

Representation of Migration, Memory and Identity in Nollywood Films: An Analysis of Kensteve Anuka's *Akara Oku Girl Just Back from America* (2017) and George U. Kalu's *Life is Hard in America* (2018)

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Abstract

I examine the effects that the experience of migration has on memory and identity and how this is represented in Akara Oku Girl Just Back from America (2017) by Kensteve Anuka and Life is Hard in America (2018) by George U. Kalu. I analyse the complicated and intriguing situation of being a migrant or travelling back to the old home after living abroad. How can movies be used to raise awareness of illegal migration and create an impact in society? How is migration represented in the corpus? The hypotheses are: movies can aid in combatting societal ills and that the production of the movies fits in a transnational context as they depict the relation between migration and memory, emphasizing the blur of American and African identities. Language choice and use is primordial in this representation. The Multimodality Theory is used as theoretical framework to analyse the films and see how the transcultural and transnational elements influence traditional elements. The directors of the films use the element to construct cultural bridges through a transcultural vision. The linguistic elements are deconstructed while highlighting the mentality and identity features of their countries. A reading of the sampled films is done to bring out how the movies focus, not only on the features of their countries and cultures of origin, but attempt to articulate the 'in between' identity of the characters. The conclusion is that movies represent and raise awareness on traditions as memory building identities, and displacements create in-between two worlds and otherness in contemporary society. Hybridity is the ideal.

Key words: Representation, Language, Hybridity, Identities, Migration, Memory, Movies, Multimodality

1. Introduction

Although a fiction movie, like any novel, evolves from a given society and is determined by that society, it would be wrong to see it as a simple reflection of social circumstances and, therefore, approach it as though it were a mere document. Movies reflect existing cultural values of society, adding weight to their ability in influencing individual beliefs of what is accepted as norms. As a result, they can be studied in multiple disciplines to analyze their influence. Popular culture gives important insights into migration phenomenon especially digging into the minds of migrants and portraying idiosyncrasies to audiences worldwide. Reconstructed and represented in movies and studying it allows researchers to move beyond the host state perspective and provide us with deeper truths and better understanding of migration experiences.

Linguistics, the scientific study of language, operates through theories which consist of simple components and the way they interact. Linguistic representations are hypothesized entities which are supposed, and placed in movies to correspond with elements in our minds. A symbolic linguistic representation is a representation of an utterance in a movie that uses symbols to represent linguistic information about the utterance, such as information about phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, or semantics. Semantics pertains to meaning behind words, phrases, sentences and all other discourse which all have levels of linguistic representation. There are other kinds of linguistic representation, dealing with the syntactic and semantic organization of a sentence, and even the meaningful composition of a word. This same explanation holds for movies because as modes of communication, they have their own syntax and semantics. Ramakrishna et al (nd) asserts that movies are often described as having the power to influence individual beliefs and values. This is effected through setting, camera angles and above all, language. Citing Cape, (2003), the authors assert: "The movies' influence in both creating new thinking patterns in previously unexplored social phenomena as well as their ability to update an individual's existing social boundaries based on what is shown on screen". (pp.15). Furthermore, representation makes it imperative to ponder over the nature of analysis to be used. This work prefers an analyses of language use in movie

representations to study migration, memory and identity since language use is a strong indicator of the speaker's psychological and emotional state. It is not a question of studying the aesthetic configurations and then proceed to see how they convey reality, but rather of understanding how a particular aesthetic configuration is linked to a crucial social problem.

Films have been used to inform, entertain, educate and provoke debates. Cinema and migration have a magical bond stretching back over a century ago when film makers, many of whom were immigrants themselves, began making movies that depicted a world on the move. The migrant films brought their dramatic, poignant and comic stories to diverse audiences, through images that provoked feeling amongst people of every culture. Human migration – the movement of people across political boundaries – has always been a significant factor in the production, distribution, and exhibition of films. Films have the power to show different facets of life, which can in turn help viewers to cultivate deeper empathy and a better understanding of realities, needs, perspectives and capacities.

