

**LITERARY STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF LABO YARI'S A
*DAY WITHOUT COCKCROW***

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my beloved parents Mr. and Mrs. Peter EzeNdubude.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise and honor be unto the Almighty God for His goodness and compassion upon my life, and for the success granted unto me throughout my years of study

My profound gratitude goes to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Peter EzeNdubude for their parental love and support. My special appreciation goes to my supervisor MallamAbdullahiMumammad for his guidance throughout this research work. May God bless you and grant all your heart desires. And to all others who contributed to the success of this project, I say thank you.

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ABSTRACT

The primary focus and interest of stylistics has been the analysis of style in any instance of language use, it examines both oral discourse and written text in order to ascertain the form and effect of choices and to determine essential linguistic properties, structures and patterns influencing perception of oral and textual discourses. This research work provides a literary stylistic analysis of LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*. As a way in which literary appreciation is being made, the major aspects investigated include: the writer's use of language, stylistic devices, narrative techniques and figurative expressions. These formed the basis of analysis in the course of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Stylistics is the study and interpretation of text with regard to its linguistic and literary style. It is the study of styles in language that accounts for how meanings are projected in literary works. Its central concern is the way in which communicative effects are achieved by means of linguistic choices and how linguistic elements act in a text to communicate the author's message. Stylistic study therefore, serves as a means by which ideas and meaning in literary texts are interpreted and conveyed. Thus, it elucidates pattern in styles that influence and clarify reader's perception of a given literary piece.

However, Stylistics facilitates the understanding of literary texts by examining in detail the linguistic choices and styles adopted by writers in conceptualizing thoughts, ideas, meaning and reality in any artistic work. Such detailed examination of a text often aids reader's comprehension of the author's message. Stylistics generally employs literary analysis to

provide organization of the devices and techniques that characterize a particular literary work. Hence, stylistic study has become an established discipline that approaches literary texts through linguistic frame work that explicitly communicates meaning entrenched in literary works. And so, stylistics remains a useful tool in analyzing literary text from any stand point by exploring the writer's overall use of language in creating both aesthetic and artistic effect in a text.

Stylistics over the years has studied style and has extended to various levels of descriptions. It was first applied in descriptive linguistics especially in the analysis of grammar and linguistic elements. Stylistics in this regard, was seen as an approach to language analysis that explicitly focused on linguistic features in terms of structures and system of grammar as found in Structuralism. This approach to language study gave rise to the discipline of structural stylistics with the major objective of describing verbal aspect of communication through models of structural analysis of language elements.

However, the scope of stylistics has extended to Literature to include literary description and analysis of variation in language use with an objective of characterizing the distinctive features and style of a given literary output. Stylistics in modern time arises as a result of the need to focus more attention to the study of literary language. Hence, stylistics since 1950s up to the present time has been applied in literary studies as a method and approach of analyzing and interpreting literary works for the purpose of determining language use in various artistic artifices.

Therefore, from models of analysis drawn from Stylistics, this research examines and evaluates LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* with the objective of determining the features that significantly portrayed the writer's literary style and use of language, as well as the writer's creative ability in projecting, expressing and communicating meaning in the text.

1.1 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research is aimed at identifying and analyzing the various stylistic devices, techniques and approaches used by LaboYari in *A Day*

Without Cockcrow in conveying his message to the reader. The study also aims at exploring the writer's use of language in order to provide insight into the writer's linguistic choices and structures which deduce the overall meaning of the novel thereby providing proper interpretation of the message being communicated in the text. From the intensive study of related material and close textual analysis of LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*, this research work sets to achieve the following objectives:

1. To provide the literary style that characterizes LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*.
2. To provide features of literary techniques used by the writer in depicting and reinforcing meaning in the novel
3. To determine how communicative effect has been achieved and the extent to which the writer's creative ability has worked out the interpretation and comprehension of the novel.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will acquaint readers with the predominant style used by Laboyari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* and the general stylistic effects in the novel. The study will further provide the reader with basic stylistics knowledge and skill needed to evaluate any instance of language use with regards to its content and form. In addition, this study will increase reader's textual ability in interpreting stylistic approach adopted by writers in representing meanings and ideas in any literary text.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study will be limited to the literary work of LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*. Thereby focusing mainly on the literary stylistic analysis of the text.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will be carried out by consulting relevant study materials including books, journals, encyclopedia as well as other collection of related research works which will provide useful information in the course of the study. For the purpose of collecting data for the study, LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* will be read and the forms and styles used by the writer will be identified. In chapter three of the study which will largely focus on the intensive textual analysis of the novel, the data identified and presented will be analyzed with regards to the overall stylistic devices and techniques used by the writer in creating artistic effect and representing ideas and meaning in the novel.

1.5 JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

Lack of pedagogical approach that targets development of literary competence and awareness seems to be a prevailing fact in our society. For this reason, the study is informed by relevance of literature to human society as a whole. As a result, the research sets to enhance literary competence by establishing and reinforcing the importance of Stylistics in

literary studies and how it serves as a useful tool in analyzing, evaluating and interpreting works of literature.

