A Socio-pragmatic Study of Characters' Names in Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*

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Abstract

This study attempts an onomastic analysis of Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed* from a socio-pragmatic perspective. Six names of the major characters in the text are selected for the study. They are given an in-depth analysis based on Halliday's (1978) socio-semiotic variables model among others. The study indicates that naming (by Soyinka) transcends the illocutionary act of labeling to bring into play the social indices of occupation, age, geography, ethnicity and religion. Out of five variables examined, religion has the highest frequency. This, therefore, proves the religious/scapegoat theme stressed in the work. The study also indicates that names are meaning potentials and a good understanding of the author's use of names is a great key that unlocks his perceived difficult text(s).

1. Introduction

Wole Soyinka is a global titan as far as literary scholarship is concerned. Being a word-smith, he is often attacked by several critics as an obscure writer. Some of these critics include Roscoe (1971, p. 220), Osundare (1983, p. 24), Umukoro (2002, p. 126) and Ogunsiji (2005, p. 1472) to mention just but few. Similarly, most critical works on Soyinka are done without sufficient consideration for his texts' onomastic resources. This study, therefore, arises from the need to shed more light on one of Soyinka's works, *The Strong Breed* (henceforth *TSB*), from an onomastic (the study and science of names) perspective, in order to reduce the problem of interpretation that often results from his artistic ingenuity and literary versatility.

2. Contextualisation of the Text

The play tells the story of Eman, who lives in a strange village and has to sacrifice his life in order to salvage the villagers. It opens with an annual end of the year ceremony involving a purification ritual in an unnamed community. The ritual serves as a rite to expel the evil of the previous year. This necessitates the search for a carrier (the scapegoat) who will dispense with the evil of the year ending as the coming year should be approached with a sense of purging. As customs demand, strangers are used for this task.

There are two strangers in the town: Eman, the school teacher and Ifada, the idiot who is the apparent choice. Citing Horton, Ogunba (1982, p. 15) affirms that the carrier, in tradition, is a spiritual force and a fortunate scapegoat who passes through severe torments in place of others in order to become a spiritual super-power. Unfortunately, Ifada, is averse to the mission. Then, his mentor, ascetic Eman, is compelled to perform it. Thus, we have the dominant theme of scapegoatism.

The obligation leads to unraveling the past of Eman as the reader is taken through a flash back where the Old Man, Eman's father, appears and Eman's early life is revealed "to show that the role of the sufferer is not new to him" Ogunba (ibid). He suffers loss of mother at childhood, victimization (of the tutor) because of Omae, neglect by the entire community and misinterpretation from Sunma (the escapist). In spite of all odds, Eman remains undaunted in performing his onerous task to the point of inevitable tragedy. The words of the Old Man sums up the whole play thus:

> Do you know what you are saying? Ours is a strong breed, my son. It is only a strong breed
> that can take this boat to the river year after year and wax stronger on it. I have taken each
> year's evils for over twenty years. I hoped you would follow me.

and

> … son, it is not the mouth of the boaster that says he belongs to the strong breed.   It is the
> tongue that is red with pain and black with sorrow. (*TSB,* p. 25).

The significant part of the play is the contrast the Old Man draws between the strong breed and the rest of humanity: "Other men would rot and die doing this task year after year.   It is strong medicine which only we can take.   Our blood is strong like no other.   Anything you do in life must be less than this son". (p. 26).

3. Theoretical Approaches

The theoretical approaches to the present study stem from Halliday's (1978) socio-semiotic variables as an extension of pragmatic principles. Halliday has viewed texts from the socio-semiotic structure of three variables namely: field, tenor and mode. According to Halliday (1978, p. 62), "Field refers to the on going activity and the particular purposes that the use of language is serving within the context of that activity." He maintains further that while tenor captures the interrelations among the participants (status and role relationships), "mode covers roughly Hymes' channel, key and genre." (Halliday ibid.).