The objective here is to use films as cultural educational tools to analyse how they influence perceptions of, and attitudes. This is done by bringing attention to social issues and creating safe spaces for respectful debate and interaction. In the present increasingly unequal world in which instability, pandemics and conflicts over resources affect multiple regions, the phenomenon of mass migration arises. The historical appearance of moving pictures in the West and now in Africa, coincided, in fact, with an increasing network of commercial transactions and movement of goods and peoples that connected industrially developed countries with each other and with underdeveloped ones.

Migration, a social phenomenon of the translocation of people from their native country to another, either permanently or for an extended period of time, is a key issue for all countries. These may be countries of origin, transit or destination, or a combination thereof. The destination preferences of any person seeking a better future are usually focused on industrialised countries, which are perceived to have better opportunity for success and prosperity. There is currently an unstoppable migratory flow from Africa to the European Union or from Central

America to the United States. Consequently, there are push and pull factors at work. Push factors are the reasons why people leave an area and pull factors are the reasons why people move to a particular area: higher employment, more wealth, better climate, political stability, more fertile land, and lower risk from natural hazards. The reasons why people migrate can be classified as economic, social, political or environmental in that people move to find work, better quality of life, and escape from political executions.

Memory is the sum of what we remember and it gives the capability to learn and adapt from experiences as well as to build relationships. The ability to remember experiences, and the power or process of recalling previously learned facts, experiences, impressions, skills and habits constitute memory. It is the processes used to acquire, store, retain, and later retrieve information. There are three major processes involved in memory: encoding, storage, and retrieval. Memory Psychology by the editors of Encyclopedia Britannica at <https://www.britannica.com/science/memory-psychology>, last updated on 20 February 2020 adds that, it is “the encoding, storage, and retrieval in the human mind of [past] experiences”. Memory, in all its physical, psychological, cultural, and familial forms, plays a crucial role within the contexts of migration, immigration, resettlement, and Diasporas, for memory provides continuity to the dislocations of individual and social identity.

Studies of human memory have been a subject of science and philosophy for thousands of years and have become one of the major topics of interest within cognitive psychology. It is also gaining grounds in language and literature studies because over the last decade, ‘cultural memory’ has emerged as a useful umbrella term to describe the complex ways in which societies remember their past using a variety of media. We sampled Nollywood films that construct and represent memory; migration and identity. But what exactly is memory? How are memories formed? Identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person or group. The something which links a present object to a past or future one is identity, Helm (1979). The memory of past episodes of a person’s life who has migrated provides a sense of personal identity- the sense that I am the same person as someone in the past. The biography of the

person who lives such an experience is most times, not an easy process. Those who succeed in the mission sooner or later find themselves in a strange country, with different customs, and face multiple impediments that will challenge their whole journey, regardless of whether they do it legally or illegally, by force or willingly.

2. The Problem

This paper explores the effects of migration, on individual and collective memory and the construction of identity as represented in selected Nollywood movies. Memory plays an integral part in how individuals and societies construct their identity. The gap is the focus on cultural memory, which is a subtle and comprehensive process of identity formation, promotion and transmission. The complicated, intriguing situation of being a migrant or travelling back to the old home after living abroad is analysed in the films. Insights into the part cinematic language and effects play in raising awareness on issues of forced or illegal migration and above all, coping in host communities. The pertinence of study lies in the fact that migration, no matter the reason, may lead to the reversal of values of their cultural and ethical values and beliefs.

3. Objective, questions and hypotheses

Following the availability of mobile Internet networks, mobile phones at affordable prices with massive acquisition of laptops, in Cameroon, there is a significant increase in preference for screen reading. The media has broadcast information persistently on the dangers of forced or illegal migration; how many end up dying or as slaves in their new destinations. Coupled with brain drain, abandon of families and failure to achieve the dream in the new land, an urgent need for education and raising awareness on migration and living together in the local and the international spaces is required. Films were found apt in discouraging bad attitudes and encouraging good ones. This paper examines the effects that the experience of migration has on memory and identity and how this is constructed and represented in *Akara Oku Girl Just Back from America* (2017) by Kensteve Anuka and *Life is Hard in America* (2018) by George U.

