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A Humanist Appraisal of Foluke Ogunleye's *Jabulile*

Olayinka A. Egbokhare, PhD & Babafemi Babatope, PhD

Abstract

*Humanism is “a system of thought centered on humans and their values, capacities, and worth.” Humanism is “. . . an appeal to reason in contrast to revelation or religious authority as a means of finding out about the natural world and destiny of man, and also giving a grounding for morality...Humanist ethics is also distinguished by placing the end of moral action in the welfare of humanity rather than in fulfilling the will of God.” Though the artist’s primary role is to entertain, based on the principle of socio-aesthetic harmony, it is obligatory for him or her to provide functional amusement. Humanism positions man at the centre stage of human existence and places on him the responsibility of making life meaningful, worth living and developmental. This has been the elemental pivot of humanistic drama from inception. This paper attempts an analytical review of Foluke Ogunleye’s *Jabulile* within the context of humanism. It argues that even though Ogunleye may not have been an avowed humanist (in the sense of its godlessness), her drama, with particular emphasis on *Jabulile*, subscribes to the tenets of cultural and literary humanism. The paper concludes that Ogunleye’s art does not only exemplify her humanistic disposition, it equally offers a panacea for the amelioration of the prevalent social dysfunctions in Nigeria.*

Keywords: *Jabulile, humanism, godlessness, dysfunctionality.*

Overture; Ideological Perspective and Playwright’s Biography

The concept of humanism predates the term “humanism” made-up to depict it. It is an age long philosophical ideology that embraces the various manifestations of munificence, kindness and goodwill toward one’s fellow humans (Barnett, 2014; Wikipedia). There are as many definitions of humanism as there are humanists. Equally, there exist disparaging definitions of humanism, from its critics, predicated upon shallow understanding and gratuitous zeal to discredit the concept and its devotees. In order to situate our preoccupation in this paper in perspective we shall ride on the submission of Fred Edword; a director of communications and director of planned giving for the American Humanist Association, who had served the organization in many capacities; as editor of the *Humanist* magazine, executive director, and as national administrator. He was also chair of the Humanist Manifesto III Drafting Committee from 2002 to 2003 and editor of the *Creation/Evolution* journal from 1980 to 1991 (*Humanist Magazine*,

2008). Edword succinctly articulates the fundamental conclusion of humanistic tradition in the following words:

When people are left largely free to pursue their own interests and goals, to think and speak for themselves, to develop their abilities, and to operate in a social setting that promotes liberty, the number of beneficial discoveries and accomplishments increases and humanity moves further toward the goal of greater self-understanding, better laws, better institutions, and a good life. (2008)

Humanism is a human-centered ideology. Its main focus is the fact that humankind is the architect of human being's fortune and misfortune and that the crisis that plagues human life is for humankind to resolve. According to Luke Mastin:

Humanism is a broad category of ethical, metaphysical, epistemological and political philosophies in which human interests, values and dignity predominate. It has an ultimate faith in humankind, believes that human beings possess the power or potentiality of solving their own problems, through reliance primarily upon reason and scientific method applied with courage and vision... It is an optimistic attitude to life whose ultimate goal is human flourishing, doing good and living well in the here and now, and leaving the world better for those who come after. As an ethical doctrine, it affirms the dignity and worth of all people and their ability to determine right and wrong purely by appeal to universal human qualities, especially rationality. It searches for truth and morality through human means in support of human interests, and focuses on the human capacity for self-determination. (2008)

Humanism positions man at the center stage of human existence and places on him the responsibility of making life meaningful, worth living and developmental. This has been the elemental pivot of humanistic drama from inception. There are many types of Humanism but one which is specifically of interest to us for the purpose of our discourse is Humanistic Psychology. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia captures the ideology of Humanistic Psychology in the following words:

Humanistic psychology is a psychological perspective which rose to prominence in the mid-20th century in response to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and B.F. Skinner's Behaviourism. The approach emphasizes an individual's inherent drive towards self-actualization and creativity. Psychologists Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow introduced a positive, humanistic psychology in response to what they viewed as the overly pessimistic view of psychoanalysis in the early 1960s. (Wikipedia)

