

Yorùbá Poets' Perception of Amalgamation and National Integration in Nigeria

Deborah Bámidélé ARÓWÓŞĒGBĒ (Ph.D)

Adekunle Ajasin University
Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria
deborah.arowosegbe@aau.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examines the perception of two Yorùbá poets regarding the issue of British amalgamation, which led to the creation of the Nigeria of today, and the subsequent problem of national integration following the amalgamation. The study appraises the motivation for amalgamation, the level of consultation and the consequences of the idea. The texts of the two authors (Adélékè (1991) and Şàngótóyè (2011) were the source of data for the study. The texts were read, and excerpts were taken from them for analysis and discussion. The study adopts the theory of Sociology of Literature, with a particular focus on the mirror image approach. The theory assumes that literature is a reflection or mirror of the social activities of man in his environment. The study reveals that poets perceive the amalgamation as a forceful union of different ethnic groups with the intent of forging unity and rapid development, the poets further claim that the amalgamation failed to unite the people or bring positive development to the nation. The study contributes to knowledge by showing poets as custodians of social events in their society; in addition, they proffer solutions to social problems.

Keywords: amalgamation, integration, poets, ethnic groups, society.

1.0 Introduction

Creative writers utilise their imaginative **skills** to comment and document historical events and social issues for posterity. There is hardly any area of societal life that creative writers do not explore; be it cultural issues such as politics, economy, religion, crime, the environment and others. Literature, as scholars have claimed in different studies, is about man and his society. Gbàdàmóşí (2003:2) writes that “literature is about the life experience of man and their perception of life in any given society. Literature may represent life, a social truth where humans are regarded as objects of literary creation.” Different Yorùbá literary writers of poetry, drama and prose have written to mirror different aspects of Yorùbá social life, such literary writers include Olú Owólabí, Afólábí Ọlábímtán, Adébáyò Fálétí, T. A Ládélé, Dúró Adélékè, Yémisí Adébòwálé, Léré Adéyemí, Tópé Olúmúyiwá, Jíbólá Abíódún, Dèbò Awé and a host of others. These creative writers and others like them have sought to demonstrate that art, an integral part of society, is one major means of documenting both contemporary and past experiences in any given society (Akporobaro, 1994). In this study, it is demonstrated that a good understanding of the functions of art motivated the poets under study to capture important issues relating to the amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria in their respective poems.

This study investigates the perception of two notable poets, namely Dúró Adélékè and Ọládélé Şàngótóyè, on the very important historical life of Nigeria. The northern and southern protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 by Lord Lugard with the hope of uniting

the different ethnic nationalities, and building a strong and prosperous nation. The poets examine the level of consultation before the amalgamation, and how far the nation had thrived in the area of unity, strength and prosperity. The poets show deep interest on the issue of integration of the different ethnic nationalities. The poets, however, not fully convinced that the amalgamation had provided expected results, suggest ways and means of pursuing integration, or of rebuilding the system to avoid an undesirable end to the marriage of inconvenience.

The study is divided into five sections. Section one is the introduction to the study, section two presents some historical facts as documented by notable historians. Section three presents the theoretical framework adopted in the study, section four presents pieces of data in the form of excerpts from the texts under study. Section five is the conclusion to the study.

2.0 Amalgamation

The Southern and Northern protectorate of Nigeria was amalgamated by Lord Lugard on the 1st of January 1914 on behalf of the British government. Various scholars have described the motivation for the amalgamation and gains and the problems arising from the exercise. Different scholars argue that the exercise was a forceful one because the opinions of the different nationalities or ethnic groups within the two protectorates were not sought. They contend that there was no referendum or any form of consultation with the nationalities by the British government before the amalgamation was announced (Tamuno 1998, Akinjide 2000, Kuforiji 2022).