Kalu. How can movies be used to raise awareness on illegal migration and create positive impact on viewers? How is this represented in the corpus? It is hypothesised that -movies can aid in combatting societal ills; they depict the relation between migration and memory and emphasise the hybridity and blur of American and African identities.

4. Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

In the introductory part of this paper migration, memory and identity were defined, showing how they interrelate and function. Most of the works consulted have not examined the trio in one dossier and so literature is scarce. However, this study goes a step further to examine what scholars have said in the respective fields and tries to link them up, taking into consideration the use of multimodality theory to analyse the selected movies.

Identity has become increasingly an important keyword in contemporary human and social sciences to the point that it is nearly impossible to provide an exhaustive synopsis of the different contributions in this field. However, little attention has been devoted to the influence of migration on identity formation and transformation. The idea of a person's identity questions how we can determine the differences of identities over time, and at what point they start and end. Also, memory automatically introduces the concept of time and change. Helm, P. (1979) citing Locke's memory theory asserts that a person's identity only reaches as far as their memory extends into the past. In other words, who one is depends critically upon what one remembers. Thus, as a person's memory begins to *fade*, so does his identity. Memories are undeniably of vital importance to our identity if our memories constitute our identity. Locke's memory theory facilitates description of the changing values of migration over the last century in terms of the ways in which people think about themselves and their place in the world. There is a shift from a situation in which people had unambiguous priorities linked to local communities and shared goals in their former countries to the new focus on individualism and capitalism. In the host communities, people's identities are in part constituted by their definitions of what they are not, and by the creation of (physical and mental) boundaries around their identities. Such identities,

and the boundaries created around them, are dynamic and constantly changing.

Hazel Easthope (2009) citing Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 13) claims that "contemporary scholars understand identities to be mobile, relational, hybrid, and discursively constructed within power relations". This holds in the present study because migrants are often faced with new situations and new experiences, requiring a re-thinking and negotiation of their understandings about the world and appropriate ways to deal with issues that arise in their everyday lives. Easthope, H. (2009:17) writes:

In the study of identity there is an attachment to the physical environment through our bodies and that this attachment can be given social significance through attachment to place. Places, understood as nodes in networks of relations, are not stable in the sense of being static. Rather, they are constantly re-negotiated and understood in new ways by different people, or by the same people at different times.

Attachment to place is important for collective identities. The most common examples of group identities connected to particular places are national and ethnic identities, in which connection to homeland provides a common reference point for groups of people. People need boundaries put in place but also facilitation to cross those boundaries to maintain their identities. After all, a people's personal and cultural identity is bound up with place identity and that most people need both a home and horizons of reach (of imagination, social relations or physical relations) outward from that home, Buttimer (1980). Memory is seen as the process of maintaining information over time, (Matlin, 2005). Meanwhile Sternberg, (1999) says it is the means by which one draws on his/her experiences in order to use this information in the present. It is the term given to structures and processes involved in the storage and subsequent retrieval of information. Memory is essential to all lives. Without a memory of the past, one cannot operate in the present or think about the future. One would not be able to remember what they did yesterday, what

they have done today or what they plan to do tomorrow. Without memory, nothing is learned. Memory is involved in processing vast amounts of information which takes many different forms like images, sounds or meaning. For psychologists, memory covers three important aspects of information processing: encoding, storage and retrieval. Human memory involves the ability to both preserve and recover information we have learned or experienced. In order to form new memories, information must be changed into a usable form, which occurs through the process known as *encoding*. There are three main ways in which information can be encoded: visual (picture), acoustic (sound) and semantic (meaning). Film incorporates these elements succinctly as will be seen in the analysis.