The three variables highlighted above were generated from the context of situation which Halliday views as the springboard of a text when he asserts that "a text is embedded in a context of situation (which is) an instance of a generalized social context… a semiotic structure." (Halliday,1978, p.122). Situational context refers to extralinguistic factors that guide a decoder in interpreting the meaning of an utterance and it is divisible into two: the context of culture and immediate context. The cultural context predicts the acceptable norms and mores as well as sociocultural rules of behaviour which must be shared by interlocutors before they can ensure mutual intelligibility. Language therefore becomes the chief instrument of socialization. This made Francis (1983, p. 8) observe that "The study of linguistic reflections of social customs, structures and differences will be regarded as sociolinguistics." He believes that many linguistic differences are closely related to such sociological variables as education, economic, status, occupation, race or class identification, political and religious affiliation. These are what scholars (Adeyanju 2002, Nilsen and Nilsen 2006) have developed into the VARIES model- a set of acronym which includes **V**ocational Jargon, **A**ge Related Language, **R**egion/Religious Language, **I**nformality/Formality, **E**thnic, Language and **S**ex Related Language.

The immediate context or context of situation (Firth, 1962) is the specific circumstance in which communication occurs in relation to time, place and other conditions. Events taking place in a communicative setting can influence the interactants' choice of words and interpretation. For instance, the ritual event in *TSB* has influenced the choice (or production) of names like Priest, Attendants, Oroge (soft words), Jaguna (Army Chief) and Eman, a stranger. It is a common knowledge in Yoruba culture that while a priest performs ritual sacrifice, he is assisted by attendants. Also they have to speak in a low voice because the ritual is done at night (time). In most cases, strangers like Eman are used for rituals in Yoruba land, hence the saying "ọmọ ọlọmọ ni a n ran ni'sẹ ẹ dide t'orut'oru" (it is a stranger's child that is sent on a night errand). Such strangers are captured by soldiers. This is the reason Jaguna (army chief) has to trail Eman in the text.

In view of the above, Moore (1962, p.103) affirms that "If utterance and situation are so bound, it would be hopeless to attempt to understand words without understanding the conditions under which they are spoken or written."

In recognition of these facts, Leech (1974, p. 319) argues that any theory that relates text to context will be deemed pragmatic. This is because pragmatics examines the "intention of speakers or the interpretation of learners to context or to a kind of act or action by means of or by virtue of using language."   Relating pragmatics to socio-cultural meaning of words, Crystal (1997, p. 20) invokes the notions of intention and implication (of the speech act) stressing that the world (context) as well as the word (text) have to be taken into consideration before any serious pragmatic analysis. He posits:

> Pragmatics and semantics both take into account such notions as the intentions
>
> of the speaker, the effects of an utterance on listeners, the implications
>
> that   follow for expressing   something in a certain way, and   the knowledge,
>
> beliefs   and   presuppositions about   the world   upon   which   speakers and listeners
>
> rely   when they interact. (Crystal, 1997, p. 20).

As enshrined in Crystal's (ibid.) submission, in pragmatics, a presupposition is an assumption about the world whose truth is taken for granted in discourse. "What a speaker assumes is true or is known by the hearer can be

described as a presupposition". Yule (1985, p. 132). Yule (ibid.) further accentuates that using referring expressions like deixis, pronouns or proper nouns (e.g. this, he, Shakespeare) by an addresser indicates an assumption that the addressees know the intended referent. In fact, the most obvious cases of referring expression (as speech acts) are proper names. This idea of designating or naming a referent (including possessive construction) is based on what Osisanwo (2003, p. 85) has termed existential presupposition.

Inference is the activity performed by a reader or interpreter in drawing conclusions that are not explicit in what is said. It is the act or process of deriving a conclusion based solely on what one already knows. This is why Levinson (2000, pp. 13-14) views it as meaning components which are context dependent. The simple logic in inference is moving from what is known to the unknown. According to Wales (1989, p. 248) inference is "the deductive process through which something is worked out or made explicit in terms of what is unspoken or unwritten".

