

The Concept of Mind and Nature in the poetry of Chin Ce's Full Moon.

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Abstract

Mind and **Nature** are the two most important terms which signify the perfect harmony, balance and beauty in this universe. Though these two terms are contrary to each other. The concept of mind basically believes in the theory of rationalism whereas the concept of nature that affects the concept of mind and it itself signifies the sparkling beauty of the surroundings by the grace of the Almighty. Today's topic is related to my new research on the concept of mind and nature in the poetry of Chin Ce's *Full Moon*. His poetry collection, *Full Moon*, is indeed full in the sense that it shows the deep relationship that exists between the state of the poet's mind and the state of his natural surroundings. The poet's mind becomes the mind of the nature, or even more, the mind of the cosmos, the mind of the beyond. Ce's poetry is profoundly beautiful and easy to the eye and to the mind. His language is generally not obscure; it possesses a pristine transparency that aligns itself with the poet's need to merge with the larger self.

Keywords:- **Chin Ce, nature, mind, Nigeria, wholeness, spiritualism and enlightenment and transcendence.**

Introduction

Among the younger generation of Nigerian poets, Chin Ce stands out as a prolific and most individualistic in blazing a style of his own which is at once effective and drawn to nativity. His creativity permeates many genres of literature. He has to his credit works of fiction such as *Children of Koloko* and *Gamji College* in addition to a full-length novel *The Visitor*. Chin Ce also has three published volumes of poetry: *An African Eclipse*, *Full Moon* and *Millennial*. His essay *Riddles and Bash: The Creative Wit of Ala's Children* argues for the riddle in Africa as a literary genre in its own right. While in *Bards and Tyrants: Literature, Leadership and Citizenship Issues of Modern Nigeria*, he parallels the lacunae of imaginative thinking in most Nigerians with the vacuity of the leadership.

However, this research article shall focus on the romantic sensitivity that runs through Chin Ce's *Full Moon*. One of the remarkable things about romantic poet is their passion and interest in natural objects. Few African poets have been concerned with nature and the natural world in contrast to English poets who have written much more on nature. In Chin Ce's poetic universe, mind and nature act upon each other to generate a network of pleasure and pain.

In his theme poem, there is an attempt to elevate moonlighting above the ordinary pleasure of communal life. It is a poem of mind and its relation to the external world, signified in the 'moon'. The description of the moonlight compels one's participation with speaker:

Full moon shines upon the dream
Of youth
and wisdom may take its time
The passion gather with violent
cracking and nothing
can stop the animated fire

The influence of nature upon the poet is such that the 'moon' is perceived as living. With Chin Ce the moonlight should no longer be taken for granted, it is now gifted with passionate and energetic feelings. The above given lines show that one moment for communion with the great moods and beams of moonlight can generate enough wisdom.

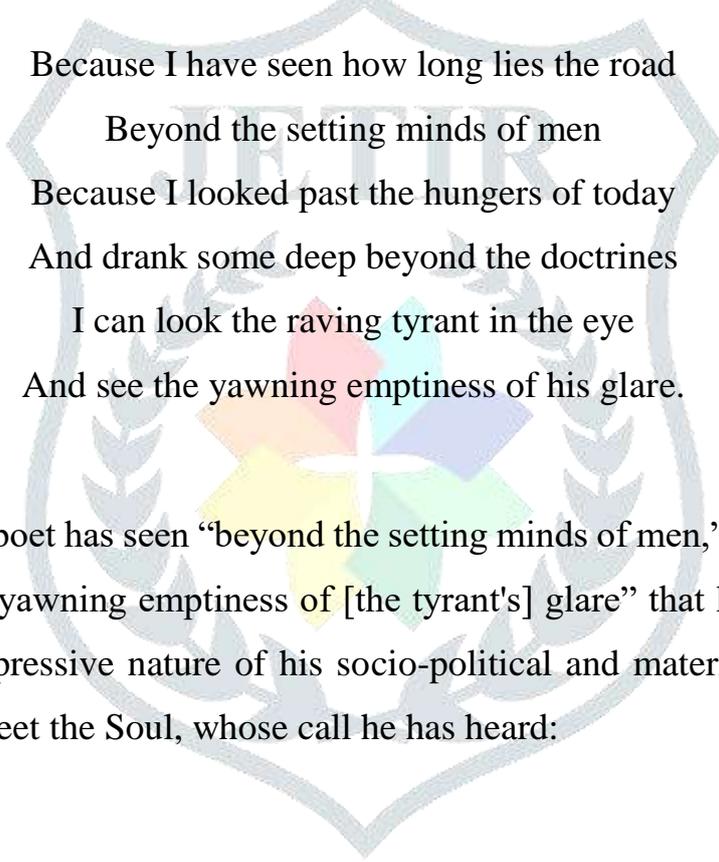
In his essay, "*Closer to Wordsworth': Nature and Pain in Chin Ce's Full Moon poems*", Kola Eke reasons that Chin Ce's poetry is intrinsically animistic and romantic in a manner reminiscent of both William Wordsworth, and Leopold Senghor, one of the finest African poets of the Négritude movement. "With Chin Ce, nature and human mind are inseparable", says Eke. One could easily add in an inflated metaphor: In Ce's poetry mind and nature are brother and sister, son and mother, wave and sea, reflector and reflected.