Once the information has been encoded successfully, it must be *stored* in memory for later use. Much of this stored memory lies outside of our awareness most of the time, except when we actually need to use it. The *retrieval* process allows us to bring stored memories into conscious awareness. The ability to access and retrieve information from long-term memory allows us to use these memories to make decisions, interact with others, and solve problems. Problems can occur at any stage of the process, leading to anything from forgetfulness to amnesia. Distraction can prevent us from encoding information initially; information might not be stored properly, or might not move from short-term to long-term storage; and/or we might not be able to retrieve the information once it's stored. The fact that experiences influence subsequent behaviour is evidence of an obvious but nevertheless remarkable activity called *remembering*. Memory is both a result of and an influence on perception, attention and learning. The basic pattern of remembering consists of attention to an event followed by the representation of that event in the brain.

In media studies, the common method for analyzing data includes content analysis, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and most recently, Multimodal discourse. As theoretical framework, Multimodal Discourse Analysis (henceforth MDA) or Multimodality Theory, propounded by Kress, G. (2009) is used. It considers how texts draw on modes of communication such as pictures, film, video, images and sound in combination with words to make meaning. Multimodality Theory is considered apt

because it interrogates how people communicate and interact with each other. In the movie industry, this is done through many modes: writing, speaking, gesture, gaze, and visual forms. An increase in technology tools, and associated access to multimedia composing software, has led to film directors being able to easily use many modes in their profession: art, writing, music, and dance and every-day interactions with each other. This makes the theory relevant in this study. In the meaning-making process in movies, the image both contributes to the overall telling of the story in different ways; they illustrate or expand on the written story, or can be used to tell different aspects of the story or even contradicting the written words. It considers how semiotic tools such as colour, framing, focus and positioning of elements contribute to the making of meaning in these texts.

According to Douglas Kellner, analysing film ideology involves analysis of discourses and figures, concepts and images, theoretical positions and myths. Transcoding the discourses through different topics is the normal way to change everyday life into filmic text. A suitable sample is the spoken dialogue in narratives. Discourse analysis is used to discover the useful samples of spoken dialogue that reflect main ideas and characteristics of characters through watching films.

4. Methodology, Design and Analysis

Critically analysing and transforming texts into ideological frames involves understanding and acting on the knowledge that texts are created for specific purposes: to entertain, educate, raise awareness, explain or influence. Therefore, texts are not neutral; they are constructed in frames and represent particular views, while silencing others. Moreover their designs and discourses can be critiqued and redesigned in a media text in hybrid ways. The sample that was important and suitable to the analysis was chosen and viewed many times intelligently. The moving images were watched with an informed awareness of how film works alongside the skills and background understanding of the elements of the craft of film making. This means possessing an informed knowledge of the film's complex and dense 'language,' its conventions, codes, symbols, and cinematic attributes. After many sessions of viewing, valid and significant scenes were

picked, paused and reviewed for analysis, taking into consideration the multimodal theoretical framework.

Language use has been long known as a strong indicator of the speaker's psychological and emotional state (Gottschalk and Gleser, 1969). Focus was in the actions, conversations (spoken dialogue) and settings. These gave a clear picture about the relations between characters and ideological positions they had in relation to migration, memory and identity. Multimodality discourse analysis was selected as a tool of analysis because it focuses on exploring ideology-meaning-creation and construction and the meaning function. Content analysis, as an objective, systematic and quantitative description of corpus was applied for the in-depth understanding of content (Bryman 2008, p274). Conversation analysis is used in research on human verbal communication. It focuses on the function of conversation (Bryman 2008, pp.496- 499). Its goal is to understand what a speaker is going to express, then how a reader receives and responds to it. In such a way, conversation analysis is the most appropriate design to answer research questions and support analysis. Analyses of the language used in dialogues is done in order to study the experience of migration on memory and identity.