Participants in a communicative setting share a lot of facts upon which they base their interpretation of utterance(s). These shared facts known to the discussants and vital to the understanding (encoding and decoding) of messages are called Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCB) (Bach and Harnish, 1979). Implicature is a technical term which was introduced into pragmatics by Grice (1975) for accounting for the implications of an utterance that goes beyond what is strictly implied by the content of the utterance; or a violation of any of the conversational maxims. The proposition by Grice is that many aspects of speakers' meaning result from the assumption that in most conversational exchanges, "participants are, in fact, co-operating with each other" to reach mutual goals (Yule 1985, p.145). This is buttressed by Crystal (1997, p.117) when he asserts that: "The success of a conversation depends not only on what speakers say but on their whole approach to the interaction". Grice believed that as rational communicators, we appear to take it for granted that an utterance should make sense in a given context. He called this assumption the cooperative principle:

> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice, 1975, p.45)

The cooperative principle was later developed into four main maxims of conversation which people adopt whenever they want to get to each other. The maxims according to Bloomer, Griffths and Merrison (2005, p.95) are:

(i)	Quality :	Do not say that which you believe to be false or for which you lack adequate evidence.
(ii)	Quantity:	Make your contribution as informative as is required, but not more, or less, than is required.
(iii)	Relevance:	Your contributions should clearly be relevant to the purpose of exchange.
(iv)	Manner:	Your contribution should be perspicuous, clear, brief and orderly.

Based on the above, Osisanwo (2003) divides implicature into two: conventional implicature and conversational implicature. Conventional implicature is determined by the conventional meaning of words and "the strict adherence to the cooperative principles" (Osisanwo, 2003 p. 92). However, when there is deviation from the cooperative principle, the speaker is conveying an additional meaning to the literal meaning. This additional meaning, according to Osisanwo (ibid), is the conversational implicature. For conventional implicature therefore, reliance on the Grice's (1975) maxims is needed while violation of the maxims will result in conversational implicature.

From the foregoing, we may submit that context (with language) serves as the melting pot for our different theoretical approaches, having been grounded on Halliday's socio-semiotic variables which is an offshoot of pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

4. Literature Review

Quinlan (2007) studies names in Erdrich's novels. Some of Erdrich's texts examined by Quinlan include *Love Medicine* (1984), *Tracks* (1988) and *Four Souls* (2004). She points out that Louise Erdrich, though generally identified by critics as a Native American author, is of mixed ethnic heritage – French, German and Ojibwe. This fact, according to Quinlan (ibid), has assisted Erdrich in creating characters that reach across interpersonal boundaries within the fictional multi-ethnic societies. As Quinlan (2007) discovers, the characters' names "reflect their ethnic identities, their individual spirit quests, and their search for healing circles of home and community" (p. 253).

She emphasizes that in naming her characters, Erdrich draws much on the Ojibwe understanding of name as a key to a person's identity. Thus, the traditional name given at birth, the saint's name given at Christian baptism and the descriptive name chosen to mark an achievement, all contribute to the reader's understanding of a character's identity.

Quinlan (ibid) maintains that Erdrich attends to individuals who struggle with the age old dilemmas of identity and relationship in all her novels. Symbolic of that struggle are the characters names. The researcher stresses the potency of names on the bearers (characters) who "became who they are in the context of a community, working their way toward a sense of self and finding the truth of their names" (p. 253)

The work is slightly related to the present study because of its emphasis on the influence of the author's socio-cultural background in naming her characters. Soyinka, it should be noted, also dwells much on his traditional (Yoruba) pedigree in his themes and characterization.

Lyles-Scott (2008) studies names and identity in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, a novel which won the 1987 Pulitzer prize. As noted by Lyles-Scott, the story in *Beloved* is set in 1873, a decade after the American civil war. It is told through memories and flashbacks of the time when the main characters, Baby Suggs, Paul D, and Halle, were slaves. He observes that the characters' names are as much a part of the novel as is the plot. He maintains that naming or nicknaming is a way of reclaiming one's self and one's identity and that there   are differences in both intent and result between the names "issued by slave owners as opposed to names bestowed by Black people themselves" (Lyles-Scott, 2008, p.25). He observes that blacks receive dead patronyms from whites and such names reflect disguises, jokes and weaknesses.

The work demonstrates that names are essential part of the legacy of the black people and names have preposterous stories which must be cared for. However, the work is both literary and historical and is therefore different from the present study which adopts a linguistic approach to onosmatic studies in a drama text.

