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination. New York: Oxford UP, 1993.
- Zapf, Hubert and De Gruyter. Handbook of Ecocriticism and Cultural Ecology. Nordingen, 2016.

Joyce Onoromhenre Agofure is a lecturer in the Department of English and Literary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, where she teaches African Literature. She is a recipient of the 2016/2017 Fulbright Foreign Student Researcher Fellowship from the University of Idaho, USA, and 2018/2019 American Council of Learned Society of the African Humanities Program Postdoctoral Fellow (ACLS/AHP). Her research interests are comparative literature, environmental literary studies, Diaspora literature, gender studies, and postcolonial literatures. Email: onorojoyce@gmail.com, joagofure@abu.edu.ng