Concerning a synopsis of corpus, *Akara Oku Girl Just Back from America* by Kensteve Anuka contains the story of Sydney who was awarded a village scholarship to study in America. She returns to the village with an American lifestyle. Back home, she is irritated and finds life and activities of her former home uncomfortable. She behaves like an American child; talking loudly to her parents, calling her father by his surname, Bob. During his sojourn, she has a friend (Emeka) in the village and for her friend to continue their friendship, the girl has to achieve her American standard. Sydney in front of her criticizes her makeup, her African accent, her walk and her dressing. Sydney spends time talking boastfully and with pride about American musicians while denigrating African musicians. Donald is in need of a girl to get married to but the parents reject Maggy; a village uneducated natural girl. They need an experienced girl who has been in the West and can speak good English. Sydney is preferred but her wayward character and life lead her to crimes as she is arrested by the police. Towards the end, Donald regrets

marrying Sydney. Franck, who married the uneducated Maggy, is appreciated for being able to learn and keeping her African lifestyle.

Life is hard in America is a romantic movie by George Kalu featuring as stars, Ramsey Noah acting as Emeka, and Uchechi Uchebu acting as Danika. A young enthusiastic bank manager illegally emigrates into America in search of better life. He leaves his wife, Amaka, back home in Nigeria. While in America he discovers that life is not all that easy. He works hard but his income is not enough to enable him pay his house rent and enjoy a decent life. He is evicted from his uncle's house. He meets a friend, called Kabul, who tells him that he did not go to college because in America, College is for the white boys. His friend Kabul takes him to his grandmother's place where he lives until he finds his own place. Faced with so many problems, Emeka decides to marry Danika in order to get his green card but he and Danika divorce because of many misunderstandings. Many who get married end up divorcing their husbands because of one problem or the other.

5. Aspects of Memory in the Selected Films

When people migrate to another country or region, they experience new life which is quite different from their former lives. The conception that one may have on a particular area could not be different from what he thought, and this comes as a shock. Africans always have the perception that the Western world or America is better than Africa, but when they migrate to America, they experience a different life (worse than the one in Africa). As such, they are always forced to reflect on some aspects of lives they had lived in Africa which brings back their memory. Identity and memory are in some cases interwoven: that is when you travel and reflect on your former life, it portrays your identity which is seen through memory caused by migration. In *Life is Hard in America* (2 minutes), Emeka said "I was a bank manager in Nigeria", this is as a result of not being employed in America as a skilled worker but an unskilled worker. He earns an income which can not even accommodate him. This shows that America and Nigeria are two different countries from different continents with two different working conditions.

Emeka in Nigeria is considered the best Bank Manager and he thought that going to America will improve his situation and earn him more money. He forgets that he needs time to adapt to the American culture and different training as a Bank Manager which makes him live in misery.

When migrants arrive in the new societies, they find themselves in a completely different reality, to which they have to adjust in the best way. However, depending on how close the hosting culture is from that of the country of origin, complications are more likely to arise both from the minorities towards the dominant society and vice versa. In the same corpus, (8mins) his situation becomes worst as his uncle asks him to pay house rent insisting that 'America is America and Africa is Africa'. Emeka said "my father sent you to school" but his uncle could not listen and evicts him from the house. Through this memory, one identifies the Africans with a harmonious and communal family life in which family members help each other for little or no payment. To the host society, elevated number of migrants that start to establish in 'their' original lands can be seen as a threat to the culture and identity. To the migrant population, a continued effort to fit in the new context could be frustrated by a lack of empathy or understanding from the dominant group.

It is at this point that migrants generally start to question their choices. Emeka's uncle has disguised himself in an American way with a vulgar language like "I give you three days to pack your fucking things and leave my fucking house". This language portrays him as purely as an American with no sentiments of any blood relation. I analyze the process of identity changes influenced by the actor's migration experiences. It has at least two aspects. One aspect concerns itself with the cultural roots of Emeka. New experiences have changed his self-image of being a man. A second aspect is connected with his life course. The movie shows how a naive African boy has become an adult and independent man. Being a man is defined with the help of categories belonging to Western culture. Therefore, the process of migration is related to losing culturally influenced ways of describing Emeka's identity. As a result, he becomes a stranger in his homeland, but he also remains a stranger in the country to which he migrated.