1.6 BIOGRAPHY OF LABO YARI

LaboYari, a novelist, was born in Katsina in 1942. He was educated in Nigeria and at the London School of Journalism and the University of Oslo, Norway. Yari worked at the former Katsina Native Authority, the Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, and became the Press Attachee in the Nigerian Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden. Subsequently, he held executive positions in publishing and printing industry including managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Nigerian publishing Company, Gaskiya Corporation Limited, Zaria. Since 1989 Yari has been the Government Printer, Katsina State. For almost two decades, Yari has been one of the four National Trustees of the Association of Nigerian Authors. He has retired since 2002. Yari has written several books and Novels, including; *Muhammad Dikko, Emir of Katsina and his times*

(1865-1944), *Man of the Moment, A Day without Cockcrow, Climate of Corruption, A House in the Dark and Other Short Stories.*

1.7 GLOSSARY

Yautai - A small Village (as used in the text) pg. 18

GiwarKuka - A small Village (as used in the text) pg. 19

Doruwa, Garo. - Names of Trees pg. 20

Faru, Marke. - Names of Trees pg.20

Jinn - An Evil Spirit pg. 21

Maguzawa - Ancient Hausa People pg. 23

Hausas - Hausa People pg. 27

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to provide proper explication of the concepts of style and stylistics, this chapter is basically concerned with the review of related literature as well as scholarly contribution in the field of literary studies. In addition, other literary aspects including figurative expression, narrative technique and literary language will be appraised.

2.1 MEANING OF STYLE

The word style is derived from the Latin word “Stilus”. It is a term generally used to mean a way of doing things; this is because it exists in everything that people do. Thus, style could mean ways of virtually doing things (Arthur 1966). When we carry out different activities, we often use devices of thought and other resources of language, but there are variations so as to change meaning or say the same thing in different ways. This is

what the concept of style is based upon. That is, the use of language in different ways, all for the purpose of negotiating meaning. Thus, style is clearly a phenomenon that everyone seems to possess. Its definitions are therefore marked by perspectives and usually depend on the approach adopted. Understanding the concept of style prepares one for a better analysis of its manifestation in any given literary work.

Style has often been described as the shell of thought, the choice between alternative expressions, a set of individual characteristics and the relationship between linguistic entities beyond the sentence level. Crystal and Davy (1969) attempt a definition of style by relating it to the distinct language habit of individual or group of people. Erstein (1978) also analyzed style in terms of some peculiarity, that is “something extra or beyond ordinary”. To Spencer (1964) style may be seen as an individual creative utilization of the resources of language. In defining the term style, Searle also contends that:

“For literary studies, style is a component of, and must be considered in relation to, a different system which is not strictly linguistic” (Searle 1971:388)

In the same way, Ferdinand de Saussure, a 20th century structural linguist asserts that style in language was a matter of individual distinct performance rather than the collective system. Going by Haynes (1992) style is defined as a structural choice between alternative forms of particular linguistic system. Language has different varieties and each is best suited to certain situation, topic or subject matter. This is why Lucas asserts that:

“Style is simply the effective use of language, especially In prose, whether to make statements or to arouse emotions. It involves first of all the power to put facts with clarity and brevity” (Lucas 1995:9)

This means that style as Crystal and Davy were cited in Babajide (2000:123) is the effectiveness of a mode of expression that can be

achieved by saying the right thing in the most effective way. The same idea is shared by De Vito (1969) who sees style as the selection and arrangement of linguistic features which are open to choice. In addition to this, Brook and Warren (1990) are of the opinion that selection and ordering of language is what is referred to as style.

Style has also been defined as the description and analysis of the variable forms of linguistic items in actual language use. Leech (1964) quotes Aristotle as saying that “the effective means of achieving clarity, diction and certain dignity is the use of altered form of word which is regarded as style”. To Michael (1998), style is an emphasis either expressive, affective or aesthetic added to information conveyed by linguistic structure without alteration of meaning. However, in presenting their definition, Enkvist and Gregory assert that:

Style is the choice between alternative expressions, as a set of individual characteristics, as deviations from the norm and as the relation among linguistic entities in wider span of

literary texts"Enkvist and Gregory
1964:12)

However, the concept of variation in style is based on the notion that within the language system, the same content can be encoded in more than one linguistic form. Thus, it is possible for it to operate at all linguistic level. Therefore, style may be regarded as a choice of linguistic means, as deviation from the norm of language use, as a recurrent feature of linguistic forms and also as comparisons. Hence, we can see that in the use of language, the combination of language components in different forms and patterns results in different styles. Consequently, style may be referred to as some or all the language habits of an individual or group of people at a given time over a period of time. Therefore, in looking at the various definitions of styles, we can conclude that style is the making of right choice of language features which will fit into a given situation or literary work. By doing so, it adds quality to a piece of literary work.

2.2 MEANING OF STYLISTICS

The term Stylistics is derived from the word “Style”. It is a recent development in an attempt to study style. Since its emergence as a significant academic field within the scope of Linguistics, Stylistics has attracted intellectual attention of varying degrees. Several meanings of Stylistics exist in Linguistics scholarship. While some see it as a branch of Linguistics that deals with the study of the varieties of language, its properties and principles behind choices, others insist that it attempts to establish principles that can account for the choices made by individuals in their use of language.

Stylistics is the literary or linguistic study of style; this implies that style is central to the study of Stylistics. Thus, it is concerned with the study of literary language or language habit of writers and their writing patterns. According to Crystal (1980) Stylistics can be defined as a branch of Linguistics which studies the features of situational distinct use of language made by individual or social group. Arthur (1996) on the other hand, defined Stylistics as the branch of Linguistics that studies styles, especially in works of Literature. Turner also asserts that:

“Stylistics is that part of linguistics which concentrates in the use of language, with special attention to the most conscious and complex use of language in literature”. (Tuner 1973:7)

Therefore, Stylistics deals with a wide range of language varieties and styles that are possible in creating different texts. It follows that the consistent appearance of certain structures, items, and elements in a given text is one of the major concerns of Stylistics. Lawal (1997) opines that Stylistics is the act of using linguistic rules and regulations to characterize a literary output; while Widdowson (1990) sees Stylistics as the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. In line with this, Leech and Short (1981) believe that stylistic study is the application of linguistic knowledge to the study of style. A broader definition of the term is also given by Allan (1988) who defined Stylistics as a branch of Linguistics which studies the characteristics of situational distinctive use of language

with particular reference to literary language and the choices made by individuals in their use of language.