It is further argued by scholars that include Falola(1987) Ahmed & Ningi (2022), and Oyarinu (2024) that the amalgamation was carried out to satisfy the economic and political interest of the colonial master (the British government). The interests of the ethnic groups in the protectorates were not considered by the British government. The scholars mentioned above, and several others claim that the exercise was carried out to ease administrative activities and to reduce administrative cost. It was carried out primarily for financial gains by the British government. Ahmed and Ningin (2022:34) corroborate this when he writes thus;

Lugard was asked to amalgamate the two territories because the British government felt that the maintenance of two separate but contiguous administrations was wasteful.... Furthermore, the British wanted to save themselves trouble of aiding the Northern administration through an annual grant-in-aid of about £100,000 sterling while the Southern administration usually had more than a million pounds sterling surplus.

Ahmed captures the rationale behind Lugard's action of amalgamating the Northern and Southern protectorate. The interest of the different nationalities and ethnic groups did not count in the mind of the British government.

One important issue that scholars have continued to raise about the amalgamation has to do with the positive and negative consequences of the exercise. While the exercise is perceived to have brought the different nationalities and ethnic groups together under one umbrella and forged a common goal and a common direction, it is argued that the exercise did very little to unite the people, it also failed to impact positively on the economy and general well-being of the people. Some scholars claim that the amalgamation laid the foundation of the many problems that Nigeria as a nation faces today (Isisani & Obi-Ani n.d).

It is argued in Chibuzor (2021) that problems of ethnicity, ethnic rivalry, fear of domination, poor economy, corruption lack of trust and present-day banditry are traceable to the poor foundation laid by the British by forcefully joining people of different nationalities, history and culture together.

This study is about the poetics of amalgamation as it describes topical issues in relation to the exercise (amalgamation) in the poems of Adeleke (1997) and Şàngótóyè (2011). The poems reveal one of the primary functions of poetry: the ability to comment on topical issues and social happenings in a society as pointed out in Adejumo 2005..

3.0 Theoretical Framework

The study used the sociology of literature as its theoretical framework. The sociology of literature is a subfield of the sociology of culture. It studies the social production of literature and its social implications. Sociological criticism analyses how individuals are moulded, reflecting their societies and institutions. The sociology of literature is a fusion of two distinct disciplines: sociology and literature (Ògúnşínà, 2006). Ògúnşínà cites Moore (1967), saying that sociology is the science of social relationships and the consequences of those relationships for ongoing social systems and the process of social change. Ògúnşínà (2006) further explains that sociology concerns itself with all that happens to human beings due to their interaction with one another. Sociology deals with the world of human experience, human behaviour towards one's fellows, but its primary focus is on the group or the larger entity. Sociology of literature is concerned with the process of change within the society, that is, how society changes gradually or radically from one to another --- and the effect these changes have on the social structure (Ògúnşínà, 2006, citing Berger, 1980). Literature is concerned with man and his society. Selden (1985:25) explains that literature, a product of a society, is a weapon that can be used in the epochs of class struggle. According to Goldmann (1977), literature does not exist in isolation. It must be assessed in relation to the society and its ideology that produces it. Therefore, the sociology of literature attempts to understand the inter-relationship between literature and society. The language with which a work of art is composed is the property of the society. Therefore, the sociology of literature views the relationship between a work of art and society as one of the constant interrelationships that each affects and is affected by the other (Taiwo, 2013).

The mirror image approach to the sociology of literature employed in this work is one of the various approaches suggested for the sociology of literature. Ògúnşínà (2006:9) asserts that a French philosopher, Louis de Bonald (1754-1840), was one of the proponents of the approach. Bonald was one of the first writers to argue that through a careful reading of any nation's literature, a clearer understanding of its people is depicted (Ògúnşínà, 2006). It conceives a literary work to depict events and happenings in a particular society. The approach views literature that directly reflects various facets of social structure, family relationships, class conflicts, divorce trends, and population composition. It aims to transform the fictional world of literature into specific social meanings. It conceives a literary work to depict events and happenings in a particular society. The mirror image approach is employed in this work because it examines the relationship between culture and society. Culture and society are interwoven, and it is not easy to disentangle one from the other. It is believed that there can be no culture without a society. The mirror image approach employed in this work provides the tools for analysing the poems. It is noted that the poems considered are all reflections of Nigerian society. Since the poets we examine in this work are from the society and the changes brought about by the 1914 amalgamation affect the society, it is believed that

the mirror image approach will be helpful in determining the poets' perception of what goes on in Nigeria, especially the aftermath of the 1914 amalgamation.