Memory also comes in when a Nigerian in America said to their Nigerian chief in America that "I want to go home and marry my wife" (9 minutes). This is an aspect of voluntary migration and memory – meaning that no matter where you go you must come back home because there is no place like home.

Another aspect of memory and identity is seen when Nneka says to Okoro: "I am not an American woman, I am a typical Nigerian... by the time I am done with you. A Nigerian man is the head of the family", *Life is Hard in America* (22 minutes). This is because Okoro has threatened to divorce her and she says that divorce is not as simple in Africa as in America. In Africa, traditional marriage is guided by customs and traditions which makes separation difficult, coupled with the sense of African solidarity. For her, saying "by the time I am done with you" means by the time their traditions have manifested over Okoro, he will become an African man as she is an African woman. Here, she is trying to deconstruct the western ideologies that Okoro has assimilated over the African traditions as a result of migration. When Okoro complains of taking care of Nneka in the days back in Nigeria, she does not deny the fact but simply tells him he is the head of the family and so needs to take care of the family.

6. Aspects of Identity in the Two Movies

Starting off from Hazel Easthope (2009), who believes that identities are defined and limited by borders and boundaries and that in crossing boundaries identities are thrust into the consciousness of the migrant, we examine aspects of identity in the two movies. In *Life is Hard in America* (11minutes) Okoro tells his friend "I married Nneka for my father". This ties with the conception that for an African man to get married, he must follow some customs and traditions amongst which is the consultation of his parents. Okoro was married to Nneka but travelled to America and also gets married to Rose. His attempt at abandoning Nneka tantamount to abandoning his culture in favour of American culture. Rose turns out to be tougher than what Okoro thought. The woman or her culture he prefers divorces him by taking all what he has worked for in America. This causes him to go back to the culture or the woman he had disappointed. This means that whatsoever you have, maintain it

and try to see the best part of it rather than migrating to a different unknown area in which you will experience the worse side of it. Amaka says to Rose “Emeka and I speak the same language” *Life is Hard in America* (25 minutes), this means she comes from the same place with Emeka and share the same culture. As such, there is no way Emeka will leave her for Rose.

Furthermore, an aspect of identity is seen where there is a thanks-giving meeting at Chief’s house in America. This portrays the communal life Africans live where ever they go. This aspect of communal life and support is seen in *Akara the Oku Girl just Back from America*. It is repeated throughout the movie that the community contributed money to send Sidney to go and study out and bring back blessings. Aspects of lost identity are seen in *Akara the Oku Girl just Back from America* (4, 11, and 25 minutes) when Sydney said “I need some money to look for a hotel... I cannot sleep here”. She comes back home and finds it difficult to sleep in the same house she grow up just because she travelled to America which is not even certain. She prefers hotel over their village house because it is not up to the standard of the claimed America. Also, when Sydney’s mother offers her oranges, she sees it as a taboo or insult, as she asked “you want me to take that local thing?” She refuses, and insults what was used to bring her up. She sees oranges from Nigeria and America as two different fruits. This shows how she has been completely consumed by the western culture which gives her a blind eye to see that oranges are oranges no matter the source. This brings a sense of memory to his father as he recounts how Emeka also back from America drank palm wine and ate “contri” food for the sake that he missed it so much. This shows that where ever you go, you must maintain your roots or else you will be lost because it is your identity and prestige. It portrays the “coming back home”. Sydney further told his parents “marriage is not in my agenda”. This is completely out of indigenous culture, for, the dream of African girls is marriage but she finds no benefits from it because she has been brain-washed. These facts are attributed to the preconception of people hatred for what they have and love for what others have with its main tool being migration.

Still in *Ankara Oku Girl*, we see another aspect of lost cultural identity. After migrating to America and returning, Sydney disrespects her mother’s warnings against going to see

Donald, her boyfriend, rather than letting the man coming over to see her in the African cultural set up. She explains that it does not matter in America who goes to visit who. This portrays the strength of women empowerment and equality in America; no one is superior to the other especially in gender narratives. Migration here is seen as an ill-factor of cultural transfer. Coupled with the fact that she comes back with nothing except a seemingly reversed cultural shock adds more to the concept that abroad is not better than home. This is evident as she goes to America and returns empty handed, instead asks money from her parents in the village, thus cancelling the ideology that going to America is not a financial breakthrough.

