

Eco-Marxist Study of Beautiful Nubia's *Jangbalajugbu and Lekeleke*

**FADERO, Vincent Abimbola,
Faderoabimbola170@gmail.com**

Abstract

This study offers an eco-Marxist analysis of two songs, “Jangbalajugbu” and “Lekeleke,” by the Nigerian musical artist Beautiful Nubia. It argues that the artist’s work represents a significant stylistic and thematic departure from mainstream trends within the Nigerian and African music industries. Framed by the theoretical insights of Raymond Williams and John Bellamy Foster, this qualitative research employs lyrical, textual, and critical discourse analysis to investigate the selected songs. While previous scholarship has engaged with Beautiful Nubia’s music and lyrical poetry, this paper addresses a critical gap by examining its explicit engagement with Eco-Marxist critiques. The primary significance of this work lies in its demonstration of how popular music can function as a discursive tool to critique environmental degradation stemming from capitalist exploitation. The analysis finds that Beautiful Nubia’s music transcends mere entertainment, embedding substantive socio-political and ecological content. Consequently, the study concludes that his songs serve as valuable resources for ethical reflection, pedagogical engagement, and civic consciousness in Nigeria. It recommends increased scholarly attention to Beautiful Nubia’s oeuvre as a vital corpus for understanding art’s role in addressing pressing societal and environmental issues.

Keywords: Eco-Marxism, Ecocriticism, Marxism, Music, Beautiful Nubia

Introduction

The salient issue of environmental despoliation has been an issue of serious concern in Nigeria, and by extension, Africa. Since the art and literature of a region cannot be separated from the predicaments of the region, the issue of environmental crisis has been well represented in Nigerian and African Literatures, arts, and music, especially in the literature and art of the Niger Delta people of Nigeria. The likes of Tanure Ojaide, Helon Habila, Ebinyo Ogbowei, and most recently, Tares Oburumu, have all written about the predicaments of the Niger Delta, where the flora and fauna have been endangered because of oil exploration and environmental degradation activities of multinational companies fully supported by the Nigerian government. As a form of cultural response to issues of socio-environmental degradation, musicians like Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Angelique Kidjo, Bob Marley, Mos Def, Sting, Keb’ Mo’, and Michael Jackson, to mention but a few, have used music as a tool for environmental music activism.

Segun Akinlolu, who is widely known by his performing name- Beautiful Nubia, is a veterinary doctor, folk singer, songwriter, poet and novelist. He has over seventeen albums to his name and these albums are subjects of scholarly research among the academics. He

was greatly influenced by his grandmother, from whom he became rooted in the African indigenous oral tradition like music, folklore and oral poetry. After releasing two albums earlier, he had his breakthrough album titled *Jangbalajugbu* in 2002. Beautiful Nubia is also a prolific creative writer. He has written four collections of poetry, three recorded poetry album, a novel titled “Citadel Blues”, an autobiography and a book of songs (lyrics). Beautiful Nubia as a social reformist has written songs and poetry that are dedicated to addressing the issues of class struggle between the upper class and the lower class. In addressing the class struggle between the rich and the poor masses, he has used the flora and the fauna as allegorical characters to explore the relationship that exists between man and his physical environment, and to protest against how the capitalists have endangered nature and how the activities of the higher class (the bourgeoisie) have negatively affected the earth and by extension, man, who inhabits the earth. Without any iota of doubt, whatever affects the earth, will definitely affect the man who lives on the earth. Two songs, “Jangbalajugbu” and “Lekeleke”, are purposively selected from two different albums of the artiste for the study.

Many scholarly research works have been done on the songs of Beautiful Nubia. For instance, Tunji Ajayi (2021) examines the songs of Beautiful Nubia as works that trigger a move towards a revival of cultural values. Also, Solanke (2002) examines Beautiful Nubia’s songs as traditional musings against modern nonsense. Adegoju (2014) also examines the artist’s music as polemics on child rights and the leadership challenges in Nigeria. Omogbolahan Abiola (2017) also examines the songs of Beautiful Nubia as Nigerian Marxist songs. In like manner, Fadero (2023) examines how Beautiful Nubia employs the African Indigenous oral tradition as a tool to project and express effectively his Marxist ideological stance in his music and poetry. It is however, the focus of this study to partake in filling an observed gap on the critical eco-marxist concerns of the songs of Beautiful Nubia. The research is particularly significant because, it contributes to scholarly discourse on Eco-Marxist theory and African Eco-Musicology.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to critically examine the issues of Eco-Marxist concerns as espoused in two selected songs of Beautiful Nubia. Specific objectives are: to

1. examine the works of Beautiful Nubia as a deviation from the status quo in the Nigerian music and entertainment industry;
2. evaluate the Eco-marxist contents of two songs of Beautiful; and
3. examine how Beautiful Nubia presents man’s inhumanity to man through the destruction of the environment (the flora and fauna) by the capitalists and bourgeoisies.