From the foregoing, Stylistics can be said to be a technique of explication, which defines objectively an author's use of language. It becomes clear that the study of style is the preoccupation of Stylistics and its basic objective is to reveal how language is used to express meaning and ideas in a given text. Hence, the clear relationship between language and Literature is what has come to be known as Stylistics both in literary and linguistic circle.

2.3 APPROACHES TO STYLE

One of the earliest and most persistent theories of style is the distinction between what a writer has to say and how it is presented to the reader. However, style in general is considered to be a reflection of one thing or the other, which results in the development of the approaches to style. The following approaches can be identified:

Style as Deviation

There are conventions, rules and regulations that guide every aspect of human activity; this implies that there are established conventional ways of doing things. When an idea is presented in a way that is different from the expected way, then the manner in which it is done deviates from the norm. The concept of style as deviation is based on the notion that there are rules and conventions that guide different activities, and when these conventions are not complied with, then, there is deviation. Deviation in Stylistics is defined as non-conformity to the norm (Babajide 2000:130). Thus, style as deviation is concerned with the use of different deviant styles in a given genre of writing. It is referred to as a departure from what is taken to be a common practice. Therefore, deviation is seen as an intentional selection or choice of language use outside the range of normal language. As a result, any piece of writing that has jettisoned the rules of language in some way is said to have deviated. In style as deviation, the violation of the norms or standard rules is what makes possible the poetic utilization of language.

Style as Situation

Language is usually used according to situation or circumstance. Just as human endeavors are many, so are the contexts in which they are carried out. The concept of style as situation posits that there are various situations (such as formal, informal, casual, hospitable etc) and each of these situations has its appropriate language use. Thus, a given situation has a great influence on the choices of words; hence, it is the context or situation that determines a particular language use. Therefore, social occasion and its adequate style are dynamically correlated. Of course, in one direction of this correlation; the speaker uses style that suit the occasion by his choice of words. This however, points out that a given situation has a great influence on the choice made at every level of language description. Accordingly, every situation has its suitable language use, be it formal or informal.

Style as Individuality/Personality

Style as individual is based on the notion that every individual has his/her unique way of doing things, and that no two persons are of the same

character. There are always distinctive features that distinguish one person from another. As a result, in literary style, one is able to differentiate between the writing of two authors based on their use of language. Therefore, style must be individual because it reflects the expression of an individual's mode of feeling. A person's style may be shaped by his/her social, religious, political, educational and cultural background. Simply put, the notion of style as individual sees style as an index of personality.

Style as Period/Time

The approach to this concept is that, style changes with the changing pattern of time. Thus, we may have style which may be outdated, ancient or modern. Each period has its peculiar features which characterize the style of that particular time; it becomes obvious when we look at the stages in the development of the English language (e.g. Old English, Middle English and Modern English), we can see the different style for each of the period. This is so because language is dynamic and changes over time. So, since language changes along time axis, style is also expected to move along

with it. Therefore, the conventions of a particular period/time constitute the style of that period.

Style as Choice

Choice is a vital instrument of stylistics since it deals with the alternatives and options available to a writer. The underlying fact behind the concept of choice is that, a given language provides many possible alternatives to express the same concept, idea or message. The individual chooses among the alternatives available to him at the various levels of the language structure. The choice is usually determined by a number of factors which include the need to be appropriate and effective with regards to both the discourse and content. Therefore, we have choice when a set of linguistic features is consciously selected from all the possibilities in a language at both lexical and syntactic level. Thus, the language remains flexible for the user to make choices so that stylistic or aesthetic effect can be achieved.

2.4 LITERARYSTYLISTICS

Literary Stylistics is synonymous with literary criticism. Its main purpose is to explain the individual message of the writer, thus, the task of literary stylistics is to decipher a message encoded in an unfamiliar way, to express its meaning in familiar and communal terms, and thereby provide the private message with a public relevance.

Literary Stylistics is obviously sensitive to language use; its concern is not principally with the way the signals of the artist are constructed but rather with the underlying message which the interpretation of the signals reveals. Therefore, literary stylistics is concerned with figurative and evocative use of language which usually characterizes the message being interpreted. It is primarily concerned with the message and the meaning they convey in a particular instance of use. Thus, the beauty of language and how it is used to capture reality is the focal concern of literary Stylistics. However, its major interest is to find out what aesthetic experience or perception of reality a given literary work attempts to

convey, it searches for underlying significance of artistic vision which language is used to express. Literary Stylistics usually undertakes the interpretation of a text as its ultimate objective of analysis, usually based on the consideration of the stylistic significant features of a text that are expected to provide sure basis for the interpretation of any literary text.

2.5 NATURE AND GOALS OF STYLISTICS

Stylistics is a border line between language and literature. It focuses on language use both in literary and non-literary texts. In doing this, it uses insight from numerous disciplines such as Literature, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy and so on. Therefore, while it has its own focus, it is multidisciplinary in nature. Generally, it adopts multiple approaches to achieve its goals.

Stylistics is adaptive in nature such that its framework, as veritable linguistic analytical approach, deals with a whole range of human discourse such as social, legal, political, interpersonal and group communication.

