

Visiting Humorous Proverbs in African Literary Fiction

by

Youssoupha Mané

yousoupha_mane@hotmail.fr

Ph.D. student, Human Sciences and Society Doctorate School
Laboratory LARAC (Culture and Art Research Laboratory)
Gaston Berger University, Saint-Louis, Senegal

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to display the way verbal humor manifests itself in African literary fiction through proverbial expressions that populate the narratives. Basing this study on former theories on verbal humor, this work analyses humors that stem from proverbs, the way vulgar proverbs provokes laughter, and how African literary wellerism is an exhaustible fountain of laughter.

Keyword: proverb, laughter, Black humor, African literature, wellerism, vulgarity

Introduction

To stipulate that laughter or the comical emanates naturally from everything that is *properly* human seems to be a relevant assertion insofar as the lifeless beings and the animals that come to realize that human laughter possess nothing but human behavioral patterns or expressions that unleash laughter (Bergson, 1993:2). If jesting is witty and human beings are the sole creatures endowed with such wittiness, they are indeed the unique beings that laugh. This aspect of life appears to be central in African folk literature, especially in its proverbial literature. Even though the wisdom of proverbs has always guided African people in their daily social interactions for thousands of years, and although African proverbs encompass everyday experiences and common observations where drolleries are used to spring up in the didactic of the proverbial utterances, the paremiological phenomenon that deals with humour is unfortunately allocated little consideration among the myriad critics in African literature. Hence, the few studies devoted to proverbs have been oriented towards their musicality and imagery composure. However, the African novelists who find themselves at the cross-road of orality and of writing have effectively reproduced either consciously or unconsciously in their literary fiction, Black populace humour that blossoms in proverbs, a condiment of speech that constitutes a major form of collective consciousness through African communicative ideas and opinions.

In the African cultural context, the implementation of humour in the written text is somewhat exhumed directly from occasional oral genre, namely the performance or the spinning of tales by a high-qualified storyteller, in verbal duel in the palaver, a spot in which wording both comical and pedagogical dominate the environment, the humming of songs which generally unearths the bonfire of the populations after the realization of a good harvest campaign to enliven the dullness of the season, in the rural folk opera or when celebrating a birth or a wedding. It is probably in this vein that Bergson (1993:24) argued that “laughter has a social function”. In such circumstances which almost gather all the members pertaining to the same kindred or vicinity, humour hardly fails to rough itself out. Even in these multiple occasions laughter is something that differs from one community to another in that what is laughable in a given cultural area may leave another person indifferent. Consequently, the comical is inextricably related to cultural and linguistic codes that the characters share. It is necessary to be familiar with the culture’s values and restrictions in order to enjoy the joke. Humorous proverbial expressions in African literary fiction are more often than not found in sexual lexicon, and in the political and religious parodies that shows the ‘Global Theory of Verbal Humor’ developed by Abastado & Raskin (1991) will be essential for this study in that proverbs are by essence words of mouth. Thus, the aim of this research seeks to demonstrate the essence of laughter in relation to proverbs that flow in the framework of some African literary fictions.

Black Humour in Proverbs

The concept “Black humour” is derived from French (*humour noir*) and coined by the surrealist theoretician André Breton in his *Anthology of Black Humour* (1935) . The term also known as gallows humour designates a sub-genre of comedy and satire in which laughter emanates from cynicism and skepticism. In Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Devil on the Cross* (1982), a novel set in a postcolonial era where foreign capitalists and their Black associates take great pleasure in taking the humanity as a mere means rather than as an end. At the middle of this conflictual situation, appears Mwaura, a character whose memory is whetted with witty proverbs, prone to rebuff vehemently the social conventions, the moral principles that uphold life in community. Hence, he comes to the gloomy decision to live according to the laws of nature and at the same time strive to fit in his surroundings overwhelmed by gluttony and malice. Through a song duel between the *matutu* driver and the passengers, the narrator displays the ideology and the guiding principles of each other. Muturi and Wangari, the embodiment of the Kenyan lower and working class improvise that the imperialists must pack up and go because the owner of the homestead is on his way (47). Mwaura instead of humming a melody is satisfied with meta-proverbial ideas that go along with his conviction. Mwaura just wants to live life by following exactly the natural order of nature. With words similar to maxims that let the reader burst out of laugh, he says:

As for me, there was no song I would not have sung then. Even today there is no song I wouldn't sing. I say this world is round. If it leans that way I lean that way with it. If it stumbles, I stumble with it. If it bends I bend with it. If it stays upright, I stay upright with it. If it growls, I growls with it. If it is silent, I am silent too.[...]If I find myself among the members of Akurinu sect, I become one of them ; when I am with those who have been saved, I too am saved ; when I'm with Muslims, I embrace Islam ; when I am among pagans, I too become pagan. (47)

From these lines which Mwaura has summed up in this proverbial expression: “Don't be choicy, eat what is available” (47) as it is the first law of hyena, it seems obvious that the reader who is profoundly rooted in the communal values of morality and uprightness will be experiencing hereby both laughter and discomfort. In a society in which the chameleon's double standards attitude is rebuked, hypocrisy wrapped up in a lugubrious loincloth of greed, become straightforward a taboo, a vice to be set aside. The Black humour that this proverb contains springs from the seriousness of the tone and its inward perversity and lewdness. In this way, it can be noted that in Black humour, the denial of reality, the grandiose affirmation of the pleasure principles is *par excellence* and the mortal enemy of sensibility and sentimentality. It is an obscene and risible proverb that offends morality and all of ethics. The character of the proverb, hyena, in many African oral tradition, is labelled as worthless, impudent non-intelligent and ugly. Consequently it becomes an anti-social character like Mwaura who is not ugly outwardly but inwardly and does not fully grasp that: “it is not the consciousness of men that determines his being, but, on the contrary, his social being that determines his consciousness” (Selden & Widdowson, 1993:70). It stands out from this sentence, an intellectual contrast or a palpable absurdity and the moral deformity which generally generate laughter.

Beside the contrast that creates laughter in this proverb, there is also the mechanism of *degradation*, a process of laughter that buckle down to express honestly a dishonest idea, to ship in shocking situation, to be involved in an occupation and describe it in respectable terms. This covetous man like many other in the novel violated proverbially the principles of shamefulness and dignity which Muturi and Wangari regarded as sacred. Mwaura was an affront to justice and fair play, always ready to flout any norm or custom with impunity and impurity, as if bent on proving that not only can evil triumph over good but that it can stay triumphant as long as possible, and the debauched need not pay his debauchery. It is what the theoretician of humour Thomas Veatch (1998) branded as the Benign Violation Theory, a model developed later by Peter McGraw & Caleb Warren (2010) which claims that laughter occurs when something is violated like morals, social codes, linguistic norms, or personal dignity and suggests that anything that threatens the characters sense of how the world “ought to be” will always set off laughter.

When Mwireri wa Mukiraai, the passenger who was heading toward Ilmorog to take part in the competition of modern theft and robbery, finally releases words to convince the rest of the travelers about the significance of the occurrence which has been the propping force of the Western power. Enlivened by greed, Mukiraai slyly assimilated democracy with the western political philosophy of liberalism by putting in circulation this following proverb.

“He who is able to grab should be allowed to grab. You allow me to grab, and I allow you to grab. You grab and I grab.”(80). Even though part of the humour that comes from this proverb springs from the violation of morality veiled under an impudence which eggs on the individuals to reap where they do not sow, the other part of the risibility seems to emerge from the repetition of the verb “to grab” which runs in connection with the figure of speech named chiasmus whose function is not solely to bring out the musicality of the proverbs but also its funny aspect. In the first proverbial sentence, there are two repetitive verbs at the same time expressing two oppositional feelings. The first feeling aims at spreading the philosophy of greed and corruption, and the second one is somewhat victim of a compression. And it is probably the case here that the use of “should”, would be meaningless.

Still in *Devil on the Cross*, when the competition of modern theft and robbery was held in a cave by foreign capitalists and their watch dogs, Black humorous proverbs in all their forms predominated the entire atmosphere. When it was the turn of Gitutu wa Gataanguru to recount his mileage from rags to gold, he first begins with the proverbial expression that hides nothing but dark comedy: “our saying is true: the young of a goat steals like its mother (101) to hint ostensibly that he had inherited the profession from his father who worked in the High Court of Nairobi and never dithered to suck the blood of his own people. Here the risible is captured directly from mimicry, one of the most prominent methods liable to provoke laughter by copying the behaviors or gestures as it is the case between Mother-goat and its offspring. Consequently, in this “Monkey see, monkey do” proverbial expression “mimicry influences social behavior and judgment” (Gueguen and al, 2009:256) and can be explained by the desire, as it is alluded in the trivializing proverb, to create affiliation and rapport. Beside the imitation as source of humour, the somber, depraved facet of the proverb resides in the art of parsimony the two characters share together. They are trained by foreign capitalists to ignore the beautiful faces of their children, of their parents, of their brothers and sisters, and to look solely on the splendid face of money by all means necessary. In so doing they will never go wrong. It’s a proverb that seeks to take slightly or even delegalize the horrible crime of theft by longing to welcome it as something normal within a society that despises energetically this misdemeanor.