Discourses with written words are not only our concern here, but also the language choice which is through camera angles, images, sounds and settings. The validity can be traced using multimodality and semiotics.

Figure 1: Nigerian chief and queen addressing his people in a thanks-giving meeting-America



From Figure 1, shot in a gathering, an aspect of identity and memory can be detected. Nigerians in America organize a thanks-giving meeting at their chief's house to celebrate their successes in America. This brings back the communal nature of

Africans and respect for their leaders (hierarchy). Without using words, one can easily identify the leader from his dressing code as well as the Queen (lohlloh). The red cap signifies leadership and authority, the beads he wears around his neck signify the African leadership system which is hereditary. The head scarf of the woman besides him presents her undoubtedly as a Queen. The congregation present are dressed in the same manner like the King and the Queen. The background sounds typically African music which indicates the memory of their culture which they aim to promote and maintain where ever they go. This is an example to follow which has been portrayed with the help of costuming. They incorporate the aspects of Nigeria in America for cultural remembrance; this is because the background is American meaning migration has not influenced them negatively.

Figures 2 and 3: Sydney returns with strange attitude among friends



From figure 2, it can be seen how Sydney has deviated from her cultural norms in due cause of migration. She returns from America with a typical American culture which is a taboo in Nigeria. She smokes, which is very strange in Africa especially for girls. She disrespects the elders by walking under an umbrella. This is customarily, an honour reserved to big chiefs (unless of course when using the umbrella for rains and the scorching sun). This is an abuse of identity. In figure 3, she pushes out a village woman who contributed money to send her to America and this act is a sign of disrespect and foolish superiority over others. Her dress code is abusive in itself; she dresses against the rules of her

culture. She looks at her former peers, elders and everyone as 'others'. These are all repercussions of migration and ill-cultural transfer. This brings to mind Rutherford (1990: 24) who explains that identity is never a static location; it contains traces of its past and what it is to become. This shift in the nature of identity is understood as a shift from relatively stable identities rooted in Africa to hybrid identities characterised by mobility and flux in America. As situations change over time, so do identities. Even though Sydney did not go to America, she carries America in her memory and moves and works around as an American.

Figure 4: At Sydney's house in the village.



Taking camera shots and background into consideration, figure 4 is a dim shot. This shows that it is in rural Africa where there is no electricity and the family sits in a dark room lighted blurredly by a hurricane lamp. Focus here is not on the shot and background itself but on its effectiveness. The character is Sydney who is not comfortable with this situation. She has returned from America to Africa with a loss of memory and identity.

7. Conclusion

Certainly, it is not enough to claim that we are moving from a society of people with identities based on place to one of

people with identities based on mobility, neither can we simply assume that increasing mobility will lead to increasingly dislocated identities. Mobility and place are fundamental aspects of the human condition and the concept of identity cannot be fully understood without reference to this dialectic. In migration, migrant individuals and groups are forced to rethink their perspectives on the world and their personal values de-radicalising themselves as a consequence. Places, understood as nodes in networks of relations, are not stable in the sense of being static. Rather, they are constantly re-negotiated and understood in new ways by different people, or by the same people at different times. This has been demonstrated in the analysis of the two movies. The characters struggle to survive in their new spaces. This radical *position is usually a result of the strife affecting their peace and comfort at home. The necessity of the steps to be taken in terms of cultural interaction is understood more and more with every passing day, leading to hybridity of cultures. The most important problem preventing cohabitation is cultural ghettoization. This situation, also called 'parallel lives', creates risky potentials in terms of social peace. Clear and unbiased cultural communication is essential for solving this problem. The host is more responsible for communicating and maintaining. Having a tradition of immigration and empathy is our greatest advantage.

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