Thus, the practice of stylistics is targeted at achieving certain goals. These include:

- 1. To Establish Discourse Peculiarity:** Stylistics studies the peculiarities that characterize the discourse of a writer, speaker, people or genre. Hence, it brings out certain features that distinguish various works of different writers or authors.
- 2. To Induce Appreciation of Discourse:** Stylistics induces the appreciation of discourse; it opens the reader's mind to the form and function of a particular discourse. Stylistics is sensitive to different linguistic manipulations and choices made in a given text. It unfolds the beauty in authorial linguistic choices and reveals the aesthetic appeal of such choices.
- 3. To Ascertain Linguistic Habits:** An author's style is the product of a particular linguistic habit conditioned by ideological, social and cultural environment. The objective of Stylistics is to help determine the linguistic background and orientation of a given writer or

speaker. Hence, every analysis of style can be seen as an attempt to discover the artistic principle that underpins the choices made by writers in their use of language. Therefore, the major aim of stylistics is to analyze language habits with the purpose of identifying linguistic features used in conveying a particular message.

- 4. To Make Critical Judgment:** The application of Stylistics on a discourse may help make an evaluative or critical judgment which is usually subjective; and so, Stylistics can help distinguish a good style from a bad one.

2.6 STYLISTICS USE AND FUNCTION

The usefulness and function of Stylistics in the field of Literature cannot be overemphasized. It plays an important role in literary studies. Stylistics enables us to interact meaningfully well within a text, it opens the mind to various dimensions of a particular literary or non-literary work. Thus, with the knowledge of Stylistics, our knowledge of textual appreciation increases. In fact, Stylistics makes us observers and analysts of language in

the process of negotiating meaning in any literary piece. However, the essence of Stylistics is that, it enables the immediate understanding of various uses of language in literary text, it also enables clear understanding of the message conveyed by the writer and how ideas are presented and interpreted. Hence, with the knowledge of Stylistics, one can easily interpret ideas embedded in a given literary work.

2.7 LITERARY LANGUAGE

Literary language refers to the language of literature; it includes the varieties of language and registers used in literary writings, analysis and criticism. A literary language may be seen as an elaborated form of language predominantly used in the works of Literature and other literary discourse; such language is usually used to achieve a particular aesthetic and stylistic effect in Literature. Thus, literary language derived its effectiveness from its exploration of mechanism in literary works.

2.8 FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Figurative expressions also known as stylistic or rhetorical devices are expressions used in literature to give or convey auxiliary meaning, extra ideas or feelings. Figurative expressions often provide emphasis of expressions and clarity. Thus, figurative expressions connote additional layer of meaning and may convey an indirect meaning of their literary form. That is, they are words which are not used precisely in literary sense, but depict an imaginary world which helps in understanding the current state of the writer. Literary expressions include the use of figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, oxymoron, hyperbole and other figurative or literary devices.

2.9 FORMS OF NARRATION

In order to carry out a stylistic analysis of any form of Literature especially prose fiction, the form of narration adopted is important as it defines the angle from which a particular story is narrated. Form of narration also known as point of view is a narrative device which defines the position or angle from which a given story is told or narrated. It is the way characters,

events and details of a story are viewed. Point of view in Literature undoubtedly exposes issues behind the narration of literary texts. With a point of view, the story is constructed and interpreted. Thus, writers give coherence to their work through the right form of narration as they reveal character's way of thought as shaped by his or her experience, mindset and history. Therefore, point of view creates access to the thoughts, mind and views of an author and may also provide the reader with what to think about a character, event or place in any given text, thereby enhancing the ability to identify the narrator of any literary piece. Hence, no story can be told without a point of view. The major forms of narration in novels include:

FIRST PERSON NARRATION

First person narration or point of view, also known as autobiographical narration describes a situation where the protagonist speaks through the author who adopts the pronoun "I". In the first person point of view, one of the novel's characters narrates the story. This implies

that the narrator of the story is the person who has experienced or witnessed the event he/she narrates. Hence, the first person narrative is usually used as a way to directly reveal the deep unspoken word of the narrator. Frequently, the narrator's story revolves around himself or herself as the protagonist and allows his/her inner thoughts to be conveyed openly to the audience.

THIRD PERSON NARRATION

This mode of narration occurs when the writer does not connect him/herself with other characters in the novel. In this category of narration, the narrator does not take part in the action of the story, but the audience knows exactly how the character feels. Thus, in this frame of narration, the author is provided with the greatest flexibility, and as a result, turns out to be the most commonly used narrative mode in Literature. In the third person narrative mode, each character is referred to as "he", "she" or "they". Therefore, in the third person narrative mode, it is essential that the narrator be merely unspecified individual that conveys the story being told.

THE OMNISCIENT NARRATION

In this type of narration, the narrator plays no part in a story but is aware of all the facts including the character's thought, in such narration, the narrator provides the reader with a direct assessment of actions, characters and events. This enhances the sense of reliability of the plot and also deepens the reader's understanding of the whole story.

2.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the major perspectives of style and stylistics as well as the nature, goals and functions of stylistics. The chapter at the same time provided basic background knowledge on other aspects of stylistic study which will aid the understanding of the concepts discussed in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to examine the overall stylistic approach adopted by LaboYari in effectively representing meaning and achieving proper aesthetic and communicative effects in *A Day Without Cockcrow*. The chapter will mainly focus on the analysis of LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* by identifying the various stylistic devices that characterise the writer's style, thereby providing explications on how language is used in expressing meanings and ideas in a given literary text.

LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* is set in the northern Nigeria, a region that is predominantly Muslims, characterized by African traditional society which reflects culture, sociological and mythological belief system of a typical African society. Superstitious beliefs are always part of every society, while some are erroneously held, it nevertheless make the survival

of the culture of the said people which is passed from generation to generation

Labo Yari as one of noble African writers, in his novel *A Day Without Cockcrow* depicted superstition as a trifling matter in Nigerian traditional society where people hold certain belief tenacious and look out with foreboding omen that comes with such superstition. Yari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* suggests that irrational belief exists and holds way across African societies. He portrayed that such beliefs are usually informed by fear, ignorance and misinterpretation of nature, and such misconceptions are often instrumental in causing many absurd incidents, harmful traditional practices and atrocious acts.