When Gitutu was tracing back his career as a businessman whose salary could not get around the needs of his large family, he evoked before the audience the proverbial councils of a twisted father in these terms: “on a journey nobody carries food for anyone else, each traveler carries his own. (102). Once again Gitutu did not fail from following fatherly injunction.

The distressing tone that oozes from this proverbial utterance is undoubtedly the struggle against the total extinguishment of the value of solidarity, a morality and a pillar upon which African societies have built themselves. Solidarity has hallowed out the wells of knowledge, languages, tools and values which ensured and guaranteed the continuity of civilization. It is this humanity that Gitutu and his begetter strive to tidy up in the dustbin by making it up for the undesirable ideology of individualism and cunning which they thought was more profitable than hard work. And the laughable aspect of this piece of proverb stems from a tautology, a statement which uses different words to say the same thing twice.

In another words, there is here something like a void in such figure of speech that unveils the idea of uttering many words to say anything and of treading several miles to go nowhere inadvertently. Consequently, laughter, in this particular context, would be in accordance with a “mark of an effort that immediately encounters the void” (Bergson, 1993:65) as he put it in his philosophical and theoretical book.

Among the great deals and gruesome proverbial expressions that positively invade African literary fiction, this following one appears: ‘if a man grows older, he eats veal’. This saying extracted from *Devil on the Cross* can also be found in *Wizard of the Crow* and is mentioned several times. The main observation that may graze the reader’s mind is that the proverb is uttered by inconvenient and whimsical male characters who take great pleasure in outraging sexually innocent young women by using as bait their devilish power of money. By this way, the Ruler and Boss Kihara, the Rich Old Man from Ngoriko and the competitors in *Devil on the Cross* were never ashamed to sleep with schoolgirls by shattering the latter’s prospect and project. The male chauvinism that this proverb contains, symbolizes the immorality and inhumanity. The laugh ability or the comical effect of this proverb may be explained by the fact that the word encompasses a *literal* and a *figurative* or a *metaphorical* meaning, and if the listener would take the word ‘veal’ in the proper way whereas the term was victim of a semantic slide, or was employed metaphorically. At whatever time the reader or the listener pays deeply his/her attention on the figurative representation of the word “veal” which means the youth and the coolness of young women skin. In this way, the expressed idea becomes risible. Hence, language is probably the dominant medium of humorous expression, notwithstanding the linguistic game of wit through the use of metaphor as a wonderfully versatile conceptual tool “which can do more than provide cognitive insights in the work of humour via a level conceptualization” (Veale, 2003:16), as laughter in this proverbial expression is triggered by the benign violation of decency.

In Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Devil on the Cross* where the narrator engages his characters in proverbs as a form or type of linguistic tool, I argue that the great majority of proverbs used by the characters epitomize the Black humour, except those uttered by the benevolent characters who did their utmost to redress verbally and physically the social, political, and economic depreciations which gangrene African peoples. *Devil on the Cross* is *par excellence* the African novel that can be labelled as the garret of Black humorous proverb or funny violation proverb.

Humour in Vulgar Proverbs

In African oral literature as well as in the written literature, proverbs bring to mind off-colour jokes and offensive epithets without losing their artistic quality woven in literary fiction. In *The Crippled Dance r* (1986) by Nigerian novelist T. Obinkaram Echewa did not fail to use the language by putting rude proverbial remarks that refer to sex and other bodily functions. When the boys in the village come to the decision to organize a masquerade dance band and went from compound to compound dancing for people and receiving money as premiums, the rowdy and boisterous Radio, the strongest among the boys proclaimed himself the managing director and the treasurer of the occasion.