Odebunmi (2008) examines the formation patterns and functions of personal names in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. Using insights from contextual models, the researcher discovers that four major types of names feature prominently in *Anthills of Savannah.* They are official names, first names, nicknames and institutional/titular names. According to the study, the official names serve as formal address forms and provide allusive reference. In structure, the first names appear as clipped form, full forms, qualifying forms and prefixed forms while they are functionally used in social peer interactions, addressing self, marking deference and making illustration among others. Similarly, the nicknames occur as clipped forms and are employed in social peer interactions. Finally, the institutional names which stem from Jewish and Igbo cultures, are connected with the three major religions in Nigeria.

The work is insightful as it examines a prose text by Chinua Achebe. However, the present study differs because it focuses on a drama work of Wole Soyinka as its primary text.

Odebode (2012) attempts a speech act analysis of pet names in polygamous homes among the Yoruba. He accentuates that pet-naming is a very significant communicative tool which is used by women in polygamous settings as instrument of vengeance and protest. The work is generic because it examines a naming system among a particular tribe and for a specific purpose. The present study is different because it is designed to explore onomastic strategies in a literary text by Wole Soyinka.

5. Data Analysis

In this section, an attempt is made to test our socio-pragmatic theory on the names of six major characters in the text. The following table examines form of the pragmatic elements. This is followed by a detailed discussion that captures both the pragmatic import of the names as well as their sociolinguistic variables.

Form of the pragmatic elements

Name of Character	Background Knowledge	Presupposition	Inference	MCB	Implicature
Eman – a stranger	A contraction of Emmanuel (a messiah, Jesus Christ)	The existence of a town which Eman is not a native of.	Another town exists where Eman belongs to.	It is the child of stranger(s) that is sent on a night errand	As a stranger in diaspora, he is destined to leave the place one day. As a messiah, he is expected to bear the sins of people.
Ifada- an idiot	An analogy of a farthing. *Ifa da* denotes (the *ifa* oracle divines).	A man exists by this name and attribute(s).	He is singled out as an idiot in a society where intelligent person(s) exist.	A useless fellow is hated by all. A poor man is hated even by his kinsmen.	Unintelligent, he doesn't understand the essence and meaning of carrier ritual.
Oroge	An analogy of "oro jẹẹ" soft word.	A man exists by this name.	There can be rash words as we have in Jaguna.	Soft words draw kolanut from pocket, harsh words attract sword from sheath.	He must be gentle. He is not parallel to Jaguna.
Jaguna	A chieftaincy title. He is married and therefore, a father to Sunma.	A man exists by this name/title.	Other forces exist. It is binding on him to wage war. He has soldiers under him.	His name is concealed as a chief is not addressed by his proper name among the Yoruba.	He should be a warrior, fighting the ground battle.
Sunma-Jaguna's daughter	An analogy of 'sun man' and summer. She is a chief's daughter. She is a native of the land.	A transition between a year and another. A lady exists by this name	Other ladies exist who are not Jaguna's daughters.	It is culturally binding on her to obey her father but she is opposed to him. Like begets like	Should be obedient, gentle, mature, loving. She should share the violent attribute of her father.
Old Man- his (Eman's) father	Appears as a flashback to Eman's past.	A man exists by this name/attribute. He is old, married with a son. He has experience.	A young man exists. The old man has passed through the young man's experience before.	Old age is synonymous with wisdom. Like begets like.	He should be experienced.

5.1 Eman – a stranger

The presupposition of the name Eman – a stranger is that a man exists by this name. The phrase a stranger presupposes the existence of an unnamed community which Eman is not a native of. The name is an analogy and a contraction of Emmanuel (the Biblical Jesus Christ or the Messiah) which denotes 'God with us' (Matthew 1 verse 23). As a messiah, Eman fulfils the carrier motif as he dies and atones for the sins of the unknown city where he is a stranger. Commenting on the carrier, Jaguna says: "We only use strangers" (*TSB* p. 21). The character therefore possesses Christ-like attributes, namely, teacher, saviour and friend of the poor as explicated in the text. He is faithful to his calling as a strong breed. He does not run away on the eve of the festival when Sunma advises him to do so.   As a friend of the helpless, Eman tolerates the sick Girl and even gives his cloth to her. The Girl retorts:

> Girl: No one lets me come near them
>
> Eman: But I am not afraid of catching your disease
>
> (*TSB* p. 8)

Eman further warns Sunma against hating the poor Ifada in the following lines:

> Eman: (*restraining her*) Control yourself…
>
> Sunma.   He comes crawling round here like some horrible insect.
>
> I never want to lay   my eyes on him again.
>
> Eman: …It is Ifada you know. The unfortunate one who
>
> runs errand for you and doesn't   hurt a soul.
>
> Sunma: He is useless...
>
> Eman: You are making sense. He is not a madman,
>
> he is just a little more unlucky than other children.   (*TSB* p. 5)

The inference from the name (Eman, a stranger) is that a supernatural being exists in diaspora. He comes to stay with the natives just as its denotation – God [is staying] with us. The MCB of the Yoruba which is the playwright's ethnic group (and which our textual setting replicates) is that 'it is the child of a stranger that is sent on a night errand'. Hence Eman, a stranger is used as a carrier. Eman also believes that a carrier must be willing; therefore, he offered himself in place of the apathetic Ifada. Conventionally, the name implies that the bearer, as a stranger, is destined to leave the setting one day.   Conversationally, the Yoruba also believe that the world is a market and heaven is home. So, Eman has to leave the market for home as a strong breed. It cannot be overemphasised that this name suggests an allusion to Jesus Christ. Thus, Eman bears the sins of the community as a carrier. He as well teaches the villagers that people should not be compelled to bear the sins of others. Rather, the carrier must be willing. Socially, the name replicates religion i.e. Christianity.

5.2 Ifada – an idiot

An analogy of farthing, Ifada ccontextually denotes a pauper. The playwright actually puns upon the name because of its ambiguous nature in the original source language i.e. Yoruba. Thus, we have:

> Ifada -a contraction of -*ifa dara* (free gift is good)
>
> Ifada- also denotes *ifa da* (the *Ifa* oracle divines)

As a pauper, his helplessness and loneliness are emphasised in page 6 of the text. Therefore, in order to get free gifts, he keeps begging from Eman. Ironically, he is the apparent choice of the villagers to perform the role of a carrier (hence the *Ifa* oracle divines). But Ifada is averse to the task. As Ogunba (1982) has observed, after suffering a bone-racking torment to alleviate others' sufferings, the carrier in the process "attains a level of spiritual power far superior to that of any other member of the community and so becomes its strongest man" (Ogunba 1982, p. 15). Ifada, therefore, is truly an idiot by leaving the part of superiority and greatness for Eman in the text. The name therefore presupposes a pauper from which we may infer the probability of another man who is wise and worthwhile (in the person of Eman considering the fact that both are strangers).

In Ifada is the Biblical proof that "the poor is hated even of his own neighbour" (Proverbs 14 verse20). Therefore, he is hated by Sunma and the villagers who want to get rid of him by choosing him as a carrier. The name implies an unintelligent poor man who does not understand the essence and meaning of the annual ritual which he is called

to perform as a carrier. Socially, we may deduce that the name traces both economic and (traditional) religious variables.

5.3 Oroge

Oroge (soft words) is a descriptive name which presupposes the existence of a man with gentle nature. Also, the name suggests soft words or sound speech. It is a coinage from the Yoruba expression "oro jeje (contracted as 'oro jee')" with a sound modification in our text as Oroge. The Yoruba believe that "soft words attract kolanut from pocket while harsh words attract sword from sheath". The character (probably a chief) is unlike Jaguna, though they both work together in the play. As a man of peace who doesn't believe in force, he calms down Jaguna and patiently explains to Eman why Ifada must be released to them for ritual as follows:

> JAGUNA: We only waste time.
>
> OROGE: Jaguna, be patient. After all, the man has been with us for some time now and deserves to know. The evil of the old year is no light thing to load on any man's head.
>
> EMAN: I know something about that.
>
> OROGE: You do? (*turns to Jaguna who snorts impatiently*). You see, I told
>
> you so didn't I? From the moment you came I saw you were one of
>
> the knowing ones. (*TSB* pp. 19-20)

Despite Oroge's explanation above, Eman is unwilling to give up Ifada. Rather he accuses Oroge and Jaguna of unmanliness. Oroge would not react negatively to the insinuation as Jaguna. This is explicated below:

> EMAN: It is you who are not behaving like men.
>
> JAGUNA: (*advances aggressively*) That is a quick mouth you have…
>
> OROGE: Patience Jaguna … if you want the new year to be soft there must be no deeds of anger. What did you mean my friend? (p. 20).

As Oroge is listening to Eman, Jaguna threatens to end the conversation abruptly. Oroge still replies softly with a smile and explains to Eman that Ifada would be willing and joyous. Also, while pursuing Eman as a carrier, Oroge maintains his calm posture. This prompts the following conversation:

> JAGUNA: You were standing there looking at him as if he was some strange spirit. Why didn't you shout?
>
> OROGE: You shouted didn't you? Did that catch him?
>
>   …
>
> JAGUNA: Do we have …
>
> OROGE: S-sh…look!   (*TSB* p 27).

The inference from Oroge in this context is gentility while the implicature is soft words. Furthermore, Oroge is a biblical allusion that "let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt …" (Colossians 4 verse 6). The character thus lives up to his name. Since the name stems from both traditional saying and Biblical allusion, we may conclude that it possesses ethnic language principally, although with a blend of religious variable.

5.4 Jaguna

Jaguna is a Yoruba expression for an army chief i.e. someone who fights the ground battle, "A ja Ogun ona". Like in the army of Yoruba land which the (unnamed) setting of the text replicates, the character is an army chief. Socio-politically, most Yoruba towns and cities were established through wars of conquest. The military titles therefore exist in the traditional Yoruba hierarchy of chieftaincy. These include Aare-ona Kakanfo (the

Generalissimo), Balogun (the General), Abogunrin (Aide de Camp) and Ajaguna (the Army chief) which is our preoccupation in this section. The name presupposes the existence of a man by this title (name). It also presupposes the imminence or possibility of a ground battle.

From Jaguna, we may infer that other forces exist like the Air force and Navy which do not fight on land. Also, other rank and file warriors (soldiers) exist under his control.

As a warrior and an army chief, Jaguna lives up to his name. He is aggressive and dangerous. When Eman accuses him (and Oroge) of not behaving like men, Jaguna advances aggressively. His action prompts Oroge to say: "Patience Jaguna … if you want the new year to be soft there must be no deeds of anger" (*TSB* p. 20). Also, Jaguna leads the team of Eman's (as a carrier) assailants. Moved by femine nature, Sunma (who doubles as Jaguna's daughter and Eman's girl friend) cries out to his father saying, "Murderer! What are you doing to him? Murderer! Murderer!" (*TSB* p 28). With these words, Sunma flies and claws at shameless Jaguna's face like a crazed tigress.

In retaliation, Jaguna "succeeds in pushing her off and striking her so hard on the face that she falls to her knees. He moves on her to hit her again" (*TSB* p. 28). The above scenario brings about the following conversation between Jaguna and Oroge:

> OROGE: (*comes between*) Think what you are doing Jaguna,
> she is   your   daughter.
>
> JAGUNA: My daughter! Does this one look like my daughter?
> Let me cripple the harlot for life.
>
> OROGE: That is a wicked thought Jaguna
>
> JAGUNA: Don't come between me and her
>
> Oroge: Nothing in anger – do you forget what tonight is?
>
> JAGUNA: Can you blame me for forgetting?
> *(draws his hand across his cheek – it is covered with*
> *blood).*   (*TSB* p. 28).

As a soldier, Jaguna's language is that of command "go on, do as I say" (p. 18). Finally, when battered Eman (as a carrier) is reported by Girl to have wondered away in search of water, Jaguna says; "He is surely finished now" (*TSB* p. 36). Jaguna knows nothing than to bash and inflict wounds on the citizens including his daughter.   From the foregoing, it is evident that Jaguna lives to his name. Meanwhile, the bearer's real name is concealed as a chief is not addressed by his proper name (in Yoruba) rather, a title is adopted. The Yoruba also believe that "a brave man is always found in a battle front", hence our MCB. By implicature, Jaguna conventionally implies an army chief. This suggests that he should be in the battle front.   Conversationally he is found on the pathways, trailing ordinary citizens such as Eman and Ifada about in the text. Socially, Jaguna is an eponym i.e. an occupational name.