Humanist thought has surfaced in human history as far back as the classical period. "Humanist thought can be traced back to the time of Gautama Buddha (563 - 483 B.C.) in ancient India, and Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.) in ancient China, although the term "humanism" is more widely associated with Western Philosophy" (Wikipedia). In ancient Greece, Thales, who is credited with creating the maxim "Know thyself" in the 6th Century B.C., is sometimes considered a proto-Humanist. Xenophanes of Colophon (570 - 480 B.C.), Anaxagoras, Pericles (c. 495 - 429 B.C.), Protagoras, Democritus and the historian Thucydides (c. 460 - 375 B.C.) were all instrumental in the move away from a spiritual morality based on the supernatural, and

the development of free thought (the view that beliefs should be formed on the basis of science and logic, and not be influenced by emotion, authority, tradition or dogma). (Wikipedia)

The dramatic arts, right from the classical period has in one way or the other featured humanistic thematics even before the label was invented. In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, the eponymous heroine took the bull by the horn, she gathered her fellow women and together they put an end to a seemingly endless war. Christopher Malore's Doctor Faustus traded his soul with the devil for power and faced the consequences of his action. The Medieval Anonymous *Everyman* advocates doing good to fellow human beings, as that is what counts on the long run. Arthur Miller, in his modern tragedy thesis play, *The Death of a Salesman*, attributes the tragedy of the masses to the failure of the society and calls for a societal remedy. Ola Rotimi's *If...a tragedy of the Ruled* and *The Hopes of the Living Dead* seeks human evolved remedies for the societal aberrations in the worlds of the plays. The list is endless. Foluke Ogunleye in her classic play *Jabulile*, has not only followed this noble course of her artistic progenitors, but has opened a new vista of a humanistic approach to the amelioration of social dysfunctionalities.

Professor Foluke Ogunleye studied at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) and the University of Ibadan. She was at a point, the Head of the Department of Dramatic Arts, OAU, where her research interests included Drama and Media Arts. An actress and director, she formed her Theatre Company, Christian Multimedia International (formerly Christian Theatre Studio) in 1990. She authored over thirty plays for stage, screen and radio. She taught Dramatic Literature at the Department of African Languages and Literature, University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni. She produced and directed many plays and films, was involved in the pan-African film and culture festival, FESPACO, and edited many humanity and theatre journals. Until her death, she lectured at the University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana. She was an avowed Christian, a benign fellow, a source of inspiration to her students and colleagues and an amiable personality.

Introduction

While reading through *Jabulile*, one gets nostalgic because the play reminds one of several folklores from oral tradition across cultures. One thinks of the Yoruba drama about the orphan girl, "Tanimola" and the classical story of Cinderella which up till the year, 2015, was the subject of a box office hit in Hollywood. *Jabulile* is a tragedy written by Foluke Ogunleye to chronicle the life of the play's eponymous heroine. *Jabulile* dramatises the story of an orphan girl who, faced with her parents' tragic premature death, subjected to untold hardship from her aunty, determines to make it in life through hard work, tolerance and perseverance. She, despite her personal misfortune, decides to channel her resources to help her community via the establishment of a community development centre. She however loses her life to HIV/AIDS without being culpable.

The researchers' treatment of the play as a humanist's submission focuses on some themes which include- the plight of the orphan, HIV and the morality issue, HIV and Stigmatization, Structural failure of policies in the face of exigencies, gender violence typified by rape, man's inhumanity to man, the ills associated with alcohol and drug abuse, the uncertainties of the law of sowing and reaping and how ultimately good still overcomes evil. The play raises questions

such as, why do innocent people have to suffer? Why is society not always in a position to help the helpless? The author raises the need for us to have society-friendly attitudes and be more humane.

Humanism is derived from the Latin concept “humanitas” which connotes benevolence towards fellow humans. It also refers to the values imparted by human learning. Humanism is closely related to philanthropy, exhibiting a friendly spirit and good feelings towards all men without distinction (Wikipedia). The assumption is that this feeling is displayed by humans alone (so animals cannot feel towards one another in this strictly humane way). Classic writers of Latin like Cicero used the word humanism in relation to “pedagogy” (Wikipedia). Foluke Ogunleye, in her rendering of the story of the life of Jabulile, evokes all of these reactions in the reader. This paper is an attempt by the researchers to bring out aspects of the play that present not just the humanist in the writer but the benevolence in the reader or audience of the drama.

First, we wish to disabuse the mind of the reader from any assumption that the reference to humanism here focuses on the lack of faith in God or being in a state of unbelief. The writer of this play was a professing Christian who had written and produced many evangelical drama pieces. In fact, she rounded off the preface to *Jabulile* with a sermon.

This play is raising a voice on behalf of all the Jabulile’s of this world. God has designed you to be happy as your name implies. This is an offering for you, so, go further and be happy.