As an African writer, Yari felt he owes a duty to teach and help eradicate the complexities of the years of denigration, superstition, indoctrination and dogmatization in immediate African societies. Hence, he spoke through the voice of his major character Mudi, who adopted the cultural motion of thinking rationally, doubting certain ideas and

questioning the beliefs of the society, in spite of what the superstition around him teaches or preaches. LaboYari clearly conveyed the message of a new mental liberation and called on Africans to think rationally and liberally in order to emancipate themselves from mental slavery, and generate ideas that can ignite the flame of African enlightenment and development.

3.1 PLOT SUMMARY OF *A DAY WITHOUT COCKCROW*

An old man named Mudi approached his village. A strong wind wailed across him; his two donkeys stopped abruptly, turned away from the wind and lowered their heads. As the storm subsided, the old man shouted at his donkeys and they trotted towards the village, which was dominated by a huge baobab tree. Sighting the tree, he smiled, remembering many things that had happened under the tree. Mudi wondered why the tree had an aura of mystery and why it was in the centre of the square. He recalled that only crows built their nests on it, and all the festivities of the village took place under it.

On reaching his village, Mudi led his donkies through the square and came to meet other villagers who had gathered around a fire place listening to the entertaining stories of the village butcher. The butcher narrated a story of a tree in Yutai village which no one climbs nor cut its branch; any attempt to do so could lead to one's death. Mudi argued about the story emphasizing that trees are meant to serve mankind as firewood, and that no tree around the neighborhood which he cannot climb. A man reclining on the ground called the old man by his name, reminding him that some trees have certain aura that discourages people from cutting them. The man added that over ten years, no man had been seen cutting the tamarind tree at the crossroad of the village and whoever cuts a branch from it will die within a day or two. Mudi further argued that a tree cannot kill a man and that one dies at his hour. The village butcher dared him to cut a branch from it before they could believe him. One of the wealthiest of the villagers also promised him a donkey if he survives thereafter for two days. Mudi accepted the challenge and requested three days to complete the work. Mudi left his house before dawn, reached the tamarind tree, and with his

sharp axe he felled it. The following day, he went back and hewed the logs, loaded the pieces on his donkey and brought the woods to his wives. The villagers waited to see what would happen to him, but after two weeks, he showed no sign of illness and the man who staked, kept to his promise and gave Mudi a donkey.

Mudi had learned from his grandfather that he was a direct descendant of the founder of the village, Sagudu, who, after a quarrel with a certain emir, had come, cleared the bush and settled down with his family near the huge baobab tree. Mudi was never heard of boasting of his lineage. His grandfather was a great farmer, well known in the district and a lover of horses. As a result, Mudi was born in a house with horses. His mother was the daughter of the village master weaver. Being a first born, Mudi had been regarded naive by his mother as custom had it in Hausaland. Though grown up in a house with horses, Mudi did not know how to tend them; he could not differentiate a rein from a halter. Whenever his brothers wanted to tease him, they would ask him to put a nosebag on a horse. His attempt would be an uphill scramble in which the horse always won; these

weaknesses hindered him from developing affection for horses. He compensated his weakness on horses with vast knowledge of birds and trees. As a boy, there was no tree in the village and the surrounding district which he had not climbed. He became adapted to this habit as he advanced in age; his brothers often remarked that “trees are his stallions.” On birds, Mudi knew about their mating and incubating; he also knew about the way they cared for their young and built their nests. In a flash, he could tell the egg of a domestic guinea hen from that of a wild one, he could also distinguish between the nest of a swift and a sparrow, and he could identify types of birds from high above and knew the song of each.

GiwarKuka was a village where Muslims and ancient Hausa people had been living together for over a century. GiwarKuka’s festival was unique from similar feast in many villages and towns. The first day was usually observed without drumming, singing or dancing. On that day, no cock is allowed to crow. The villagers believed that if there was a cock crow on the day of the festival, the owner of the cock would die and calamity would befall the village. As a result, all the cocks in the village would be

slaughtered on the eve of the celebration and then be used for festive meal. The uniqueness of the feast usually attracts people from far and wide. Many visitors only came to see if the people of GiwarKuka would succeed in their task of silencing the cocks.

On the day of the festival, a crowd gathered at the square under the baobab tree to observe the first part of the feast, neither drumming nor singing was allowed, or anything that would distract them from hearing a cock crow. They talked in low voices and narrated tales and stories in group. A hunter was narrating his adventure to the village head when suddenly a sharp cock crow from the top of the baobab tree was heard. The village Head looked at the people around him hoping to get an explanation of the occurrence. The crowd remained silent, and another crow with fluttering of wings shattered the silence. A man close to the village Head explained that it must be a Jinn and not a cock. An old man in the crowd also remarked that there will be a calamity in the village as there had never been a cock crow on the day of the festival. Disagreeing with them, Mudi claimed it was a real cock, belonging to no one but a crow and actually not

Jinn. When the third crow was heard, most of the people fled in all directions. Mudi moved closer to the village head and further explained to him that it was a real cock, hatched by a crow that has stolen an egg of a hen. He asserted it was a natural process, though unusual. As Mudi climbed the baobab tree to catch the cock, the remaining villagers took to their heels; the presence of the visitors discouraged the village Head from fleeing the square. When Mudi brought down the big cock, the village head refused to touch it. One of the visitors held the cock and Mudi brought out his knife and killed it. He then made a fire under the baobab tree, roasted the cock and ate a piece of it, some of the visitors also tested the meat to verify. The village head looked at Mudi, smiled and heaved a long sigh to dispel the heaviness of his fear.