4.0 Data and Analysis

In this section, the study presents excerpts from the texts to support the major themes discussed under various subheadings.

4.1 Forceful Amalgamation of Ethnic Groups

Adélékè (1997) describes the amalgamation of Nigeria as a forceful fusion of distinct, autonomous and independent ethnic nationalities into one nation under the British hegemony. According to the poet, the three major ethnic groups —Hausa, Igbo, and Yorùbá —and the numerous other (minor) ethnic groups lived independently, with each not interfering in the internal affairs of the others. The poet puts it thus:

 Ñ bẹ̀rẹ̀ pẹ̀pẹ̀
 Şebí kónkó-ja-bele ni
 Kálukú ló ñ şe tirè lóṭòṭò (Adélékè, 1997: lines 52-54)

In the beginning
Everyone was independent
Every ethnic group was independent

The excerpt from the text, which is illustrated above, signifies that before the coming of the British, the various ethnic nationalities existed independently. This is captured in *Ñ bẹ̀rẹ̀ pẹ̀pẹ̀ 'in the beginning' Kálukú ló ñ şe tirè lóṭòṭò* 'each ethnic group was independent'. The excerpt states that each ethnic group existed and lived as a free and independent entity. No one group interfered with the internal affairs of the other. The poet says *şebí kónkó-ja-bele-ni* 'each group was independent'

Şàngótóyè (2011:118-120) echoes a similar perception in his poem 'Ètùtù Ìşòkan' when he writes that:

 Kálukú ló ti ñ bẹ̀ látayébáyé.
 Pèlú ètò tí kò tẹ̀ tí kò gbun (Şàngótóyè, 2011: lines 58-59)

Each group had been in existence from time immemorial
With their different ways of life

These lines from Sangotoye (2011) agree with the perception expressed in Adélékè (1997) that each ethnic group existed independently, with each group operation a pattern or structure that suited it well, Şàngótóyè also affirms the issue of each group being in existence before the coming of the British, and the fact that each group was distinct and independent of the other.

A clear understanding of the two poets reveals that the three major ethnic groups — Hausa, Igbo, and Yorùbá —and the other (minor) groups lived differently, with distinct cultural, economic, and religious patterns, as well as different approaches to social development and governance, prior to the 1914 amalgamation. Their existence was peaceful and progressive, and each group was satisfied with its situation.

Having claimed that the ethnic nationalities were autonomous and largely independent of one another, the poets affirm that the independent groups were forcefully brought together

under one umbrella as a nation. Each group, thereby, lost its autonomy and independence to a central government run by the British colonial power. The excerpts below testify to the forceful perception of amalgamation.

(Adélékè, 1997): Àtòhúnrìnwá ló fi jàgùdà páálí bọ̀rọ̀ (line 54)
Ọmọ afòkunsọ̀nà so wọ̀n pọ̀ (line 60)

The impostor made it mandatory.
Ọmọ afòkunsọ̀nà joined them together.

Adélékè (1997: lines 51-58) asserts that foreigners (*àtòhúnrìnwá*) forcefully integrated the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. The poet affirms that the consent of the ethnic groups was not sought; they had no say or choice in the amalgamation. This agrees with the position of Historians like Ehiabhi (2024), who opines that the different ethnic nationalities were compulsorily enrolled under a single political structure without considering their historical backgrounds. Adélékè adds that:

Láìwòtàn ìṣẹ̀dálẹ̀ kóówá wọ̀n
Ọmọ afòkunsọ̀nà so wọ̀n pọ̀ (Adélékè: lines 59-60)

Without considering their different cultural and historical backgrounds,
The stranger, the impostor, unites them.