Thus, for us, the argument is that in this play Ogunleye’s lens focuses more on how humanity can be saved by people being benevolent to their fellow humans. Using some popular themes, she paints a picture of man’s inhumanity to man. *Jabulile* stems from the morality play tradition. However, unlike the happy ending of most morality plays, *Jabulile* ends in tragedy. Here, we have a case of good not leading to good and reaping what one did not sow. In what appears to be a synthesis of several definitions, humanism is operationalized as:

a philosophical and ethical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively, and generally prefers critical thinking and evidence (rationalism, empiricism) over established doctrine or faith (fideism). The meaning of the term *humanism* has fluctuated, according to the successive intellectual movements which have identified with it. Generally, however, humanism refers to a perspective that affirms some notion of a “human nature.” (Wikipedia)

The humanist drama is not about passion, or mystery or allegory. It tries to promote integration of a story with popular values with the aim of imparting the viewers and the society at large. According to McClinton (2006), “*Studia humanitas* or studies of humanities were delineated from *studia divinitatis* or studies of divinity, which concentrated on religious matters.” So, it has not always been the case that humanism meant that the proponents did not believe in God. Rather, some of the early humanists were devout Christians who “focused on this life and its secular activities, not religion or the wellbeing of the soul in an afterlife; in other words, they were human-centred not church-centred.” (McClinton, 2006) It is worthy of note that humanists

themselves were generally “teachers of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy.”

In Europe, while using drama as a vehicle, humanists urged political leaders to practice statesmanship, businessmen to become more generous to the less privileged and generally for all to become more moral. These humanists spoke out against a broad range of political, social, economic and religious evils. They were ardent reformers of society’s ills. (Strathern, 2005; McClinton, 2006). While writing about Erasmus who wrote the Greek edition of the *New Testament*, Wells (2005) notes that he was a reformer and a liberal like other humanists. Erasmus held the view that the essence of religion was morality and rational piety or what he called “the philosophy of Christ” rather than ceremony or dogma”. Hence, these humanists wrote to promote doing right by others out of responsibility and not necessarily because one held a religious belief.

The line between the moralist playwright and the humanist is somewhat thin. A moralist is defined as “someone who has very strong opinions about what is right and what is wrong” (vocabulary.com). A lay man’s definition of a moralist was simply a “moral person” and later person who moralizes or makes authoritative comments on moral issues. The Latin root word “moralis” means pertaining to morals. The moralist playwright plays the role of society’s watchdog, police or conscience. The moralist like the humanist looks out for the interest of all and preaches through drama, the entrenchment of values and virtues. They point out human flaws and suggest the right type of social forces. The paper therefore examines the array of societal ills presented in *Jabulile* as well as alternative or humane counter behaviour or acts in the twenty-one scenes of this tragic play.

In Scene 1, we are introduced to Jabulile, the heroine and her mother Siddie. Later in Scene 2, we meet the antagonist Dudu and the stage is set for the show of strife which Dudu puts up against her niece all through the story. The subsequent scenes introduce us to Siphon (Jabulile’s father), the family’s Pastor, Bheki the Master of Ceremony and the choir. The scenes show the couple’s activities on their last night before they move to the big city. We witness the display of ill-feelings by Dudu towards Jabulile and her parents. Here we see the flaws in this character as she plays the victim and blames others for her woes. Everyone had contributed to her ill fortune (except herself); her parents, her sister, her brother-in-law, even her young niece. She is presented as one who was grumpy and devoid of the joy of life. This portrayal is in contrast to the happy picture of a loving family which we see of Jabulile and her parents. From their calm loving verbal exchanges to the testimony of the Master of Ceremony, Brother Bheki; “while they have been here, they have touched our lives in various ways” (Scene six, p.14)

Another theme that surfaces in these opening scenes is man’s quests for new beginnings, the couple was moving to the city in search of the proverbial ‘golden fleece’. Like Siddie said:

This is a chance of a lifetime, Siphon has received a wonderful offer to teach in a big missionary school in the city, and I have been offered a job in the missionary hospital as well (Scene 3, p. 7).

Siddie also mentioned the fact that it will be a “wonderful opportunity” for Jabulile to attend a school where music (a subject she was interested in) is taught. To further drive home

this moral lesson about bad things happening to good people, Siphos, in a statement that was ominous said to her daughter,

You are a good girl and good people sometimes face a lot of oppositions. I want you to know that you may still encounter a lot of unpleasantness in life (Scene 5, p. 13).

However, her concluding statement that “nobody can attain the height of happiness in life without seeking to make others happy as well,” did not hold true in Jabulile’s case. Much as Jabulile sought to make others happy, the play does not show her as receiving happiness in return, except of course we speak of the joy in seeing people she taught at the centre to eke a living out of their miserable past.