5.5 Sunma, Jaguna's daughter

The presupposition of Sunma is that a female character exists by this name. That she is Jaguna's daughter also suggests that other girls exist who do not belong to Jaguna (for instance, "A Girl" in the cast list). Sunma (an analogy of Samson denoting sun-man) has the inference of strength and war, like her father. Through this name, we may also conjecture that Jaguna is married. Additionally, since Jaguna is strong in a sense as a warrior, his brave daughter can be said to also belong to the linage of 'the strong breed'.   That Sunma is Eman's girl friend also affirms that she is familiar with another strong breed. It is culturally binding on her to obey her father but since 'like begets like', the "Sun man" in her manifests as she engages her father in combat because of Eman. When Eman shields Ifada from being arrested by Jaguna and Oroge, Jaguna addresses Sunma thus:

> Daughter, you'd better tell your friend. I don't think he quite knows our ways. Tell him
> why he must give up the boy. (*TSB* p. 18)

The above extract from the text affirms that Sunma is Jaguna's daughter and Eman's girlfriend. It also confirms that Eman is a stranger in the land. As a warrior's daughter, brave Sunma engages her father in combat because of his cruelty to Eman as a carrier. Discovering that he has sustained injury in his mouth (covered with blood), Jaguna says: "My own daughter … and for a stranger…" (p. 28). Sunma, therefore, like the Biblical Samson, possesses strength to withstand a warrior (her father). But she is equally weak morally like Samson. She says: '… my weakness betrays me' (p. 7). Affirming Sunma's weakness, Jaguna says "… Let me cripple the harlot for life."

By implicature, conventionally, the cooperative principle is violated in the personality of this character. She is expected to be a man by the denotation of her name. But ironically, she is a lady, who should be gentle, loving and mature. Although she loves Eman, she is not gentle with Ifada neither does she support the culture of her people. Conversationally, her name implies "a violent man" because the sun componentially possesses: +harshness, +strength, +heat and +light. And since like begets like, she shares in the violent attributes of her father. She therefore lives up to her name. Because the name subsumes natural phenomenon (sun) in the universe of the text, we may submit that it is a toponym (i.e. geographical name).

5.6 Old Man, Eman's father

This character appears as a flashback to Eman's past in the play. He is mature and experienced. He has advanced in age physically and psychologically. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2000 p. 985) defines old boy as a man "who used to be a student at a particular school, who belongs to the same club and uses his influence to help others."   Old man belongs to the strong breed and appears to Eman when the latter is weary as a carrier. He encourages Eman and throws light on his (Eman's) past in the following reminiscence:

> Ours is a strong breed my son… I hoped you would follow me… your wife died giving birth to your child.. Don't you know it was the same with you?
>
> You killed your mother… (*TSB* p. 25).

The presupposition of the name (Old Man) is that a young man exists (i.e. Eman). We may infer that the old man has passed through the young man's stage before. So, he belongs to the class of the old strong breed. This therefore brings a contrast between the two men as follows:

Old Man	**E-man**
+ experience	- experience
-energy (man)	+ energy (man)

The MCB associated with this name (Old Man) are: like begets like (i.e. offspring resemble their parents) and old age is synonymous with wisdom. The Yoruba also believe that when a youth is cutting a tree, it is the adult who knows the direction it will fall. The old man appears in our text strategically to show Eman his past life and to explain that he belongs to the real strong breed. By implicature, Old Man conventionally implies an experienced man. He lives up to his name (attributes) by coming to explain the duties/essence of being a carrier to the wearied Eman. In social distribution, therefore, we may submit that Old Man is an age related name.

