



Socio-Cultural Archetypes: Interrogating African Virginity Discourse in Tunde Kelani's Films

Adeyoola Mercy Ojemola, Bowen University, adeyoolamercy@gmail.com

Volume 11.1 (2023) | ISSN 2158-8724 (online) | DOI 10.5195/cinej.2023.405 | <http://cinej.pitt.edu>

Abstract

In African culture generally, virginity is associated with innocence from sexuality; it is ascribed the position of the pride of every woman and for the Yorubas', one who has not "spoiled" herself. Public and empirical discourses on the influences of westernisation on cultural values like virginity in Nigeria-Africa have been significantly negative as a paradigm shift from the indigenous concept of communal honour and personal/public morality and modesty to representations of westernisation and modernisation. This study examines four films by Tunde Kelani (Narrow Path, Magun, Campus Queen, and Arugba) to explain the unevolved socio-cultural importance attached to virginity before and after the embrace of westernization.

Keywords: Virginity; Culture; Westernisation; Film; Sexuality



New articles in this journal are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 United States License.



This journal is published by the [University Library System](#) of the [University of Pittsburgh](#) as part of its [D-Scribe Digital Publishing Program](#) and is cosponsored by the [University of Pittsburgh Press](#).



Socio-Cultural Archetypes: Interrogating African Virginity Discourse in Tunde Kelani's Films Adeyoola Mercy Ojemola

Introduction

Film is a conveyer of meaning through its images, visuals, symbols, and sound. Film is to be watched in a way that its meanings are easily conveyed to its viewers otherwise, its meanings and essence of creation go to waste. In this vein, watching cultural films will only make meaning when it is deliberately watched in light of how identities have been constructed and what the presentations of symbols and sequential images represent. Bearing this in mind, Ewweirhoma (2006) postulated a cultural viewing model that seeks to ensure that the Nigerian society views Nigerian films without biases from foreign films (specifically the Asian and American cultures) in other not to lose the flavour that accompanies our nationally made films. Idachaba (2008) citing Igwe (2008) expressed how Nigerian films lend a voice to the Nigerian society through the opportunity to create personalised images that tell the Nigerian story. Through film, the opportunity to have changed perception and orientation of who we are, where we have come from, where we are and hope to be is created. Considering this, film has been able to permit the revealing of the various intricacies that define the Nigerian society and by extension, Africa as a whole. One of such intricacies is the issue of virginity which has over the years, experienced a decline in popularity in Nigeria. In this study, the perception of virginity will be referred to as ‘...sexual innocence and bodily purity’ (Chen, 2010:78). It is to be noted that though virginity can be applied

to the male and female gender, this study focuses on the female gender as there seems to be a more sentimental focus on the female gender and the issue of virginity by the society. This study explores four of Tunde Kelani's films that have primarily and secondarily focused on the issue of virginity- *Narrow Path*, *Arugba*, *Magun*, and *Campus Queen*. Tunde Kelani is a veteran filmmaker in the Nigerian film industry with visible interests in the promotion of indigenous and cultural issues of Africans and more specifically, Nigerians. His films will usually focus on using indigenous means as satire for the Nigerian society.

The Problem

In the film *Narrow Path* by Tunde Kelani, an auteur indigenous filmmaker in Nigeria, virginity was depicted as a priceless pride belonging to the female gender and should only be given out on a marital bed. Orita village and other neighbouring villages would usually hold dance festivals for the young maidens of the village, who are virgins to gather around and display their femininity and youthfulness of marriageable age to suitors from these communities (see image 1). From these events, young men will pick wives and those with wives already will pick another if they so please. It was from one of such festivals that Awero, the heroine of the story received marriage intentions from two eligible suitors, Odejimi and Lapade from other villages (see image 2). Awero was depicted as one of the most beautiful and promising women who would make a fine and wonderful wife. Meanwhile, Awero had a childhood friend, Dauda who had migrated from the village to the

city. Dauda will often visit Orita village and on his way, he would often bring city gifts like mirror glass, facial powder and other beauty gifts for Awero, who met with him usually in secret dark places (see images 3 and 4).