Humanism and the theme of the Wicked Relative

In other popular moralist plays earlier cited like *Cinderella* and “Tanimola”, we have characters that played the wicked relative; either an aunt or a step-mother. We were introduced to the wicked aunt “Dudu” in the first scene of the play. Her first utterance prepares the reader for what was to follow. Here was a fountain of bile and bitterness and everything she said from then on did not come as a disappointment or shock: “Stop shouting in my ears, I wonder why you are so mannerless. Is that the way to welcome somebody of my age? Scallywag.” This tirade is in response to a simple, friendly greeting from her young niece. The play is replete with examples of Dudu’s flawed character. She claims she was deprived of education to her sister’s advantage (p. 8). Later, we learn that she had an equal opportunity as her sister to get education but she failed her examinations for two consecutive sessions and refused to repeat because she did not want to be her sister’s classmate. Dudu is also portrayed as an insolent, rude, uncouth woman whose use of language is flagrant. We see her in her “shebeen” as she insults her patrons as well as the compromising law enforcement agent whom she tells to shut up (p.17 and 18). In the same scene 7, even her husband gets the sharp edge of her tongue when he tried to caution her about exposing their daughter to the dangers inherent in serving as a sales girl late at night in a liquor store. Dudu’s tongue is so poisonous that even when she pretends to be commiserating with her niece, she ends up mocking her; “Ah poor girl. Poor dear Jabulile, how unfortunate you are in life” (Scene 8 p. 21)

Maduna, (Siphos’s uncle) quickly corrects her by saying “don’t pronounce her unfortunate”. Also in the same scene, we see her as a greedy fox whose avarice came to the fore as she demanded to be given the responsibility to care for her niece and manage the property of her departed sister and her husband. Her greed is only matched by that of Sibusiso who left the meeting after learning there was no property to share, saying: “if I knew this was the state of things, I wouldn’t have bothered to waste my time coming” (Scene 8, p. 23).

Dudu showcases her wicked trait in scene 9, where she metes out punishment to Jabulile to torture her and make her say where her parents’ savings were kept. In fact, the Bank Manager testifies to her evil nature when he said: “You are a very wicked woman” (scene 10, p. 30).

This wickedness was visited not only on her niece but also on her husband and son. Surprisingly, in at least two instances, we see even her “golden” daughter being on the receiving end of her sharp tongue. But like all wicked relatives—aunts, mother-in-law, step-mothers, Dudu eventually suffers a devastating personal loss.

One major theme featured in *Jabulile* is that of the plight of an orphan. Like earlier mentioned, the motif of the orphan is as old as literature itself. One example cited is that of Cinderella, a story written as far back as 1697. Other popular orphan classics from the Western world include *Snow White*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Gulliver's Travels* and the famous contemporary literature: *Harry Potter*. Writers of these stories always feature one character in common—the wicked relative. Looking through all these orphan stories, the themes of poverty, despair, exploitation, abandonment, isolation, neglect, ill-treatment are recurrent. These orphans may have lost both or either parent. As a result of this they are left in the care of mean relatives who mistreat them or take advantage of them. Like Chirwa observed:

Orphans are most likely to fall into both situational and structural poverty; to have their rights violated in various ways and consequently to less participate in the society in which they live. (2002)

The fictional orphan is a replica of the orphan in real life as Chirwa shows in this article “Social Exclusion and Inclusion: Challenges to Orphans in Malawi,” In an interview with one of the orphans in his story, the writer shows how these young children are maltreated by their Grandmother and Uncles whose only interest is in taking the house left by their dead relatives. Some of these orphans sampled in the report dropped out of school and the girls were forced into early marriage or lured into prostitution. Some of the boys ended up on the streets doing odd jobs or taking part in criminal acts. Chirwa observes that “increasing number of orphaned children are becoming destitute. In a similar view, Friis opines:

The lives of fictional orphans are often depicted as lives in coldness, cruelty, neglect, starvation and imprisonment. They grow up in families without affection and love. (2013)

This probably explains why the children grow up either living rough lives or struggling for self-reliance or empowerment. This would have been the case with *Jabulile* as her Aunt made life unbearable for her, but for the efforts of her uncle, who on the other hand did all within his power to get her a scholarship from the mission to make sure she did not drop out of school. Dudu also first showed interest in caring for *Jabulile* because she thought there was some inheritance to misappropriate and wrongfully take. The moment she realized *Jabulile* was not going to get anything in trust fund or inheritance, she saw her niece as a burden, just like Sibusiso and the other relations who ran off at the bequest meeting. The actions of these characters go a long way to prove that the spirit of volunteerism and humaneness is fast disappearing from our communities. It appears man has refused to see the truth behind the assertion by Albert Schweitzer that “until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.” The treatment of orphans in the society as showcased by the treatment of the heroine of this play calls attention to how the society has failed in its role. Most African countries have Ministries of Women and Children Affairs, Ministries of

Justice, nongovernmental organizations and other related bodies, yet many orphans still live in daily torture in the hands of the people who are designated as their care givers.