3.2 *STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN A DAY WITHOUT COCKCROW*

Stylistic devices are basically techniques and tools used by writers to convey meaning and create aesthetic effect within a text which makes it

more effective, interesting and approachable. Thus, writers often use language artfully as a means of expressing feelings, thought, ideas, as well as adding beauty and clarity to a literary piece. In other words, stylistic devices enhance emotional, aesthetic and intellectual appeal of a given text. Certainly, a writer who organizes his ideas in a unique and appealing way increases the richness and beauty of his literary work.

However, LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* employed different stylistic devices to provide a deep representation of meaning and ideas which clearly revealed the underlying message he intends to convey. The following stylistic devices are identified as used in LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*:

IMAGERY: The primary function of imagery in Literature is to bring a lifelike quality to scenery, characters, or circumstances. Writers use imagery to give life to their words in a way that is both realistic and authentic. This enables them to evoke certain feelings and images in the mind of the reader that gives a particular outlook of reality. Therefore,

when imagery is properly used, it can bring a great deal of context to the reader and also make the scene, characters or situation described both lively and realistic.

In LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow*, there are various depictions of images which the novelist used to present a vivid picture in the mind of the reader through visual illustrations. When Mudi approached his village, the writer was able to paint the picture of the village as:

“The old man...trotted toward the village which was dominated by a huge baobab tree...exactly in the centre of the square, in which all the festivities of the village took place under it”. (pg.17)

The writer also employed imagery to present a picture of the unfavorable atmospheric condition of the setting thus he says:

“A plain where life was harsh, dry, hot and scrubby with biting harmattan wind.” (pg. 17)

Yari also used imagery to give a vivid, realistic picture of the appearances of some characters in the novel. He used descriptive language to create mental images of characters in the reader's mind. Some of the descriptions that depict pictures of characters are as follow:

“A man with protruding teeth which had been reddened by tile juice of kola nut.” (pg.18)

“A man with a big head and traces of beard” (pg.22)

“A man with piercing eyes” (pg.22)

“A crippled young man” (pg.23)

“A tall man in white gown” (pg.22)

The writer also painted pictures of birds like this:

“Birds of prey have powerful wings and feet, sharp and strong claws” (pg.23)

However, with the use of imagery, LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* carefully appealed to the real sense and brings a lifelike quality to the characters, setting and other objects in the text which create images

and visual representation that aids and stimulates the reader's imagination. Hence, the text becomes more interesting and meaningful.

FLASHBACK: In narrative, flashback is a stylistic technique in which a writer interrupts the chronological sequence of event to reflect upon experiences, events or incidents that had earlier occurred in the past. However, writers use flashback as a means of adding background information in the present event of the story. This provides the reader with information about a character's past, secrets, inner/external conflict, and significant event that has affected or shaped his/her life. In other words, by employing flashback, writers allow the reader to get an insight into character's motives and actions which usually deepen the intensity of the plot and provide a better understanding of the present action. Thus, the use of flashback also enables the writer to start a story from a point of high interest by avoiding the monotony of chronological exposition. Flashbacks are often introduced in narrative with the help of various methods ranging from series of dreams, memories, sudden remembrance or past stories told by the character.

LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* is characterized by series of flashbacks. The writer made effective use of flashback to relate the past incidents and events with the present action of the story. Through flashback, the writer was able to disclose to the reader the history of GiwarKuka and how the village was founded; he also unveiled Mudi's lineage this way:

“Mudi had learned from his grandfather that he was a direct descendant of the founder of the village, Sagudu, who, after a quarrel with a certain emir, had come, cleared the bush and settled down with his family near the huge baobab tree. The settlement later derived its name from The tree (i.e GiwarKuka)” (pg.19)

The writer employed flashback quite skillfully to detail Mudi's past and background. Through flashback, the reader is made to know that Mudi's grandfather was a great farmer, well known in the district of the village, and at the same time a lover of horses. As a result, Mudi was born in a house with horses. Again, with flashback, Yari bared that Mudi was the first child. Though grown up in a house with horses, he disliked them,

and by the time he was in his twenties, he sold the horses he had inherited from his father and bought donkeys.

Furthermore, the use of flashback could be identified in the novel when the writer reflects on how the headship of the village was taken from Mudi's family and how his uncle was eventually dethroned. The writer detailed indicates:

“The headship of the village rested now with another family because udi's uncle, who had become the village head, had a disagreement with the district head, consequently, he was dismissed” (pg.19)

Moreover, Yari carefully utilized the tool of flashback to disclose the intricacies of Mudi's life and his vast knowledge of trees and birds. It reads:

“He compensated his weakness on horses with a vast knowledge on birds and trees. As a boy, there was no tree in the village and surrounding istrict which he did not climb. On birds, Mudi

knew about their mating and ncubating, he also knew about how they build their nests. He could also identify types of birds from high above and knew the song of each” (pg.20-21)

From the foregoing, LaboYari's *A Day Without Cockcrow* is a good example of narrative which used flashback very skillfully and nicely. In many ways, the writer achieved a better level of narrative and also attracts more attention from the reader through proper use of flashback. Thus, flashback is one of the most common stylistic devices used in literary writing. Hence, LaboYari utilized flashback to enhance the appeal of the plot and create a sense of variability of time in the story.

SUSPENSE: Suspense is the sense of anticipation, feeling of curiosity or uncertainty about the outcome of a given action in a literary work. It is the lack of certainty the writer creates that leaves the reader to wonder about the outcome of a given action. Hence, suspense basically leaves readers holding their breath and wanting to know more. In narrative, writers usually employ suspense to captivate interest and maintain reader's

attention. It draws the reader deep into the story and creates a sense of drive to the plot

Suspense is one of the dominant devices used by LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow*. The writer utilized suspense to heighten the anxiety of the reader. As with the story, the tamarind tree at the cross road of the village was not meant to be cut, with a belief that whoever attempts to do so will die within a day or two. When Mudi contradicted the statement and cut a branch from the tree, suspense was created, leaving the reader feeling anxious and unsure of the outcome of the action.

Another instance of suspense in the novel was when a sudden sharp cock crow was heard on the top of the baobab tree. As with GiwarKuka's harvest festival, no cock was allowed to crow on that day, believing that the owner will die and calamity would befall the village. At this point, uncertainty and indecision was created, leaving a sense of inquisitiveness. This further heightened the anxiety of the reader. Suspense was also formed at the very end of the novel when Mudi climbed the baobab tree to

bring down the cock. However, this produced a kind of anticipation of what the outcome would be. Hence, created a tense feeling in the mind of the reader.

However, all narratives are built around the structuring of information; therefore, suspense plays a vital role to how writers control audience access to narrative outcome. Perhaps, suspense has emerged as a technique as well as a way of using literary frame to create a more interesting narrative. In *A Day Without Cockcrow*, LaboYari greatly explored the use of suspense to design and hold the reader's interest, thereby making the story more engaging. Therefore, stories that carefully utilize suspense can succeed in engaging reader's interest the more.

FORESHADOWING: In Literature, foreshadowing is a literary device used by writers to hint about future event in the story. It is generally used to give insight of future event within the confinement of a given narrative. By presaging about an event that will happen later in the story, the writer

allows the reader to predict how the event would turn out; this carries the reader along and makes the narrative more arousing.

There are several instances of foreshadowing in LaboYari's *A Day Without cockcrow*. The writer presaged the end of drought and famine in GiwarKuka. Through the narration of rain fall in the story, he foretells a future of great and bountiful harvest. The writer foreshadows:

“When the rain had decided to come to the emirate, after many years of its absence, it came in sheets, there was no violent wind, thunder or lightning. subsequently rain had continued to pour regularly throughout the rainy season”
(pg.24)

This instance of foreshadowing gives the reader some optimism that ultimately things would turn out well, of which he eventually reflected in the story, saying:

“Life went on with clam of memories of drought behind and bright feeling in front, the year's harvest was large,

with no equal for over a decade” (pg. 24-25)

Another instance of foreshadowing could be identified when Mudi contradicted the story about the tamarind tree and accepted the village butcher’s challenge; this gave the reader insight into the next line of action or event in the story, that is, Mudi’s act of cutting the tree.

Though the use of foreshadowing in narrative allows the writer to give a preview of the future, it adds tension and leads to certain expectation on the part of the reader. In *A Day Without Cockcrow*, Labo Yari previewed some of the events in the story, and used stylistic technique of foreshadowing to add depth to the story which makes the narrative more effective and intriguing.

3.3 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES USED IN A DAY

WITHOUT COCKCROW

Narrative techniques are methods writers use in narrating their story. Adopting a particular method usually depends on the writer’s choice or

based on the story being narrated. In *A Day Without Cockcrow*, LaboYari used different techniques to achieve effective narration. The writer adopts the third person point of view, in which he narrates events using the third person pronoun “He”, “They” and “It”. This gave him ample opportunity to air his view either through a character or in a philosophical reflective form. Some examples of third person narration in the novel are as follows:

“He pulled up a part of his turban over his mouth and nose to prevent the dust from getting into his nostril and throat. He failed in his effort, for the dust has already gotten into his mouth, nose and throat” (pg.17).

“They laughed at him, betted him to fall trees, which they believe were the domain of jinn, with the belief and aim that he will meet his death” (pg.21).

“On reaching the village he led his donkey through the square. He noticed that the People who had left their huts early had converged at the great fire” (pg.17).

Yari also utilized stream of consciousness method in which he depicted the multiple thoughts and feelings that pass through the minds of the characters. Thus, he exemplified below:

“Right now he thought... something must be happening over there. He wondered why the tree had an aura of mystery” (pg.17).

Such narration allows the writer to gain authorial presence in the novel. Thus, the narration of the story is non-chronological in that it is frequently distorted with different methods. The writer adopted multiple techniques to avoid monotonous approach of exposition.

3.4 LANGUAGE USE IN A DAY WITHOUT COCKCROW

Literary language refers to the use of language defined mainly by its figurative meaning which ultimately conveys ideas from imaginary point of view. Literarily, writers often use language to effect the desired expression which is achieved only when words are carefully combined in both clear and concise manner. Thus, literary language relies mostly on imaginary and

figurative descriptions by means of which writers can artistically express ideas. Therefore, the hallmark of effective expression in literature is in the stylistic manifestation of literary language. Hence, language use in *A Day Without Cockcrow* manifested to a great extent elements of literary language such as the use of imagery, figurative expressions as well as descriptive language so as to realize the desirable artistic effect in the text.

The language used in *A Day Without Cockcrow* is simple, clear and concise. In the narrative, Yari achieved a great stylistic effect through the use of both aesthetic and figurative language which gives a better comprehension of the novel.