Image 1: Awero dancing at the festival for virgins



Image 2: Odejimi wooing virgin Awero



Image 3: Awero seclusively meeting with Dauda



Image 4: Dauda highlighting the gifts he has given Awero from the city

Tunde Kelani made the progression of the story depict an uneven disparity between the secluded life of the village and the bustling style of living in the city. Dauda had projected city life to Awero as one she should long for, one that avails the opportunity to become more beautiful and highly sort after among men. Awero was already in marriage talks with Odejimi and she had

decided to accept his marriage proposal when Dauda called out to her once again for a visit. With the desire to have more of such tantalising gifts to brag with among friends, Awero conceded to visiting Dauda alone late at night again, knowing fully well that the communal living of the village forbids it, especially as a soon-to-be-married woman. Dauda demanded payment for all the city gifts he had given to Awero by asking for a kiss as city girls would give as tokens of saying thank you. His special reference was to ‘American films’ which were common past-times in the city. At her refusal, Awero was forcefully robbed of her irreplaceable gift (virginity) to her would-be husband, Odejimi which in Dauda’s perspective, was not a bad deal considering all the city gifts he had bestowed on her (see images 5 to 10). She didn’t inform anyone of this predicament as it was a shameful thing to her, her family, and their entire community.



Image 5: Awero meeting with Daudu in the dark



Image 6: Daudu praising Awero’s beauty



Image 7: Awero refusing Daudu's kissing attempt



Image 8: Daudu pointing out that it is normal to kiss as a city girl



Image 9: Daudu forcing himself on Awero



Image 10: Daudu asking Awero to think about all the things he had bought her after laying with her forcefully

Awero's wedding ceremony was with so much fanfare without any frugality in spending. She was considered a daughter who has brought honour to her family as well as their entire village (see image 11). All she needed for a smooth transition to her husband's house was adequately provided. On the night of marital consummation, the expectant Odejimi had no blood-stained cloth to prove his bride's chastity. Discomfited, the new groom faced the awaiting guests outside of the bridal

chamber with the unstained cloth with the shattering statement of ‘She’s not a virgin’ (see image 12). The natural response from the crowd was to term her, Awero, a ‘broken pot’ which means, an incomplete woman. She wasn’t only tagged this name but was alleged to have been in cohorts with her parents in sending them an incomplete bride (see images 13 and 14). This situation was an utter shame and dishonour for both communities involved in the Awero saga.



Image 11: Awero’s welcoming to new home



Image 12: Odejimi declaring Awero a non-virgin after laying with her



Image 13: Awero being declared a ‘broken pot’



Image 14: Odejimi’s elders castigating Awero’s parents

Awero was returned to her father’s house, the unmarried ladies in her village lamented at their misfortune of probably not getting a husband and having to marry from among their brothers and fathers because of Awero’s shame. This shame was Awero’s because of her desire to cultivate

the lifestyle of ‘city/ modern girls’ and Dauda treated her as a ‘city/modern girl’ would have been treated. Tunde Kelani has invariably projected the gullibility of Awero as one who was so easily deceived on the premise of not being like the ‘city girls’ that were not so uptight and unwelcoming against the opposite sex. The desire and pleasurable gain to be like the infamous city girls led Awero to the forest, far away from where the watchful eyes of the community could be on her, to be alone with Dauda, to collect gifts from the city. The result of this was the loss of the cultural treasure that grants self-worth and value to the African woman. Although unlike other African communities, the young maidens in the film were not subjected to virginity testing, it is considered general knowledge and consensus that no man has the right to tamper with a woman except he is married to her.

The perpetrator of the ‘evil’, Dauda, who was an outsider and had been exposed and aligned to ‘city culture’ thought nothing of his actions as a ruin for Awero whom he claimed to love. Awero was not the only one ruined, but her entire community as well as that of the man she married who was from another community. This is following Nnazor & Robinson (2016) that this interchange is said to be influenced among the Yoruba by the infiltration of the British colonisation that introduced western liberalism, individualism, and sexual freedom. This invariably reduced the pride attached to virginity as pre-marital sex and pregnancy during courtship became the order of

the day. This study however stands to earnestly advocate that in the interchange, the art and beauty of virginity are still highly reckoned with, and by no means are the cultural attachments overrun by the infiltration of modernisation, individualism, western liberalism and sexual freedom. Three other films produced by Tunde Kelani, *Arugba*, *Magun & Campus Queen*, will be used in positing this stance.