Şàngótóyè (2011) also believes that the whites, specifically the British amalgamated Nigerian ethnic groups without the groups' consent. He says:

Kálukú ló ti ñ bẹ látayébáyé (line 58)
Kóyìnbó ó tó da sùgà àti iyọ̀ pọ̀ (line 59)
Kíwọ̀n tóó kó yẹ̀pẹ̀ sínú imí ẹ̀ran, (line 61)

The individual group had been in existence from time immemorial.
Before the British combined sugar and salt
Before they add sand to cattle excrement

The references to *sùgà* 'sugar' and *iyọ̀* 'salt' by the poet in line 59, and to *yẹ̀pẹ̀* 'sand' and *imí ẹ̀ran* 'excrement' in line 61 are very symbolic, particularly in interpreting the issue of forceful amalgamation. Sugar and salt have something in common; they are typically used to add sweetness. However, they are different in terms of where they become useful. Sugar, for instance, is usually not added to soup, while salt is never added to tea. Combining the two for whatever purpose is, in Şàngótóyè's view, an aberration and unhealthy. He perceives that the forceful amalgamation is not healthy for the peace and development of the different ethnic nationalities. The reference to sand and excrement suggests a chaotic situation, as the two are meant to serve different purposes; mixing them leads to a confused state of affairs.

The mirror image approach in the sociology of literature suggests that the three ethnic groups did not come from the same background. The Igbo came from the Southeast, the Hausa from Northern Nigeria, while the Yorùbá came from the Southwest. They did not have the same language, nor were they under the same government. Religiously, they were not the same. While we had more Christians in Yorùbáland and among the Igbo, there were more Muslims among the Hausa; they practised the African Traditional religion in different ways.

4.2 Poetic View of **the Purpose of Amalgamation**

The texts Adélékè (1997) and Şàngótóyè (2011) put forward a number of purposes the British wanted the amalgamation to serve. One of the purposes was to foster unity among the ethnic groups and strengthen them to work together for the greatness of one nation. Adélékè points to this in lines 54-59 of his poem, where he writes thus:

Àtòhúnrìnwá ló fi jàgùdà páálí bọ̀rò
Páìtówọ̀rìn ejò
Ní kó ìyà jọmọ̀ ejò
Pégi kan kì í jégbó
Àpapọ̀ ìtākùn ní í jé ìtí (Adélékè, 1997: lines 54-59)

The foreigner made it mandatory.
Saying that snakes suffer
Because of their inability to move together
That a tree does not make a forest
The combination of many adventitious roots is called wood

The poet utilises Yorùbá proverbs to convey the message of unity and strength in the poem. There is a Yorùbá proverb that says,

Àìkọ̀wọ̀rìn ejò ní jọmọ̀ ejò níyà. Bí ọkà bá sáájú, tí òjòlá tẹ̀lé e, tí ọ̀wun
Ní wọ̀ ruru bọ̀ léyìn, baba ta ni yóò kò wọ̀n lójú?

Lack of unity is responsible for the suffering of the offspring of snakes. If the cobra leads, and the python follows with the black snake following behind, Who will dare confront them?

The proverb is repeated in the poem as *páìtówọ̀rìn ejò ní kó ìyà jọmọ̀ ejò* 'Saying that snakes suffer, because of their inability to move together'. The message inherent in the proverb is **that** human beings cannot make progress when they are **not** united. This, the poet perceives, is a significant reason for the British to bring the different ethnic nationalities together. **It** is an assumption on the part of the colonial master that if they come together as a nation through amalgamation, the prospect of unity, peace, strength and progress would be great. The poet also makes recourse to yet another proverb,

Igi kan kò lè ẹ̀ ẹ̀gbó
Àpapọ̀ ìtākùn ní jé ìtí

A tree cannot make a forest
A combination of adventurous trees makes the woods

The proverb equally buttresses the poet's perception of why the British adopted amalgamation. The assumption being that by coming together as one, the different ethnic groups would be in a position to act with one voice.

A second purpose for amalgamation that can be drawn from the poem by Adeleke relates to the ease of administration, allowing for access to and control over the resources of the different ethnic groups. This would help sustain dominance and exploitation of the ethnic groups. This point is captured in the lines below.