At the end of the performance, Radio, after having taken the lion's share announced to the rest of the members that his pockets had a hole and the money had fallen out. Despite his hypocritical apologies, he did not allow anyone to frisk him and verify. But Ajuzia the protagonist could not unload such a treachery and reported it to his grandmother by breaking into a passion of tears. To console his grandson, the old woman through these proverbial utterances applies herself to repress the wrongdoer's misdemeanor:

There is a saying that the poor man eats his crusty overnight fufu and his soup has no fish; and the rich man soup is full of meat and fish. However when they both go to the latrine, the rich man's shit does not smell any better than the poor man's.(10)

It is obvious that any person with access to this hilarious and long proverb based on human attributes will inevitably giggle because of its increasing vulgarity and abusing words. However this does not imply that all vulgar words are generating of laughter. What seems to me to be the other source of the amusing effect is the nature of an expectation that stumbles on emptiness. Whatever endeavor Radio may provide to swindle his fellows boys, no matter how enriched with vitamins the food he may buy with the ripped off money, his excrement will be as fetid, and there will be no pecking order in terms of stink. In addition, in this humorous proverb, the hilarity and laughter are reactions the individuals like the grandmother produce to release an aggressive tension, and at the same time the protagonist's grandmother resorted to a proverb that contains insults or vulgarities to liberate herself and Ajuzia to say the truth. If anger makes human beings look little, the one related to putting forward vulgar and risible proverbs required a necessary presence of wit. Such verbal aggression is epitomized in the very use of vulgar and hilarious words.

In *Arrow of God*, a novel described by some critics as the dictionary of Igbo proverbial sayings (Nwadike, 1989:36) that concretizes the African psycho-cultural crisis, deeply entrenched in the African proverbial folio by Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe “who has carved out a niche for himself as an African Proverbialist” (Aguoru, 2012:1) as crumbs of humorous popular wisdom stormed his narrative framework. During the performance of the funeral ceremony of Ogbuefi Amalu, a well revered man of titles, Obika, Ezeulu’s son was asked by his friend Eneto to carry the mask of the spirit of the night, the ogbazulobodo to assure the transition of the deceased to the land of the benevolent ancestors. From the ritual, emerged a profusion of proverbs on behalf of the spirit which is certainly an embodiment of wisdom. Among those proverbs droned by Obika, the one that encompasses humour through the naming of vulgarities, there is this following one: “He who will swallow *udala* seeds must consider the size of his anus” (226). At first sight, the reader may consider this mount of proverbs unjustifiable and incoherent in that there is apparently no particular context to which they refer to, but is far from being the case here. Each of the proverbial combinations is symbolized by analogy in a specific episode. This risible proverb like the one mentioned in the *Crippled Dancer* pawns itself to berate the unjust and proud attitude of Ezeulu to which, I think the proverb alludes as it unveils the idea that the priest had not weighed up the dramatic consequences of his vengeful act which consists of postponing the harvest of the new yams.

This heavy responsibility is represented here by the vegetal image of “*udala*”, a seed big enough so that it causes danger to whoever swallows it. Unfortunately the priest of Ulu had done so. The drawback of such a situation is the death of his beloved son which had pushed him to the threshold of madness. The humour emerging from the proverb is obviously due to this coarse lexicon “anus”. Vulgar proverbs make the hearer or the reader laugh at whatever time the latter is taken by surprise, that is to say when the receiver is not expecting that the editor will resort to proverbs that embody such rough vocabularies. Sometimes, people usually burst out a laugh when the proverb that contains vulgarities is uttered by a man of virtue. In such a situation the amusing effects of the proverbs is produced both by the very nature of the term and by the unforeseeable occurrence which is an incongruity between what we expect and what actually happens. These two vulgar and risible proverbs analyzed above, had led me to the conclusion that all of the characters that fell back upon these kinds of proverbs are more often than not in an unfavorable powerless and oppressive situation. Consequently, emitting coarse and hilarious proverbs is somewhat an effective and efficient means for the wretched, and the lower class to take the great weigh off their minds of domination and suffering, so they can survive. As Ngugi wa Thiong’o in the introduction of Hama Tuma’s *The Case of the Socialist Witchdoctor and other stories* (1993), had put it in terse and pithy words: “one of the greatest weapons of survival is humour.”(2). Such survival laughter also appears in the course of Soviet Union history wherein between 1929-1932, when famine roamed the countryside and the embittered peasantry rose up against government’s carelessness and callousness.

To secure his reign against the rebellious masses that resorted to satirical jokes about the Party, Stalin ordered all potential threats to be treated with the utmost severity including joker-tellers under the infamous article 58 of the Stalinist criminal code for involvement in anti-Soviet conversations (Lauchlan, 2009:10). Likewise in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Wizard of the Crow* (2006), the satirical laughter is used both by the narrator and the kind-hearted characters to fight and survive from the tyranny of the Ruler and his puppet like ministers.