Methodology

The study has employed qualitative narrative content analysis in exploring the socio-cultural importance attached to virginity in a typical Nigerian-African setting as depicted in the selected films. Qualitative content analysis according to Elegbe, (2018:151) citing Hsieh and Shannon (2005) allows for a subjective interpretation of gathered data through the systemic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. It further permits testing theoretical issues to aid the understanding of gathered data. Films for this study were purposively selected by the researcher through purposive sampling technique as *Narrow Path*, *Arugba*, *Magun*, and *Campus Queen* has major and minor references to virginity. Through film review methods of data collection, descriptive and narrative methods were used in collecting data.

Virginity as a Socio-Cultural Virtue

Virginity is usually not discussed in isolation of marriage. In northern Sudan, it is highly common to place value on virginity. Spaulding (1992) explained that in some parts of Sudan, there are

practical implications attached to the cultural value of virginity as it is directly linked with marriage. When referring to virginity in this light, Chen (2010) highlights it as a symbol of communal glory and pride in the society she belongs to. This can be witnessed in some parts of India and the Pacific Islands where a village head's daughter's virginity may signify the integrity of the entire community such that should any mishap happen to the lady's virtue, shame causes a dent in the honour of its men and women.

Among the Zulus of South Africa and the people of Swaziland, the virginity testing ritual was precisely common. To submit to this test creates the opportunity to partake in the Umhlanga annual dance that seeks to celebrate virgins and only those who have been certified as virgins through testing are permitted. The hopes attached to this ritual were focal on ensuring the hymens of their daughters were still intact upon marriage. Though many studies have tried to prove that the cultural embrace of virginity testing is against human rights, it doesn't override the initial purpose of its establishment which is to ensure the chastity and morality of the females in the community. This is not to say that checking the female genitals to prove virginity status is no encroachment on human rights, the cultural motive indirectly makes it passable. At the confirmation of a hymen, the communities consider it as equivalent to achieving a cultural milestone worthy of celebration and rejoicing by the entire community (Nnazor & Robinson, 2016; Kang'ethe (2014); Maluleke

(2012); Wickström, 2010). Virginitv testing was adopted to prevent children born out of wedlock, bearing the hope of restoring the gradually fading cultural values of maintaining virginitv before marriage for the pride, modestv, self-respect, virtue, and value it provides (Louise, 2006; Bruce, 2004; Leclerc-Madlala and Leclerc-Madlala, 2003). Wickström (2010), also contributed to this knowledge that the inspection of hymen by mothers, grandmothers and other local elderly women in the Natal and Zulu community amongst unmarried girls was to serve as a precaution against the disgrace of a child born when the unwed mother still lives in her father’s house. Wickström considers virginitv testing to be an act that serves to prevent rather than diagnose virginitv in the bid to celebrate, guard and encourage it.

In Nigeria, Renne (1993) studied the cultural importance of virginitv among the Ekiti people of the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria. Superlatively the women who marry into their husbands’ houses were virgins and to be a virgin relates to not being “spoiled”. To be married a virgin comes along with social benefits of reward from the husband, his family, and sometimes the bride family also gets rewarded for proper child upbringing. The joy of the husband is publicly displayed by presenting the blood-stained white cloth that proves the virginitv status of the new bride. The bride is given payment for her virginitv through money, clothing, and accessories or even a specially made food delicacy for the bride. Any bride whose husband cannot show proof of his bride’s virginitv becomes a laughing stock in the community. The bride herself receives reproachful names like

aikaragba (broken calabash), *aloku* (something used), *alagbere* (person with low morals), *alaipe* (incomplete person), *onisekuse* (corrupted). Alaba (2004) also added that among the Yoruba should there be no bloodstain as proof of the bride's intact hymen, the husband is free to return the bride to her father's house and also allowed to express his anger and disappointment along with his family. To avoid this, the entire community will join hands in ensuring that their daughters were not 'spoilt' (deflowered) as only damaged (spoilt) goods are returned to the seller.

Feyisetan & Pebley (1989) described this as a bride who marries as a virgin becomes the pride of her family deserving of respect and is deemed worthy of holding her head high and walking with confidence. Any bride found at the opposite end will have to suffer reproach alongside her family and the husband is left with a marriage with no joy. Thus, to avoid this negative result, it becomes an unspoken rule for a woman to remain a virgin till marriage. This setting may also be found among the traditional Fulani society who also place white bedspread on the bed for the new couple to consummate their marriage. The evidence of blood marks which will be proven by the community after an examination will be celebrated with a feast as word spread about the new bride keeping her virginity till marriage. Among the Hausa society, the spotting of a virgin bride's blood after the newly married couple has had coitus will make the husband send monetary gifts and kola nuts to the bride's family. Should it be that the new bride is not a virgin, the husband sends nothing.

In the Igbo society, though measures of maintaining sexual innocence are not so strict as some other tribes, the mere understanding that the new bride will have to confess all acts of sexual impurities in a shrine before her husband and family puts a check on sexual exorbitances. This indirectly helps to curb sexual immorality and maintain sexual purity.

As cited by Nnazor & Robinson (2016), Alaba (2004) highlighted that to ensure virginity was kept by the female folk, some ceremonial rituals and rites were enacted to achieve this purpose. These ceremonies were to serve as a guide and maintenance of sexual order to prevent unplanned reproduction. Repercussions of losing this virginity as a result of not keeping to the ceremonial rituals invariable lead to social shunning, no potential husband. In the case where there is, the bride price will be low, and the overall dishonouring of the woman's family. Nnazor & Robinson cited an example of such ceremonial rites that involves secluding young females who are yet to be married with the purpose of sex educating them. The elderly women who are tasked with this responsibility will 'groom' and 'socialize' these young women for marriage and motherhood. While doing this, they are guided on how to guard their virginity and keep themselves till marriage. Right after this seclusion is presenting these young women to the general community to celebrate their passage from girlhood to womanhood. Presenting these women to the public thus showcases them to potential suitors and tasking the men to join hands in protecting the purity of the women.

The De-popularity of Virginity

Clarifying the meaning of the words de-popularity of virginity is expedient for this study. It refers to a decline in the value of virginity. According to Schlegal (1991) and Bruce (2004) culturally, virginity is simply an avenue for men to gain control over women as men have to pay the women's family in order to procure a wife like a good while, also considering that cultures where virginity is valued usually seek to control women closely. This attitude she claimed has been developed historically over time such that culturally, some societies will not tolerate a non-virgin bride. Therefore, a woman is expected to not be deflowered till she is married as her husband will "test" her virginity. However, further, into the study, Schlegal concludes with the disposition that virginity has lost its significance due to sexual revolution, technology, and cogent changes in social-cultural relations. One of such changes is attributed to education, the prevalence of civilisation through exposure to television and films, increases in adolescent sexuality, and a slacked sexual behaviour in society. Evidence of this is the notion that men are afraid and do not desire women who are still virgins as penetration is difficult. This inevitably increases the number of women who balk at the social norm of being virgins as they marry (Reene, 2009). Hence, there is an emerged redefining of virginity as a shift from its original interpretation and the cultural purpose of its existence.

Many studies in and outside of Nigeria have tried to view virginity in various light through quantitative and qualitative methods. One common denominator among these studies points in the direction of a decrease in the reputational value of virginity (Feyisetan & Pebley, 1989; Carpenter, 2009; Renne, 1993; Gesselman et al., 2017). Renne (2009) claimed that this decline is a result of the various changes occurring in social practices such that virginity became a stigma of backwardness and being antisocial. According to Gesselman et.al (2017), as of 2001 in the United States, being chaste (virgin) was no longer considered attractive and desirable ever since the sexual revolution that introduced widespread birth control in the 1960s. Over time, anyone who was maintaining sexual inexperience (virgin) would experience the stigmatic feeling of not belonging thus, inevitable devaluation. Renne couldn't but express this as virginity experiencing a 'reversal of the moral evaluation...from something good to something bad for many women' (2009:122).

However devalued virginity is considered in recent times, some studies opinionated that virginity should have a woman's autonomy to decide what she wants to do with it. This seems to be the trendier take on virginity having been influenced by changes in socio-cultural practices.

Bruce (2004) thus asserted that Western views have influenced and incorporated themselves into African attitudes. This aligns with the views of Louise (2006) that modernity through westernisation has long infiltrated Africa and has revamped its traditions into modernisation. Citing an example is Topan's (1995) study on 'Vugo: A Virginity Celebration Ceremony among

the Swahili of Mombasa'. Vugo is a ceremony done amongst the Mombasa to celebrate the purity of their women on their wedding day and few days after that. Any unmarried woman who was found impure (non-virgin) was considered a shame worthy of dishonour to herself and her family. Therefore, it is expected that every woman should maintain her virginity till she is lawfully wedded. The celebration of this lawful crossover from girlhood to a woman is the Vugo which is done in elaborate and grand style with singing, dancing to confirm and celebrate the bride's virginity. A woman called the Kungwi in the company of other women to sit patiently outside the wedding room for the groom to consummate the wedding. After consummating, the Kungwi enters the room as the bridegroom opens the door to take the cloth stained with the virginal blood of the bride. Seeing the blood, as it is being passed around for everyone to see and confirm, is proof of the bride's purity status. To express delight, the bridegroom presents his bride with a special gift while the news spreads around the community and it is accompanied by more singing and dancing. The bride's virginal blood-stained cloth will be held high up for everyone to see while singing and dancing the Vugo celebration. However, the Vugo celebration has been modernised and has grown less popular since the early 1970s due to the economic, political, and social changes the community has undergone outside of its control. Internal contribution to this decline was the growing dislike for the ceremony as members of the community, both men and women, began to consider it

shameful because it was publicly announcing the loss of a bride's virginity thus old-fashioned and not required. Carpenter concluded that besides the Vugo celebration, some other indigenous and customary celebrations peculiar to the Mombasa have been replaced with newer and revitalising forms of entertainment that suit the taste of the new generation.

Nnazor & Robinson (2016) expressed that the decline in the importance attached to virginity among the Yorubas in Nigeria as a result of the infiltration of the British colonisation that introduced western liberalism, individualism, and sexual freedom. This invariably reduced the pride attached to virginity as pre-marital sex and pregnancy during courtship became the order of the day. This corroborates Bruce's (2004) earlier citation of Davis (1997), who identified five ways that identified changed western attitudes towards sexuality. The paramount summary of these is that sexuality relationships were now being led by personal subjections that only give regard to the individual and not the family. These relationships seek to express their sexualities with expectations of attaining sexual freedom and happiness with no restrictions from the once traditional sexual repression. She further highlights that Western society cherishes personal freedom thus the high-level disregard for virginity. Advocating for sexual abstinence or cherishing virginity in a western setting only seeks to against the norm as the focus of sexual freedom is to attain individual pleasure at whatever's expense. The main Western setting idea embraces the concept of individualism that pursues personal interest as a right (at whatever cost) which is against

the communal feel in a typical African setting. Carpenter (2017) noted that since around 1920, the number of people from the younger generation who chose to lose their virginity before marriage was on a high increase and it progressed through the 1960s to the 1990s. More of this came from the women's end who consented to pre-marital sex with partners they may not end up marrying on the basis that virginity was becoming an embarrassment, unappealing and undesirable. This invariably and regrettably ended up offsetting the virtue and pride traditionally attached to virginity.

Likewise, citing Orubuloye (1987), Feyisetan & Pebley (1989) expounded on the situation of the diminishing pre-marital purity among the Yorubas, basing it on the premise that the reduction is based on the availability of contraceptives that guarantee pregnancy free pre-marital sexual relationships. Since 1965, Uchendu already surmised that westernisation through schooling, advancing science and medicine, and the gradual loss of traditional checks on purity like the virginity 'test' and celebration has devalued virginity to a concept of idealism rather than reality. Hofheinz (2017:286) specified that the high disregard for virginity, which is one '...of the foundational pillars of the old social and political order...' is greatly influenced by '...new networking and communication technologies...'. Hofheinz directly quotes an interview respondent who said:

...the issue of virginity that people were fixated on before, that's no longer that central; people are now more relaxed about it... if a guy loves a girl and wants to marry her, and finds out she's no longer a virgin, or if the two had sex before marriage, there's a bigger chance that he will be ready to cover that up in front of the families (pg. 287).

This shows the heavy decline of the importance attached to virginity and marriage as it no longer matters much to both the male and the female gender. This is such that even when the families and societies they have come from requires it, they are willing to put up a façade should the virginity be lost.

Arugba, Magun, Campus Queen and their Implications to Modernised Virginity

Zheng et al. (2011) wrote on the concept of detraditionalisation in China where modernisation emerged swiftly against stringent socio-cultural traditions on the issues of virginity and marriage. They defined detraditionalisation as the '...abandonment or reconfiguration of the socio-cultural traditions that had been in place previously...' (pg 498). They categorise this transfiguration as possessing 'post-traditional societies individuals' who make their personal decisions on new ways of life, and relationships without being held back by indigenous traditional rules and sanctity. From Muşat's (2015) perspective, there has been a marginal shift from the indigenous to

‘...modernise the rural world’ (pg. 534) which brings ‘...modernisation in the guise of development’ (pg. 548).

Laid on this foundation, Tunde Kelani has adequately depicted through *Arugba*, *Magun*, and *Campus Queen* how these indigenous rules have been influenced by the transition into development where urbanisation has taken root and even rural communities no longer entirely hold dearly the set rules that guide sexualities. However, the three heroines of these films may as well be identified as city-girls who have been exposed to the modernisation foreign to the indigenous way of life. In *Arugba*, *Magun*, and *Campus Queen* with Adetutu, Ngozi, and Bimpe playing the heroines respectively, it is adequately noted that they have the core of their lives revolving in the city where modernisation is, and indigenous sanctities are not necessarily adhered to.

As compared to *Orita* village in *Narrow Path* where socio-cultural traditions are immensely encouraged, quite the opposite exists in *Arugba*, *Magun* and *Campus Queen* where detraditionalisation is the common phenomenon. It is quite glaring in these three films that there is abandonment and possibly reconfiguration of moral systems where it is not a thing of shame and dishonour to find a young unmarried maiden who is no longer sexually chaste. However, these other three women were such who kept their chastity in a modernised system of living even when amid men who were willing to offer them anything in return for sexuality.

This was expressly depicted in *Arugba* where Adetutu is considered a symbol of purity for the Osun river's goddess in the not so rural town she hails from, due to her virginity. She had left her town to a bigger city for higher education where the watchful eyes of the town kinsmen are not overseeing her. She was involved in extra-curricular activities of satirical singing on campus and had become a belle some men sought after for a relationship on her academic campus due to her beauty and ability to sing and dance (see image 15). Also, the king of her town, who had many wives already, could not resist her beauty and sought to bring Adetutu into his large harem which she bluntly refused. The film also subtly compared her with the daughters of the king who were asked to consult with the Ifa god to find answers for a missing item in the palace. The three princesses could not do the consultation while Adetutu did because she was a virgin. This stands in contrasts as the three princesses are expected to be custodians of the traditional laws of sexual inviolability and Adetutu who isn't compelled to, is found doing that in their stead (see image 16). This may invariably suggest that westernisation may not be a major factor to the loss of sexual chastity in an indigenous environment. All through the film, she lived in the consciousness of keeping her virginity and would not settle for less in upholding the principle of sexual purity as one whom the river goddess chose. At some point, her virginity was questioned due to the various news about her, members of her hometown were receiving about her from the city and had undergone traditional virginity testing in public (see image 17).



Image 15: Adetutu singing satirically on campus



Image 16: Adetutu boldly beholding the face of the gods as a virgin when the king's deflowered daughters cannot



Image 17: Adetutu publicly going for a virginity test to prove that she can still be the bearer for the goddess

In the same vein, Ngozi in *Magun- Thunderbolt*, though Igbo, got married to her Yoruba husband as a virgin. When she was questioned by her husband on the grounds of infidelity, she confidently reminded him of her sexual chastity by being a virgin before he married her (see image 18). Surprisingly, her husband still had doubts about her due to the kinds of friends he kept. Notable in the film is the clear depiction of Ngozi's personality that proves to the audience that she was a young woman who was bound to the indigenous sexual chastity before marriage. Ngozi was a

woman who grew up in affluence and had the opportunity to undergo higher education in the university and thereafter went on the compulsory one-year national service year where she would have had many encounters and interactions with the opposite sex (see image 19). She was previously engaged to a fellow Igbo man who was more of a childhood friend till she met with her husband and married him. The film, *Thunderbolt (Magun)*, gives a background understanding that she had no sexual relations with either of these men or any other until she was a legal bride to Odejimi. This is another attestation that exposure to modernisation and western liberalism is not empowering enough to cause a desist from the laid down traditional regulations on sexual chastity before marriage.



Image 18: Ngozi's husband querying her fidelity at work



Image 19: Ngozi's flashback to remind her husband that while he courted and married her as a fresh graduate, she was a virgin

As for Bimpe in *Campus Queen*, who was also a student at the University, she was a student activist who sought to eradicate corruption in their society with other students. She had many close shaves of having coitus with men in the process of her extra-curricular activities on campus and

having a social life (see image 20). However, she always tried to wittingly excuse herself. On two specific occasions, she was set up by the leadership of her school's club to entertain some male guests off-campus in order to get their financial sponsorships. To her dismay, it was a call to serve them in bed (see image 21). On the second occasion, she was on an undercover spy mission to live with a corrupted military officer in his house as a pretend lover. On several occasions with this man, she could have giving-in to his requests of sexual intercourse especially since she was lavished with so much money, a brand-new car and many other nice things her parents may not be able to provide her with. In the long run, she fulfilled her mission with her virginity intact and was crowned queen of the campus for her noble deed in tackling corruption.



Image 20: Bimpe at a school party refusing unsolicited touches from a male dance partner



Image 21: Bimpe being set up by school club for sexual favours.

Campus Queen makes it discernible that sexual chastity may not necessarily be a function of indigeneity but a personal resolution even when actively involved in activities that may warrant promiscuity.

Conclusion

Although Awero, the heroine in *Narrow Path* was raped by a man who wanted to influence her with modernisation, she still knew and understood the importance and implications of being a virgin, it is noted that she was responsible for her jeopardy as this study focuses on the intentions and not the deed. The other three movies, *Arugba*, *Magun* and *Campus Queen* attest that though African societies have embraced a modernised lifestyle that is different from the indigenous cultural African systems, it is still possible to embrace westernisation and not stay aloof to the African indigenous way of life. Westernisation may be a lure from the cultural, spiritual, and indigenous identity of the African woman and her virginity, it is still incapable of dislocating this identity in its entirety. It is aptly noted that compared to the film *Narrow Path* and the communal attachment to virginity, in *Arugba*, *Magun* and *Campus Queen*, the attachment has shifted from communalism to individualism. The other three women kept their virginities not as a shared honour for their communities but as a matter of individual choice. This study therefore recommends that other culturally inclined films may be studied for further depths in relations to modernisation of

African socio-cultural systems and how it specifically and generally affects other indigenous systemic way of life.

REFERENCES

Alaba, O. 2004. "Understanding Sexuality in the Yoruba Culture." *Africa Regional Sexuality Research Seminar Series, Africa Regional Sexuality Research Center (ARSRC)* 1 (13).

<http://www.arsrc.org/downloads/uhsss/alaba.pdf>.

Bruce, Patricia. 2004. "Virginity: Some Master Myths. A Study of Biblical and Other Ancient References to Virginity in the Context of HIV/AIDS in South Africa." *Neotestamentica* 38 (1): 7–27.

Carpenter, Laura M. 2001. "The Ambiguity of " Having Sex ": The Subjective Experience of Virginity Loss in the United States." *The Journal of Sex Research* 38 (2): 127–39.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3813703>.

Carpenter, Laura M. 2009. "Virginity Loss in Reel / Real Life : Using Popular Movies to Navigate Sexual Initiation." *Sociological Forum* 24 (4): 804–27.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40542597>.

Chen, Kuo-Jung. 2010. "The Concept of Virginity and Its Representations in Eighteenth-Century English Literature." *Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture* 3 (June): 75–96.

- Davis, J. 1997. "Sex These Days, Sex Those Days: Will It Ever End?" In *Sex These Days*, edited by J Davis and G Loughlin, 18–34. Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield.
- Elegbe, Olugbenga. 2018. "Women Trauma and Stereotype Tradition in Tunde Kelani's Film, Thunderbolt." *CINEJ Cinema Journal* 6 (2): 144–64.
<https://doi.org/10.5195/cinej.2017.176>.
- Feyisetan, Bamikale, and Anne R. Pebley. 1989. "Premarital Sexuality in Urban Nigeria." *Studies in Family Planning* 20 (6): 343. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1966437>.
- Gesselman, Amanda N., Gregory D. Webster, and Justin R. Garcia. 2017. "Has Virginty Lost Its Virtue? Relationship Stigma Associated With Being a Sexually Inexperienced Adult." *Journal of Sex Research* 54 (2): 202–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2016.1144042>.
- Hofheinz, Albrecht. 2017. "Broken Walls : Challenges to Patriarchal Authority." *Die Welt Des Islams* 57 (3): 278–302. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700607-05734p02>.
- Hsieh, H. F., and S. E. Shannon. 2005. "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis." *Qualitative Health Research* 15 (9): 1277–88.
- Idachaba, Aduku. 2008. "Adapting Traditional African Narratives for Nigerian Video-Film." LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.
- Kang'ethe, S.M. 2014. "The Need to Resuscitate Cultural Rite of Virginty Testing as a Tool to Strengthen the Campaign Against HIV/AIDS and Moral Decadence in South African

Region.” *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 5 (8): 484–89.

10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n6p484.

Leclerc-Madlala, Suzanne, and Susanne Leclerc-Madlala. 2003. “Protecting Girlhood ? Virginit

Revivals in the Era of AIDS Author (S) :” *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender*

Equity, no. 56: 16–25. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4066360>.

Louise, Vincent. 2006. “Virginit

Culture, Health & Sexuality 8 (1): 17–30. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4005433>.

Maluleke, M.J. 2012. “Culture, Tradition, Custom, Law and Gender Equality.” *Potchefstroom*

Electronic Law Journal (PELJ) 15 (1): 1–22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/pelj.v15i1.1>.

Muşat, Raluca. 2015. “Lessons For Modern Living.” *Journal of Modern European History /*

Zeitschrift Für Moderne Europäische 13 (4): 534–48.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26266209>.

Nnazor, Agatha Ifeyinwa, and Jacquelyn Price Robinson. 2016. “Virginit

Development: Harnessing a Traditional Virtue to Address Modern Challenges in Africa.”

Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences 7 (1): 155–60.

<https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2016.v7n1s1p155>.

Renne, Elisha P. 1993. “Changes in Adolescent Sexuality and the Perception of Virginit

Southwestern Nigerian Village.” *Health Transition Review* 3: 121–33.

Schlegal, Alice. 1991. “Status, Property, and the Value on Virginitv.” *Wiley on behalf of the American Anthropological Association* 18 (4): 719–34. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/645449>
Accessed : 28-06-2016 15.

Spaulding, Jay. 1992. “The Value of Virginitv on Echo Island, 1860-1866.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 25 (1): 67–83.

Wickström, Anette. 2010. “Virginitv Testing as a Local Public Health Initiative : A ’ Preventive Ritual ’ More than a ’ Diagnostic Measure ’.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 16 (3): 532–50.

Zheng, Weijun, Xudong Zhou, Chi Zhou, Wei Liu, Lu Li, and Therese Hesketh. 2011. “Detraditionalisation and Attitudes to Sex Outside Marriage in China.” *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 13 (5): 497–511. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2011.563866>.