One of the reasons for this as Chirwa notes, lies with the failure of the society itself. To him, “family structures are being weakened and disrupted and we need to build a social fabric capable of providing support for the orphan based on social morality” (2002). If Dudu knew she had a social responsibility towards her late sister; she would not have opened up such a vulnerable person to despair and hatred. Even though the Bank Manager could see through Dudu’s ill-intention towards the orphan, there was nothing he could do to protect her. Dudu later lamented “If I had known how much trouble I would experience as the next of kin to an indigent idiot, would I have volunteered when they were looking for somebody to take care of this bastard”(Scene 11,p.32). This goes on to show our society’s lack of comprehensive legal provision for the protection of orphans. If families are failing in their responsibilities towards orphan, maybe the government needs to be more humanitarian in its structure by providing a National Orphan care programme.

Still in the shadow of the orphan story is the theme of the heroine as a victim. Jabulile becomes orphaned not because her parents suffered prolonged illness but because they were unfortunate to have engaged the services of a drunk driver who on the eve of their departure to the city was busy reveling in the Shebeen managed by Dudu. We are also privy to the information that the reason more people patronized Dudu’s is because unknown to them, she adds Dagga (sounds like dagger) a special ingredient that increases the alcohol content. The theme of the innocent victim is very common in the plays of Foluke Ogunleye (examples are *Nest in a Cage* and *The Innocent Victim*). Like Awoyemi observes:

The sufferer in Ogunleye’s plays become victims not because they are guilty: they are innocent. However, either as a result of cultural practices, evil counseling or bad blood, they suffer the consequences of the action of others. (2014:208)

Thus, even as culpable as Dudu is in the death of her sister and brother-in-law, she still goes ahead to cheat Jabulile out of her inheritance and then visits her with untold suffering and deprivation all is a pure show of hatred. Like earlier noted, the humanist’s dramaturgy holds out both bad and good examples in the society as a lesson to all. Here, we see Jabulile not only as an orphan but also as a victim who suffers great misfortunes through no fault or wrong doing on her part.

Humanism and the theme of Gender Violence -Rape

One of the greatest injustices that can be meted out to any woman is to forcefully have carnal knowledge of her. The theme of gender violence is one that has featured in many plays and in daily discourse. It appears almost daily on most of the crime pages of our newspapers. Gender relations are a structure of the society but they are historically formed and are continually transforming .The ideologies about gender are taken from our peculiar experiences within our culture and gender perceptions depend on ones experiences. In *Jabulile*, we see two faces of gender-based violence and peculiarly, we see the two sexes being perpetrators of this ill. Almost

all through the scenes of the play, we hear Dudu inflicting verbal pain on all her targets, both female and male, but most especially on her husband, her son and her niece, the heroine of the play. No one escapes Dudu's verbal missiles. They are hurled effortlessly and with calculated meanness. This type of violence is stereotypically credited to women. The aim usually is to put the individual at the receiving end down and to dampen his or her morale. This type of gender violence is a subtle but psychological attack that can leave lasting damaging effect. Examples can be seen starting from the first scene of the play—"You scallywag" (from Dudu to Jabulile)—that husband of yours ... it is your good fortune that is making you arrogant... I am going to my small hovel...you drunk oaf...you roughnecks...which acquaintance of yours is rich enough to invite you to the Orions?.....some people are worse than jellyfish...Shut up and stop making a scene (to a Police Inspector)...the number of your children surpasses the ability of your purse... These are ten mild samples from Dudu's repertoire of verbal assaults.