3.5 FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS IN A DAY WITHOUT COCKCROW

METHAPHOR: Metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a direct or applied comparison between two dissimilar things. According to Wales (1989) metaphor is a phrase or expression that in literary usage denotes something different from its kind. In *A Day Without Cockcrow*, there are various depictions of metaphors which include:

Crows are thieves” (pg.20)

“You are a simpleton” (pg.22)

“You are really mad” (pg.22)

“Trees are his stallions” (pg.20)

“Don’t mind that Lunatic” (pg.26)

SIMILE: Similes are figurative expressions that compare two things; it is a figure of speech that makes comparison between two different things, explicitly indicated with words such as “like” or “as”. The following similes are identified as used by Yari in *A Day Without Cockcrow*:

“His village folks regarded him as a lunatic” (pg.21)

*“They had regarded farming more or less
as a religion” (pg.23)*

“Like human being...birds sing in the morning to glorify their God” (pg.22)

“Birds are just like us, they hate and fear those that prey” (pg.22)

RHETORICAL QUESTION: According to M.H Abrams (2005), a rhetorical question is a question to which no answer is expected and often used for rhetorical effect. In other words, it’s a question usually asked to produce an effect or to make an assertion and not to elicit a reply. Rhetorical questions in *A Day Without Cockcrow* include:

“How can a tree kill a man?” (pg.18)

“Are you really thinking that birds are like human beings?” (pg.22)

“Why don’t you stick to donkeys and Trees?” (pg.22)

“Don’t you observe how the chickens behave

whenever a hawk flies over a house?” (pg.23)

“Don’t you see their nests?” (pg.26)

PERSONIFICATION: Personification is another form of figurative expression in literature. It is the attribution of human qualities or nature to inanimate, animals, or abstract ideas especially as a rhetorical figure. Personification usually inscribes human qualities to non-human subjects to give a sense of life to it. Examples of such expressions in *A Day Without Cockcrow* are:

“A gale from north-east wailed across him” (pg.17)

*“A light wind and cloud raced from south-west toward
The village” (pg.24)*

“The hot hammatan wind was blowing violently” (pg.19)

“There was no violent wind, thunder or lightning” (pg.24)

“Hot scrubby land with biting hammatan wind” (pg.17)

“When the rain has decided to come...” (pg.17)

ALLITERATION: According to Stylistic Dictionary (Second Edition), alliteration is a literary device identified by the repeated sound of the first consonant in a series of multiple words, or the repetition of same sound at the beginning of words in a stressed syllable of a phrase. Yari explores several instances of alliteration in the novel such as:

“Great Grandfather” (pg.23)

“Direct Descendant” (pg.23)

“Tamarind Tree” (pg.18)

“Trotted Toward” (pg.17)

“Cock Crow” (pg.18)

“Sand Storm” (pg.24)

“Cannot Climb” (pg.26)

“Mad Man” (pg.26)

“Free From” (pg.17)

“Wondered Why” (pg.17)

HYPERBOLE: Hyperbole is a figure of speech used to exaggerate or make deliberate overstatement for either emphasis or comic effect. They are generally used to convey actions or feelings that are realistically or

practically not possible but help emphasize an emotion. The instances of such expressions identified in the novel include:

*“He had to kill several elephants and one or
Two lion” (pg.19)*

*“Next you will say birds perform ablution and
face Mecca” (pg.22)*

*“The year’s harvest was large, with no equal
For over a decade” (pg.25)*

“It’s the end of the world” (pg.27)

“Birds also have leader criminal” (pg.23)

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the major literary devices used by LaboYari as well as the narrative technique employed by the writer in *A Day Without Cockcrow*. From the analysis, it is clear that Yariutilised different stylistic

devices ranging from imagery, suspense, flashback, foreshadowing as well as other figurative expressions by means of which aesthetic and communicative effects were achieved in the text. The stylistic devices identified as used by the writer also revealed the writer's use of language which particularly characterise his style.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

4.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It has been noted from the study, that African societies are often immersed with superstitious beliefs which are culturally shared and transmitted from generation to generation. LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* described superstition as an irrational belief informed by ignorance, fear, misconceptions and wrong adoption of ideas which negatively affects or demoralises human behaviour and hinders social progress and development in the society. The writer expressed superstition as one of the key problems that thwart or prevent social development in African context,

In an attempt to fight such problem, Yari sought to create awareness of the devastating effects fostered by superstitious beliefs (such as harmful traditional practices and atrocious acts) with the goal of instigating desirable change that will enhance the eradication of such beliefs and practices, thereby improving social development in the society. However,

in creating social awareness through Literature, LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* challenged certain irrational beliefs in the society through the major character (Mudi), who was often sceptical of the superstitious beliefs held in GiwarKuka. From this stand point, Yari conveyed a message of new social freedom and mental liberation by offering humane and rational alternatives. Thus, calling on Africans to liberate themselves from superstitious beliefs that deter their perceptions by thinking rationally.

Therefore, the study reveals that LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* has strongly expressed a message of new social development which could be achieved by eradicating irrationality that exist in superstitious beliefs through education and creating social awareness.

In summary, this research work comprises of four chapters. Chapter one being the introductory part of the study examined the aim, scope, significance and justifications for the study. It also specified the methodology of the research. In addition, a brief biography of LaboYari was presented.

In chapter two, relevant literature were reviewed which examined the concept of style and stylistics, its approaches, use and functions, as well as its nature and goals. Furthermore, the meaning of literary language, figurative expressions and the forms of narration used in prose fiction were also appraised.

Chapter three analyses the data, in which the researcher overviewed the plot summary of *A Day Without Cockcrow*, followed by a careful analysis of the writer's literary style with regard to the stylistic devices, narrative techniques and figurative expressions used to convey ideas and meaning in the text.

4.1 CONCLUSION

This research work specifically indicates that LaboYari in *A Day Without Cockcrow* greatly utilized the recourses of language to beautifully create an artistic representation of meaning in the text. This attested that the writer's style is unique and elegant as it reflects a skillful application of literary devices ranging from imagery, suspense, flashback, foreshadowing, simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, alliteration and rhetorical questions. Via this, both aesthetic and stylistic effects were achieved in the text. No doubt, *A Day Without Cockcrow* is a great achievement of a well literarily structured style. The cognizance of literary features as identified and outlined by the researcher further proved the text to be an excellent literary output.

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