Chin Ce's poetry collection, *Full Moon*, is indeed full in the sense that it shows the deep relationship that exists between the state of the poet's mind and the state of his natural surroundings. The poet's mind becomes the mind of the nature, or even more, the mind of the cosmos, the mind of the beyond. To satisfy a visceral anthropomorphic and transcendental need, the mind of the poetic subject becomes the very being of nature, or the very being of the universe at large, with rivers and trees,

boats and harmattan(s), suns and moons, clouds and skies (...) becoming mirrors of the deep sensibilities and desires of the poet, of his need to travel through the confines of time, space and material reality. The poet's fundamental, quasi-organic need (or requirement) is not just to merge with the terrestrial; it is also to merge with the extra-terrestrial.

Discussion

In Chin Ce's poetry, nature is not always the nice princess that can bring solace to the mind of the poet. Nature often shows how violent it can be, as violent perhaps as some tyrannical and corrupt governors of past or current Nigeria as the poem "*The Call*" alludes to:



Because I have seen how long lies the road
 Beyond the setting minds of men
 Because I looked past the hungers of today
 And drank some deep beyond the doctrines
 I can look the raving tyrant in the eye
 And see the yawning emptiness of his glare.

It is precisely because the poet has seen "beyond the setting minds of men," "looked past the hungers of today" and "see[n] the yawning emptiness of [the tyrant's] glare" that he can exit his smallness, and the smallness and oppressive nature of his socio-political and material milieu and travel. His travelling allows him to meet the Soul, whose call he has heard:

Because I have heard the call of the soul
 That haunts my wild and restless mind
 I shall forge along to build my dream
 On the hills beyond the rising sun.

Our poetic speaker is a "Journey man," as he points out in another poem, "a traveller of the High way," "the dream of silent night", that "silent night" where the noise, the worries and the littleness of this world are annihilated or suspended. His ability to travel spiritually via what could be called the

transit of poetic metaphor is what makes him a larger ontological being as illustrated in the capitalized poem “*I AM*”. His being becomes divine, cosmical, far exceeding the confines of the physical sphere.

Chin Ce's poetry is profoundly beautiful and easy to the eye and to the mind. His language is generally not obscure; it possesses a pristine transparency that aligns itself with the poet's need to merge with the larger self. And furthermore, because of its foremost levity, it permits the reader to also share in the pleasure of the extra-terrestrial voyage that is the mind of the poet and enjoy, enjoy.... As Wordsworth would say himself: “The Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion”

Conclusion

Thus, Chin Ce's poetry, like all powerful poetry, is a divine call, a profound yearning for wholeness in a world that has become too acquainted with the smallness of dissected disconnected particles. Ce's poetry is circular and round like the Moon when it is Full. Or like the revolving call of the wolf, who in his desperate and lonely night calls the 'lover' that he has lost and misses dearly. If the characters of Children of Koloko speak the language of loss, confusion and spiritual decadence, the shamanistic speaker of Full Moon utters the language of discoveries, enlightenment and transcendence. Ce's poetry moves to the displaying of a non-personal Life force, presenting it as the solution to the general inertia affecting Nigeria. The poet paints this non-personal Life force, which can also be named the Soul, or the Social or Collective Ethics, as being oriented by the common good and not by the individual and egoistic desires of the single mind or minority group. The quality of Chin Ce's poetry is its ability to fire the imagination and debunk the establishment that control religion and politics. His writings evoke a sense of duty, friendship and an awareness of the environment and fauna of Africa. His sensibility as a poet ancestral memory reveals itself witty and often long lines of rebuke to his nationals, words of encouragement to friends and the celebration of universal human feelings.

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