Wellerism in African Literary Fiction

Wellerism, this paremiological parlance can also be regarded as being part and parcel of The Global Theory of Verbal Humour insofar as it tends to be based on laughter thanks to the characters or the narrator's oral literary artefacts that depart from the acceptance of a general proverbial truth. It is also a cynical way like in the Black humour that scoffs morality but a witty and intelligent game of mind essentially based on sentence adjunction or omission and the verbal substitution of old words by new ones so that the reader or the hearer cannot help laughing about the witticism. Again, the etymology of the concept of Wellerism took its name from Charles Dickens's main protagonist, Samuel Weller in the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*. Wellerism unquestionably reveals the humour that this phenomenon confines. In this way, Wolfgang Mieder in his *Proverbs: A Handbook* pinpoints:

It should be noted at this place that there exists a folk tradition of adding humorous comments to proverbs and proverbial expressions in a typically triadic structural pattern, as for example in "Everyone to his own state" as the farmer said, when he kissed the cow" or "Like will to like" as the devil said to the collier." Normally these sayings consist of three parts: a statement (quite often a proverb, proverbial expression, quotation, exclamation, etc.), a speaker who makes the remarks, and a phrase or a clause that places the utterance in a new light or an incompatible setting. Charles Dickens made much use of these traditional structures and he placed many of them in the mouth of his character Samuel Weller in the Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club. In fact, scholars to name these unique sayings 'wellerisms' in direct association with Sam Weller's frequent use of them. After Dickens have popularized such humorous, ironic and satirical sayings as elements of literary works, there follows a wave of imitations both in Great Britain and in the United States. The wellerisms in the novel give Charles Dickens as social critic an opportunity to make ironic, detached, and entertaining comments on sociopolitical issues and conflicts of the day. (Mieder, 2004:190)

Unlike a proverb, Wellerism is hardly ever an impersonal entity but a recognizable one which an individual can create and leave in the arcane of history owing to his/her ingenuity. In Gorgui Dieng's *Leap out of the dark* (2002), an African novel jam-packed with Wolof metaphors and proverbial expressions that sustain and enrich the arguments of the narrator and the characters, when the protagonist Moodu had randomly attended a dramatic episode in which an unfortunate robber was undergoing physical atrocities for having snatched 500 CFA from a young woman. To preserve the raging crowd from torturing the thief and to remind them that the dignity of a human being is sacred and priceless, he awkwardly put forward the anecdote of the wealthy Englishman who gave all his heritage to a cat-protection fund so that his kin did not get no farthing when he passed away. In so saying, Moodu expected to touch the throng's deep feeling, but he failed. One of the members of the crowd who loathed vehemently the rich man's mind-set, poured filth on it in this proverbial expression: *A mad man's ship never accosts a harbor*, a proverb in which another unknown character adds entertainingly a comment to point out a finger to the English gentleman's attitude and also to relativize wittily a general truth, thus "On second thought one among the mob added "It does man" but never to the harbor profitable to his kin..." (22). Hence, the other amusing effects of wellerism can be searched in the words of wits and in the deviation of some rules or a general acceptance of things, as everything that is subversive from an established order is a source of laughter.

Also, in the Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Wizard of the Crow*, the use of wellerisms is also noticed in the narrative frameworks. When Machokali was welcoming the foreign dignitaries for dinner in the Paradise one of the biggest hotels, the surrounding of the area was swarmed with journalists and beggars who heard from rumour mongers that visiting members of the Global Bank had brought with them money to distribute to the poor. But among the myriad beggars there were also the infiltrated supporters of the Movement for the Voice of the People who go beyond the mere art of begging by humming revolutionary songs: "Marching to Heaven Is Marching to Hell. Your Strings of Loans Are Chains of Slavery. Your Loans Are the Cause of Begging. We beggars Beg the End of Begging. The March to Heaven Is Led by Dangerous Snakes. (74). Here, the police did not react until the mention of the word "snakes" which had immediately cast the memory of state representatives back to the spoilage of the anniversary of the Ruler by fake snakes. And as soon as the M5 had informed Sikiokuu, the home minister about the happening, the latter had not dithered to mandate the policemen to scatter violently the threatening and portentous beggars. Here the narrator comes up with a wellerism. The wretched who were gathering at the same spot to do their work was represented by this proverbial expression: "birds of the same features flock together". But to show that such proverb has its limits in term of veracity and the context that predominates, the narrator had artfully and astutely included as a comment "in time of peace, when there is danger each flies alone" (75) Such wellerism like many others has brought about laughter in that the feigned blind beggars had recovered their sight, and the legless and the armless gained their limbs as they left the gates of Paradise.