5.7 Statistical Analysis of the Names' Variables

In this section, we attempt a statistical analysis of the onomastic variables deployed in the study. The result is presented with two tables (Table1 and Table 2) and a bar chart (Fig. 1) as follows:

Table 1: A table indicating name variables

Name	Variable
Eman	Religion (Christianity)
Sunma	Geography (toponym)
Ifada	Religion (traditional)
Jaguna	Occupation (Eponym)
Oroge	Ethnic language
Old Man	Age

From the discussion so far, we may deduce that the six characters' names analysed above have six corresponding social variables respectively. These are: Eman (religious[Christianity]), Sunma (geographical), Ifada (religious

[traditional]), Jaguna (occupational), Oroge (ethnic language) and Old Man (age). Table 1 illustrates this situation.

Table 2: A table indicating frequency distribution and percentage(s) of variables

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Religion	2	33.33
Geography	1	16.67
Occupation	1	16.67
Age	1	16.67
Ethnic Language	1	16.67
Total	6	100

Furthermore, the variables are dissected according to their frequencies and their corresponding percentages simultaneously. Thus we have the following result presented in Table 2: Religion (2-33.33%), Geography (1-16.67%), Occupation (1-16.67%), Age (1-16.67%) and Ethnic Language (1-16.67%).
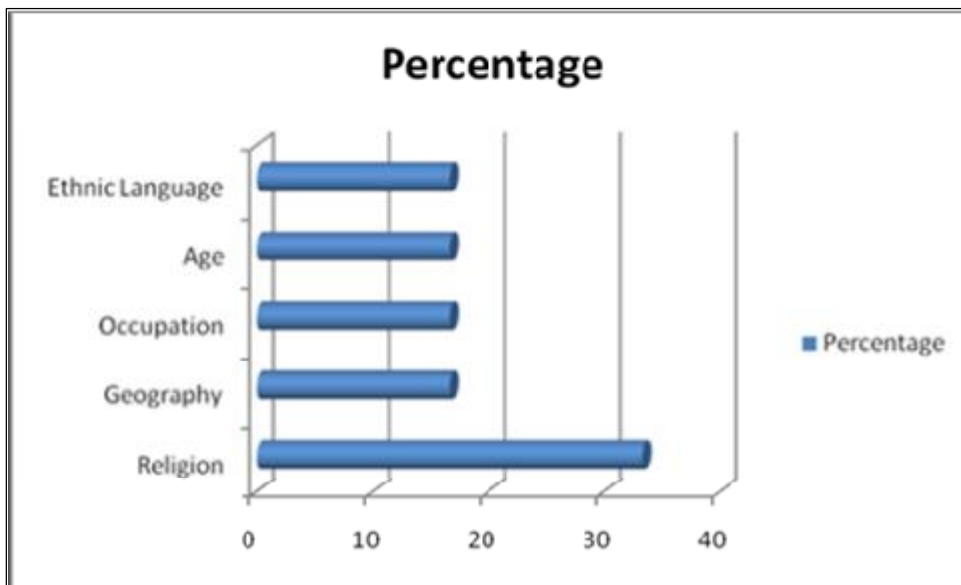

Figure 1. An inverted bar chart indicating percentage(s) of the names' variables

Figure 1 indicates the percentage distribution of the variables deployed in the study. Thus Religion has the highest with 33.33% while other variables (Geography, Occupation, Age and Ethnic Language) have 16.67% respectively.

6. Conclusion

This study has indicated that names are meaning potentials in the universe of Soyinka's text. A thorough analysis of the names of the characters through the principles of pragmatics cum socio-semiotic variables has revealed that naming (by Soyinka) transcends the illocutionary act of labeling to bring into play the social indices of occupation, age, geography, ethnicity and religion among others. Out of the six variables examined, religion has the highest frequency. This therefore proves the religious/scapegoat theme stressed in the work by the author. The study further indicates that names, as linguistic elements, are socially diagnostic features which Soyinka has tactically manipulated in his plays to function interpersonally as means of identification of the characters (bearers), ideationally, as means of prediction and description of the characters' traits and textually, as means of constructing 'texts' that are coherent and situationally relevant in dramatic discourse (Halliday 1973, p. 41). Names are

therefore meaning potentials and a good understanding of the author's use of names is a great key that unlocks his perceived difficult text(s).

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