Ó so wọ̀n pọ̀ dodiiidi tán

Omo afòkunṣòṅà bá sọrà rè di kòṅkò
Tí í ẹ baálẹ̀ odò
Wòsò-dè mí fẹ̀ donísò
Ajínílókọ-fẹ̀ fẹ̀ ẹ̀daya ẹ̀ni
Mùsùn musun irè oko to so jìngbìnnì wọjú àtòhúnrìnwá
Àtòhúnrìn fẹ̀ gbalẹ̀ lówó onílẹ̀ (Adélékè, 1997: lines 61-67)

After making them one
Omo afòkunṣòṅà made himself a bull-frog
Which is the chief of the brook
The person who was to look after the market stall wants to make himself the owner
A concubine wants to become one's wife
He covets the plants with many seeds
A non-native wants to acquire another man's land

The poet claims that the British became firmly established in the way the bullfrog establishes its authority at the riverside; they became the sole inheritors of other people's wealth. Because they saw the immense potential of the land, they forcefully became the landowners due to the economic potential of the land. The position of the poet aligns with the records of historians such as Tamuno (1998), Kuforiji (2020), and Ehiabhi (2024), who argue in their respective studies that economic interests motivated the British to adopt amalgamation.

4.3 The Consequences of the 1914 Amalgamation

The two poets are unanimous in their perception that amalgamation had consequences for social cohesion and the administrative landscape of the land. Most noticeable were rivalry, a lack of trust, a lack of developmental progress, and a fear of dominance by one major ethnic group over the other two major groups and minor groups. The poets demonstrate these noticeable consequences in their respective poems. Adeleke (1997) in his poem "**Oníkàn yí Rọ̀ra**" refers to the ambition of a particular ethnic group to monopolise the land's resources and dominate other ethnic groups. The poet writes thus,

È sọ fún un
Pájọni wa ni
Baba gbogbo wa ló para pọ̀ pàjùbà
Kóníkàn ó rántí
Pórí n gbogbo wa fi rìn délẹ̀ yí
Kó yé ragabú móhun tí í ẹ̀ ti gbogbo wa (Adélékè, 46: lines 19-24)

Tell *him* (the owner of the garden egg)
That the resources belong to all of us
Our leaders came together to establish the nation
The owner of the garden eggs should remember
That we are all indigenes of this land
He should stop his dominance over what belongs to all.

The poet reminds everyone that all the resources in the land belong to all; as such, fairness and justice must prevail. He condemns the clear efforts to lord it over others, to dominate others and to take control of what belongs to all. Line 44 of the poem *Kó yé ragabú móhun tí í ẹ̀ ti gbogbo wa* is a clarion call for restraint by the overbearing ethnic group not to force itself on others or appropriate to itself the resources that belong to all. The explanation here

reflects a lack of trust arising from rivalry and a fear of one group dominating the others. The proclamation of one ethnic group, as contained below, reflects a rejection of servitude.

Èmi ò joyè abẹ̀sin káwọ́ oníkà̀n mọ́
Torí bá a ti bẹ̀rú la bọmọ́

.....
Ọkánjùà ni ó pa oníkà̀n yìí (Adélékè, 47 lines 37-38, 39)

I am not ready to serve under *oníkà̀n* any longer
Slaves are born the same way children are born
Oníkà̀n is only greedy

The poet conveys a sense of distrust and a reluctance to work together.

The poet borrowed the story of *Oníkà̀n* ‘the garden egg farmer’ from the Yorùbá folktale (*Oníkà̀n Yìí Jingbin*). In the folktale, the garden-egg farmer appropriated the entire garden egg on the farm to himself and forbade any person from harvesting or benefiting from the farm. This continued until *Ijápá*, the crafty and legendary protagonist of Yorùbá folktales, reminded the garden egg farmer that he should live and let others live. He explained to the farmer why the garden egg was for everyone to share and enjoy. The poet uses the folktale to call for restraint and avoid efforts to dominate and appropriate resources to oneself only. The issue of dominance by a group is given prominence in the excerpt below from Adélékè (1997:52)

Ajá kan ò fẹ́ ẹ̀sákápò Ẹkùn mọ́
Akú àti Kedú ò joyè abẹ̀sin-káwọ́ mọ́
Sànnnú kò fẹ́ Kedú lóba
Sànnnú kò fẹ́ Akú lóyè

No dog wants to remain the treasurer to a leopard
Akú and Kedú are not ready to serve Sànnnú any longer
Sànnnú does not want Kedú to lead
Sànnnú does not want Akú to lead

According to the poet, Sànnnú is hell bent on dominating all the other groups. The group does not want Kedú or Akú to rise to the position of power or authority. The Sànnnú group was determined to appropriate all power and positions to itself to the exclusion of all other ethnic groups.

Şàngótóyè (2011) decries the sense of inequality and injustice in the sharing of resources and power. He writes thus,

Torí bí a ẹ̀se bí ẹ̀rú la bí ọmọ́.
Bọ̀ròntàsé kò sẹ̀rú kò sọmọ́ lórílẹ̀-èdè yìí
Ọgbọ̀ogba ni gbogbo wa lójú Olúwa, (Şàngótóyè, 2011: 119, lines 55-57)

Because slaves are born the same way children are born
Talk less, there are neither slaves nor children
Everyone is equal before the Lord

The message inherent in the excerpt is that all are equal, all are free-born, and should have equal access to available resources. The message in the excerpt reflects feelings of inequality, injustice and domination perceived by a section of the amalgamated groups. There is a clarion call for redress and balance.

Finally, on the consequences, the poets report a sense of chaos and disruption of social coherence. Adeleke (1997:48) writes thus,

Kò pé kò jìnnà
Yánponyánrin dé
Kòsèni lè sun àsùnwató (Adélékè,1997, 48: lines 82-83, 90)

Not long
Chaos sets in
Nobody could sleep soundly

The poet, in the excerpt above, claims that chaos (*yánponyánrin*) erupted due to the fusion of ethnic groups that are not culturally and historically the same. The various groups could not harmonise effectively and live together in peace due to ego, fear of domination, and lack of trust. As would be expected, chaos made development and meaningful social progress impossible.

Şàngótóyè agrees that chaos and disorder set in due to the forceful amalgamation implemented by the British. The fear of domination and lack of trust led to deadly changes in government. Şàngótóyè (2011) captures this in the excerpt below:

Òní, ìjòba dàrú
Òla, Sójà yòbò
Wòn a máa para wòn sí pópó
Wòn a máa dú ara wòn bí ẹnì dúran (lines12-15)

Today, chaos
Tomorrow, the military takes over
They kill themselves on the highways
They slaughter themselves as one slaughters cattle

One of the consequences that has left a deep scar in the heart of the Nigerian nation is the intrusion of the military. The nation had witnessed *coup d'état* several times, resulting in the killings of political actors, generals in the army, and civilians in some cases. This has affected the smooth running of the government and governance. Every aspect of social development has been badly affected by the chaotic situation arising from the amalgamation.

4.4 Poetic Perception of Resolving Problems of Integration

The two poets agree that amalgamation has not yielded a positive dividend for the Nigerian nation, as it has not brought unity, strength, and peace to the nation as a unified entity, nor to the individual, diverse ethnic nationalities that comprise the union. The previous section (4.3) explains the various problems being experienced due to the fusion of the various ethnic groups. The poets proffer solutions to the problems, but they proffer different solutions. Adélékè, for instance, suggests separation, a reversal of the old order where each ethnic nationality lives an autonomous and independent existence. The poet says:

Òfón-òn ti tò ó gbègìrì
Kélekò kékò è lówó
Kí kóowá gba sarè e baba è lo
Òrán-an-yàn kó làşepò (52: lines: 215-221)

Rat has urinated into the stew (The nation is perverted)

Everybody should hold their wrapped pap
Everybody should move to their father's land
Staying together is not compulsory

This is a strong position based on the poet's perception of domination by the Sànnnú group over other groups. The poet believes that since different groups do not share a similar history, culture, religion, and social practices, staying together as a nation would continue to breed rivalry, distress, chaos, and insecurity. Thus, his canvassing for separation by saying that *kí kóowá gba sarè e baba è lọ, Òràn-an-yàn kọ làsepò* 'let everyone go back to his father's land, staying together is not compulsory.