The other type of gender violence exhibited in the play has a more devastating effect and usually enjoys more coverage and discussion and is easier to identify. This form of violence is almost always targeted at females and often goes unreported and thus unpunished. Violence against women is a persistent and universal problem occurring in every culture and social group. It has been called "the most pervasive and yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world" (UNFPA). Gender-based violence is that which involves men and women in which the female is usually the victim and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Gender-based violence can lead to a variety of unhealthy consequences, behavioral and psychological problems, sexual dysfunction, relationship problems, low self-esteem, depression, suicidal thoughts, crimes of passion, risk taking, among others. A report shows that one in four South African men admitted to rape (www.theguardian.com). The study also shows a significant relationship between gender-based violence and HIV infection in South African women. Another major dangerous occurrence is the widely held belief that sleeping with a virgin is a cure for HIV/AIDS. This is where the humanist in Foluke Ogunleye again comes to the fore in this tragedy. Unlike the tradition in most orphan stories where there is a Prince Charming waiting by the corner to sweep Cinderella off her feet, Jabulile comes face to face with another vicissitude of life. Like many reported rape cases, Jabulile was raped by a known assailant. A report has it that 76% of the victims in a study in South Africa claimed to have been raped by people they know.

(www.theguardian.comhttp://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/2001/safrica/ZAFINAL03.htm#P491_63053).

In scenes 14-16, Phindile, the envious cousin, who fully assisted her mom—Dudu—in maltreating Jabulile, succeeds in luring the innocent girl to a make-believe party.

This scene is another lesson in man's inhumanity to man. Not only was Jabulile lured to an arranged gaudy setting. She was made to wait for her assailants and to make her conquest easy, her drink was laced with sleeping tablet. This is another common feature of date rapes. The rapist is usually such a coward that he prefers to violate a woman who has been made helpless through the aid of drugs. Foluke Ogunleye's handling of an otherwise painful theme is calm. The playwright saves us from the traumatic experience of seeing snaps of a rape by taking us away from the scene just as the stage is set for the devastating episode. While commenting on Ogunleye's treatment of issues such as this, Awoyemi points out the fact that "she is definitely

concerned about the girl child: her plays have an uncanny empathy with the category of young girls who are sexually naïve and at times get themselves into trouble because they are innocent victims of the society” (2014: 209).

The issues of HIV/AIDS and rape have gone beyond the stage of moralizing about sex. Sometimes society makes excuses for the rapists by talking about indecent dressing and exposure of body parts or the fact that the raped girl was not a virgin. In some awkward situations, law enforcers have made cases for victims to provide evidence of struggle at the scene of rape or signs of forceful entry into the vagina. The definition of rape does not limit force to the physical. What makes a sexual activity to be termed rape is lack of consent. Once the lady says “No” to sexual advance and she is taken without her consent, it becomes rape. Little wonder some Africans feel insulted by the claim that a wife can accuse her husband of rape while still living under his roof and bearing his name. The humanist in Foluke Ogunleye comes alive in her treatment of this sensitive issue. She succeeds in drawing attention to a painful subject which is assuming a pandemic position (if 25% of SA men admit to rape). The problem is equally becoming alarming in Nigeria if newspaper reports on crime pages are anything to go by. More worrisome still is the age of the victims. A study in Zaria, Nigeria, reveals that 16% of hospital patients treated for sexually transmitted infections were younger than five years old. (UNFPA)

With cultural beliefs and power inequity that pre-dispose the girl-child to rape and other forms of abuse, there is greater need to create awareness about this menace and to put in place structures that will make all citizens more responsible in providing greater care and protection for our girls. Once again, like Cartwright observes, “the humanist affective dramaturgy engages audiences’ emotions, senses, and capacities for empathy as well as their intellect” (1999). The need becomes rife as reports show that in war torn parts of Africa, another known battle field is the body of the woman and female children as they are debased and sexually abused, as further proof of capture of their towns and villages. Examples abound from the Rwanda example as dramatized in the award-winning film, *Hotel Rwanda*.

Next we look at the aftermath of this rape; the play presents a short interlude where good fortune seemed to smile on Jabulile. She is summoned by the Vice Chancellor who in his office tells her: “I have heard so much about you, both from staff and students, all the reports I have about you are positive, best overall first year student, in addition to the government scholarship you are already enjoying the corporation is offering you an additional scholarship of twenty-five thousand Emalangeni, postgraduate scholarship, and a position as the university’s goodwill ambassador.” Suddenly, Jabulile appears to be able to bear her true name again; Joy. This joy however is short-lived and like the saying goes: ill-fortune does not rain but pours.

Before the audience gets over the euphoria of this good fortune, scene 18 jolts us back to reality with the opening stage direction; “Campus. Jabulile is sitting on one of the park benches. She looks weak and emaciated”. We smell trouble but we do not yet know how bad it is. But the Humanist in Foluke Ogunleye ensures that the breaking of this bad news takes place when the two dearest people in Jabulile’s life are on hand to bear some of her anguish. She eventually really was not alone. In fact, Jabulile herself attested to the need for this when she said, “it is good that both of you are here Father, I can tell both of you now and we can all comfort one

another” (Scene 18, p. 56). One of the greatest defenses against life’s storms is having the cushioning effect of family and loved ones.

It is important to quickly point out the stigmatizing stance in the outlook of many who always narrow down the issue of HIV/AIDS to the moral issue of sleeping around. Contracting HIV or even Teenage- pregnancy is not always about morality or promiscuity. Sometimes it is about rape, sometimes it is about sexual naivety, sometime it is about exploitation and at other times it is about making a wrong choice. So again, bad things happen to good people. The important thing is not buck passing or fault finding, it is more humane for us to find a pro-active way of stopping the spread of the virus. Punch newspaper (Thursday, April 29, 2015, p. 58) reports that the battle against HIV in South Africa assumed a phenomenal height when the President, Jacob Zuma “signed a bill that will make persons tested positive for human immune deficiency virus to be marked in the genitals in a bid to control the spread of the virus in the country.” The writer reports that “the President explained that the step was taken to caution those who have uncontrollable sexual urge.” There are more serious issues begging for attention in the fight against HIV than giving HIV Positive persons tattoos on their genitals. How does a rape victim who does not suffer from “uncontrollable sexual urge” stop her assailant from infecting her with the virus? How can we get people like Jabulile’s Vice Chancellor to know that “even though the usual story given by HIV-positive ladies is that they were raped” (scene 19, p.58) some people in actual fact are innocent victims of HIV/AIDS? According to the earlier cited newspaper report, 280,000 people died of AIDS in 2010 and this constituted about 48% of all deaths among South Africans. The humanist in the playwright also protests the callousness of the system in its use and dump approach. Why is it so easy for the same Vice Chancellor who gave glowing testimonies about Jabulile to be so quick to nail her coffin on the altar of “people change?” Would a humanist who is the head of an institution hide under the cover of “policy cannot be changed” instead of taking a proactive stance in an unusual situation?

In scenes 20 and 21, between Dudu and her daughter Phindile, we see the climax of man’s inhumanity to man and the verdict of one day is for the thief... The painful bit though is that usually before the wicked gets the recompense of his evil deeds, many good people would have died needless deaths like sacrificial lambs. One of the boys that participated in the rape organized by Phindile for her cousin Jabulile was the one who later fed the courier of death with her own poison. Phindile also contracted the virus. She confessed that all the hatred was because Jabulile epitomized everything that was good, “how could she be going around as a virgin while I was as good as a public utility vehicle?” Jabulile suffered rape because she was chaste? Good is rewarded with evil? Another report says, “Among women aged 15–44 years, gender based violence accounts for more death and disability than the combined effects of cancer, malaria, traffic related injuries and war.”(WHO Report) So, gender based violence is a pandemic more disruptive to the lives of young females than the more talked about health concerns.

Jabulile's Humanistic Panacea for the Failure of the Society and its Structures

Though set in Swaziland, *Jabulile* has a symbolic universal humanistic appeal. The play on a metaphoric scale dramatizes the fact that our world is inundated and beleaguered with aberrations of all sorts. These social dysfunctionalities afflict humanity and are inimical to the peaceful and harmonious existence of man. When people suffer or have challenges in life, they explore all manners of options in search of solutions. They appeal to spiritualists, magicians and all kinds of metaphysicians. For instance a nation is bedeviled with violent insurgencies, kidnapping, insecurity, unemployment, cultism and all sorts. Rather than looking inward and seeking human solutions like Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and Ola Rotimi's *Harcourt White* did for their people respectively, the nation declares days of national fasting and prayers. Majority of the problems in Nigeria, for instance, are man-caused.

Governments mismanage the country's resources, thereby creating poverty in the land which ultimately results into conflicts of political interests, ethnic and intertribal animosity. The society becomes unsafe, divorced of meaningful growth. Nothing works, everything is upside down and the entire atmosphere is chaotic and in a state of higgledy-piggledy; all because man has failed to get it right. In such a situation, as Ogunleye allegorically represents in *Jabulile*, the panacea does not lie in spiritual intervention but in man. Though the story on the surface revolves round the untold hardship orphans are exposed to, we are presented with a society plagued with man's inhumanity to man: child labour, exploitation, sex crime, vagrancy, greed and avarice. *Jabulile* seeing all these did not advocate that the community should be prayerful or invoke the spirit of the dead, rather she thought of practical things she could do to help the community. She sets up a skill acquisition centre, thereby recalling the youths off the street and equipping them with the ability to fend for themselves. This is thoroughly humanistic and this is a significant message of the play: O ye man, seek ye practical man-oriented solutions to the problems of the world.

Conclusion

So far we have examined *Jabulile* as a humanist drama which points out the ills of the society and the challenges faced by an orphan girl in Swaziland. As Omuro and Anyanwu submit "the function of art in the society is to leave it better than it is; the artists have the moral obligation to make a positive statement about society, not to rehash the wrongs as they are" (2014). In addition, Ogunleye also reminds us of Goodlad's (1971) postulation that one principal feature of the play is to inform the audience about social structure and moral rules which are necessary for the smooth running of the society (2002:71). In telling of this story, the writer introduces some affirmative stance especially through the vocational centre project. At least, people like Zandile got their lives back and *Jabulile's* life, though short, was meaningful. Thus, it was not so much about how long but how well. In the same vein, Omuro and Anyanwu (2014) point out that "art does not only exist for the mere titillation of the senses but rather it performs a functional role, its main objective being to affect man." Foluke Ogunleye's *Jabulile* presents to us the humanist in the author and also challenges our humanity by asking us to take a closer

look at the lives of this character and see how much of Dudu is in every one of us and how much of Jabulile is in our moral framework whatever religion or faith we profess.

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ⁱSee: Q12:1-4 for more interpretation and guidance.

ⁱⁱThis is the import of *Hadith One of Imaam Nawawis* collection which bears on reward of actions according to their intentions.

ⁱⁱⁱAdamu Abdullah, Challenges of Crime Management in Nigeria, A paper delivered to members of the *Nigeria National Assembly* on Wednesday August 11, 2004.

^{iv}Q12:33-35 relates Prophet Yusuf and his Masters wife saga which led to keeping the former in prison custody for reformation for a crime he did not even commit.

^v<https://www.dictionary.com> accessed on 23/1/2018 12.25 pm.

^{vi}<https://www.dictionary.com> accessed on 23/1/2018 12.25 pm.

^{vii}<https://www.cliffnotes.com> accessed on 28/1/2018 7.23 pm.

^{viii}<https://www.dictionary.com> accessed on 20/1/2018 3.42 pm.

- ^{ix}Statement credited to the Lagos State former Attorney General and Commissioner of Justice, Alhaja Muhibat Wonu Folami, on the occasion of a Breakfast Get Together with the State Legal Luminaries, held at Magodo Central Mosque, Lagos Nigeria, on July 22, 2012.
- ^x<https://www.naij.com> accessed on 26-6-2017, 7.14 pm.
- ^{xi}Statement credited to Dr Onitiri who got the judgment and organized the swearing in of Chief M.K.O Abiola after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election at a solidarity rally held on 12/6/2017 at MKO Abiola Garden, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.
- ^{xii}Adolescents criminal trend which is currently on the increase is enjoying community policing as enjoined by the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, CP Imohimi Edga during Town hall meeting held on Thursday 18-1-2018 in Alimosho Local Government, Lagos, Nigeria.
- ^{xiii}*ThePunch*, PDP Chieftain Welcomed Back From Prison, October 16, 2012. p16.
- ^{xiv}*Agberos are corrupted name among Nigerians for transport workers touts who at times also serve political god - fathers in committing crimes.*
- ^{xv}<http://www.naij.com> accessed on 17-6-2017 12.23 pm
- ^{xvi}*TheNation*, Judges Face Court Charges over Bribery and Corruption, February 4, 2017, p5
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- ^{xviii}*Ibid.*
- ^{xix}*Tubu* is a Yoruba appellation for incarceration of a person into solitary confinement with various punishments such as inhaling dry pepper, torturing them with hot pressing iron, etc.
- ^{xx}Nwankwo, O. Peter, *Criminal Justice in the Pre Colonial and Post Colonial Eras*, p.9
- ^{xxi}*TellMagazine*, Travail of Nigerian Dem ocrats, Monday August 22, 1996
- ^{xxii}*Yahoo* is known as fraudulent activities being carried out on-line by both old and young members of the society. This in other word is called 419
- ^{xxiii}*One chance* is bandit activities of robbing innocent persons of personal effects and pushing him off the vehicle.
- ^{xxiv}*Baby factory* is illicit activities of illegal orphanage homes which produce babies for sales
- ^{xxv}*The Punch*, Notorious Kidnapper Evans N300b Suit Against Nigeria Police Begins on July 13, Wednesday June 28, 2017, p1.
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