Even though proverbs are sometimes defined as words of wit, here wellerisms surpassed them in terms of witticism in that real proverbs are informative and useful linguistic signs of cultural values and thought that required the use of a sense of observation of nature which is tagged by the configuration of the proverb and it is immediately used by the entire community. Hence its fixity and the non-authorship of the inventor can no longer be an identifiable person who can be searched in the arcane of pre-history for the unique and solemn power of community. Thus, wellerism is a field in which the verbal art of the speaker encounters any restriction for the perfect blooming of the verbal creativity as he/she always feels free to handle the proverb which does not fit the situation he/she wants to epitomize, and consequently the use of witticism is very rife in wellerisms than in pure proverbs.

Wizard of the Crow, also as a novel that is powerfully funny, wellerisms is once again used to criticize greed and corruption, a prevailing socio-political situation in the Imaginary Aburirian Republic. When Kaniuru made up his mind to go to the shrine of the Wizard of the Crow, his sole aspiration was to find some magic potions to protect the embezzled money and to set aside all his enemies driven by envy so he might recover his peace of mind and enjoy in total discretion his money. Kanuiru, the covetous man told Kamiti, the Wizard of the Crow, that he was conscious of the danger of eating alone, and utters the wellerism: “*there is a saying that he who eats alone dies alone, but there are some delicacies that a person should eat alone even at the risk of dying alone* (356).

Readers of the Ngugi’s fiction understand that the matrix of the proverb is summed up as: “He who eats alone dies alone”, but Kanuiru had ingeniously and laughably used his verbal skill to redirect the proverb whose preliminary norms and injunctions are the appeal to the virtue of solidarity as he cynically tried to find a limitation to the initial proverb which is marked by the restrictive preposition ‘but’. From this demonstration, wellerisms contain the necessary witticisms, and all witticisms are *par excellence* laughable.

Conclusion

The study of laughter in the African proverbial expressions found in the literary texts has been overlooked, and thus, unobserved by many African critics. Maybe, laughter, a phenomenon proper to human beings is to them something trivial and trite so that it does not deserve full attention. Of course it is common place as humans can burst out laughing without being able to explain in plausible terms their hilarities. Consequently, the risibility of the proverbial expression is just trivial in the amusing effects, but not in theory. In the African literary proverbs, laughter is displayed in humour that sends offence to morality in a vulgar lexicon in which a release of psychological burden, anger and oppression is noticed among the characters who are victims of a disintegrated personality, especially in African wellerisms where words of wit constitute the fountain of laughter.

References

- Abastado, Salvador & Raskin, Victor (1991). "Script Theory revis(it)ed: Joke similarity and joke representation model. *Humor: The International Journal of Humor Research*, 4(3-4), pp 293-347.
- Achebe, Chinua (1964). *Arrow Of God*. London: Heinemann,.
- Aguoru, Doyin (2012). "African Proverbial Sayings: A Paremiological Reading of Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *In Ife Psychologia*, September 1, , pp.1-11.
- Bergson, Henri (1993). *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dieng, Gorgui (1993). *Leap Out of the Dark*. Dakar: Les Editions du livre universel.
- Echewa, T. Obinkaram (1993). *The Crippled Dancer*. London: Heinemann.
- Lauchlan, Iain (1986). "Laughter in the Dark : Humour under Stalin". In *Le Rire Européen / European Laughter* (ed) Alastair Duncan. Paris : Perpignan University Press.
- McGraw, A.Peter. & Warren, Caleb (2010). "Benign violations: Making immoral behavior funny". *Psychological Science*, 21, 1141-1149.
- Mieder, Wolfgang (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press.
- Veale, Tony (2003). "Metaphor and Metonymy: The Cognitive Trump-Cards of Linguistic Humor» *The First international Workshop on Computational Humour*, edited by J. Hulstijn aNijholt. and A., pp:14-32.
- Veatch, Thomas (1998). C. "A Theory of Humor". *Humor*, 11, 163-215.
- Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi (2006). *Wizard of the Crow*. London: Vintage Book.
- Widdowson (1993). Peter & Selson, Raman. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky.