

T.C.

YASAR UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION

MASTER THESIS

**FREEDOM OR SUPPRESSION: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN
NIGERIAN CINEMA**

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Declaration

I.....do

hereby solemnly declare and attest that this research work with the title ‘Freedom or Suppression: Representation of Women in Nigerian Cinema’ is my independent work and is in accordance with the scientific and academic laws and ethics.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost is to offer my gratitude to the Almighty Allah who grants me life, health and the capacity to undergo my Masters degree. Secondly, I would like to acknowledge the effort of my able supervisor Assist. Prof. Mahmut Çağrı İnceoğlu.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to my beloved parents; Alhaji Yahaya Muhammad Shu'aibu and Fatima Abdulsalam Yahaya.

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

ÖZGÜRLÜK YA DA BASKI: NİJERYA

SİNEMASINDA KADININ YENİDEN SUNUMU

Abubakar Muhammad Yahaya

Yaşar Üniversitesi

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

İletişim Yüksek Lisans Programı

Afrika sineması Afrika'nın bağımsızlık dönemi öncesinden günümüze kadar bölgede yer alan yabancı sinemanın etkisiyle karakterize olmuş ve şekillenmiştir. Bir Afrika ülkesi olarak Nijerya da bu sömürgeci etkiye maruz kalmıştır. Diğer taraftan, bugünün sineması insanların farklı kesimlerden insanların temsiline dair kalıplarla doludur. Feminist eleştirmenler her düzeyde sinemadaki kadın kalıbını kırıyor ve böyle bir ataerkil kavramın düzeltilmesini hedefliyorlar . Bu araştırma çalışması Nijerya sinemasını ve onun izleyiciye kadını nasıl sunduğunu inceler- Nijerya film endüstrileri iki filmi; Nollywood ve Kanywood'dan seçilmiş göstergebilim yaklaşımı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu iki filmin analiz sonuçlarına göre , Nijerya sinemasında kadın; şeytansı, materyalist, cinsel nesne, yuva yıkıcı ve Nijerya toplumlarının kültürel ataerkilliğinin kurbanları olarak tanıtılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nijerya Sineması, Kanywood, Nollywood, Postkolonyalizm, Feminizm

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

FREEDOM OR SUPPRESSION: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN NIGERIAN CINEMA

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Master of Communication

African cinema has been characterized, influenced and shaped by the infiltration of foreign cinema into the region since pre African independence era to date. Nigeria being an African country is also affected by this colonial impact. On the other hand, today's cinema is full of stereotypes with regard to the representation of different class of human being. Feminist critics at all levels condemn the female stereotype in the cinema, and call for the correction of such a patriarchal notion. This research work examines the Nigerian cinema and how it represents women on the screen to the audience. Two films from the two Nigeria's film industries; Nollywood and Kanywood are selected and analysed using semiotics approach. Based on the result of the analysis of the two films, women in Nigerian cinema are being featured as diabolic, satanic, materialist, sexual materials, family breakers and victims of the cultural patriarchy of Nigerian societies.

Key words: Nigerian Cinema, Kanywood, Nollywood, Post colonialism,
Feminism

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In his popular book *Film Language*, Christian Metz (1974) explained that cinema is an excellent phenomenon of art in which the signifier co-exists with the signified. However, Metz also cited Rossellini saying “*Cinema is a language, if one means by that a ‘poetic language’ but the theoreticians of silent film saw in a real, specific vehicle*” (Metz, 1974, p. 44).

To investigate the representation and images of women in Nigerian cinema, this research will adopt a thematic and semiotic analysis of two Nigerian video films belonging to two different film industries in the country, namely, Nollywood and Kanywood. These two popular films belong to the melodramatic genre that characterizes contemporary filmmaking in Nigeria. The first film from the Kanywood industry is *Gabar cikin gida* [Enemies in the House] and the second from Nollywood is *Two Brides and a Baby*. Most interestingly, despite the films being from different regions of Nigeria that have different socio-cultural histories, they employ the same genre and revolve around similar themes in relation to women’s position in the narrative structure. The selection of these films is based on their popularity, which occurs due to the popularity of the filmmakers, the protagonists, and, more importantly, the melodramatic, heartwarming plot and narrative of the films. In fact, *Two Brides and a Baby* was first screened outside Nigeria, in the United States in 2012. Rhetorically, this shows how confident and popular the filmmaker is and how much respect audiences, the Nollywood industry, and the producer have for the films within the industry. On the other hand, *Enemies in the House* was produced by popular filmmaker, director, and contemporary Kanywood

actor Sani Danja. The film narrates a mystical love victimization and the utmost intra-family rivalry.

Theoretically, this research employs the feminist perspective to identify the images of women in the two selected films using the semiotics approach as its method. Syntagm, Paradigm, Denotation, Connotation, and other linguistics/semiotics concepts are applied when analyzing the films. Semiotics as originated from linguistics can be applied to cinema although care must be taken when doing so because cinematic language is not like the normal verbal language in everyday use. Metz argued that

“When approaching the cinema from the linguistic point of view, it is difficult to avoid shuttling back and forth between two positions; the cinema as a language; the cinema as infinitely different from verbal language. Perhaps it is impossible to extricate oneself from this dilemma with impunity” (Metz, 1974, p. 44).

However, according to the feminist film perspective, most of the films produced in Nigeria reproduce and distort the images of women in comparison to their real social images and roles. While describing the way women are portrayed in Nigerian video films, Adekunle argued that *“there is a noticeable trend in the Nigerian film industry...the women in the films come as wicked, manipulative, loose in morals, diabolic and inferior to the men” (Adekunle, 2010, p. 1).* The controversy here involves whether the films distort or reproduce reality. Some of the social situations reviewed in this research attest to the film images situating women as they are in real life. Nevertheless, although there is a bit of development toward the patriarchal ideology of Nigerian societies due to different campaigns of women empowerment within and outside the country, this culture is still embedded in these

societies. Moreover, the Nigerian cinema reinforces these patriarchal ideologies through its representation of women and how they are related to men in the cinema.

Chapter one of this paper discusses the evolution, antecedents, and challenges that Nigerian and African cinema has faced since inception to date. This chapter touches on the impact of colonialism on the African socio-cultural practices of which entertainment and the arts are part. Also, within this chapter, the research problem, objectives, limitations, and justification are buttressed. The second chapter discusses the theoretical background of the research. Discourses on post-colonial feminist film theory and its different perspectives, Marxist feminism, deconstruction, equality theory, and structuralism, among other topics, are discussed. The methodology of the research (i.e., semiotics) is also discussed in this chapter. Semiotics concepts of various linguistics scholars such as Christian Metz, Peter Wollen, Umberto Eco, and Ferdinand De Saussure, among others, are examined. Chapters three and four are the analysis chapters. The analysis employs different semiotics analyses with a view toward achieving a super analysis covering concepts in cinematic semiotics. The final chapter contains a summary of the findings and the conclusion. Additionally, the chapter provides recommendations for stakeholders in Nigerian filmmaking and decision making for the cinema which, if applied, will dramatically improve Nigeria's film industry.

1.2 African cinema, an overview

According to French film historian Georges Sadoul, until 1960 that when many African countries south of the Sahara got their independence, no really indigenous African film yet produced, i.e. one produced, directed, photographed and edited by Africans and featuring Africans as protagonists who communicate in African languages. Rather, only British, French, and U.S. auteurs had been making

documentaries and fictional films in Africa and about Africans ever since 1900 (Diawara, 1992).

For centuries before their colonial experiences, Africans had their indigenous traditional forms of communication using traditional sophisticated communication methods. These methods were well developed so that they were effective communication channels; they included dance, songs, folklore, drawing, rites, and ceremonies (Frank, 1994).

Despite these traditional methods/channels, Africans still value Western media for information and communication development, especially in the wake of industrialization and the proliferation of technological devices for media communication. Africans could not themselves face the global media challenges and so borrowed ideas from the West for development policies and plans. This dependence/imperialism is perhaps one cause for Africa's underdevelopment.

However, the cinema came to Africa as an indispensable propaganda organ of the colonialists; this is because film is a powerful visual medium with an extraordinary ability to influence the thinking and behavior of its audience (Frank, 1992). Moreover, the Europeans manipulated the cinema and imposed their cultures and ideologies on Africans, perhaps because the traditional African visual media were not sufficiently flexible. When the colonialists started to show films in Africa, people received them as an ultimate development because they were consciously and unconsciously influenced by the moving images of the films.

Early African cinema was in the hands of colonialists and missionaries, who produced and distributed films and showed them at screening centers. Thus, they used the cinema as a tool for religious and political propaganda. Since the cinema was not in the hands of Africans the content did not reflect African culture or

ideology; rather it represented the views and ideologies of the owners, what classic Marxists termed a superstructure model. For this, Africans were seen as only carriers of Western thinking and ideology. Diawara maintained that fundamentally Africa can be seen as a ghost because film distribution is not under Africa's management. This may be connected with the belief of those who administered cinematic affairs in Africa in civilizing Africans thorough audio-visual culture, complementing what their co-Europeans concurred on in 1884 at the Berlin conference when they converged to scramble Africa (Diawara, 1992).

Moreover, the Westerners surreptitiously and cunningly produced films so that they portrayed a distorted picture of Africa and its people. In 1915, D. W. Griffith's American film, *The Birth of a Nation*, was released and shown in France. However, the government banned it so as to avoid discontent among the black African soldiers (Frank, 1994).

However, this monopolistic and colonialist-centered administration of cinema in Africa changed when a roundtable discussion was organized in 1961 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). At the meeting, Chairman Jean Rouch highlighted the importance of integrating Africans in the process of filmmaking; particularly those who attended film training school in Accra and the first Francophone graduates from the National Film School (Diawara, 1992).

At this juncture, with the involvement of Africans in the process of filmmaking, the films' content reflected Africa and Africans in one way or another, although the filmmakers' were under their colonial masters' close monitoring and supervision. However, Africans began to feel as if they belonged to the cinema since they could see their brothers and sisters acting as protagonists or crew members.

In this process, the local Africans learned from their colonial masters when they opened more schools across the region; they participated in film processing and later began to produce their films, especially after independence. Even so, a kind of dependence can easily be noticed in the content as they tried to produce films about their relationships with the colonialists.

Akasharo, while describing the typical nature of early indigenous African filmmaking, argued that it was a way of defining, interpreting, and describing African experiences with those who had shaped their past and continued to shape and influence their present. It was a consequence of the historical experiences of Africans and was directly related to the challenges that African societies and people of African origin face throughout the world (Akasharo, 2010).

However, the colonial operations of cinema in Africa ended in 1950 when the British colonial film unit (CFU) and its central African counterpart (CAFU) ceased to exist. From that moment, indigenous Africans continued to run the affairs of the film industry (Obiaya, 2011). Additionally, the formal independence of a number of African nations in the late 1950s and early 1960s, facilitated access to the medium of film as did the later end of apartheid. Africans' eyes began to offer new perspectives on the continent that contrasted sharply with the views popularized by Western jungle melodramas, where Africa was a mere backdrop with stereotypically uncivilized, childish, or cruel natives for triumphant acts by great white hunters and treasure seekers (Pfaff, 2004).

Armes (1987) argued that the first black African feature film was *The Money Order*, produced by Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembene. However, this film was produced with a low budget and substandard fictional works. However, Saul and

Austin maintained that *“African filmmaking first took off in the early 1960s, during the euphoria of decolonization”*(Saul and Austin, 2010, p. 1).

During this period of euphoria, African leaders who succeeded the colonialists in leadership of the region should have supported the filmmakers, funded their productions, ensured that the situation was viable, and provided sophisticated modern production tools. Unfortunately, less effort was expended; that is why the cinema did not develop rapidly immediately after independence.

African cinema is divided into two parts from the angle or perspective of its colonialism roots: Francophone and Anglophone. Francophone cinema is from those countries colonized by France, while Anglophone cinema is from those countries colonized by the Great Britain. Similarly, the different strategies for film production between Francophone and Anglophone countries were born out of the parallel ideological approaches of the British and French colonial governments. Whereas British colonial government used indirect rule, for reasons of pragmatism, the French colonial masters used an assimilation policy. Based on these different approaches, the cinema of these countries contrasted. The French fed its colonies with feature films, while the British provided only documentaries to its colonies (Diawara, 1992).

In the post-independence era of the early 1950s through the 1960s, Francophone African filmmakers were more active than their Anglophone counterparts; their films were plentiful and produced with quality. In 1974 alone, six feature films were made in Senegal. By 1982, about 30 films had been produced by Francophone directors (Diawara, 1992). On the other hand, Anglophone films for the first time were short films meant to educate the people to adapt to new Western development ideas in the areas of business, agriculture, and health, among others. Between 1935 and 1936, about 35 short educational films were produced in

Anglophone Tanzania, films like *Coffee under Banana Shade*, *Anesthesia*, and *Infant Malaria* (Diawara, 1992).

Diawara continued to argue that

“while Haile Gerima (Ethiopia) and Ola Balogun (Nigeria) are the only internationally known directors outside of Anglophone Africa, such Francophone filmmakers as Ousmane Sembene (Senegal), Oumarou Ganda (Niger), Dikango Pipa (Cameroun), Safi Faye (Senegal), Med Hondo (Muritania) and Souleyman Cisse (Mali) are famous for winning awards at film festivals in Ougadougou (Upper Volta) Carthage (Tunisia), Cannes, Paris, Rome and Moscow (1992, p. 21).

This clearly shows that Francophone African countries were more committed to film production than Anglophone countries. This was because they received more training from their colonial masters than their Anglophone counterparts. On their part, the Anglophone filmmakers abandoned the local filmmaking and directed their energy toward pressing problems at the expense of the cinema (Diawara, 1992, p. 9). This resulted from the British colonial film unit’s purpose of agitating Africans to participate in World War II, rather than for developing Africa; after independence, they took a new perspective toward filmmaking. Moreover, when Anglophone Africans were trained in film schools, they were asked to go on their own and create productions, unlike in the Francophone countries.

Actually, it was after independence that Africans woke up and started to change the screen distortion and misrepresentation of the colonialists in the films they produced. Thus, many films were produced all with a view toward challenging Western iconography. The filmmakers concentrated on Africa’s culture, history, politics, wealth, economy, ethnicity, and full identity.

Moreover, some scholars have categorized themes of early post-independence African cinema; one is the French critic Guy Hanebells. He illustrated three main themes in African cinema: the struggle against colonialism, the childhood sickness of independence; disillusion and the rural exodus; and the condition of African women. Here, the African filmmakers in their bid to seek and fight for independence fought against the culturally inclined denigration of women and against the rural-urban migration, which if eliminated, would encourage the rural people to contribute more to the development of Africa, particularly in the areas of farming and food security (Akasharo, 2010, p. 88).

On the nature and style of the early post-independence African films, Saul and Austin maintained that the films share four distinctive features: they resemble the art cinema of contemporary Europe, most are produced in Francophone countries, they depend on French support, and they use celluloid film, usually 16mm (Austin, 2010).

Additionally, tradition and modernity are conflicting phenomena in African cinema that often contradict each other. Many films have featured conflicts between primitive and modern ideology. This conflict often occurs in the family circle and is depicted in all social spheres. Moreover, Boughedir (2000) quoted by Akasharo maintained that four conflicts between the new and old are often found in African cinema: the conflict between town and village, Westernized women versus women who respect tradition; modern versus traditional medicine; traditional art bearing cultural identity and art which has become a commodity and an object for consumption (Akasharo, 2010).

African films were seen in Paris, New York, Berlin, London, and Tokyo, sometimes much more than they were seen in African cities like Harare, Nairobi, and Darussalam (Kabore, 2010, p. 189, cited in Akasharo, 2010, p. 93).

African films receiving much more recognition in countries outside Africa indicates that African films did not serve the interests of Africans or that Africans did not have a watching culture in the early days of African cinema. Economic problems and poverty might also contribute to the low viewership. However, it was an advantage for the filmmakers to receive outside recognition even though it was the Africans in diaspora that subscribed to the films; this may be because they longed for home and attended movies as their entertainment and escapism mechanism.

However, African filmmaking suffered a great setback due to scarce production facilities; the filmmakers had to go to Europe or the United States for editing. This obstacle forced them to take considerable time before producing a single film (Keyan et al, 1995). Furthermore, the nonchalant attitude of post-independence African government re-suffocated cinema development in the continent; it was the films' sub-standard quality that paved the way for foreign films to continue dominating the local indigenous productions, as Mambety (2005) noted in Akasharo (2010, p. 85). Diawara argued that *“not only film production but also distribution in Africa had faced ruthless and monolithic exploitation by American, European and Indian distribution companies”* (Diawara, 1992, p. viii). This exploitation did not end after Africa's independence; rather, it was swooped up and changed into a new perspective in the disguise of neocolonialism or imperialism.

Contemporaneously, African cinema from the perspective of socialists-realists is diversified as it themes current socio-cultural issues. The films produced try to reposition and uplift Africa's social, economic, political, and cultural standards. Additionally, the filmmakers use melodramatic narratives touching different social spheres, particularly polygamy, early marriage, illiteracy, and poverty, and their negative consequences.

Another thematic aspect of contemporary African cinema is the colonial confrontation. The films show the resistance of Africans to colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, and apartheid. Films like *Heritage Africa* and *Lakhdar Hamina* are examples of such films. Nevertheless, non-African viewers have rejected such films while Africans appreciate them (Diawara, 1989). She argued that most African spectators view them with a sense of pride and satisfaction, with a history from the African point of view. Some European spectators, on the other hand, characterize them as polemical, poorly constructed, and belonging to the 1960s rhetoric of violence (Diawara, 1989).

The post-colonial African cinema is characterized by imperialism and dependency, shoddy productions due to lack of facilities, and less committed efforts to correct the distorted picture of Africa in the colonial films. The ideologies, styles, and processes of the African colonial masters are reflected in today's African cinema, although some filmmakers have tried to produce purely African culture-oriented films, but to no avail because of technical and infrastructure problems. However, more recently, romantic films about love relationships have dominated African cinema.

1.3 Nigerian cinema: evolution, antecedents, and challenges

The origin of film in Nigeria precedes the origin of the country as an independent federation. While the different Nigerian protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 to form Nigeria under colonialism, the first motion pictures were reportedly screened in August 1903 when Nigeria's nationalist Herbert Macaulay in association with the Balbao Film Company of Spain introduced the new medium to an audience assembled in Global Memorial Hall in Lagos (Ebewo, 2007).

Between 1903 and 1958, the colonialists continued to use the cinema for their propaganda. However, Nigeria is the biggest and most significant African country in terms of quantity of film productions, with more than 150 million people and more than 300 languages. The Colonial Film Unit had three offices in Nigeria, left-behind laboratories, 16mm cameras, and studios. Moreover, Nigerian television had a large audience during the pre-independence era in 1958 when it was established. It had as its first director Segun Olusola. This man had wanted to develop a career when he co-produced *Son of Africa* with a Lebanese merchant in 1970. Harrow (1996) argued that “*Nigerian feature film production began in 1970 just a few years after the beginning of cinema in the francophone countries*” (Harrow, 1996, p. 20)

After the production of *Son of Africa*, filmmaker Francis Oladele received support from Pennsylvania, California, and New York. He named his company Calpenny, using the initials of those regions that supported him. Oladele’s quest to produce high-quality films compelled him to seek international co-producers and film directors. His first film was *Kongi’s Harvest* in 1971, an adaptation of a popular play written by Wole Soyinka. This film was directed by African American film director Ossie Davis and Soyinka himself. Oladele’s second film was *Bullfrog in the Sun* (1972), an adaptation of Chinua Achebe’s two popular African novels, *Things Fall Apart* and *No Longer at Ease*. West German Hans Jurgen Pohland directed the film. Oladele perhaps can be considered the first independent film producer in Anglophone Africa (Diawara, 1987, p. 63).

In southern Nigeria, cinema going was accepted by all and sundry. Both males and females went to the cinema without any hesitation. There was no social trauma or immorality attached to cinema going. Moreover, the cinema was considered a leisure activity and modern form of entertainment. In contrast, the northern part of

Nigeria had a different approach to cinema establishment. It faced many challenges from the Emirs, Ulamas (religious teachers), and society at large. Due to Islamic religious injunctions, the cinema was labeled as immoral and as such anti-Islam because it reproduced reality through sound and pictures, which is like magic, and magic is forbidden (Haram) in Islam (Larkin, 2004). Nevertheless, the northern Nigerian Muslim communities had enthusiastically consumed the Indian Bollywood films and a number of cinema houses were established in Kano. All the films screened at these cinemas were in video cassette form.

However, Larkin (2004) described Nigerian video culture as something largely outside state control and examined four public spheres in Nigeria with regard to audio visual media evolution: the historic arena of cinema and radio during the colonial era, the regional TV and radio in the post-independence era, the era of strengthened and normalized TV during the oil boom, and the radically different contemporary era. Thus, films in Nigeria serve as a complementary medium for education, information, and entertainment, even though the films have significant influence to change and reshape the life style of their audiences, particularly youths.

In contemporary Nigeria, there are two popular film industries, the southern Nigeria-based Nollywood and the northern-based Kanywood. The latter gets its name from Nigeria, referring to the Nigerian film industry but attaching the coinage to the word 'ollywood,' and the industry produces films in the English language. The former gets its name from Kano city, which is the center of Hausa film in Nigeria and produces in the local Hausa language. However, with Nollywood using English, the world lingua franca has gotten much recognition and acceptance and Nollywood is considered as the only Nigerian film industry. Oluyinka (2008) argued that *“Nollywood is the Nigerian movie industry whose acclaim was initially restricted to*

Nigeria and African audiences, but is progressively making in-roads on the global scene” (Olayinka, 2008, p. 1).

The name ‘Nollywood’ became popular in the early 1990s. Since then, many English films have been produced. This has led to bringing many actors, producers, marketers, technicians, and other production crew members into the limelight. Nollywood video films have become popular audio visual entertainment for Nigerians (Ebewo, 2007).

Also in the 1990s, when the local Hausa filmmakers started film productions, they produced and imitated the way Indian Bollywood films are produced. This is because of the consumption and over dosage of Indian films by northern Nigeria societies. Moreover, they translated Indian films into Hausa using the same narration, plot, and dialogue. This culture of imitation is what labeled Kanywood as not sufficiently creative to conceive its own ideas and produce films that are Nigerian culture oriented. To receive acclaim, the filmmakers assumed that since foreign Indian films were already consumed, people would accept their productions if they mimicked the Bollywood way of filmmaking, including songs and dance, with mostly love narrations. According to Abdallah Uba Adamu (2007) more than 120 Hausa films were copied and translated directly from Indian films.

Both the Kanywood and Nollywood film industries face challenges. Infrastructure constraint is the biggest problem of Nigerian cinema today. There are no highly sophisticated cameras or studios. The government also commits less to development of the cinema and talks less with individuals who should have harnessed the opportunity and invested in film production. Hynes argued that *“the rate of production in Nigeria is at best about four 16mm features in a year - that is, films shot on negative film stock” (Harrow, 1999, p.1).* The video industries in

Nigeria are growing with minimal help from the government unlike other broadcasting media outlets. In addition, there is no subsidy or assistance from international non-governmental organizations today (Abah, 2008).

However, the federal government of Nigeria had shown interest and concern in helping the film industries in the country. Recently, on July 22, 2013, the Daily Trust newspaper reported that the government has approved 3 billion naira, the equivalent of 18 million, 365 thousand US dollars for the Nollywood film industry. This money will be used for capacity building within the industry (Daily Trust, 2013).

Another constraint of contemporary Nigerian cinema is that most of the active protagonists and all of the stakeholders in filmmaking found themselves in the field by chance; they don't have prior education or knowledge about cinema and filmmaking. Additionally, most of the films are poorly directed because the stakeholders in the production assume that all it takes to be a movie director in Nigeria is money and a handful of people. Olayiwola argued that:

“The point is worth stressing that 90% of those who straddled the video films in Nigeria today have no formal education in related disciplines like theatre art, film studies, broadcasting or cinematography; also, they have no formal education at all. They are only involved in a game of trial and error, leading to shoddy production” (Olayiwola, 2007, P. 3).

Moreover, the films are low-quality productions and have simple narrative structures. They are rated as Grade B productions but are watched by all social classes. The films are produced in great numbers and using unsophisticated machines, but they still receive rapid acceptance by the public (Gantung, 2008).

Moreover, Nigerian cinema has been criticized for its dominant themes although part of them is society centered, aiming to bring about development in the country. In his article 'Reflections on Nigerian Video Films' Emmanuel (2010) adopted the following as the dominant themes of Nigerian cinema: religion\hallelujah, cultural values and traditions versus modernity, tradition/leadership, modernization\upward social mobility, materialism, everyday life, regional orientation, folklore and folk tales, violent crime, sexism, love, occultism, stereotypes, melodrama, propaganda, and education.

In his article 'Conversion on Screen: A Glimpse at Popular Islamic Imagination in Northern Nigeria, Krings (2008) noted "*several northern Nigerian videos feature films that depict stories about conversion to Islam.*" However, on the basis of sheer commercial vitality, Nigerian video films can claim to be the major contemporary Nigerian art form" (Sabine, 1999, p. 13).

In the essay, "From Film to Video," Nigerian filmmaker Afolabi Adesanya (in Sabine, 1999) shed some light on the economics of Nigerian home video productions and pointed to cultural differences in the viewing habits of different ethnic audiences. He argued that the Yoruba people (mixed Muslims and Christians) are the most frequent cinema goers in Nigeria, and the Igbo (Majority Christians) do not find it appealing to watch movies and talk about the Hausa man who can share his entertainment with his wife and children at home.

Nollywood (produced in English) and Kanywood (produced in Hausa) films penetrate not only neighboring countries but also the entire continent. Africans in diaspora watch African films. This helped the Nollywood industry to be seen almost the same as Hollywood. Nigerian cinema has been considered a giant stride for Africa. Gantung argued that another cinematic evolution receiving acclaim on the

African continent and spreading into international immigrant markets is Nollywood, a rapidly growing film industry in Nigeria (Gantung, 2008).

Nollywood is considered a rapid development for Nigerian film industries; the country's film industry has been ranked as the second largest in the world in terms of number of films produced (UNESCO, 2009). In its research report published by in 2009, India, Nigeria, and the United States had the biggest film industries in the world. The report continued to say that India produced 1,255 feature length films in 2009 while the Nigerian Nollywood film industry produced 997 and the United States' Hollywood produced 819 major films (UNESCO, 2013).

UNESCO 2013 World Film Production Statistics

In this statistics United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization referred to the film produced in 2011.

Table 1: UNESCO 2013 world film production statistics

Country/Industry	Number of films produced in 2011
Indian Bollywood	1,255
Nigerian Nollywood	997
United States Hollywood	819

In Nigeria, both Kanywood and Nollywood films are made available to viewers in various ways: distribution companies, theater halls, TV and satellite stations, and even house delivery for those who subscribe to retailers' shops. Africa Magic, Multi-Choice Nigeria, and BEN TV sky satellite channels show the Nollywood films while

the Farin Wata (The Moon) satellite channel shows the Kanywood Hausa films. Oluyinka argued that *“since January 2008, Nollywood has a dedicated channel offering 24-hour movie service on the sky digital platform to audiences in the UK and Ireland.”* (Ukata, 2010, p. 6). It is a great achievement of filmmaking in Nigeria to have these films now internationally available. Ukata continued to argue that:

“The widespread distribution of videos has improved with the introduction of online access to Nigerian video films as video patrons can log onto internet websites like Nigerian Video online, and African video series online, or YouTube to gain access to videos which may be difficult to get from the market. Besides, the Nigerian videos can also be viewed via the DSTV channel 102, Africa Magic. This channel airs many African films (mostly Nollywood videos) and this has helped to further make the Nollywood videos more accessible to various parts of Africa and beyond” (Ukata, 2010, p. 6).

However, some film producers in Nigeria deal with distribution companies while others distribute their films themselves to dealers in various markets. Those that deal with independent distributors give the films to the distributors to pass to markets; sometimes the producers sell their films to one person who produces as many copies as possible and may first show it in a cinema to make a profit. However, some producers show their films in cinemas themselves. Radio commercials are used to promote the films that will be released into markets soon. When a particular film is shown in a cinema, the news goes viral to the larger population; those who attend the show will spread the news to others.

The distributors take their films to dealers in markets while retailers buy them in quantity to sell in local areas. There is a culture of video renting in Nigeria where individual or corporate bodies open a shop and people register; they pay to rent a

film and return it within a specific agreed period of time. The rental shops also sell the films to those who want to buy.

Nigeria has a federal system of government whereby three tiers of government exist, federal, state, and local. The censorship of films produced is at the first two levels. There is the National Film and Video Censorship Board, and the state level also has censorship boards.

The National Film Censorship Board was established by Decree No. 85 in 1993 to regulate the film and video industries in the country. This means that the government has more power than anybody in the affairs of filmmaking in Nigeria. This monopoly via censorship blocks all ways to criticize the government or to mobilize the masses against the state. This is a challenge for filmmakers as their films can be used to sanitize the country from corrupt government practices.

The role of the Nigerian Film Censorship Board is to give license to filmmakers, censor video and film works, regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises, regulate and control cinematographic exhibitions, and carry out all other functions conferred on it by the decree. Safeguarding the norms, values, and cultural heritage is the sole purpose of establishing censorship boards in Nigeria, but this has sometimes hampered cinema development as politics enter the issue.

The National Film and Video Censorship Board mostly censors the Nollywood films because Nollywood filmmakers produce their films in Nigeria's official language (i.e., English). The state's censorship boards screen those films produced in local languages across the country. Kanywood films are screened by the Kano State Film Censorship Board because those films are produced in the local Hausa language and the industry is based in Kano.

This Kano state censorship board was established under law in 2001 following the agitation over whether the Hausa film industry should be banned and scrapped or sanctioned for indecent productions. In the early 2000s, with the official introduction of the Shari'ah law system in some northern Nigeria states, Islamic scholars and other individuals pressed the issue that the Kanywood film industry contributed to the moral decay of youths rather than making society better. They said the productions were devoid of Islamic values and Hausa cultural heritage.

The new law empowered the board to license and approves all video films produced in Kano before exhibition in any form. The board was also charged with the responsibility to approve the sale of particular films in the market and to check and balance all filmic affairs in the state.

The culture of subtitling helps films reach wider audiences. However, subtitles sometimes come with linguistics problems because understanding a film through subtitles requires the viewer to divide his or her consciousness in two. One tries to follow the moving images to decode the meanings and the other tries to understand the language and decode its meaning.

Code switching is apparent in Nigerian cinema, particularly in times of anger, overexcitement, hardship, surprise, and even happiness. The protagonists switch to other languages when acting in films.

In the case of Nollywood, Pidgin English (Nigerian-constructed English devoid of grammatical rules) is also an explicit characteristic of the films but normally it represents the low social status of the character.

Nigerian cinema is autonomous and, in contrast to cinema in other West African countries, it has little participation from the outside. However, its content has been influenced by foreign cinema due to colonial contacts and trade relations.

1.4 Statement of the Problem, Research Questions, Objectives, and Limitation of the Study

The representation of women in cinema today is a matter of debate. Nigerian cinema practices are influenced by the patriarchal ideologies and fantasies of the male filmmakers where women are placed in a lower social status, often domesticated as housewives, secretaries, nurses, and child breeders. However, this kind of maligning of womanhood did not stop but was augmented through negative representations. In most Nigerian films, women are portrayed as home breakers, prostitutes, materialists, victims of poverty, and evil doers. This type of representation is not restricted to films produced by men in Nigeria; even those produced by women situate women in such ominous positions. This research investigates the dominant images of women in two Nigerian film industries, Nollywood and Kanywood. To do so, the following questions will be answered:

1. What are the major features and images of women in Nigerian cinema? How are they represented in the context of their social status? Are they suppressed or free?
2. How does Nigerian cinema reproduce or subvert cultural hegemony? Do the films promote patriarchy or feminism?

The objectives of the research are to:

1. Bring out the major features and images of women in Nigerian cinema.

2. Ascertain the level of representation of women in the context of their social status.
3. Investigate whether the Nigerian cinema reproduces or subverts cultural hegemony.
4. Determine whether or not Nigerian cinema promotes patriarchy or feminism.

This research work revolves around two Nigerian film industries, Nollywood and Kanywood, and examines one film from each. However, the theoretical approach is feminist film theory while the methodology for analysis remains the semiotics approach.

Chapter Two: Theoretical framework

2.1 Post-colonial feminist film theory

Many competing approaches and theories guide film analysis, including anthropological theory, semiotics theory, neo-structuralism theory, feminist theory, and neo-Marxist theory (Ukata, 2010). My appreciation of Nigerian cinema, focusing on the representation of women in the two major film industries in Nigeria (Kanywood and Nollywood), will generally be informed by the post-colonial feminist theory and use semiotics as the methodological approach.

Colonialism is the Western exploration and political domination of various countries throughout the world during the 14th to mid-20th centuries. Colonialists gained hegemony and legitimacy in the colonized countries through different tactics of governance; indirect rule and assimilation were the major tactics. They even employed the use of force to invade territories. During this long period of Westerners' overseas empires, they established different systems and life styles that affected the socio-economic and political spheres of the colonies. However, by the mid-20th century, almost all the colonies had gained independence. From this period, studies of colonialism changed from a focus on the invasion to the mimicry and footprints left by the invaders. The new term 'post-colonialism' entered the language.

Post-colonial studies were developed from the work of Edward Said on *Orientalism and Culture and Imperialism* in 1978 and 1993, respectively. Said analyzed the Europeans' contact with their colonies in the 19th century and the way the colonies are perceived and represented based on the colonial masters' fantasies and interpretations (Jackson & Jackie, 1998). Moreover, Said examined how this imperial relationship continued even after the colonies' formal independence. This dependency between colonies and their colonizers culminated in the

underdevelopment and backwardness of the colonies, particularly in Africa. The economic, social, and political structures of those colonies after independence mimic their masters' system. For example, in Nigeria, immediately after independence the country's republic was a parliamentary system of government, copied from the British who colonized Nigeria.

Colonialism in Africa was characterized by massive exploitation of the continent by Westerners. Mimicry, construction of rails, ports, and forts were meant not for the development of the region but for the economic boom to Western countries (see Rodney, 1973). However, most devastating of all was the integration and amalgamation of different peoples with different civilizations and cultural backgrounds.

Examination of the present legacy of colonialism/imperialism is the major concern and focus for post-colonial theorists (Mills, 1998). She maintained that post-colonial theory deals with different perspectives such as development of thinking and behavior structures, not only economic and political structures. Mills is one of the post-colonial theorists who questioned the masculine-centered nature of colonial struggles. Furthermore, Mills examined the feminist film theories with regard to cinematic representation, which is the concern of this research. She argued that:

“The ideological forms of masculinity developed within the colonial context can be considered to be extreme and excessive; thus, British male explorers and administrators tend to be represented as adventurous, unemotional, courageous, hardworking, patriotic and resilient” (Mills, 1998, p. 3).

Moreover, in her counter argument to the masculine-centered nature of post-colonial theory, Anne McLintock argues that imperialism can be understood only when there is a theory of gender power. Gender power is not a superficial patina of

an empire, an ephemeral gloss over the more decisive mechanics of class or race. Rather, gender dynamics were from the outset fundamental to securing and maintaining the imperial enterprise (Mills, 1995).

In addition, Mills (1995) while trying to showcase the role of women in the British colonies, debunked the thinking that colonial imperialism struggles were experienced exclusively by British males; women had contributed immensely to the struggle, while campaigning for women's rights and sensitizing them to potential dangers of some diseases.

In fact, Mills has ostensibly examined post-colonial theory and its related concepts with an understanding of the orientalist Edward Said; she then discussed women during the colonial struggles and examined the criticism that women had contributed nothing to the struggle against British colonial rule. Finally, she debated the status of women as subaltern and subordinate to men. Here, she touched different theorists' views which debunked this stance and refuted the homogenizing of females in their thinking.

Feminist film theory emerged in the 1970s and is rooted in the women's movement of the 1960s. The central discourse of the feminists involves how film texts are worked and constructed to impose patriarchal ideology on females. However, alternative feminist filmmaking in the 1970s by people like Laura Mulvey and Sally Potter is considered the beginning of feminist film theory (Hollinger, 2012).

Thus, feminist film discourses were born out of the female's desire to counter and criticize the mainstream cinema, while advocating alternative cinema and filmmaking in which women are given favorable, active, and leading roles as the main protagonists. Additionally, in their bid to counter the masculine-oriented

cinema, feminists even delved into criticism of the mainstream media representation of women, such as in television programs, newspapers, and magazines.

Moreover, New Day Films (one of the first US distribution companies for feminist documentary films) revealed what motivated feminists to start their films: They (feminists) found that women traditionally seen on the screens were the reproduction of the experience, imagination, and fantasies of male filmmakers. Additionally, Jan Rosenberg, in an interview with women filmmakers, disclosed that most of the young feminist filmmakers in the 1970s, such as Julia Reichert, Judy Smith, and Geri Ashur, started in film production to communicate their politics of feminism. Rosenberg quoted Reichert, saying “*We made (Growing Up Female) to bring about some new awareness about women’s oppression to a broad audience*”. Reichert continued to argue that they specifically intended to reach above the women’s movement to housewives, black women, poor women, and high schools goers. Films such as *Anything You Want to Be*, *Janie’s Janie*, *Growing Up Female*, *Three Lives*, and *The Woman’s Film* reveal the critical trend in feminists filmmaking (Warren, 2008).

Feminists, both academics and radicals, at all levels are fighting to bridge the cultural gaps between men and women. Buikema maintained that within the general paradigm of equality, feminists works in the humanities have aimed both at eliminating the disadvantages that women directors, authors, visual artists, and composers have in relation to their male colleagues and supplying missing historical information about women (Buikema, 1995). Additionally, McCabe maintained that the primary intention of feminist films is to understand the ways in which women are represented in film and to expose the sexist and women-centered content of cinema

narratives as well as reveal the media construct of women as sexual objects for men's pleasure (McCabe, 2004).

Feminists in film studies are also concerned about the sexist image of women in the works men produce, which led to coining of the term 'sexual difference.' Feminist studies have focused on establishing a female aesthetic independent of the cultural norms and values set by men (Buikema, 1995). Nevertheless, Haskell (1973) and Rosen (1993) argued that feminist arguments on films are about representation and spectatorship, the stereotypes of women in cinema, and the distortion of women's images from reality; thus, they called for positive images of women in films (Anneke, no date). In her conclusion, Anneke maintained that as a result of the agitation of feminist critics, more women filmmakers have emerged and been able to produce several films in different genres (Anneke, no date.). Moreover, feminists are accusing the media of misrepresenting women, portraying them in a stereotypical manner, denigrating them, and always showing them in the home and subordinate to men (Nelmes, 2007, p. 227). Mayne argued that

"...film by Arthner, Craig's Wife (1936), female connotes so much the female body in terms of performance, but rather a conception of space. Craig's Wife, based on a stage play by George Kelley, shows us a woman so obsessively concerned with her house that nothing else is of interest to her" (Mayne, 1984, p. 56).

In an editorial on women and film in 1972, the American Journal of Women said that women are suppressed and maligned within the film industry; they play secretaries, prop girls, odd-job girls, receptionists, and similar characters. They are oppressed by being packaged as images (sex objects, victims, or vampires) and they

are oppressed within film theory by male critics who celebrate auteur (Thornham, 1999).

The above prescribed roles attached to female cinematic representation are passive, very low status roles. None of the roles is active, and women tend to be under men as their masters, husbands, or fathers. However, in some societies, these features might not offend based on the status of women in those societies because media, including film, reflect a society, although feminists suspect the male auteurs of distorting the real social images of women in their films. Smith, cited in Thornham (1999, p. 10) said that:

“Films both reflect social structures and changes, and misrepresent them according to fantasies of their male creators. The resultant stereotypes serve to reinforce and/or create the prejudice of their male audiences, and to damage the self-perceptions and limit the social aspirations of women” (Thornham, 1999, p. 10).

However, Smith proffered a solution to the problem: The film industry and auteurs should have a variety of roles for women in their films. Smith doubted this would be effective until new thinking emerged (Thornham, 1999). Additionally, in her article ‘The Image of Women in Film, Some Suggestions for Future Research’ Smith maintained that *“women, in any fully human form, have almost completely been left out of film. This is not surprising since women were also left out of literature”* (Thornham, 1999, p. 14).

At this juncture, Sharon also stated that women should be shown in a variety of roles; they should be depicted as heroines, not only in the roles of loving a man, homemaking, and bearing children. She further maintained that women should be represented as active. They should not face ridicule or unhappy or tragic endings;

women should be given high positions, depicted in adventures that don't center on sexual attraction for a man or in working with other women without cattiness (Thornham, 1999). Moreover, Claire Johnson, in her paper "Women Cinema, a Counter Cinema" showed how women have been portrayed in films since the days of silent cinema. Women are always seen as an extension of a man. Thus, she castigated the narrow roles women have been given in films (Nelmes, 2007).

Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook explores the relations between female identity and artistic production. One such relationship is represented for Lessing through the cinema, where the woman is the viewer, man the projectionist, and the whole viewing process a form of control and domination (Mayne, 1984, p. 53).

Sharon argued that the role of women in film is almost always related to their physical attraction and the sexual roles they play with the male protagonist. However, Sharon maintained that films in the 20th century exploited the female body, as women just appear as sexual objects for men; even if they are the main protagonists in a film, at the end women become subordinates to men. Men present their fantasies in films. Sharon said the sexualization of women in film started slowly but is increasing. Moreover, films use all their power to persuade and reinforce not only the status quo, but some mythical Golden Age when men were men and women were girls. Traditionally, the entire human race is male, 'man' means the whole human race and 'woman' is just a part of it (Thornham, 1999).

However, additional feminist film theories have been propounded to examine women's representations in the cinema, including the psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Lacan, structuralism, and Marxist theories. Nelmes argued that:

“Freud’s theories on scopophilia (pleasure gained from looking at women) centre on voyeurism and the desire to see the erotic and the forbidden, yet this desire is male centered. The cinema provides a perfect venue for illicit voyeuristic viewing because the audience is in a dark, enclosed womb-like world” (Nelmes, 2007, p.229).

This scopophilia is divided into two types. First is voyeurism, which is the scopophilia, attached to sexual attraction (e.g., when a man looks at a woman and derives sexual pleasure). The second type of scopophilia is attached to narcissistic identification. As Mulvey argued, this identification is also always with the male, who is the central or main protagonist of the film (Myne, 1984). He argued that voyeurism has become so established a feature of the cinema that we seem to take it for granted. Early films are largely instructive in this perspective for they often express baldly and directly those figures of fascination which, in the course of film history, have become naturalized in a variety of ways. She cited an example and argued that *“A search for the evidence (1903) is one such film: it is a simple example of cinematic voyeurism, and it demonstrates, in highly condensed form, some of the crucial implications of voyeurism for women’s relations to film” (Mayne, 1984, p. 54).*

Structuralists have argued that language, being very important in communication ideologies and the beliefs of a culture, is also essential in cinema studies. This approach can be applied to films (Nelmes, 2007, p. 229). However, with regard to feminist film studies, Structuralists are concerned about how meaning is conveyed via language and code; film narratives convey meaning and representation not only through characterization but through some linguistic codes.

According to Hill and Church (2000) it was after World War II that the new development of Marxism and film emerged whereby most capitalist societies witnessed a boom in their politics and economy, which led to more commitment to film practices, although neo-realism influenced independent efforts in the capitalist world. However, Hill and Church noted with high hope the contribution of Marxism to contemporary film studies in the areas of historical, ideological analysis, and media activism.

Marxism in relation to cinema as a social institution, and despite the different schools and tendencies within the theory, provides a supple method for film analysis. Film as an ideological construct can reproduce and reinforce the views of the economic foundations of societies on their superstructures. According to Marxist theory, the base determines the superstructure in capitalist societies. The ruling class ideologies influence the views of the working class. Exponents of Arthusserian Marxism argue that the mainstream narrative cinema reinforces the capitalist system (Nelmes, 2007; Hill & Church, 2000). Moreover, Cleinhans argued that Marxism's ability to combine progressive political goals with social examination based on historical development and dialectical prospects for change made it an essential part of much contemporary post-colonial thinking, gender, and race/ethnicity in film studies (Hill & Church, 2000). The feminist concern here is that since the cinema is mostly in the possession of male auteurs, women are represented in a way the male auteurs want, according to their fantasies and ideologies.

The other feminist theories that help in examination of the feminist movement concerning cinematic representations are reflection theory, equality theory, and theory of difference.

Reflection theory of women and film says that the cinema reflects and represents the social reality. The way women are depicted in films is the way society treats them. These depictions are false and distorted; hence, they should be changed (Hill & Church, 2000).

If the cinema reinforces the social reality, feminists must first change the societal perceptions of women and the way they are treated, starting from the grassroots rather than attacking the male auteurs to the extent of deconstructing the cinema contents with regard to female representations. According to reflection theory, in societies where women are highly valuable and respected, their cinematic images are the same as in reality. Moreover, feminists have strongly opposed reflection theory, arguing that it allows a reconstruction and distortion by the filmmakers (White, 2000).

Another feminist theoretical perspective is equality theory. This theory seeks to remove the social and cultural dichotomies between men and women, advocates equality with regard to opportunities and equal pay, and promotes socio-cultural recognition of women (Buikema & Smelik, 1995). Also, Simone de Beauvoir, cited in Buikema (1960), maintained that in relation to men, women are considered as the second sex; she suggested that women feminists have compared women with blacks because both groups are oppressed. Some questions remain within gender discourses that are yet to be justified or critiqued by feminists. In our daily interactions, we deal with many terminologies that are masculine centered. However, this custom has never been challenged. For instance, why do we say gentlemen of the press, chairman of the board, and bachelor of art or science? There is no chairwoman, no ladies of the press, and no maiden of arts or science. These and similar terms are all accepted in Nigerian societies and feminists have not questioned their use.

Feminists agitating for equality are trying to emancipate women, to have them seen as coherent, rational, and autonomous. De Beauvoir provided an example of equality emancipating theory. She argued that women should live the way men do and their social roles should go beyond motherhood and subalterns to men; rather, they should be equal and shoulder to shoulder with men. Moreover, part of their struggle is to acknowledge the ignored women historical figures, authors, visual artists, playwrights, and composers (Buikema, 1995).

Feminists who apply the theory of difference campaign for the abolition of sexual differences, for females to have full access to social and cultural structures. They want women's social and cultural positions to be strengthened, using different means to promote women's interests and raising questions regarding women's aesthetics. However, Buikema argued that sexual difference is constructed by society. In addition, while demarcating gender and sex, Buikema maintained that 'sex' refers to biological differences between women and men and 'gender' to the identity and social position that accompany this biological difference in particular cultures (Buikema, 1995).

Deconstruction, often linked to the works of Jacques Derrida, is 'anti-philosophy' and for that was denounced by some on the left. As far as thematic interpretations and formality of individual films is concerned, deconstruction has little to offer. This is because deconstruction is not a discipline or methodology, but a questioning stance geared toward the basic components of the production of knowledge. Deconstruction concentrates on the qualitative decrease of meaning (Hill & Church, 2000). However, in feminist cultural studies, deconstruction calls for bringing to an end the subordination of women and their frontiers, although there is

now a paradigm shift that asks what ‘femininity’ and ‘women’ refer to. Moreover, Buikema maintained that

“the consequence of deconstructivist thought for feminists is that femininity is disconnected from a specific female identity, femininity can be regarded as a discursive construction and not as exclusively related to a specific biological or social group” (Buikema, 1995, p.13).

In addition, as reactive measures to the patriarchal cinema, feminist actions have paved the way for counter-cinema, which is the opposite of classical cinema. However, feminist counter-cinema avoids the conventions of the classical and accommodating female point of view. Smelik argued that the female counter-cinema achieves its goals by deconstructing the classic cinema, like Puccini’s opera (1985) (Smelik no date). She argued that the *“female counter cinema took its inspiration from the avant-garde in cinema and there such as the montage techniques of Sergei Eisenstein” (Smelik, no date, p. 492).* According to Smelik, the feminists’ struggles do two things; they try to deconstruct the patriarchal images and representation of women, and they historically have established their female subjectivity. However, Teresa de Lauretics cited in Smelik maintained that feminists should not destroy narrative visual pleasure, but rather should be narrative and oedipal with a vengeance (Smelik, no date).

Some international cinemas like Hollywood are seen as subverting and oppressing women as they feature them in passive actions. Marjone Rosen argued that Hollywood produces a patriarchal ideology and a powerful carrier of its values and ideas (McCabe, 2004). Feminism is just a visionary way of seeing, rather than having a single vision. This body of discourse for four decades has tried to document the history of feminist theory as an organ of development. Even so, scholars have

suggested that within the feminism discourses there is misunderstanding, failure, regression, disillusion, and uneven development. Moreover, feminist film theory, while trying to situate the woman in cinema and film narrative, disrupts and deconstructs the orthodoxy on gender, identity, and sexual difference. This has, however, quickly generated theories of spectating habit and female subjectivity, feminine identity linked to class, female desires, voyeurism, race, and ethnicity. McCabe argued that “*we may in fact have reached a point when it might be more important to gain knowledge about the features of feminist writings on film and cinema*” (McCabe, 2004, p. 45). This entails that the feminist discourses on film and cinematic representations justify the patriarchal domination and ideology imposed on females within the popular culture. However, without a tangible vision of feminism, it is impossible to fully understand how gender shapes the cinema.

Post-colonial feminist film theory revolves around mainstream feminist theory, moving from parochial concern to a focus on women in different parts of the world. It has also paved the way for post-colonial theorists to drop gender discrimination, and it also has the ability to be considered in its own right analytically, rather as a polemic of Western feminism or post-colonial theory (Sarah, in Jackson & Jackie, 1998).

Film, particularly in the early feminist period, was considered as one part of the media that could become a battleground for the women’s movement. It could also be used as an ideological tool to counter attack the stereotyped images of females depicted in the male-dominated media and raise women’s awareness of their subordinate position in the patriarchal society, where women were generally relegated to a low status and subservient role (Nelmes, 2007).

To sum up, the arguments and discourses of feminists in all spheres and disciplines revolve around three basic perspectives: representation, spectatorship, gender and sexual difference.

2.3 Semiotics and the semiotic approach in film studies

Various scholars have defined the term semiotics according to their understanding but with a unifying central meaning. Taylor and Willis stated that *“semiotics or the science of signs is primarily the study of how signs communicate, it is also the study of rules which regulate the operation of each system of sign”* (Taylor and Willis, 2007, p. 19).

Semiotics is a method used for textual analysis in social science disciplines and linguistics. It is concerned with how combinations of signs communicate and make meaning in a given text. The text can be sound, image, or a combination of the two. Semiotics is the study of the means that can be used to communicate, such as words, images, traffic signs, flowers, music, and medical symptoms (Taylor & Willis, 2007; see Berger, 2000). Saussure (1916) maintained that semiotics is a science that deals with study of the life of signs within society (Noth, 1995; see Lapsley & Westlake, 1998).

However, semiotics can be said to come out of linguistics as some early semioticians borrowed certain concepts of semiotics application from linguistics structures. Buckland argued that *“early semioticians borrowed from structural linguistics the communication test, a deductive method of analyzing how the underlying level lends structure to surface level”* (Buckland 2004, p. 36).

Chandler (2000) maintained that Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) was a pioneer who regularly referred to semiotics. According to Chandler, the other key role players in the early development of semiotics are American

philosophers Peirce (1839-1914) and Morris (1901-1979). Chandler also acknowledged Eco, Barthes, Kristeva, Metz, Jacobson, Halliday, and Greimas as leading contemporary semiotic theorists. Moreover, semiotics cannot be separated from structuralism; Levi-Strauss in anthropology and Lacan in psycho analysis are also considered important in the field (Chandler, 2000).

In addition, semiotics also deals with how meanings are produced within a given media text. Seiter (1999) identified the benefits of semiotics analysis thus, *“It allowed us to describe the workings of cultural communication with greater and enlarged our recognition of the conventions that characterize our culture”* (Taylor & Willis, 2007 p. 19). Moreover, Berger argued that *“semiotics helps us to understand how to decipher the messages we are sent and understand better the messages we send about ourselves to others”* (Berger, 2000, p. 43). Moreover, Vanzoonen (1994) defined semiotics analysis thus, *“semiotics analysis can be seen as formalization of the interpretative activities ordinary human being undertakes incessantly”* (Taylor & Willis 2007, p. 19). Fiske maintained that when dealing with semiotics we concentrate on terms like denote and connote (Fiske, 1990). He further argued that semiotics systems *“concentrate on analyses of a structured set of relationship which enable a message to signify something. Moreover, semiotics works tend to contribute in demystification and neutralizing representations and making them as constructed signs”* (Westlake & Lapsley 1998, p. 33).

Based on the above definitions of semiotics from different scholars, semiotics involves the study of different linguistic and cultural signs and the way they make meanings in a given text. Text can be sound, image, spoken words, or a combination of all. The meaning for semioticians should have cultural significance. Rose argued that *“Semiology offers a very full box of analytical tools for taking an image apart*

and tracing how it works in relation to broader systems of meaning” (Rose, 2001, p. x).

However, in semiotics, researchers are mainly concerned with the levels of meaning deduced, the implicit and explicit, surface and latent, and the connotation and denotation levels of signs.

However, early moves to regard film semiotically were first made in the 1960s and 1970s following the general linguistics turn and developments in structuralism occurring at that time (Bateman, 2013).

On one hand, despite the importance of Barthes’ method in the development of film theory, Metz is regarded as the most important contributor of semiotics method when applied to film. Metz’s work revolves around the notion that film is not language, and even though linguistics concepts can be applied to film, care must be exercised. He examined the Langue system and how it differs from language. Metz subsequently offered his grand syntagmatique concept and how it can be applied to cinema studies. However, despite Metz’s ideas being narrowly revealed, other scholars such as Raymond Bellour, Umberto Eco, Steven Heath, and Sam Rhode have devised different semiotics concepts similar to or different from that of Metz.

Moreover, semiotic analysis of film narrative was first developed by Raymond Bellour in 1972, when he studied *The Birds*. After Bellour, in 1982 Peter Wollen analyzed *North by Northwest*. Both Bellour and Wollen applied different approaches to their analyses but within the premise of semiotics. Bellour did his work shot by shot, while Wollen followed Proppian analysis of the whole film. However, they are criticized due to the assumption that there is one narrative meaning, not simultaneous meanings (Hill & Church, 2000).

Through various types of signs, everything in this world entails and imparts a certain meaning of its own in the eyes of the receivers. Chandler (2000) explained that in semiotics, signs are perhaps everything from which meanings can be deduced, like words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects. To analyze semiotics in Saussure's approach, every sign has two concepts: a signifier, the form the sign takes, and the signified, the concept it represents.

Another two important aspects of semiotics are syntagm and paradigm. The organization of signs by chain is referred to as syntagm, while by choice it is referred to as paradigm. Chandler maintained that the difference between paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures is vital in Structuralists semiotics analysis. These two distinct concepts are often labeled as 'axes.' The horizontal axis is the syntagm and the vertical is the paradigm. These terms were coined by Roman Jakobson (Chandler, 2000). Syntagm is an orderly combinations of signs that make meaning together (sometimes called a chain or combination). Such combinations are made within a framework of rules and conventions. On the other hand, paradigm is a set of associated signs that all belong to a defining category, but in which each sign is significantly different.

Moreover, being one of the three theoretical bodies of knowledge that intervened in film theory, the signifier and signified and the syntagm and paradigm axes constitute the most fruitful theoretical thinking applied to film studies from the branch of semiotics (Hill & Church, 2000). Hill and Church (2000) examined these linguistics concepts in relation to classical film theory. First, they started with signifier and signified, where they argued that signifiers are compositions of arbitrary sounds related to one another, while the signified form the meanings of the signifiers. However, they said it is difficult for them to work with a medium like film.

However, Hill and Church argued that *“the overall consequences of semiotics attention to cinema were to weaken concern with the issue of realism and strengthen attention to the cinema as a particular kind of textuality”* (Hill and Church, 2000, p. 51). In what resembled a development for semiotics, Hill and Church maintained that after 1968 these semiotics tendencies were reinforced due to the intrusion of an unpredicted quarter. Moreover, with regard to what concept of semiotics is appropriate for cinema studies, Christian Metz contrasted Hill and Church’s viewpoint restricted to only signifier/signified and syntagm/paradigm concepts. Metz maintained that:

“The semiotics of the cinema can be conceived of either as semiotics of connotation or as semiotics of denotation. Both directions are interesting, and it is obvious that on the day when the semiological study of film makes some progress and begins to form a body of knowledge, it will have considered connotative and denotative signification” (Metz, p. 70-71).

Moreover, in film the interpretations of individual shots depend on both paradigmatic analysis (comparing it, not necessarily, with the use of alternative kinds of shots) and syntagmatic analysis (comparing it with preceding and following shots). Additionally, a syntagmatic analysis involves an analysis of how each shot, scene, or sequence in a film is related to the others. Metz illustrated syntagmatic categories for narrative film as follows:

Table 1: Metz’s Grand Syntagmatique

The autonomous shot (e.g., establishing shot, insert)
The parallel syntagm (e.g., montage of motifs)
The bracketing syntagm (e.g., montage of brief shots)

The descriptive syntagm (e.g., sequence describing one moment)
The alternating syntagm (e.g., two sequences alternating)
The scene (e.g., shots implying temporal continuity)
The episodic sequence (e.g., organized discontinuity of shots)
The ordinary sequence (e.g. temporal with some compression)

(Chandler, 2000, pp. 8-9). However, Chandler argued that

“Metz's 'grande syntagmatique' has not been considered as an easy system to apply to some films. Hodge and Tripp (1986), in their study of children's understanding of television, divided syntagms into four types, based on syntagms existing in the same time (synchronic), different times (diachronic), same space (syntopic), and different space (diatopic)” (Chandler, 2000, p. 9).

The categories of the syntagm, as provided by Hodge and Trip, as are follows:

Table 2: Hodge and Tripp Syntagm categories

Synchronic/Synoptic (one place, one time: one shot)
Diachronic/Synoptic (same place sequence over time)
Synchronic/Diatopic (different places at same time)
Diachronic/Diatopic (shots related only by theme)

Moreover, in film semiotics, researchers try to bring out the meaning of any given sign at the two levels of meaning. Buckland argued that *“film semiotics adopts their two-tier hierarchy between perceptible and non-perceptible levels of reality and formulates probable hypotheses describing this underlying non-perceptible level”* (Buckland, 2008, p. 4; see Berger, 2000, and Fiske 1990). Buckland’s stance represents the central goal of film semioticians as he continued to maintain that *“the*

ultimate objective of film semiotics is to construct a model of the non-perceptible system underlying all films” (Buckland, 2004, p. 10). However, in understanding the latent meaning of film text in semiotics, early film semioticians used the methodology of segmentation and classification (Buckland, 2004).

Semiotics has been criticized because its approach tends to be subjective based on the researcher’s level of perception of what he or she is analyzing. If two people are given the same text to analyze, their results will differ, particularly at the connotative level. Nevertheless, semiotics provides researchers with unifying concepts and sets of methods. It is the approach that made available different methodological terms to follow in analyses. Semiotics serves as a textual analysis method that gives more room to researchers to express their thoughts, while also giving them the chance to dig beyond the surface and manifest meaning of a text. However, the problem of film expressiveness as Metz put it is that cinema is not like a language system because it contrasts important linguistics facts, while a language is a system of signs with rules used for inter-communication (Metz, 1974). Metz continued to argue that *“film, like a verbal language can be used merely as a vehicle without any artistic intention, with designation (denotation) governing alone and consequently, the art of the cinema like verbal art is, so to speak, driven one notch upward”* (Metz, p. 77). He further maintained that the semiotics should be applied to cinema studies with the greatest caution.

To sum up, to this researcher, the category given by Hodge and Tripp (1986) tends to be an easier and more systematic way of seeing paradigms and syntagma in films than Metz’s division. In the upcoming chapters, the syntagm/paradigm is used to determine the structure of the two films selected for analysis.

Chapter Three: Analysis

3.1 Analysis of *Gabar cikin gida (Enemies in the House)*

While justifying the use of different analysis approaches by the contributors of the collected articles in their book, Geiger and Rustky argued that

“While it is possible to view these essays in terms of their varying critical approaches, it is also important to note that they often combine different modes of analysis, demonstrating that no single critical approach is sufficient to understanding the diverse array of cinematic possibilities” (Geiger and Rustky, 2005, p. 38).

Therefore, the analysis of *Enemies in the House* employs different modes and approaches but emphasizes on the semiotics method, which is the main methodological approach of the researcher. By examining the iconography of this film, semiotics concepts such as connotation and denotation, syntagm and paradigm, metaphor, and signifier and signified will be applied.

Aesthetically, *Enemies in the House* is a film that presents intense enmity within a polygamous matrimonial home of a royal family. The different kind of syntagma used in the film to suture it made it a heartwarming and popular melodramatic film in 2013 in Nigeria among the audience of Kanywood films. Moreover, the background music, different types of shots, verbal language, popular and charismatic protagonists, and, above all, location made the film stand out among other films. Because the cinema-going culture is not so much appreciated in the northern Nigerian Hausa community, it was marketed by distributors in other areas across the country.

3.1.1 Background information about the film

Enemies in the House, was produced by 2Effects Empire Film Production Company, situated in the old city of Kano, Nigeria. The producer was Sulaiman Garba, with Ubale Ibrahim as co-producer. The film's director and screenwriter was Yakubu Muhammad, with Hassan Giggs as assistant director. The protagonists are Sani Danja (Hassan), Yakubu Muhammad (Kamal), Tahir Fagge (Alhaji), Saratu Gidado (Hajiya), Hadiza Muhammad (Umma), and Nafisat Ahmad (Hanadi). Moreover, the film was produced using inexpensive digital technology and was unprofessional. Saro-wiwa supported this view when describing the shoddy production of Nigerian films:

"The films are wordy, improvised, melodramatic morality tales that are often set in a shameless upwardly-mobile urban Nigerian environment. They are shot on cheap digital technology which has enabled a freewheeling approach to film-making that heavy, expensive 35mm equipment doesn't allow. These are films made in a hurry" (Saro-wiwa, 2008, p.1-2).

The *Enemies in the House* and grudges within the polygamous family resulting from jealousy and competition originating in a love dilemma caused by the evil plot of a woman is the central theme of the film. Additionally, the film is produced in a mansion situated in a capitalist and elite area of the city of Kano, even though some parts of Abuja and Kaduna were used here and there. The film's setting tells of the urban life style. However, the names of the cast are all popular and traditional northern Nigerian Muslim names, except for Hanadi, which sounds outlandish. However, *Enemies in the House* is presented in the chronological order of its narrative using different types of shots and scenes. The film also depicts the conspicuous life style and charisma of traditional rulers in Nigeria and signifies their

polygamous habit of marrying more than one wife, which often leads to polarity and friction within the family.

However, the end of film narrative leaves its audience in suspense regarding what happened to Hanadi after she is stabbed. In a telephone interview, MD Coka, a production crew member, revealed that the film had ended but the producer would not produce the third part of the film.

Moreover, in terms of ideology, this film appeals less to ideology than the patriarchy embedded in most Nigerian societies, particularly in the north where the majority is Muslim because Islam encourages patriarchy in that the men are the leaders at home. However, the critiques of ideology are concerned with deconstructing the ideological practices through assessment of their legitimacy. Rodriguez maintained that “*a central aim of ideology critique therefore consists of assessing the legitimacy of a practice of subordination*” (Rodriguez, no date, p. 269). According to Kellner ideological criticism comprises the analysis and deconstruction of ruling class ideas (Kellner, 2013). With regard to the above statements, Nigerian elites are yet to wake up to using the film medium for influential aims in society. This is because filmmaking is not seen as a respectable activity but rather a profitable business. In northern Nigeria, filmmakers are considered immoral and agents of moral decadence.

3.1.2 Synopsis of the film

The screenplay of *Enemies in the House* provides vivid melodramatic narration and depicts strong intra-family enmity. The film revolves around a traditional ruler (emir) who lives an Arcadian life with his two wives. Each of these wives has one male child and the children are mature enough to get married but are subservient to their parents.

Within this family composition is a woman called Hanadi, who is a daughter to Alhaji's friend who lives in Kaduna. She gains admission to university in Kano and is brought to stay in her father's friend's home. Both Kamal and his elder brother Hassan fall in love with Hanadi and Hassan is the first to feel this emotion, but he procrastinates while Kamal does not wait; he dares to express to Hanadi the feelings he has and she accepts and loves him.

One day, Kamal tests his family to see whether they love him or not. He locks himself in the gate security's room, switches off his telephone, and warns the security not to tell anyone that he is there. The entire family becomes confused and bewildered, especially Hanadi and Kamal's mother. Because of this, Hanadi pledges to retaliate for the psychological hardship Kamal throws her and brings someone to the house and introduces him to Kamal as her fiancée, saying that their dating relationship is jocular. Immediately when she utters this to Kamal, he faints and, in a coma, is taken to hospital for treatment.

Hassan's mother, the co-wife in the family and Kamal's stepmother, goes to the hospital and connives with the doctor, bribes him to write a fake medical report about Kamal to say that when he fainted, he fell on a nail and as a result of that his heart is affected and will stop working in 60 days. The doctor does what she wants. Her aim in this evil plot is to pave the way for her son Hassan to marry Hanadi so that she and Hassan will possess the wealth of Hanadi's father. Fortunately for her evil plan, the ill Kamal asks the embattled Hanadi to marry his elder brother Hassan since he is dying in 60 days. However, for the first time, both Hanadi and Hassan reject the offer. Kamal's mother also doesn't like it, but only Alhaji, who doesn't know what happened, and Hassan's mother, who is behind the fake medical report, want the swap of Hanadi from Kamal to his elder brother Hassan. Nevertheless,

Hassan and Hanadi later agree and start to date each other because of pressure from Kamal, Alhaji, and Hajiya (Hassan's mother), while Kamal is suffering the psychological pain that he will die in a few weeks.

After the stipulated 60 days, Kamal doesn't die and his heart does not pain him. He meets his father when discussing with Hassan where to have the reception on the wedding day; he asks for the revocation of Hanadi since Kamal is no longer sick. However, Alhaji lambasts him and even calls him stupid for such talk. On Hassan's side, his mother tells him not to surrender and that he must marry Hanadi. This issue is what breaks the family in two and causes their feud. There has always been a feuding exchange of words between the two co-wives and the two brothers. However, the householder (emir) remains at the center although he backs the marriage between Hassan and Hanadi because he has already concluded with Hanadi's family that she will marry Hassan; thus, there will be no revocation of the arrangement. Moreover, as the feud continues within the family, Kamal takes a knife and goes to Hassan's house to kill him. When he gets into the room, he finds Hanadi, who is lying down confused as a result of what the medical doctor has told her about her mother-in-law's plot to take her away from Kamal. Hanadi wears her husband's sleeping dress out of love; thus, Kamal does not recognize her and he stabs her. Immediately, Hassan comes in and Kamal tells him that he wanted to kill him but has mistakenly stabbed Hanadi. Hassan says he will cover for Kamal and to say that Hanadi fell on a knife in the kitchen. As they are mournfully discussing her, they hear Hanadi moving and anxiously dash into the room. This scene marks the end of the narrative.

3.1.3 Context of the film

“...since the comprehensiveness of reality both appears and is produced in texts, it is important to regard texts in relation to their context or function” (Anttila, 2009, p. 37).

Polygamy, one man marrying more than one woman, is a traditional Islamic practice in Nigerian communities. Since the pre-Islamic periods, some northern Nigerians communities have practiced polygamy. Also, in the south, particularly in Igbo land, they have been polygamous. However, when Islam arrived, it confirmed the practice but limited it to only four wives. Nevertheless, some people in Nigeria who follow certain traditional beliefs marry as many wives as they wish.

In most cases, polygamy comes with or causes problems, enmity, and jealousy among the wives and their children. Sometimes out of jealousy the women engage in criminal acts on their co-wives and their children. However, sometimes it is the husband who is victimized by the evil acts of the wives or children. Additionally, the children themselves often become antagonists of one another, each backing his or her mother. In February 2013, a woman in Nigeria’s capital Abuja reportedly burned her husband to death out of jealousy. This was because he stayed for 10 days with his first wife in the city of Kaduna (Weekly Trust, Feb. 16, 2013). Such merciless and criminal evil acts which occur owing to polygamy are rampant in Nigeria. Similarly, another woman in the city of Port Harcourt reportedly poisoned her husband’s food and subsequently stabbed him to death (Herald, 2013). However, among suitors also there is often a feud because of the woman the suitor intends to marry or among women fighting because of a man. This form of rivalry also leads to criminal acts and evil plots in Nigerian societies. According to the Lawyers Alert Report in 2013, a policeman shot dead his co-suitor in the Benue state of northern Nigeria (Lawyers Alert, 2012). This type of criminal evil act that results from jealousy in a polygamous

family is the major theme of *Enemies in the House*. One of the emir's two wives connives with a medical doctor and creates a fake medical report.

Another contextual aspect of the film is the phenomenon of a love story, currently the most frequent theme of Kanywood films in Nigeria. Although the Kanywood film industry is criticized for its melodramatic and romantic narratives in its films, Kanywood productions still tilt toward love/marriage affairs. The two different songs in the film, featuring the protagonists dancing, confirm the Bollywood film industry's influence on the Kanywood industry.

Materialism and greediness in the marital process are prevalent in some Nigerian communities. There is a tendency among the people to marry a prosperous or rich partner. However, parents too often develop such an uncalled for habit to pave the way for their children to marry a rich life partner or one from a well-to-do family. Djauro argued that materialism is one of those factors that break the family. This habit is found in males and females, children and parents. She continued to argue that *"men are of the habit of looking for girls that are from a well-to-do family not minding the other side of the woman"* (Djauro, p. 1). In *Enemies in the House*, the bone of contention in Hassan's mother plot is materialism. She works for her son to marry Hanadi so that they will subsequently possess her father's wealth.

Patriarchy is a common tradition of family life in Nigerian societies. The man is the head of the family, with one or more wives under him. He gives commands for the whole family because Islam and other cultural traditions in Nigeria encourage patriarchy. The film reinforces this culture, as it features a traditional ruler and rich man heading the family house. There are two wives and two male children under his utmost control. All the family members must obey the rules and regulations he lays out. One of the wives is even portrayed straightening his royal gown when he stands

up to leave. However, in some instances, women in Nigerian societies do take control of their houses, especially when the husband is not capable of fending for the family or when the wife engages in magical and spiritually improper acts and puts a spell on her husband.

3.1.4 Paradigmatic and syntagmatic structure of the film

According to Hodge and Tripp (1986), as far as syntagmatic structures are concerned, texts are examined from three different angles or variables: space, time, and continuity. Additionally, while integrating these three variables, Hodge and Tripp proffered another four concepts (discussed in chapter two), part of which are applied to a critical examination and identification of the scenic and shot structure of the film at stake. Regarding the paradigm, Metz argued, that “*the image paradigm is fragile in film; often still born, it is approximate, easily modified and it can always be circumvented*” (1974, p. 69). However, all these scenes are put in episodic sequence of the narrative, as Metz maintained, and are separated by cuts and dissolves, among other montage techniques. Additionally, Hodge and Tripp asserted that “*the important point is that both syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimensions carry meanings separately and in combination*” (Hodge and Tripp, 1986, p. 20).

3.1.4.1 Paradigmatic structure

According to Berger (2000), the paradigm involves how oppositions in a text work together and make meaning. However, in this analysis, the concept of paradigm is applied to determine the selection of different major parts of the film’s structure. The paradigmatic structure of a film depends on how the filmmaker or director wants to organize his or her materials. Sykes defined film as an “*assemblage of speech and movement images that function communicatively between the director, actors and audience*” (Delueze, 2009, p. 71).

There are different paradigmatic codes in (*Enemies in the House*). These codes are different and dependent specific choices that reinforce the thematic discourse of the film. First, the name of the film itself (*Enemies in the House*) signifies a kind of social problem which bedevils communities, especially polygamous families. People living in urban centers are expected to be void of all such ominous behavior and to be wise and responsible. This is because they are modern, educated, and above all well-to-do. Also, the location of the film is another paradigmatic code. The film is set in a gigantic mansion among many of its type in an honorable area, which signifies luxury, riches, royalty, and charisma. Additionally, the dress in the film is another paradigmatic code. The attire worn by the emir and his two wives throughout the film connotes a decent and tradition-oriented family. The dress of Hassan and Kamal is mostly nontraditional, which shows the de-culturing phenomenon among youths in Nigeria who consider themselves as modern and free to dress the way they want. Hanadi and Salima's dress is also modern trado-Islamic fashion, which also signifies the infiltration of modernity into Nigerian societies.

Another paradigmatic aspect of this film is the choice of the protagonists' names: Alhaji, Hajiya, Umma, Hassan, Kamal, Hanadi, and Salima. These are all Muslim names and popular in Nigeria; however, the names are found more in northern Nigeria, a Muslim-dominated region, except for Hanadi, who in the film is from Kaduna, a more cosmopolitan city than Kano where the film was produced. Additionally, the selection of different music and songs in the film is a paradigmatic aspect. The background music used, the different sounds used at times of happiness, anger, surprise, nervousness, or excitement, all contribute to the smooth flow of the film's dialogue and plot. Moreover, the selection of two co-wives and two male children and the selection of the embattled Hanadi, with Alhaji at the center of the

household, are other paradigm angles of the film. This paradigm balances the central themes of the film, which are feud, love, wickedness, and greediness.

When we make a commutation test, for example, change these paradigmatic angles of the film, the film's theme might denotatively or enigmatically change. When you change the names and use more traditional ones, the change might not match the location or the cast. If you change the dress of the cast, the Alhaji (emir) as a royal father might look different and not have any charisma. Likewise, for example, when you put three wives with their children, the relationship will change within the family. Paradigms are the prerogative of the filmmaker to select this or that and decide to put it here or there.

The above mentioned aspects, which are sequential and orderly in the film, are the paradigmatic angles of the film. They serve a common function and can easily be substituted with other elements without tempering the rationale of the film, but the meaning might change. All of them work together to make the meaning of the film.

3.1.4.2 Syntagmatic structure of the film

Syntagm, as Berger (2000) argues is the examination how events follow sequentially in a given text. With regard to this research work, the syntagm reveals how the scenes of the film's narrative flow and work together to complement the theme of the film. The syntagma of this film will be explained in two forms: diachronic/diatopic and synchronic/diatopic. Additionally, Kingston argued that "*the syntagmatic analysis of media text involves studying it as a narrative sequence...it would involve an analysis of how each shot, scene or sequence related to the others*" (Kingston, no date).

Additionally, the Syntagmatic category is normally large because the combination within the chain might be many. The more the Syntagmatic category is

revealed in an analysis of text, the better its structures come out. For this reason, the Syntagmatic category receives more explanation than paradigm.

However, all these techniques of filmmakers use editing to suture different parts of the film together. Also, the meaning of diachronic/diatopic and synchronic/diatopic will be clearer as the argument progresses. A detailed analysis and categorization of the scenes as either diachronic/diatopic or synchronic/diatopic brings a clearer picture of the terms.

3.1.4.2.1 Diachronic/Diatopic (shots related only by theme)

Almost all the syntagma of this film are Diachronic/Diatopic. They are shots related by theme. The film is chronologically presented. The first scene in the film contains a Chinese roofing type shown on many different houses, sending signals of an honorable area. The camera switches to the interior of a home, marvelously decorated with modern furniture, where a fully covered woman and a young man casually dressed meet in a corridor. Both of them looked puzzled and they discuss Kamal's whereabouts as he has not been seen for a day. The next scene is of the emir with one of the co-wives standing and chatting, the other co-wife comes and tells them that Kamal has not been seen for a day; here music signifying anxiety is used and the emir's face suddenly changes. The camera shot then changes to a staircase, showing Kamal coming up, and moves back to where the emir (Alhaji), Hassan, and the two wives are seated. As they see Kamal, they quickly stand in anxiety. Here again, music is used to connote a mixture of happiness and anger. This scene is followed by another scene which is sutured together to create the meaning; Hassan admonishes his younger brother Kamal not to do this again as it is not Islamic or proper.

Another diachronic/diatopic scene is where Hanadi (the girl Kamal dates) complains to him about what he did in hiding himself. She shows her anger and Kamal apologizes for what he did. However, she pledges to retaliate in the following scene, where Hassan tells Kamal about Hanadi's plan to take revenge. After this scene is one related to the theme where Hanadi introduces another person as her fiancée to Kamal and he immediately faints. The next thematically linked scene is in the hospital where a female nurse tells her male colleague what happened to Kamal and the result of the test. After leaving the hospital, they go back home where the emir tells Hajiya, the other wife, and appeals to Kamal's mother to stop crying. This scene is followed by a scene where Hajiya cheerfully informs her son Hassan about the health condition of his brother Kamal, that his heart will stop working in 60 days according to the medical report. Additionally, the camera shot switches to Alhaji coming outside of the compound and meeting the weeping Hassan; he asks what has happened. Hassan replies that his mother has told him what is going on in the family. Although Alhaji asks the wives not to tell the children anything about the issue, she defiantly does.

As the film flows diachronically/diatopically, another scene of this structure is when Alhaji meets Kamal and tells him the result of his health tests. Immediately, he faints again. The next scene is where Hanadi and Kamal are in discussion and he tells her the medical results. Next, Hassan meets Kamal in his room, appeasing him, trying to calm him down, and saying that falling sick is not death. Hassan even rejects the medical results and says that many quack doctors don't know what they're doing. In the next scene, Kamal asks his elder brother Hassan to marry Hanadi just to complement his lifelong dream since he is dying; he assumes his brother can replace him, but Hassan rejects Kamal's request and restates his rejection of the medical report, saying Kamal might not die.

The next thematically related combination of shots is when the family meets and pleads with Hanadi to marry Hassan as a result of his condition. Another closely related shot is where Kamal meets Hassan and Hanadi chatting and tells them he understands that the two have started to love one another. After this, Kamal asks both Hanadi and Hassan to get married before he dies so that he can witness their wedding ceremony, but they refuse saying no one knows what will happen. The next two consecutive diachronic/diatopic scenes are when Alhaji, Hassan, and Kamal leave and Alhaji gives a car key to Hassan to go to a different hospital for another check-up. At the hospital, the doctor tells Kamal that there is no any problem with his heart. However, Kamal pessimistically denies what the doctor says to him, claiming it is just his father's plan to calm him down. Kamal stands and leaves the doctor in wonder.

After they come home, Hanadi's father comes to Hassan's house to confirm the relationship with his daughter; he agrees to give her to Hassan for marriage. Another scene in this category is the sixtieth night, on which Kamal will die. His parents and Hassan stand with him while he lies in bed crying asking why his father told him about his death time. The father apologizes and they all wait till dawn and Kamal doesn't die. He stands and goes to have a bath and barb. Similarly, the next consecutive shots in this category are where Kamal's mother asks him to ask for the revocation of Hanadi to him since he is now okay and he hasn't died. He goes and meets his father to tell him what he wants. Also, in another diachronic/diatopic scene, Hajiya, Hassan's mother, calls him and stresses her stance, asking him not to surrender and leave Hanadi. Another similar scene in this category is when Hassan and Kamal exchange words about Hanadi; they pledge to become rivals and enemies for life. After this scene, Kamal, Hassan, and their mothers meet and discuss the revocation of Hanadi. However, Hajiya and Hassan reiterate their stance. A similar

scene with this structure is when Kamal meets Hanadi separately to ask her to return to him. He even calls her a traitor, hypocrite, and lover, but she says if he can convince his family, she will come back and marry him. The next diachronic/diatopic structure is where Hassan comes home and meets friends of the bride waiting for him to collect the traditional money from him that a groom should give the bride's friends before she can speak to him. This is a sign that Hassan and Hanadi are married. In this first night, Kamal and one of his friends intrude into Hassan's room, meet him with his wife, and disgrace them by saying he is still in love with Hanadi and she must come back to him. Next, Alhaji warns Kamal not to interfere in the new groom and bride's affairs as he says he will curse him if he dares. Kamal goes and tells his mother what his father has said but she challenges the father's stance and instigates Kamal again to go and get Hanadi back from Hassan.

In a similar scene, Hassan's mother reiterates to him her position not to surrender and Hassan vows to use all means against his brother Kamal. They fight with big, sharp knives and injure one another. After this bloody scene, Alhaji warns Kamal again and Kamal tells him that it is his mother behind what he has done to his brother Hassan. Then Alhaji meets Hassan and tells him that it is Kamal's mother disturbing his life. Hassan goes and meets her, he is angry with her and she cries and calls her son Kamal to tell him what Hassan has done to her. Kamal furiously takes the knife and goes to Hassan's home for another fight.

Before Kamal reaches Hassan's home, two nurses in the hospital are depicted and the female nurse tells her male colleague about the evil plot of Hassan's mother. The medical doctor who connived with Hassan's mother and wrote the fake result informs Hanadi about this then tells the truth to Kamal, too. The next similar scene is when Kamal goes to Hassan's house and meets Hanadi lying on bed, thinking she is

Hassan because she is wearing his sleeping dress. Kamal stabs her with the knife. All of them leave, but they hear Hanadi moving and they say that she hasn't died. Here marked the end of the film.

3.1.4.2.2 Synchronic/diatopic scenes (different places at the same time)

There are a few synchronic/diatopic scenes in the film. The first is when Hassan tells Kamal that Hanadi pledges to take revenge for what he did to her; at the same time, Hanadi and the man she introduces to Kamal appear on camera. Another scene of this syntagma is where Hassan and Kamal sit in different shots, each of them reflecting back on something that once happened (flash back). Hassan reminisces that he was the first to start having feelings for Hanadi. Kamal, on his part, thinks about something similar to what is happening to them now. At the same time, they fall in love with the same girl. The girl is their father's accountant, named Salima. This accountant accepts both of them and they accidentally meet in her house. From that day, they give up all for her and she returns to square one.

Also, when Kamal comes to kill Hassan, a dark background is shown outside, signifying danger. In addition, before any scene that takes place in the house, the roofs of the houses in the area are shown.

3.1.5 Mapping out representation of women in *Enemies in the House* and feminist film theory

The central criticism of feminists on films in all the three waves revolves around the stereotypical images and domain of women in film and theater. These critiques concern how women are portrayed and depicted and the way males reconstruct female images based on their fantasies. Feminist critiques always call for the depiction of strong images of women in film, even if in situations whereby the reproduced images are as they are in real social life. In *Enemies in the House*, the

mapping of the representation of women concentrates on verbal language, facial expressions, body gestures, music, and different shots within the film, while approaching and framing the images connotatively and denotatively. In his popular article on film language, Metz maintained that “*the study of connotation brings us closer to study of art*” (Metz, 1974, p. 71). Denotation, on the other hand, has problems of motivation of signs and continuity of meaning. Metz (1974) added that the denotation motivation is stored by analogy, which is by the perceptual similarity between the signifier and the signified. However, to determine the position of women in this film, a general approach is applied rather than following the film scene by scene.

Enemies in the House, as the name implies, is the story of an intra-family feud between two co-wives and their male children. This feud came as a result of a young girl with whom both the male children in the royal family fall in love. First, the theme of the film, feud as a result of a woman, connotes that women are positioned as sexual objects and subsequently cause family disintegration rather than bringing unity and peace in the royal home. Although culturally women in most Nigerian societies are assumed to be home-keepers and children-breeders, this film reinforces the patriarchal ideology. According to Ezumah (no date), right from infancy, girls are considered in the light of their future matrimonial life where they become potential housewives and mothers, but with positive materialistic optimism. She cited an example in some communities like Igbo where at birth a baby girl is referred to as ‘Akpa-Ego’ (bag of money) or ‘Obute’ (scores of wealth). Similarly, in northern Nigeria, since before girl reaches puberty, her mother will save money in preparation for her marriage. This signifies that the film somehow reproduces the reality in some Nigerian societies.

Additionally, the two wives (Hajiya and Umma) are portrayed as domesticated by their husband (Alhaji), who is a traditional ruler. They are always at home serving their children and husband and receiving commands from him. The film here also reinforces the patriarchal culture of Nigerian societies.

However, this patriarchy does not exist in Nigeria alone; the entire world today is patriarchal. It is a global phenomenon. Johnson (2004) contended that the world is patriarchal because everything is perceived from a man's perspective. It is the man who commands, disciplines, and assigns roles and duties for the woman based on his fantasies, based on his needs or desires of the woman. Thus, there is no respite for women in film. Burstyn argued that women remained tied to their homes with very few social experiences to divert their thoughts, and they dwelt in misfortune in a way unknown and unsuspected by their active partners (i.e., men) (Mohammed, 2004).

These assertions by different women writers are further reinforced by Ukata (no date) in her studies of Nigerian video films. She maintained that in the film *August Meeting* different women from different places organized an event to take place in the month of August. These women struggled to get the money for clothes to wear on the event day. As they came to the village where the meeting would be held, they found that the male elders in the village had canceled the event despite many of them coming from faraway places and suffering much to get the money for the event (Ukata, 2010, Okunna, 1996; Ogunleye, 2003; Eziego, 1996). Azeez argued that

“Nigerian films portray and position Nigerian women stereotypically and negatively. In line with a feminist ideological perspective of the media then, the films position women at the bottom of the power hierarchy in a way that reinforces their domination and suppression” (Azeez, 2020, p. 1).

Moreover, in this film, Hajiya is also featured straightening Alhaji's royal gown as he is about to go outside. This shows how superior husbands are over their wives. The way Alhaji commands the two wives as he says 'Ku tashi ku tafi' (get out) also signifies his superiority, reinforcing the patriarchal ideology.

Another patriarchal signal in *Enemies in the House* shows Alhaji sitting on a cushioned chair, while the wives sit on the floor as a sign of submission and subservience to him. Additionally, in places of work, women occupy subordinate and passive roles. In the company of Alhaji, Hassan, and Kamal's father, a woman is the accountant, while in the hospital women are featured as nurses while the medical consultant is a man.

However, audiences of the Nigerian video films have also held that the films are products of men to dominate women. In his study, Azeez discussed the audience perception of the portrayal of women in Nigerian home videos:

"Responses from both the male and female audience members in this study conform to the idea of mass culture, agreeing that Nigerian films, as a form of culture industry, are devoted to controlling and dominating women and they do this in such a way as to make the control and domination seem natural and given, but with the power to propel women to internalize their objectives" (Azeez, 2010, p. 201).

The negative images of women in *Enemies in the House* are both implicit and explicit; typical of this negativity is that all the stories about Kamal's situation are revealed by woman. The female nurse is first depicted telling her male colleague that Kamal's heart was damaged. She is similarly used to expose the evil plot between her boss and Kamal's stepmother of writing the fake medical result. This is despite there being a male nurse; a woman is used in these scenes to tell bad news. This

connotatively shows what gossips women are because in both the scenes her actions show that she doesn't want the doctor to hear. In contrast to this negative image of women is when Kamal's whereabouts are unknown; both his mother and the co-wife are shown worried, confused, and bewildered. Similarly, when he appears, they become happy.

In another film *Basaja (Camouflage)*, produced by Tahir I. Tahir (2012), young women are situated as machinery for and tools for fraudsters in duping their parents. However, the women's greediness is what makes them so easily manipulated and cheated. The man who dupes people goes from city to city meeting girls and using them to defraud their fathers. The first girl he dupes is Safiya; he dupes her father for one hundred million naira. Another girl is Ummi; the fraudster cunningly plans and dupes her father for one hundred million naira as well. This film is a typical example of the melodrama genre. The third girl who is used to dupe her family of twenty million naira is featured terribly insulting the fraudster as she learns that he has done something similar in Kano. However, this fraudster uses three different names, Ameenu, Kabiru, and Mukhtar, in the different cities of Katsina, Kano, and Minna, respectively. Additionally, he goes to Bauchi with another name, Ameer, and defrauds a girl who cheats on her friend and is the first to fall in love with the fraudster. Even worse, the fraudster, the multi-named young man, engages in this evil business as a result of greediness and betrayal of women who have rejected him in preference for a rich man.

However, in *Enemies in the House*, Hajiya's facial and verbal expressions are hypocritical as she is inwardly happy that Hassan has not been seen for a day. Moreover, although Hajiya and Umma are always featured fully clad in Islamic dress, they are ridiculously portrayed as jealous and wicked.

In a popular Hausa film, *Ibro juga*, women are positioned as just political campaign machinery for the male contestants in the film. Additionally, among the elites of the state and the officials of the electoral commission, there are no women. Women only appear as housewives and carriers of the contestant to their fellow women. More devastating is that the wife of the chairman of the electoral commission even encourages her husband to take bribes and manipulate the votes in favor of one candidate over the rest.

In another film, *Ina Mafita ga 'Ya'yanmu* (*what is the way out for our children*), women are depicted as victims of indecent dressing, despite their victimization by men. One of the protagonists in the film is raped and becomes pregnant; during the merciless and foiled process to abort the pregnancy, a traditional medical doctor is seduced by her indecent dress and has sex with her, infecting her with HIV.

However, these representations of women in Nigerian video films are the same as those in soap opera, as posited by Modleski. Modleski argued that soap operas reinvigorate the traditionally sutured works attached to women that is the responsibility of becoming housewives and domesticated (Azeez, 2010). Moreover, Azeez continued to argue that based on the different studies of representations of women in Nigerian films, the films not only portray women as passive and subordinate housewives, but also position them as evil, wicked, vindictive, and unfaithful (Azeez, 2010). A typical example of this assertion in *Enemies in the House* is where Hajiya's sheer wickedness and evil act are portrayed.

Another feature of women in *Enemies in the House* is that of seeking revenge and being unforgiving. Hanadi pledges to retaliate for what Kamal did to the family as she was psychologically irked with his act. Her vengeance complex leads to all the

chaos within the family. Here, women are placed as unforgiving and agents of men's victimization. In the analysis of *August Meeting*, a Nigerian video film, Duru wrote that

“Men were portrayed as victims of women’s insatiable desires to indulge in luxury and off their wealth. Rufus had to go to jail when he was caught stealing so he could give money to his wife, and to finally have some peace at his home. Evans suffers the humiliation of publicly finding out that his wife was cheating on him and sleeping with his friend so she could get some jewels for the August meeting. Victor suffers the loss of a child which he left in the care of his wife when he travelled. His wife used the money he gave her for their family upkeep while he was away to buy clothes in preparation for the August meeting” (Duru, no date).

Rufus, Evans, and Victor are all victims of the evil craft of their wives. Each of them is caused to suffer. This anecdote from Ukata reiterates the frequent and negative images of women in Nigerian video films.

Moreover, in all the scenes where women's evilness is shown in *Enemies in the House*, special music telling of danger is used. Sometimes dark locations are shown before an evil act. Special effects of music in films are important catalysts for actualizing and complementing a character's role in films.

In addition, women in *Enemies in the House* are also labeled as untrustworthy because they don't keep secrets. This happened in two instances; when Alhaji tells the wives not to tell their children about Kamal's heart condition, Hassan's mother calls him and tells him everything and Alhaji becomes very angry about this. In some Nigerian films, women are portrayed as traitors and unfaithful to their husbands out of greediness and ingrates just as Duru in the analysis of *August Meeting* suggested.

Women are also shown as unpredictable, feeble, and fickle. For example, this is demonstrated when Hanadi within a day changes her stance from resistance to leaving Kamal for Hassan to acceptance of Hassan.

Similarly, the sexual objectification of females for men's pleasure is conspicuous in the film. Two ladies are featured (Hanadi and Salima), both loved by two brothers. Both the ladies accept the offer, and their acceptance causes enmity between the blood brothers. This signifies how dangerous life with women is as well as their overly ambivalent nature and unreliability. Verbally, Kamal calls Hanadi a traitor, hypocrite, and lover. He also tells Salima that he wants to tell his mother that he loves her but because women are not reliable he has delayed telling her. These two different verbal statements decrease the social status of women. Another sexualization of women's bodies is when Hassan meets with Hanadi at the house's compound. They exchange greetings and as she moves he stops looking at her, chilling, and even dances using his hand to picture her body structure. Additionally, special romantic music is used here to reinforce the scene.

The core greediness of women is also depicted in the film. Hassan's mother plots against her stepson out of greed and jealousy, just to possess the wealth of Hanadi's father. Similarly, Salima loves two brothers because of their father's riches. Other greediness of women is depicted when the groom Hassan comes to his house the first night. Traditionally in northern Nigerian Hausa communities, the bride's friends will collect some amount of money from the groom before they allow him to enter the bride's room. Here they demand more than normal. This is like in *August Meeting*, as Duru argued that Victor blames his wife for the loss of their boy, who died after the wife used their upkeep money to buy jewels and clothes for their organization meeting (Duru, no date).

Zawarawa (Divorcees and Widows) produced by Maje El Hajij (2013) is a popular Kanywood film that appeals to female emotions and sympathy. This film also belongs to the melodrama genre of films. The themes of *Zawarawa* revolve around the rampant cases of divorce, adultery, infidelity, and jealousy. In the film, women are situated as born of contention behind marriages that break as they engage in all they can do to oust their co-wives from the homes.

Women have no freedom to choose their spouse, as *Enemies in the House* connotes. Hanadi is forced to love Hassan instead of Kamal, whom she loved first. All the family coerces her to accept Hassan in place of Kamal. This is a deprivation of the personal rights of women. While justifying feminism as a tool for women's rights campaigns, Mohammed argued that

“Through a long period of time, despite the “successive socio-political mutation from a feudal to a bourgeois” estate, the position and roles of women has remained feebly subordinate and subaltern and that it was recently as a result of modernity, that women have been able to woo the same right as her male counterpart. It has been a long time for women to get the right to vote and be elected, to be paid for equal wages for equal work and to have free voice for choice of spouse” (Mohammed, 2004, p. 171).

In Nigerian Hausa (Kanywood films), such positioning of women is common as Mohammed argued that in films the subordination of a woman is stressed when she is featured as a daughter or good housewife in an idyllic household. As a daughter, she must propose at a specific given time a husband (*fidda miiji*) or accept one chosen by her parents. He cited an example thus:

“In Sukuni film, Hussaini Ali Koki, the father of Hadiza Kabara, persistently demanded that his daughter should come up with a suitor, at the end of the

narrative the girl was forced to marry someone other than the one she chose; then eventually the marriage had to collapse” (Mohammed, 2004, p. 172).

Another typical instance of this women’s rights suppression is in the film *Gyale* where Bashir Nayaya forces his daughter to marry somebody unknown to her because the father has rejected the one (Ali Nuhu) she proposed to him for marriage (Mohammed, 2004). A similar instance is in the film *Kuskurena*, where Fati Ladan gets herself in a dilemma as her father has chosen a husband for her, despite another man she loves. Such instances of women’s rights suppression are numerous in Nigerian film productions.

However, women as weak and feeble-minded forms part of women’s positioning in *Enemies in the House*. In times of calamity, women cannot control themselves. The situation in which Hanadi finds herself, and how bewildered the two housewives are when Kamal is not seen, signifies this feature, while Alhaji and Hassan are not shown in as critical an emotional condition as the women within the home. As a result of these derogatory features of women in Nigerian videos, women have called for the abolition of this culture. Mohammed maintained that a new image of woman should be portrayed in the film industries, which are mostly watched by women, an image that differs from what is now being presented. Those images show a woman as one who sacrifices her independence for men; her superior courage and her capacity for selfless compassion and heroism should be changed and supersede the timid, loyal depiction that is now rampant on the screen as the handiwork of male script writers, directors, and producers. However, she argued that women should join the film industry if they want to see a good image of women on the screen and assert their presence in the sunlight shoulder to shoulder with men (Mohammed, 2004).

Additionally, in *Enemies in the House*, women are shown as not providing a good moral upbringing for their children as both the wives have pitted their children against each other. In fact, as Alhaji says to Hassan, it is Kamal's mother who is behind his misbehavior. That is, as men try to make the children good, women spoil that effort. However, contrary to these pictures, Sheme posited that women are the bedrock of society but always at the bottom of the social hierarchy. He argued that it is no more a story that the lot of women in the world has been a dour one even despite their prospects as progenitors of the earth. The facts are startling. It is women who give birth and nurture children; they take care of the home front regardless of culture or creed, maintaining good relationships and sanity at the family level, are the major players in child upbringing, and significantly contribute to the growth of society. Nonetheless, despite their high number in the world, they lag behind economically and politically. Worse, they are regarded as a subordinate species in almost every society (Sheme, 2010).

Risk taking and endangering life as a result of love is another circumstance in which women are situated in the film. Because Hanadi, despite knowing that Kamal will die in a few weeks, insists on marrying him out of blind love, regardless of the reality that widowers and divorcees suffer in Nigerian societies, particularly in the north where women are not as free to work as in the south. Another picture of this type is when Hanadi complains to Kamal about what he did; he tries to apologize and she says, "Don Allah kar ka yi amfani da karfin soyayyar da nake maka ka hana min rayuta" (Please do not extol how deeply I love you to spoil my life). Similarly, she (Hanadi) insists on marrying Kamal despite knowing that he will live only days. She says no matter how bad his situation is, she will go ahead and marry him. Moreover, she even threatens to damage her heart so that she will have an illness similar to Kamal's. Additionally, after Hanadi is stabbed, the two brothers unite at her expense.

Immediately Hassan says he will cover Kamal against any allegation that he killed Hanadi, even though he comes to the house to kill Hassan. Here, the woman is regarded as nothing rather than lust material.

The extent of women's jealousy is easily noticed from the way they (Hajiya and Umma) talk to one another. As Alhaji tries to comfort Kamal's mother Umma, her co-wife Hajiya instead of praying for Kamal's quick recovery, says that Umma should stop crying and just pray for her son to rest in peace when death comes. A kind of suspicious gaze at her by Alhaji emphasizes the extent of the jealousy.

Women are positioned, as always, as dependent on men. This is signified in the words of Kamal when asking his elder brother Hassan to marry Hanadi; he says if Hassan doesn't marry her, she might fall under an evil hand. This means that women can never live on their own without the support of a man. However, there is a popular proverb in northern Nigeria which says women regret only when there is no solution to a problem. This film reinforces this fallacy as Hanadi regrets taking vengeance on Kamal when he is already finished. When she says, "kar ka kona ni da ruwan da na tafasa" (do not burn me with the water I boiled), she refers to her revenge as the water she boiled. This is a sheer patriarchal depiction of women through screen representation.

Despite the patriarchal bias regarding an education, especially at the higher level, in Nigeria, particularly in northern state communities, Hanadi gains admission to university. Nevertheless, she is warned not to go outside except when going to school. The fear of women's weakness inspires her father not to allow her to stay on campus; rather, she stays at his friend's home. Salaam contends that

"...generally, girls' educational opportunities tend to be circumscribed by patriarchal attitudes about gender roles, which result in some parents

attaching greater importance to the education of boys than girls. This is always the likelihood when the parents lack resources to enroll all children in schools...in some families, investing in girls' education is regarded as investing for the benefit of the family she will eventually marry into, unlike in the case of boys" (Salaam, 2003, p. 1).

Another bad feature of women in the film is close to infidelity. Although they are not married, Hassan tells Salima why he should come and meet her with his brother in her house when there is nobody there except them. He passes by the sleeping gateman. Their loneliness is not questionable, but rather the language Hassan uses. Another position in which women are situated in the film is comparing them to money in terms of dangerousness. When Hassan meets Kamal at Salima's house, Kamal apologizes and says, "*My elder brother, neither money nor woman can separate us.*" This comparison demeans the image of women and reinforces the notion that women create friction in families as a central theme of *Enemies in the House*. A similar feature of women in Nigerian film is in the Omata women, as Ukata (2004) contended. In the film, women are shown with an insatiable character. Because she needs money, Evan's wife sleeps with his friend. Such features are common in Nigerian video films. Additionally, in the film, *Matan gida (House wives)*, women are shown with the bad habit of cheating on their husbands and end up humiliated and ashamed in society. However, their co-male adulterators move freely without being victimized. This social imbalance is what the feminist fight.

This negativity attached to women in Nigerian films was also observed by Mohammed (2004) in the film *Sunduki*. A mother is shown abandoning her newborn baby and her husband just because of a disagreement. According to Mohammed, this is an insult to motherhood as she reiterates that no woman would be so merciless and

irrational if sane. Mohammed (2004) also observed that another film, *Tsiwa*, reflects women as awful, dangerous, and extremely destructive. He further noted that in the film *Furuci*, Alhaji's wife pretends to be pregnant and at the end delivers a baby to Alhaji. This baby was obtained from one of Alhaji's loyalists, who promised his wife that he would not bring her kishiya (co-wife). Subsequently, he divorces her. However, it is not possible for a woman to pretend pregnancy for nine months and deliver. This is a highly negative image resulting from a woman's evil plot. Apart from this bad habit linked to Hajiya, she is also shown destroying the entire family and the family of Alhaji's client.

Ni da ke mun dace (I and you match), co-produced by Ibrahim Bashir Nuhu and Usman Muazu (2013), embodies a typical film that appeals to female emotions and fosters a total suppression of women's rights. The main protagonist, a young undergraduate student named Raliya, finds herself in a dilemma as her family has chosen a husband for her against her wishes. This dictatorship has ruined her life. Additionally, the film's plot also situates women as a cause of turbulence. Abbas, another protagonist in the film, is sacked from home by his uncle just because he is in love with his cousin's sister. Patriarchal views and sentiments are explicit in the film as women have been domesticated, serving the family. Like most of the Kanywood films, this film also establishes a love relationship as the main branch of the narrative.

Songs featured in Nigerian films play a significant role in portraying women. Ukata argued that songs in Nigerian video films are elements to portray and personify women (Ukata, 2010). In one of the *Enemies in the House* songs between the embattled Hanadi and the two rival brothers, the chorus of the song by Hanadi reads '*Gabar cikin gida, Gabar cikin gida, gaba ake mai muni kauna da ku ba zan*

daina ba' (*Enemies in the House*, it is the worst feud, and I can never stop loving you). Here she acknowledges how bad the feud is but still burns the fire. This connotes another evil characteristic of women. While justifying the use of song in Nigerian video films to represent women in *Omata* film, Ukata argued that "*the song becomes a personified judge of women's character in the film. The song used to draw relationships helps to enunciate the various icons of wickedness that women in this video associated*" (Ukata, 2010, p. 73). While justifying positive representation of men in the film, she maintained that it is through the use of song that men are represented as good, stable, and qualitative home builders, in contrast to their counterpart women who are seen as a threat to society (Ukata, 2010).

Additionally, in *Enemies in the House*, the chorus of the song from both Hassan and Kamal reads '*Gabar cikin gida, Gabar cikin gida, gaba ake mai muni da ni da kai ba zai yanke ba*' (*Enemies in the House*, *Enemies in the House*, it is the worse feud and it will never cease between us). This chorus connotes how women can destroy the good rapport between the two brothers. Both vow to continue fighting over Hanadi. In addition, they both acknowledge the good upbringing they received at home, but, as a result of a woman, they divide. As Burt contended, song has the capacity to create different underlying cultural meanings which serve to provide more surface meaning of the language. However, she believed that the capacity of language and music are significant and help to break down the purpose of explicitness in some pictures (Ukata, 2010).

The second song of *Enemies in the House* features Kamal and Hassan, as well as Salima, their father's accountant. The song, which comes up as a result of Kamal's reminiscence of their clash with Hassan at Salima's home, features women as not trustworthy and as sexual objects. The way both Kamal and Hassan dress in the song

signifies that Salima's body is sexualized. They dress casually in T-shirts and their underwear can be seen. The song's chorus reads 'Marmaza marmaza ba ma son gaba, a soyayya marmaza ba a son gaba' (be fast, be fast, we don't want a feud, be fast, be fast, in dating a feud is not needed). However, in part of what Salima says in the song she endorses Kamal despite the presence of his elder brother.

Despite these negative images in Nigerian video films, some people have contrasting views; they argue that these videos are used to bring about development and solve social problems. Makhu contended that video films have been used to proffer solutions to existing and emergent problems. Because of their uniqueness and popularity, these films serve as a veritable tool to curb anti-social practices and instill socially approved norms, values, etiquette, and philosophy. Moreover, he further maintained that film and video as powerful communication media have the unique advantage of both audio and visual elements (Makhu, 2010)

Makhu argued that the film medium can be exploited for cultural development and propaganda. Filmmakers, particularly in developing nations such as Nigeria, should concentrate on how they can bring about social development within their society, while simultaneously winning recognition in the international arena. However, Makhu cited an example with the American Hollywood of how the US security agency ably used Hollywood for international propaganda (Makhu, 2010). He contended that

“In the United State of America, the film industry represented by Hollywood worked in close affiliation with the government establishment to project a particular government philosophy. The funding for the film Beret and the manpower for it was allegedly from the United States intelligence service headed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)” (Makhu, 2010, p. 160-161).

However, Nigerian video films have been questioned for their romance, feuds, love, and other peripheral themes and narratives. This is because today critics globally use Hollywood cinema to judge other cinema in the world. While criticizing the Nigerian Hausa (Kanywood) home videos, Adamu argued that

“Critical audiences from both academics and the public sphere always use Hollywood as a template for determining quality and competence in filmmaking. They also use the very concept of representation as a basis for judging storylines. When filmmakers sacrifice art for commerce, these two templates were likely to clash – leading to public outcry, it is this outcry strident in the commercialization of the Hausa film industry that leads to soul-searching as the current one” (Adamu, 2009, p. 1).

Muhammad, in research on the use of Hausa home videos (Kanywood films), revealed that audiences prefer films with love themes and narration, films with dance and songs, rather than films that portray the real Nigerian culture (Muhammad, 2004). However, it might be for this reason that filmmakers exploit and produce films with the above mentioned themes that dominate the film context (Enemies in the House).

In an effort by Nigerian scholars to intellectualize Kanywood films, Abdallah Uba Adamu created an online-based forum (Yahoo group) where he collected different views and criticism. Most of the participants had negative attitudes toward production of the films. The filmmakers even called their critiques ‘Mahassada’ (those who wish ill) (Adamu, 2009).

Nevertheless, many Nigerian Hausa films portray women with negative features and in subservient positions, while men are positioned in enhancing and positive roles. In most of these films, male characters are the main protagonists (as in

Enemies in the House) and the action revolves around them. Men are thus given a strong character trait to take the narrative through. However, women are presented in their social roles as mother, daughter, sister, mistress, and/or housewife.

Makahon gida (2013), produced by Usman Mu'azu, is a Kanywood film that positions women in lower social positions and with negative images of womanhood. The central theme of the film is the family life style whereby a woman is featured as the cause of her husband's death. Their only son Nasir is taken and nurtured by his uncle and is also ruined and seduced by his uncle's second wife. Hajiya, wife of the deceased Rabi'u, is featured as an infidel breaking all the marital protocols. However, this film is also cheaply made with a low budget and is unprofessional.

Additionally, feminist narratives are a significant part of media studies that revolve around the plight of women, particularly in the way gendered norms are presented and upheld in film. All of the discourses within the three waves of feminism from the 1960s to date have concerned how to achieve gender parity between males and females in all socio-cultural and political public spheres.

According to Stuart hall, representation is the production of meaning via the means of language. Hall has divided representation in to three different perspectives; constructionist perspective, intentional and reflective (Hall, 1997). This mapping out representation looks at the last two out of the three approaches given by Hall, as the positioning of women in this film to some extent reproduces social realities; and it is also according to the fantasies of the film producer.

To sum up, the male filmmakers in the Kanywood film industry manipulate the content of films in ways that reinforce patriarchal dominance. Ideologically and aesthetically, the Nigerian Hausa films are significant expressions of traditional Hausa society, providing insight into the local and regional gender politics

(Mohammed, 2004). Women generally condemn this patriarchal world as almost everything is linked to men's creativity and fantasies. Leclere in Mohammed argued that nothing in existence today is not said to be made by men: thought, language, and words. She further maintained that a new world should be called the women's world. Leclere added that everything invented by men is deceitful and oppressive to women, capable of killing women (Mohammed, 2004).

3.2 Analysis of *Two Brides and a Baby*

There have been four approaches to the cinema; film criticism, history of the cinema, theory of cinema and film. However, at the side of both the theory of cinema and film are linguistics and its semiological extensions (Metz, 1974). Geiger and Rustky have the view that when analyzing a film, different approaches might be followed in order to have an objective and rationale approach to cinema (Geiger and Rustky, 2005). Speech, sound and images are the central focal point of this analysis. These audio visual elements are confined within the film's dialogue and narrative structure. However, Metz maintains that the concern of cinema semiotics is all about the question "*how does the cinema indicate succession, precession, temporal breaks, causality, adversative relationships, consequence, spatial proximity or distance etc*" (Metz, 1974, p. 72).

According to the plot and narrative structure of the film, *Two Brides and a Baby* is a melodramatic mode of Nigerian Nollywood film which revolves around a strong rivalry between two different women who fall in love with one man. The narrative of the film also presents how deep women find themselves in dating relationship and the fact that they couldn't withstand any interference against the relationship. Their impatience leads them to resolve to plot against those knocking on them. Additionally, exploitation of female nudity is also another order of the film as

the actresses dress half naked. This film is released in the year 2012 and is first screened outside Nigeria. *Two Brides and a Baby* film is first screened in the United States on 22nd May, 7:30pm at SMG Arlington Theater Dallas; SMG city center Houston; and Alpine cinema New York respectively (Egbe, 2012). The popularity of the film producer who is also an actress who features in the film make the film to be popular within and outside Nigeria among Nollywood films audiences. As already discussed in the first chapter of this work, Nigerian films have significant number of audiences across the globe. Wherever Nigerians are, they do find the local films produced in Nigeria mostly for escapism as they are far from home.

3.2.1 Background information of the film

The film '*Two Brides and a Baby*' is produced by B'Concept Production, Lagos Nigeria. The film producer and the screen writer is Blessing Effiom Egbe (a popular actress in Nollywood film industry), the film is directed by Teco Benson and Blessing Effiom Egbe as the assistant director. The main protagonists in the film are: Stella Damascus (Ama), Kalu Ikeagu (Deji), O.C Ukeje (Kole), Keira Hewatch (Ketche), Oke Uzokeshi (Maye), Blessing Effiom Egbe (Ene), Chelsea Eze (Ugo), Kehinde Bankole (Pewa), and Clared Onukogu (Omo).

Aesthetically, the themes of the film revolve around love, betrayal, vengeance, and friendship. These thematic aspects have been sutured together throughout the film's plot, story and narration using both Syntagmatic and paradigmatic codes and structures. The *Two Brides and a Baby* is produced in the city of Lagos (the largest and most populous city in Nigeria). Additionally, the plot duration of the film is two days and one night while the screen duration of the film is ninety (90) minutes.

The names of the protagonists in the film sound purely traditional names of southern Nigerian communities (Kole, Ketche, Ene, Ama, Ugo, Maye etc).

Additionally, the film is presented employing different narrative styles i.e. chronology and flash back styles. Moreover, infiltration of foreign culture and the effects of westernization and modernity are explicit in the film. For instance the dress of most of the protagonists signifies the western domination in Nigerian societies.

The term plot in film studies is used to describe anything which is audio-visual presented within the screen time of a given film. It comprises the story events which are directly shown (Thompson and Bordwell, 2008). However, they gave an example of the film *North by Northwest* which has only two story events and that are explicit in the plot; rush hour and Roger Thornhill speaking the Maggie as they get out of a lifter. Melodrama on the other hand is termed as a low cultural expression in films, derogatory concept, sutured with cheap emotional effects, quick entertainment and devoid of moral questions. However, concept of melodrama has now been dropped while scholarly widening the phenomenon to be termed as “*A serious and central category to assess the modern cultural imagination in general*” (Keller and Mayer, no date, p.7)

Esthetically, the story line of the film or the story event of the film starts with a close up shot of Ugo, majestically working towards a building. The building as she enters is the place where the wedding will be taken place the next day. She is there to supervise how the place is arranged and decorated on behalf of Ketchie, the potential bride. The other story event is the quite place as there is nothing seen apart from cars parked outside and the green scenario which suggests coolness, calmness and when attached to the way Ugo sways her body as she walks, signifies happiness and enjoyment moment. The third story event of the film is when Kole (the bride groom

to be) and Ketche (the potential bride) discuss about the decoration and the arrangement of the hall.

The Nigerian films produced are more of weepies, having women as the main audience. Woman's cinema is melodramatic narratives which woo women's sympathy to a given protagonist(s). Woman's cinema has two different meaning. First is the films produced by women, secondly film targeted at women. Mayne argues that "*woman's cinema refers to films made by women.....more precisely, the woman's film has acquired another meaning, referring to a Hollywood product designed to appeal to a specifically female audience*" (Mayne, 1984, p.49). They continued to argue that these films are the cinematic order and famous films during 1930s, 40s, and 50s, and were melodramatic in tone and full of 'high-pitched' emotions.

Saro-wiwa while describing the shoddy productions of Nigerian films argues that

"The films are wordy, improvised, melodramatic morality tales that are often set in shameless upwardly-mobile urban Nigerian environment. They are shot on cheap digital technology which has enabled a freewheeling approach to film-making that heavy, expensive 33mm equipment doesn't allow. These are films made in a hurry" (Saro-wiwa, 2008, p.1-2).

The *Two Brides and a Baby* in its total has three different but related and interwoven story events; the space outside the wedding saloon, the Ugo's supervision of the decorated wedding saloon and the discussion of Kole and Ketche about the wedding. However, other extraneous materials appeared at the first scene of the story. As the camera shots at different ranges follow Ugo up to when she finishes supervising the wedding hall, the film's credits pop up. Thompson and Bordwell

while citing an example with *North by Northwest* film maintain that “*the film’s plot may contain material that is extraneous to the story world*” (Thompson and Bordwell, 2008, p. 76).

Additionally, with regard to the visual style and theme, Nollywood films imitate the TV soap opera. These types of film genre should have been broadcasted as soap opera on weekly television channels but they are forced into a market to sell themselves, owing to an unviable industry environment. Naturally, these films have been categorized as B- movie type which adapt and use small-screen conventions. For instance the films are mostly divided in to two or even four on different CDs or DVDs, which makes the each film to be like an episode out of a feature film (Saro-wiwa, 2008).

However, there cannot be an argument of a social function of film without touching its ideological role and significance. Ideology is the imposition of the way the ruling class thinks unto the masses. Nigerian films might have less ideological aim rather than that of patriarchy. This is because in all the two films in this research, patriarchy is being reinforced either directly or indirectly. According to Rodriguez “*Ideology is a species of moral persuasion, mainly concerned with the normative evaluation of certain ways of thinking, feeling and acting that have a bearing on our social institution*” (Rodriguez, no date, P. 260).

Going by the above description of ideology by Rodriguez, Nigerian cinema has no any of the above set ideological goals. As earlier discussed, the filmmakers are only after profit maximization rather setting particular agenda for their films. Unlike other cinema like Hollywood which is being exploited by the US government to spread its ideology and hegemony across the globe, Nigerian cinema lacks this quality.

Moreover, ideological element at work in the cinema tends to concentrate on the relationship between the camera and the subject (Baudry and Williams, 2008). If it is thus, the non-availability of sophisticated production materials is another challenge which hinders the Nigerian cinema to achieve any ideological goal. If Hollywood would use montage to show the America's military power, for instance in Rambo film during the reign of Regan, than the industry which lacks such equipment can never achieve parity with the one which is already strong.

3.2.2 The synopsis of the film

The entire collection of events in the narrative of the film, both those that are explicit and those we infer, together make the story (Thompson and Mordwell, 2008). However, in this section, a synopsis of the *Two Brides and a Baby* would be buttressed.

According to the plot of *Two Brides and a Baby*, there is a young man called Kole. He dates a young woman called Ketcher. Both Kole and Ketcher have been engaged and it is now time for their marriage the next day. Additionally, Kole has a bosom friend Maye who dates another young woman Ugo. He also has a cousin brother Deji who is married to Ene. Both Ene and Ugo are friends to Ketcher. Also on the other hand, Ketcher lives with her sister and she has her best friend Ugo. Apart from these, by another side, there is another woman called Ama. Ama is the ex girl friend of Kole who dumps her for Ketcher. Ama also has a bosom friend Omo. However, Omo is a business partner of Maye, the bosom of Kole. This is a total form of weepies. However, the themes of woman's film includes affliction, obsessive sacrifice, love stories, domestic role of women, fetishism of woman's body, their tragic and tragedies among others, which emanate as a result of social imbalances. Judith Mayne in her paper 'the women at the key hole: Women's cinema and

feminist criticism' has given many examples of such weepies which include; Stella Dallas (1937), Magnificent obsession (1954), Julia (1977) and the Turning point (1977) (Mayne, 1984).

A day to the formal wedding of Ketcher and Kole, at the rehearsal ground of the wedding activities, as few close relatives gathered and Kole is standing facing Ketcher, suddenly Omo and Ama get in. Kole upon seeing Ama, feels guilty and nervous, he couldn't withstand to wait. He went out while Ama and her friend get seated. While outside and confused, Kole thinks (flash back) on their way coming to the party ground, his friend Maye received a call and asked the caller to come and meet him at the wedding rehearsal. Coincidentally, the caller is Omo, Ama's friend. Additionally, when Omo gets ready to come and meet Maye, Ama visits her and as such they go to the wedding rehearsal saloon together and Ama discovered that it is her ex planning to marry the next day.

Ever since Ama discovered that her ex-boyfriend is getting married tomorrow, she starts plotting against him in order to foil the wedding and take him back. First at the wedding saloon, she comes out with Omo telling her how much relationship she had with Kole. Additionally, she vows to take what has been taken from her. And as she gets out, Ketcher follows her and hears all she uttered. However, Ama continued plotting and creating factions between Kole and Ketcher. She one time gets the Ketcher's telephone number and calls her. Ama reiterates her plans to take Kole away from Ketcher, and Ketcher says is never possible. In another time, when Kole visits Ama to tell her that he will not marry her, Ketcher calls his phone and Ama quickly picks the call and says "Hello Ketcher, this is Ama". This evil act of Ama has caused a lot of damages for Kole. As a result of this, Ketcher starts believing what Ama says that she shares much more with Kole than Ketcher. Throughout the film, Kole gets

bewildered and more terrified. He even goes to appease with Ketché but she instead of listening rather blasts and drives him away.

Moreover, Ketché through her friends Ugo and Ene learns about the baby Ama has for Kole. She goes and meets him in hotel and says she is no longer interested in marrying him. She even gives him their engagement ring. Kole has tried and to calm Ketché and she agrees to wed him tomorrow. However, Ama has not stopped from her struggle to divide Kole and Ketché. She asks Maye to tell Kole that she forgives him and wants to see him to have a last conversation. Kole comes, as he enters into the Ama's room, sees her with a baby on her laps. He stops out of surprise and she asks him to come and meet his daughter who is part of his blood. Here Ama cunningly snaps their picture and sends to Ketché. When the Ketché receives the message of the picture, she was with her friends preparing for tomorrow's wedding. Ketché gets more disillusioned but her sister says to her if she didn't marry Kole, Ama will marry him. Nevertheless, Ama is not successful in her plans as Ketché and Kole gets wedded. Ama has attended the wedding ceremony and Kole acknowledges that he and Ama were in love but now dumps her for Ketché.

Moreover, the entire features of this film are shots, cut edited and gets ready for screening. Saro-wiwa argues that Nollywood films are not aesthetically good and the production directors tend to be novice and inartistic. They fail to subscribe an intellectual or political agenda in Nollywood plot and commercial rule (Saro-wiwa, 2008).

3.2.3 Context of the film

Context in film studies revolves around all the related elements which in one way or the other influence the text of the film. In other words, context refers to the

situational nature of a given film in relation to its immediate environs or the global village.

According to Geiger and Rutsky understanding the context of a given film requires viewing related films; studying the culture or historical period in which the film was made; reading relevant books or articles from a library; researching studio records and documents; or tracking the film's reception by audiences. They further argue that

“One cannot expect to understand every aspect of film's context. Analyzing context involves a continual process of sorting or filtering information with an eye to what is most relevant to your central argument about the film or films in question” (Geiger and Rutsky, 2005, p.30).

With regard to the production context of the film, a situation of inadequacy of production materials and novice of the filmmakers has been discussed in previous chapters. However, Shaka argues that over years, Nigerian film, art and literature offered an insight exploring the socio-political and cultural traumas that Nigerians are passing through (Shaka, 2011).

The film, *Two Brides and a Baby* has different but interwoven contextual aspects. The central themes of the film are love, vengeance, betrayal and sexualization of woman body. Today, there have been different arguments on why the dominant themes of the Nigerian cinema are enshrined within the aforementioned melodramatic modes of films. Similarly, there have been much social and political criticism of the cinema, this issue has already been discussed in previous chapters.

Modes of courtship and process of marriage are different among various Nigerian communities. Nigeria, being multi-cultural and religious country, makes the

cultural practices of its people to differ. According to some Nigerian communities, youths, both men and women can establish a relationship with each other and later get married after they get a baby. However, this is considered as an abomination as to some communities, men and women cherish the courtship under close monitoring and supervision of their families. In the *Two Brides and a Baby*, Kole had a relationship with Ama to the extent that they are engaged and even have a baby. Later Kole changed his mind and leaves her for another girl Ketcher with whom according to the plot of the film they will get married the next day. This culture of abandoning a woman for another by men endangers the lives of the women. The *Two Brides and a Baby* film, is produced amidst when such a practice is wide spread and order of the day among some Nigerian communities. Apart from Kole and Ama in the film, the relationship of Maye and Ugo also justifies this as they have been engaged for three years but yet to get married and from all indication, they might have broken as they use to get sequence of problems and misunderstandings.

Moreover, the engagement among couples might be for personal gains. As it takes long time before they get married, the men seize the opportunity to abandon the girls and betray them and go for another as soon as they get what they want. However, those who are aggrieved in such relationships resort to taking revenge and retaliations via all possible means. Often they employ cruel ways and criminality, breaching the personal rights of others. They create disharmony and chaos among their targets. Just as we see in the *Two Brides and a Baby* film.

3.2.4 Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic structure of the film

Both syntagm and paradigm are significant in the analysis of text and they are very important to semiologists. In the syntagmatic angle of signs, the signs gain their meaning from other meanings that surround them in a still image. On the other hand,

paradigmatic signs get their meaning from a contrast with all other possible signs (Rose, 2002). However, Berger argues that “*Semioticians use the term Syntagmatic analysis for interpretation of text that look at them in terms of the sequence of events that give them meaning*” (Berger, 2000, p. 44). He further maintains that in contrast to Syntagmatic focus, paradigm concentrates with how oppositions within a text work together and provide meaning.

3.2.4.1 Paradigmatic structure

There are various paradigmatic aspects in ‘*Two Brides and a Baby*’ film. These aspects are the different choices of the film’s director with which make a given film to become meaningful contextually, and tally with the set plot. The name of the film its self reinforces how the climax of the film will be. The two different brides and one baby tells that something must be attached to that which will make the viewers to be more inquisitive.

Another paradigmatic angle in the film is the choice of the protagonists’ names. Here, the selection of the name reflects the geographical location and immediate background of the filmmaker, although it is not meant for specific region. This practice has been the order in any film industry. In Hollywood, the names of the protagonists represent American culture even though the films target the whole world.

Outfit and dress is another paradigmatic choice of the film’s director. The way both men and women dress in the film is carefully selected. Nevertheless, the dress signifies and reinforces the de-culturing of Nigerian youths in the name of westernization. Additionally, the women’s dress in the film attests to the core exploitation of female body. This is despite the fact that the film’s producer and simultaneously assistant director is woman and popular Nollywood films actress.

The different music selected and used in ‘*Two Brides and a Baby*’ complement the meaning to the viewer with regard to the scenario it is placed. At the time of anger, anxiety, happiness, emotion or surprise, a wise selection as part of the film’s paradigm is made. Mostly, the music used for actualities in Nigerian cinema is outlandish, borrowed into the Nigerian culture. Saro-wiwa argues that “*the incidental music tends to consist of dissonant chords and sound escapes produced on synthesizers, reminiscent of the Latin American techno vellas that are still popular in Nigeria*” (Saro-wiwa, 2008, p. 2). Moreover, the two opposing teams from both Kole and Ketché, and the Ama, causing the latter two to quarrel is another paradigmatic viewpoint in the film. According to the plot of the film, Maye and Deji back Kole while Ene and Ugo back Ketché. Ama serves as the source of all the problems and disagreement among the aforementioned two sides.

When we make a commutation test to replace some parts of the film’s paradigm, the meaning might change or there wouldn’t be a climax at all. When you change the casts or their names to different ones, additionally, when another clique or group of friends is added, there might not a balance at the climax state of the plot. However, depending on the film director’s prerogative in the mise-en-scene of a given film, the film’s paradigm might take any form of structure. However, Metz argues that “*the image paradigm is fragile in film; often still-born. It is approximate, easily modify and it can always be circumvented*” (Metz, 1974, P. 69). This Metz’s assertion attests that paradigm can take any form of structure base on the way the filmmaker wishes.

3.2.4.2 Syntagmatic structure of the film

Syntagm is a combination of different collaborative and dependent elements within a given film narrative. In other words, syntagm refers to the way filmic

fragments (scenes, shots, transition) are sutured together in making meaning. However, the Syntagmatic structure of *Two Brides and a Baby* would be discussed in two ways; Diachronic/Diatopic (shots related only by theme) and Synchronic/Diatopic (different places at the same time). However, the more we get into the analysis of these scenes the clearer we understand the above mentioned concepts.

3.2.4.2.1 Diachronic/ Diatopic scenes (shots only related by theme)

Starting with the first scene of the film which comprises different consecutive shots, it begins with a close up shot of Ugo's half naked body majestically walking towards a building. The camera shots change as she moves into the house where she supervises a decorated wedding saloon. After then, the camera switches to another scene of Ketchie sitting in front of a dressing mirror doing make up and waiting for Kole to come. Immediately Ugo gets in and their discussion tells the situation they are in.

Being a scene or shot related only by theme, the next diachronic/diatopic scene is where Ama and her friend Omo through whom she comes to the wedding rehearsal, come back home and discuss the issue about why Kole will dump her for another girl, despite the fact that they have since been engaged. Additionally, Kole too, gets back home with Maye chatting on how Ama gets to be there. Another scene of this category is when Ama presents her engagement ring with Kole to her friend Omo. Immediately after this, Ketchie's friend Ene and her husband Deji shown quarrelling about that he is left hungry because of the wedding rehearsal they attended, and Ene insists to go back again and sympathize with Ketchie for what happened in the morning during the wedding rehearsal. Moreover, another scene of this sub type of syntagma is when Ketchie is at home, looks worried and her elder

sister tries to calm her down. On his part too, Kole is with his mother discussing the issue at hand. All these diachronic/diatopic scenes are constituted and related to the theme of the film as in each of them; there is a story idea or the development from one scene to another.

Similarly, the embattle Ketche and her two friends Ugo and Ene are shown discussing the issue as Ene backs Ketche to investigate why Ama gets to attend the rehearsal while Ugo insists that Ketche should not worry and just forget about it. Another Diachronic/Diatopic scene is when Maye comes to meet with Ama and first sees Omo. She ushers him in where they discuss with the Ama and she cunningly asks him about their relationship with Ugo. Maye seems to be guilty. She just tries to justify what Kole did to and the vengeance she is planning against Kole and Ketche.

Still on the matter at Ene's house, when she comes back home from Ketche's visit, they quarreled again with her husband, and he insulted her, saying she is disgrace to womanhood, just because she didn't cook for him in just one day. Maye and Ugo too quarrel as Ugo suspects him of having an affair with another girl and she asks him where he is coming from. Because she is scare of what happens to Ketche might happen to her. Another similar scene in structure is at hotel when Maye meets with one of the hotel workers asking for Kole and immediately Deji comes and they dash into the main hotel building while discussing the long time engagement of Maye and Ugo.

The next diachronic/diatopic scene is when Kole comes to Ketche's home to appease her and justify why Ama picks his telephone when Ketche calls him. Instead of giving him a chance, Ketche insults and drives Kole away from their home. She even asks him out of anger and jealousy to go to Ama. She says she doesn't want to see him at all since is having affairs with another girl. Additionally, the scene when

Ketche sits in her car, confused and helpless. Her sister comes over her and appease with her that she should stop worrying herself.

The same scene of this category is when Ketcher plans to leave Kole's home as she packs her goods when she meets Deji and asks him to leave the home for her. Deji immediately goes and tells Kole the development and asks Kole to go and stop her from going. Simultaneously, they discuss about the baby which Ama says she has for Kole. At this time, Ugo sneaks and listens to what they discuss about. So also the scene when Kole meets Ketcher to plead with her not to go and he explains to her why he goes to Ama saying is just to apologize with her since he dumps her for Ketcher. Ketcher naively believes and forgives him. As we describe the scenes, they flow and make meanings in relation to the theme of the film

Moreover, immediately after that reconciliation is the scene which marks the climax of the plot, it is a diachronic/diatopic scene where Ketcher tells Ugo and Ene that Kole has just visits Ama to apologize with her as he dumps her. But they wanted to tell her the truth and she gets into a room, they say men are liars today and she hears and asks what lies? Here she comes to know about the baby issue. Immediately after this scene, the camera switches to where Ugo regrets revealing the matter to Ketcher and again Maye gets in and questioned them why would they tell her?

Another diachronic/diatopic scene is when Ene and her husband Deji quarrel. She challenges him on why would he be a party to such a cruel act. In response, Deji asks her to keep quite or say something good. Ene asks for their wedding ring signifying she might seek divorce. At the end she gets highly angered and picks their hanged enlarged photo in glass and breaks it. Ketcher on her side always cries. Another diachronic/diatopic tells this is when Ama is seen weeping and wondering

why Kole would have a child and didn't tell her. Then to where Ama makes a phone call reiterating her stance to divide Kola with Ketché and take him back again.

The next is where as part of her plans Ama invited Maye to her home. As he comes she tells him that she forgives Kole and wants to see him just to have a final discussion. Upon hearing that, Maye gets out. In between the arrival of Kole to Ama's home, the narration takes us to Ene and deji as they resolve their differences. Then to where Kole kneels down and seek Ketché's forgiveness, she forgives again and agrees for the wedding the next day. The last diachronic/diatopic scene in the film is where the wedding takes place.

3.2.4.2.2 Synchronic/Diatopic scenes (Different places at the same time)

The first synchronic/diatopic scene in the film is when Kole gets out of the wedding saloon on the rehearsal day due to the attendance of Ama. Here Kole thinks (flash back) when his friend Maye asks someone to come and meet him at the wedding saloon. Additionally, the way Ama gets there is revealed in this flash back. Different palace at the same time is shown here. Another scene of same structure is when Ugo boils water and thinks (flash back) of what Deji tells her about when she is getting married with Maye. Here also, another place is shown at the same time then back to Ugo in the room pouring the hot water in a cup.

The next synchronic/diatopic scene is when Ama calls Ketché. Both of them are shown at the same time using different shots. Similarly, when Ketché calls Kole and Ama picks the phone, again both of them are shown. Additionally, when Kole is at home, he thinks (flash back) of a discussion he had with Ketché about their wedding, here also different places are shown at the same time. Also when Kole gets into Ama's room and sees her with a baby, he stops and she asks him to move in.

here another different scenes are shown at Ketché's house when Ama sends her the picture she snaps with Kole and the baby.

Moreover, as Maye and Ugo lie on bed, Ugo thinks and reminisces (flash back) when they had a discussion with Maye about their relationship. Then the camera switches back to them. Additionally, there are consecutive close up shots of Ene, Ugo and Ketché crying in their different places but at the same time. The last scene of this category is when both Kole and Ketché are shown preparing for the wedding.

3.2.5 Mapping out representation of women in *Two Brides and a Baby* and feminist film criticism

In most of the Nigerian films, women are portrayed negatively. This might be because of the male domination in the film industry. However, despite the fact that some films are produced and directed by those women who dare to establish their film production companies, negative images of women and patriarchal ideologies are still discernible in these films. Ukata maintains that

“The issue of male dominance in film production has been identified as one of the reasons for the portrayal of negative images of women in Nigerian videos. However, such depictions are not peculiar to Nollywood and they can be traced back to Hollywood's visual iconography as well” (Ukata, 2010, p. 47).

However, this examination of the way women are depicted in Nigerian Nollywood films would be done from the perspective of feminist film criticism, which according to Noel Carroll

“Feminism is the most visible movement in film criticism today, and the most dominant trend in that movement is psychoanalytically informed” (Noel, 1996, p. 268). He however, maintains that *“it is necessary to analyze the way women*

are depicted in films adding that “the investigation of the image of women in film begins with the rather commonsensical notion that the recurring images of women in popular media may have some influence on how people think of women in real life” (Noel, 1996, p. 268).

First of all, sexualizing women’s body is one of the most explicit feature in which women are situated in the film. The first scene of the film starts with a close up shot of woman, shooting from down to top. This woman is also half naked as half of her laps are bare. The camera lens pan upwards slowly from her feet up to head, while she walks majestically and swaying her body. As she approaches the main building, the camera’s focal point centers on her. This is a sheer exploitation of women’s sexuality.

Women in this film are represented as mere complement of men’s life and pleasure fulfillment. Ketchie is viewed sitting in front of a mirror doing make up. She sits waiting for her fiancé Kole to come. But on the other hand, Kole is not shown doing anything make up just because is meeting his fiancée. This is in addition to the patriarchal ideology which positions men as superior to women in a relationship. This also reinforces a social disparity between men and women.

In Onyekachuku Ayube’s film *Escort Service* (2013) Love and date relationship is the central theme of the film. Cheap digital technology is explicit in the film, based on the lighting, camera quality and sound. However, the film represents women having a prostitution organization under Dayan as the leader. The indecent men seducing dress is explicit in the film, which signifies fetishism of women’s body. Nadia has strongly opposes her brother to marry Cliff who belongs to the classic prostitutes organization. Nadia describes Cliff as tacky, dirty, smelling, useless and indecent. In response, Andria vows to take all measures against Nadia.

Female's hypocrisy is visible as Nadia quickly changes her mood as her brother Cliff gets in when she insults Andria. Women are also featured as fierce in the film as Nadia leads another thugs group of Men despite being a woman. Nadia too possesses a gun and threatens Andria if she doesn't leave Cliff. Another armed women group hunts Nadia's life in the film. Females' terrorism and criminal tendency as a result of love relationships is the plot of the film. In the long run, Andria is stabbed and killed by armed men led by woman. Additionally, Dame vows to take the last breath of Nadia.

Another image of women in *Two Brides and a Baby* is lack of respect for their spouses whenever they have a misunderstanding or when they need something from men and couldn't get it. This can be inferred in several places in the film. Firstly, Ketche blasts Kole just because he made some changes at the wedding saloon with regard to the decorations. Additionally, Ene quarrels her husband several times because he supports Kole over her friend Ketche. More devastating is when she even broke their enlarged picture and asking him to give her their wedding ring.

Barren Women film, Sylvester Obadigie's film (2013) represents hoe evil women are in cheating their husbands just because they want to have children. The first scene of the film features a young woman at soothsayer's shrine; she puts her baby in Mortal and squeezed with pestle. This is the highest negative image of women for a mother just because of the wealth she might have, she kills her baby mercilessly. I don't think a real mother can do this to her child. But in the film, it occurs. Worst images of women in *Barren women* are how they become expert in pretending pregnancy, lying to their husbands. They connive with a medical doctor and buy children from him. One of the protagonists of the film lost her live as a result of abortion she had at the embattle doctor's hospital. Additionally, the doctor

dismantles the young ladies he employs working for him as nurses. He sexually harasses them and they even fight over him. Exposing female sexuality is also one of the characteristic of the film. Young ladies, drinking appear indecently. Childlessness and the family trauma which the women are often blamed is another negative image of the women in the film. There is a mother woman sneaking to hear the discussion of her son with his wife tonight and later in the morning pounce on her in-law daughter to produce a child for them. This family challenge makes Ann to buy a baby from outside. A woman disturbing the happiness of her son's marital home just because of childlessness. Women in the film also become the victims of unwanted pregnancy and they resolve to abortion which subsequently leads them to lose their lives just as it happened to Chichi, one of the film's protagonists. Moreover, childlessness as discussed in previous chapter in one of the major themes of Nigerian cinema.

Moreover, another negative image situated women in is that of evil acts. Ama throughout the film has been plotting against Kole because he will not marry her. On the other hand, the girl who he will marry, Ketché responds harshly as a result of Ama's plots. Nevertheless, Kole is not shown trying to take revenge against Ama. He always tries to appease both Ama and the Ketché. The wickedness of the female is not only represented through actions or verbal talks, it is also inferred by viewers through facial expressions. An example is when Kole gets out of the rehearsal hall and Ama gives him a venomous look. Also the way Ama and Ketché gaze at each other sends a lot of their grudges.

In another film, *In a woman's world* produced by Tissy Nnachi (2013), the young ladies in the film are highly depicted as sexual materials. They just fall in love with young men and entice them for sex. They run a very bad life even ruining

others' lives. The group of the ladies under Tasha becomes extra lecherous and subsequently armed robbers. Another girl in the film called Cleo who dates another guy who is taken away from her by the other group. She became so confused and felt deep in his love. At the end, Tasha and Cleo fight over Duran. Women are always depicted as a victim of any relationship while men scale free without being hurt. The ladies gang and kidnapped Cleo and harshly beat her. This film is also belonging to melodramatic category of film genre as it resembles those weepies of mid 19th century. Additionally, this film represents women as members of a cult groups. And taking revenge is what leads Cleo to join the cultists based on the influence of her friend. In the long run another girl in one of the cult groups is shot dead by a rival group.

Similarly, on the exploitation of women's body another instance in *Two Brides and a Baby* is that almost all the attire of the female protagonists are either tight or half naked. The dress of Ketchie throughout the film, Ama, Ugo and Omo are all indecent as they reveal their bodies' shapes. Jealousy although it is normal habits of women, but it is too much in the film with regard to the way Ama reacts against Kole and Ketchie. All the quarrels are borne out of jealousy. Ugo and Ene are also shown expressing their version of the jealousy.

Moreover, with regard to the assumption that the today's cinema reproduces female image in a distorted manner and reinforces the patriarchal ideologies, women filmmakers are expected to counter this masochism and male centered cinema. Mayne argue that "there is temptation to establish a rigorous opposition. if women have been "falsely" represented in distorted images in the classical cinema, then women filmmakers will more likely to present "accurate", "undistorted" not to mention "positive" images of women-which will then be eagerly consumed by the

film viewer” (Mayne, 1984, p. 54). Despite this, Mayne doubts the possibility of this. Because “*the works women filmmakers need to be seen against a background shaped and defined by the ways in which women have been associated with the cinema*” (Mayne, 1984, p. 55). *Two Brides and a Baby*, although is produced by a female filmmaker, the film still shows a distorted image of woman.

Today, there should be a concerted effort towards changing the negative image of women in all the media particularly the film medium just a Ukata argues

“Indeed identifying a problem is one thing and being able to know what choices can be employed to bring about a positive solution is another exercise. This presupposes that changing the images of women from those which the patriarchal social order has constructed, requires a concerted effort by both female and male film artists, using any available medium including film” (Ukata, 2010, P. 65).

Friends in Love, is another popular Nollywood film produced by Azuka Odunukwe (2009). The film’s plot revolves around love and betrayal. A girl’s (Chike) curiosity to know all the movements about a guy (Debby) she loves and intends to marry puts her into more psychological pains. Chike finds another girl Bella to monitor the movements on Debby. The traitor, Bella base on the good values she finds in Debby, plots using another girl to be with him so that Chike will stop loving him. Bella succeeded and snatched Debby as she purported an enmity for Debby in the eyes of Chike. When Chike calls Bella to ask about the monitoring project she says “*terrible is on the statement...unfaithful as a rabbit*”. This has put Chike into more confusion and starts believing what her mind whispers to her. This feature of betrayal of Bella is an insult for womanhood. As it has been the main themes of the Nigerian cinema, this film also depicts how deep women fall in love

with men. Just as in the film at discussion, *Two Brides and a Baby* where both Ama and Ketché fall in love with Kole. Additionally, this film has melodramatic tones belonging to the weepies of 1940s, 50s and 60s.

Moreover, taking revenge is another negative image in which women are situated in the film. When Ama gets home from the wedding rehearsal, she sheds her sword and vows that both Kole and Ketché will be severely dealt with. She says “I swear they will pay for this”. These words together with how the close up shot shows her signifies how more wicked she becomes and ready to do whatever possible to win the heart of Kole back to her. Additionally, two women bear grudges over a man is another feature denigrating their status. Both Ama and Ketché in several cases exchange words of insults and at the wedding rehearsal hall, the way they look at each other tells this.

Similarly, as a result of this wicked act and out of jealousy Ketché almost have an accident when she drives back home from the wedding rehearsal with her friend Ugo. However, Ugo has tried to appease with her, as she debunks all the threats of Ama. And Ketché tends to become paranoid about the issue. In addition, women are situated as victims of men’s hand work. Kole who betrays Ama has later successfully achieves what he wants i.e. marrying Ketché. But Ama didn’t, just ending with a baby from someone who goes and marries another woman. This is a clear disparity between men and women. Kole is the primary source of the problem but Ama is the most suffered victim.

Domestication of female is another feature they are situated in the film. Although Omo is shown as business partner to Maye, but Ene is completely shown under her husband’s control and she stays at home depending on him. And because that she didn’t cook for him in just one morning, he blasts her and even calls her “a

disgrace to womanhood”. This is a big insult which women shouldn’t receive from men, talk less of their husbands. This surprisingly happens in a film produced and co-directed by woman. In fact, she is the one who received this utmost humiliation in the film. With regard to this and the political malign of women as represented in the Nigerian films Ukata argues that:

“.....videos those concern the representation of women in political governance in Nigeria since political power is associated with men. Instead, women are portrayed almost always in domestic spheres, fulfilling what is regarded as their traditional roles. Similarly, economic power is also considered a male prerogative and big businesses are owned by men who are also the bread winners for their families. This helps to condition women to see themselves as dependants who must rely on men for their upkeep and survival (Ukata, 2010, p. 42).

Marriage is one of the happiest moments of life to the two couples. But the opposite is the case of Kole and Ketché. This is as a result of woman’s hand work. However, to show another weakness of women in the film, Ketché gets more worried, bewildered and confused than Kole throughout the film. Similarly, Ugo gets more worried than Maye concerning their relationship.

Early Marriage film produced by Emeka Onwuamaeze (2003) is another Nigerian Nollywood film which is typical melodrama or a weepie. The film depicts a mother called Nwanneka disturbing the happiness of her son Christopher over the city girl Itheoma he proposes to marry. The mother wants him to marry a village and home trained girl Nnena. The teenage girl Nnena has later disappointed the Christopher and his mother. She joints armed gangs through a neighboring friend called Helen. The Helen is also a victim of early marriage and under duress. Her husband died and she later starts prostitution and have the armed robbers as her

mating friends. Moreover, women throughout this have been portrayed negatively. Nnena's mother countered her husband to send the girl to school just because Christopher has money. Women have become the family destructors instead of becoming good family members. Helen, Nnena and Christopher's mother in the film play the role of hindering the happiness of his (Christopher) life. Additionally, another theme of this film is the clash between tradition and modernity which is one of the characteristics of post colonial African cinema.

In her studies of three Nigerian Nollywood films, (*Hostages, Dust to Dust, and True Confession*) Garritano examines how women are represented and their status in the films. She maintains that women are portrayed as helpless objects acted on by others, dependent and they are portrayed as morally decayed, without any valuable qualities. Garritano concludes that these representations explicitly brings into point the gendered and biased perspective in which the female protagonists are reconstructed and depicted (Garritano, 2000)

Every woman, another Nigerian Nollywood film produced by Chiweuba Nneji (2012) Indecent dress is one of the characteristics of the film. However, this film gives a high status for women as to officials of organization. Childlessness is another theme of the film. Sexual intercourse scenes are explicit in the film. Women in the film are featured as traitors and dependents on men. Additionally, adultery and infidelity are other features situated women in this film. This happens as a result of female's seduction to men. The cultural practice of families to propose marriage partners for their children and relatives is also part of the film's plot. As a result of the infidelity, Beca gets pregnant from a man she sleeps with. A woman in the film wanted to buy baby from outside just show her husband that she is virile. She earlier told series of lies to people that she is pregnant, up to ten month she didn't deliver. A clear picture of women's evil depicted. She goes to a female medical doctor to get

them a baby. At the end the new baby of her niece is given to her by the cruel and criminal doctor. The criminality of women is very explicit in this film. Beca and her husband are put in psychological pain. At the end of the film, Beca's husband happens to be her father, he raped Beca's mother long time ago. All the females in the film ended in mess. And Mrs Babra who stole the baby gets arrested. Ukata holds the view that:

“Women have also been labeled as prostitutes, husband snatchers and adulteresses. As prostitutes, they are seen as parasites that drain money from men and leave them with incurable diseases. Men's role in prostitution, whether as pimps or patrons, is never considered nor turned into stereotypes. Likewise, adulterous women as stereotypes, have male accomplices whose liaisons with the adulterous women receive no publicity at all. When women are either labeled as prostitutes or adulterous it points to how unreliable they are, but the male figure has no queries to answer for having illicit affairs with the same women tagged as prostitutes or adulteresses” (Ukata, 2010, p. 46).

In Swagger Mamas produced by Anaele Ugochuku Dominick (2013), apart from the love theme of the film with young ladies suffering, the film also situates matured women as greedy as they participate in a Miss Africa beauty contest. Additionally, about twenty women participated in the contest and none of them is awarded with the five million naira promised, SUV Jeep and round trip to Germany, as it is just two ladies and one young man plan to dupe the women. The worst part of it is that the women participate in the contest against the wish of their family. The way the women are featured as mothers is a total insult to motherhood. Childlessness is another thematic aspect of the film, as of the families in the film adopts a child because they don't have one. Similarly, indecent dress signifying the female's body

exploitation is another order of the film. At the rehearsal for selecting the right candidates, all the women gather and answer questions on current affairs, dance and at the end most of them are disqualified. Another negative image of women in the film is the sexual harassment they face in the film; talk less of domestication serving the family house under the leadership of the husband, while they face humiliation from husbands. Another negative image of women in the film is how they value wealth over human as one of the women Mrs. Evlen Obama who adopts a baby, leaves her at home and busy dancing for the beauty contests.

Another negative image of women in the film is that of being an espionage agent. When Kole, Deji and Maye discuss the baby issue, Ugo sneaks in a room and hears all they say. She later discloses the gist to Ene and then to Ketché. Also call of when Ketché calls Kole Ama suddenly picks the phone and answers; this is also a taboo for not respecting other's secrets and privacies.

Clash of Destiny produced by Emmanuel Obioma and Don Cheche (2013) is melodrama that revolves around a women terror group who engage in different criminal acts. These women are hired by Mafias to kill who they want. Among themselves too, they target to kill one another. Additionally, they engage in spiritual activities. The young ladies in they are put into mystery and misery by another old woman who heads the cult like organization. This film in its totality has not featured any woman with positive images. According to the plot of the film, there is another mighty man who uses the girls to sleep with men and from then the men will die and their lives will keep him alive. In fact, all the girls too have been confirmed that they will die as soon as possible. Moreover, women in this film have been pictured as merciless murderers.

Chinyere Okunna’s research results on Nollywood videos affirm that the videos are full of negative and stereotypical images of women. According to Okunna, women are portrayed in Nollywood videos as wayward, morally bankrupt and easily enticed to material things which, in return, appeal them to act against the social moral norms and values by committing taboos like lesbianism, murder, infidelity and child abandonment (Okunna, 2000).

Nigerian films in both Nollywood and Kanywood film industries have more or less the same theme and narrative structure. The films are characterized by novice filming, use of cheap technology, unprofessionalism and above all the producers are just after profit maximization. Additionally, the most common feature of the two different industries is that of melodramatic tone of the films. *“The films are full of indulgent and interminable soap opera close ups, all the better to see the tears of streaming down people’s faces, forcing the viewer to confront the emotions generated by invariably melodramatic tone”* (Saro-wiwa, 2008, p. 2).

Based on the argument of feminists about representation in the cinema today, the following table contains the list of the dominant negative images of women which are found on the screen being depicted by both Nollywood and Kanywood film industries of Nigeria. Such images are what the feminists criticize and call for the replacement with good and favorable ones.

Table 1: Images of women in Nollywood and Kanywood films

Kanywood	Nollywood
Family/Home breakers	Sexual materials
Greed	Complements of man’s life
Materialists	Disrespect for spouse
Source of sorrow	Evils
Subordinate to men	Vengeance and unforgiving
Not free	Domesticated

Weak and feeble-minded	Espionage agents
Evil story mongers	Manipulative
Home keepers and children breeders	Loose in morals
Infidelity	Diabolic
Compared with money	Inferior to men
Valueless in relation to men	
Sexual materials	
Untrustworthy	
Traitors and Unfaithful	
Wicked	
Hypocrites	

Going by the above listed features of women in Nigerian cinema, northern Nigerian Kanywood film industry oppresses and misrepresents women more than the southern Nollywood industry. Kanywood also promotes patriarchy and relegates women than Nollywood. Moreover, the images on the Nollywood table are also damaging, negative and oppressive to women. These are what feminists question about cinema and ask for the shifting from misrepresenting women on screen to depicting them as heroines, business tycoon, high public officers, leaders, executives, and any other positive image.

Moreover, in defining semiotically the structures of the films, the syntagmatic categories given by Hodge and Tripp are used, while general paradigmatic approach is also applied on the paradigm part. As paradigm with regard to film analysis involves the selection of different items which work together and make meaning, the under tabled different choices are the paradigms in the two Nigerian films analyzed in this research work.

The following table gives the screen time of the two films, number of all scenes in the films and how many diachronic/diatopic and synchronic/diatopic scenes are in each film.

Table 2: Syntagmatic structure of Nollywood and Kanywood films*Two Brides and a Baby**Gabar cikin Gida (Enemies in the House)*

Screen Time	90 minutes	120 minutes
Total number of scenes	27 scenes	36 scenes
Diachronic/Diatomic	18 scenes	32 scenes
Synchronic/Diatomic	8 scenes	4 scenes

Approximately, each scene of the *Gabar cikin gida (Enemies in the House)* lasts for 3 minutes 30 seconds. On the other hand, each scene of *Two Brides and a Baby* also lasts for the same time, 3 minutes 30 seconds. *Gabar cikin Gida (Enemies in the House)* has 36 scenes which last for 120 minutes while *Two Brides and a Baby* has 27 scenes within 90 minutes screen time.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

Initially, when studying the third world cinema examination of western colonialism and its left footprints in the countries colonized should be the first foot step for such a study. African countries are labeled as part of the third world countries, as most of them were colonized by the western super powers between 17th-mid 20th centuries. Nevertheless, a cinema is not automatically qualified for the name third cinema just because it is produced in the Third world (Simpson, Utterson, Shepherdson, 2004). Although those colonized countries have liberated and got their political independence, colonialism has succeeded in influencing and shaping the cultural practices of African communities, most times leaving behind negative effects which might not suit Africa and its people. These effects have of course affected the African cinema, which is a public cultural sphere and one of the agents of socialization.

Senegalese director Ousmane Sembene stated that before they started to make these films, Europeans had already shot films about the African continent showing Africans as antagonists of one another. Most of the Africans we see in those films are unable to set one foot in front of another by themselves (Pfaff, 2004).

The above statement by one of earliest indigenous African film producers is a clear instance of a distorted picture of Africa. Media are very powerful tools in image making and identity description. Whatever picture media feed people, they assume it as true. They tend to stereotypically and naively believe that. Through the power of the mass media the Europeans got the opportunity to use the cinema and represented the Africa and Africans the way they liked. Despite this mono-centrism of the early African filmmaking, the colonial film makers established cinema schools to educate

Africans. The first school was Bantu cinema school, sponsored by the colonial office of the British film institute (Daiwara, 1992, p.2).

Nigeria, being one of the Anglophone African countries, its cinema is a third cinema. The first motion picture in Nigeria was screened in Lagos in 1903 by Balbao film Production Company which belongs to westerners. In subsequent years, although indigenous Nigerians wanted but with little effort to spearhead the cinematography in Nigeria, but to no avail, as there is only one man, Ola Balogun who made that effort. As such, the cinema, film viewing centers in rural areas, importation of foreign films into the country remained in the hand of these westerners who came to the country either as colonialist for economic exploitation or as Christian missionaries, who use the cinema as a tool for colonial of religious propaganda. During this period, foreign films such as American Hollywood films, Hong Kong films and Indian Bollywood films were imported to Nigeria. These films were screened at cinemas and viewing centers, the effect of which plays a great role in contemporary Nigerian cinema.

Moreover, in 1970s and 80s indigenous Nigerian felt to start producing their own films, so that they will portray Nigeria by themselves rather than still seeing their people consuming (pure) foreign films. Lack of resources, adequate government intervention, effect of the consumed foreign films by the populace, are what hindered the development of the cinema in Nigeria in those days, the effect of which is still obvious.

In Nigeria today, there are two biggest cinema industries known as Nollywood and Kanywood. The latter is northern Nigerian film industry which produces film in Hausa language while the former is of southern part industry which produces its films in English language. The content of these industries tend to resemble and copy

the style in one way or the other of some foreign film industries. For example, Kanywood films imitate reproduce the way Indian Bollywood narrates their story, particularly the dance and singing in their films. Additionally, some filmmakers copy exactly the content and ideas of another film and translate it to produce their films. On the other hand, Nollywood film industry too tries to copy and imitate the American Hollywood styles and plots; by the way they couldn't have succeeded due to lack of sophisticated production materials and adequate to funding.

However, is Indian Bollywood Third cinema like Kanywood? While giving a definition of Third cinema, Tyrrel referred to Allen's definition. He maintained that *"Third Cinema is commonly perceived as 'serious' cinema, challenging in aesthetic as well as a political sense. Bollywood films generally include light-hearted song-and-dance numbers"* (Simpson, Utterson, Shepherdson, 2004 p. 358).

Having that the aim of this research work is about the representation of women in Nigerian cinema, feminist film criticism is the approach used to examine how the films can be criticized from the feminist perspective. The way women are positioned, situated, empowered or relegated, liberated or suppressed, sexually exploited or not in relation to their male counterparts in the films. And the study found that women are given many negative images in Nigerian cinema, relegated and oppressed. They are featured as wicked, subordinate, and subaltern.

Although feminists struggled at the three different waves of feminism namely; first-wave, second-wave and third-wave, all of them have a common goal of deconstructing the patriarchal ideologies, which relegate, subordinate and sometimes suppress women. According to Kroløkke and Sørensen, first-wave feminism emerged in the wake of industrial society and liberal politics. It is connected to both the liberal female's rights movements and early socialist feminism in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries in the United States and Europe. First-wave feminism is concerned with access and equal opportunities for women. Second-wave feminism arose in the 1960s to 1970s in postwar Western welfare societies, when other suppressed groups such as homosexuals and Blacks were being defined and the New Left was on the rise. Third wave-feminism emerged from the mid-1990s onward, rising from the emergence of a new postcolonial and post socialist world order; it seeks to overcome the theoretical question of equity or difference and the political question of evolution or revolution. Kroløkke and Sørensen (2006). The common goal of all these three different periods of feminism struggles is that they all fight for the course of femininity and the liberation of women from cultural oppression and undermining. At this juncture, several theories have been developed by feminist critics, theories such as psychoanalysis, deconstruction, equality, structuralism, Freud and Lacan theory, semiotics, mise-en-scene Marxism and many more are being used in examining film in relation to how women are depicted on the screen by male auteurs.

Ideologically, Nigerian cinema is devoid of clear ideological aims rather than profit maximization and promotion of the culturally oriented patriarchy. Moreover, Nigerian government is yet to wake up and start exploiting the film industries with a view to fast track national development and for propaganda purposes. Thus, it pays less attention to the activities of the filmmakers, unless the issue of censorship.

This research work extensively discussed and analyzed two chosen films for analysis, namely; *Gabar cikin gida (Enemies in the House)* and *Two Brides and a Baby*. On the first one, feminist point of view and semiotics approach have been combined and sutured together in ascertaining the representation of women in the film. It is found that women in this film have been positioned and portrayed with negative images. On the other hand, the second film selected for the analysis, *Two*

Brides and a Baby is about two hours screen time, with two days and one night plot time. Also in the analysis of the film, the same approach applied to *Gabar cikin gida* is used in the examination of how women are represented. The most negative feature and image situated the women in this film is how the sexuality of female body is being exploited. Some of the female protagonists are half naked throughout the film, while none of the male protagonists is portrayed with such an image.

Finally, going by the findings of this research work and the situation of Nigerian cinema and filmmaking, it will be good to offer some useful recommendations and suggestion as follows:

Today, there is the need for capacity building for both the filmmakers and the protagonists. Lack of proper training and inadequate knowledge about the process of filmmaking is one of the major challenges to the Nigerian film industries. The filmmakers mostly engage in trial and error. Unless this habit is addressed, the industries will continue going unprofessional.

Government alone can't handle the issue. Investors within and outside the country should put their hand so that good and qualitative films would be produced. Additionally, the films should take another pattern of bringing unity to among different Nigerian ethnic groups. The dress and the names from both north and south should be mixed and reflect the country not only one region.

And for the purpose of the education, more film schools should be established in Nigeria. In addition to the ones available and theatre arts departments in some Nigerian universities, additional special institutes meant for pure training of filmmaker are needed. Nevertheless, those institutions should be well equipped with both human and material resources for the smooth conduct of the capacity building trainings.

Nigerian film producers should strive to concentrate more on producing educational films, not entertainment always, because education is the first pillar for development. Their films should be beyond melodramatic. Melodrama is also good for its target, but generally, the films should be meant for national agenda.

Government should set up film and consultative committee made of well qualified producers and artist to work hand-in-hand with appropriate government agencies so as to tackle the problems of contaminating the cultural values, of Nigerian societies.

Government should also invest in film making throughout the country, because, film makers after profit making, as such they want the people want most. If the government would invest in film industries, more educational, societal reform inclined films would be produced as an alternative to the current trivial themes of the films. It can also be suggested that merit awards should be given to films that have messages which promote consciousness, cultural solidarity and patriotism. However, the awards should not be associated with affiliation of the filmmaker or a protagonist.

The films produced should have different themes and plots from the current images of women in Nigerian films. Positive, favorite, meaningful and important roles should be given to women in Nigerian films.

More women should be involved in the process of filmmaking in Nigeria. The involvement should be right from pre-production to post production stage. This will help make their opinions, ideas, imagination and more importantly change their image on the screen.

Cinemas of the third world should be fully supported so that their films can serve as an alternative from the dominating first world cinema especially American Hollywood. Fidel Castro once criticized the Hollywood cinema which he described as poisoning human mind and he calls for the adequate support for the third world cinema (Simpson, Utterson, Shepherdson, 2004).

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