Şàngótóyè (2011) agrees that there is a need for modification of the status quo in order to remove rivalry, distress, chaos, and other unfriendly issues that cause disaffection among the different ethnic nationalities. The poet does not call for the outright separation of the different groups; rather, he advocates for a national conference where the groups will dialogue, each group having the opportunity to air its views on how to restructure the nation to benefit each group. The poet writes thus,

Èmi ìbá dàmòràn ìpàdé fílá.
Níbi a ó pe òpò ènìyàn fún ìjíròrò (Şàngótóyè, 2011. lines 36-37)

I would have suggested having a general meeting
Where many people will come together for a dialogue

The position of the poet is that there is nothing wrong with amalgamation or the coming together of the various ethnic nationalities, even if the fusion was forceful. He contends that the various groups should find a way to manage the amalgamation for the benefit of each group. This implies that rather than going their separate ways, the groups should meet and find a way to live together in peace as a united entity.

5.0 Conclusion

This paper highlights the role of creative writers as repositories of the social events in society. Drawing on sociological literature, the study demonstrates how two Yoruba poets, through their imaginative skills, bring to the forefront the history of the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates that led to the formation of Nigeria. The poets equally bring to focus the unfolding events relating to rivalry, lack of trust, fear of domination, and apparent lack of cohesion among the different ethnic groups that were brought together under one umbrella. The poets demonstrate a good understanding of the social and political terrain of Nigeria after its amalgamation. The poets further suggest means of solving the problem of integration. Whereas Sangotoye suggests a meeting of stakeholders from all ethnic groups to facilitate national integration and cohesion, which will cement unity and development, Adeleke proposes a reversal of amalgamation and a return to the old order, whereby each ethnic group would revert to its autonomous and independent past. The mirror image approach of the Sociology of literature adopted in the study captures the poets messages sufficiently well, and allows for a good understanding of the messages. In conclusion, the paper suggests that social, political, and economic imbalances among major ethnic groups are the primary causes of ethnic tensions. To mitigate these challenges, the

sincerity of purpose, justice, and equality in handling national affairs are necessary to address the problems identified by the poets.

References

- Adágbadá, F. (2014). *Şé Dandan Ni?* Montem Paperbacks.
- Adéjùmò, A. (2005). "A sociological appraisal of Àtári Àjànàkú's *Orin Ewúro*", in *Yorùbá, Journal of the Yorùbá Studies Association of Nigeria*, pp.34-42.
- Adélékè, D. (1997). *Aşò Ìgbà*. Visual Resources Publishers.
- Àdisá, A.O. (2017). *Olú-Ọmọ*, Foresight Educational Publishers.
- Ahmed I. K. & Ningin A. I. (2022). History of Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 1(1): 34-51.
- Akinjide, R. (2000). Excerpts from the speech of Chief Akinjide, SAN. First and Second Republic Minister, at the public presentation of the first edition of the book "Fellow Countrymen- The Story of Coup D'états in Nigeria on June 12, 2000..*Tribune Online*. tribuneonline.ng.com
- Akporobaro, F.B.O. (1994). *Introduction to African Oral Literature: A Literary Descriptive Approach*. New York Garland. <https://de.pir.org>
- Àrè mú, F. (2018). *Àşírí Ajé*, Graceville Publishers.
- Asemota, S.A. (2008). An Appreciation of Amalgamation of 1914, at the Igbo Day Annual symposium held on Sunday, September 28, 2008, at Enugu.S
- Àtàn dá, A. (2003). *Başorun Olúyòlé*, Rasmed Publications.
- Awólàlú, J.O. & Dòpámú, P.A. (1979) *West African Traditional Religion*, Oníḅon-Òjé Press and Books Industries, (Nig.) Limited.
- Bamidele, L.O. (2000). *Literature and Sociology*, Stirling-Horden Publishers Nigeria Limited.
- Berger, (1980). *Invitation to Sociology*. Penguin Books. New York.
- Chibuzor M. C. (2021). Was Amalgamation a Curse or a Blessing: A Study of Nigerian History Since 1914. *Journal of Historical Studies* 4.17-32.
- Ehiabhi, S.O. (2024). 'Historical Consciousness, Shared Identity and the Quest for A Restructured Nigeria, 26th Inaugural Lecture, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. www.aaua.edu.ng
- Fadipe, N.A. (2012). *The Sociology of the Yorùbá*, Ibadan University Press.
- Fálétí, A. (1993). *Ọmọ Olókùn Eşin*, Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) PLC.
- Fagbule, F. & Fáwèhìnmi, F. (2021). *Formation: The Making of Nigeria from Jihad to Amalgamation*. Cassava Republic Press (cassavarepublic.biz).
- Falola T. (1987). *Britain and Nigeria: Exploitation or Development?* London: Zed Book Ltd.
- Goldmann, L. (1977). *Towards a Sociology of the Novel*. London: Tavi Stock Publication Limited.
- Isiani M. C. & Obi-Ani N. A. (nd) Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria: Blessing or Curse. *Ikoru Journal of Contemporary African Studies* (online)
- Ìşòlá, A.O. (2008). *Şaworoide*, University Press PLC.
- Moore, W.E. (1967). 'Sociology in Encyclopaedia Americana', vol. 25, pp.207-215
- Mustapha, O. Oyèrindé, O, Àlàgbé, A, & Adéḅòwálé, O. (2009). *Èkọ Èdè Yorùbá Titun (SSS) Ìwé Keji*, University Press Plc.
- Ògúnşínà, B. (2006). *Sociology of the Yorùbá Novel: An Introduction*. Integrity Publication.
- Òkèdijí, O. (2022). *Aláàfín Şàngó*, Standard Way Edu. Publishers.

- Ọládàpò, O. (1983). *Ògún Lákáyé*, Oníḅon-Òjé Press & Book Industries (NIG) LTD.
- Ọlálékan, O. (2024). *Brief History of Northern Nigeria before Amalgamation*.
Olaone.org/2024/1, #NorthernNigeria#Africa
- Olúmúyìwá, O.T. (2012). *Oko Aga*, Montem Paperbacks.
- Otite, O. (1995). 'Nigeria: Towards Salvaging a Ravaged Society', PG School
Inter-Disciplinary Research Discourse, U.I
- Owólabí, O., Olúnládé, T., Àdérántí, B., & Ọlábímtán, A. (1986). *Ìjìnlẹ̀ Èdè àti
Lítírésọ̀ Yorùbá, Ìwé Kìíní*. Evans Brothers (Nigeria Publishers) Limited.
- Oyarinu A. (2024) The Amalgamation of 1914 and the Nigerian Civil War: the Burden of
Blame. *Brazilian Journal of Nigerian Studies* 9, (17): 102-118.
- Şàngótóyè, O. (2011). "Ètùtù Ìşòkan" in Ọpádòtun, O (ed.) *Àwọn Akéwì Şàşàrà̀*.
University Press PLC. Pgs 118-121.
- Selden, R. (1985). *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. University Press
of Kentucky.
- Tamuno, T.N. (1998). Nigerian federalism in historical perspective' in K. Amuwo
et.al. (Eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*, pp. 13–33,
Spectrum Books Limited.
- Taiwo, A. (2013). *Ká Rìn Ká Pọ̀: A Novelist's Perception on Security*. *Yorùbá: Jónà
Egbé Onímò-èdè Yorùbá*, vol.7, Nọ 2, pg. 111-138.
- Meta (WhatsApp) Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Lliama 3.
- Meta (WhatsApp) Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Lliama 4.
- 'Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigeria', Nationlineng.net