Literature Review

Ajayi (2021) opines that Beautiful Nubia's lyrics are "powerful, socially conscious protest lyrics, which can change the most impenitent heart for positive reactions. It can also provide needed succour for famished souls whose hopes are sinking into the nadir on daily basis especially in Africa. He is the philosopher who provides timely blandishments for the self-opinionated and impenitent African leaders' benefits. Like a troubadour, the artiste and avid writer who has traversed the Nigerian entertainment scene with untainted glamour and undiminished honour, is in the vanguard of revamping and reviving our lost cultural values and age-long traditions". Ajayi's assertion reveals the importance of Beautiful Nubia's music to the Nigerian and by extension, the African society. For Adegaju (2014), Beautiful Nubia is an artist who cuts the figure of an agent of social change, who, through his music, raises the national consciousness on inherent socio-political problems in the Nigerian society. Collectively, these studies establish that Beautiful Nubia's art goes beyond art-for-art-sake rather; it is a socio-politically conscious art. Falodun (2019) observes that Beautiful Nubia has consistently made music that addresses societal issues. "Monkey Wear Shoe" from *Sun No Dey Sleep* (2011), his eighth album, is a satirical piece on gluttonous and corrupt political leaders. In the same album, "Someone Like Biko" declaims iconic names like Shaka the Zulu, Kwame Nkrumah, Steve Biko. Beautiful Nubia hopes that this generation will raise more people like them. Beautiful Nubia's music is an historical, philosophical, political, pedagogical, and social conscious music. It is a music that uplifts the poor masses (the proletariats) and confronts the exploitative political leaders (the bourgeoisies). Fadero (2023) observes that Beautiful Nubia's works are works that address issues of global concerns like war, bad governance, racism, oppression of women, child soldiering, and oppression of the poor amongst others. All the previously cited studies are scholarship on social critique within Beautiful Nubia's oeuvre. Salaudeen-Adegoke (2016) asserts that Beautiful Nubia draws the strength of his music from the Yoruba copious corpus of folktales, folksongs and proverbs. This musical evangelist presents the wisdom, the impeccable understanding, and the wonderment of Yoruba culture to the world, preserving the rich legacy of the Yoruba inheritance. Oje and Adejube (2017) opine that Beautiful Nubia's music is noted for a strong usage of native wisdom with Yoruba traditional songs that are transferred orally from one generation to the other. In alignment with Salaudeen-Adegoke and Oje and Adejube's submissions, Beautiful Nubia's songs are rooted within the indigenous Yoruba culture and tradition; this explains its consistent engagement with the flora and fauna because the African indigenous tradition always revolves around both animal and plant characters. Fadero (2023) asserts that Beautiful Nubia has a strong passion for words. He delights in using words in a simple but powerful manner to convey his message to his audience. This is evident in his songs too. Arguably, he is the most word-conscious African modern-day musician. He believes in the power and the potency of words to effect change in the society. Fadero also observes that like a traditional town crier who uses a metal gong, a horn, a drum or a song, Beautiful Nubia incorporates all these African traditional oral

elements into his works to produce traditionally rich and semantically sound works. Salaudeen-Adegoke, Oje and Adejube, and Fadero.s works are scholarship on how Beautiful Nubia's works focus on cultural revival.

The Eco-Marxist theory is important because it is a critical instrument to be freely applied to literary works. Moreso, the theory has become a dominant sign of our time and has moved from its traditional engagement with literary texts to address a wider range of ecological and socio-political concerns worldwide. Primarily, Eco-Marxism is an offshoot of Ecocriticism which is a literary theory that examines the relationship between literature and the environment. Defining Ecocriticism, Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (1996) assert that it is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Buell (2005) defines Ecocriticism as the study of literature and environment from an interdisciplinary point of view where all sciences come together to analyse the environment and brainstorm possible solutions for the correction of the contemporary environmental situation. In alignment with Glotfelty, Fromm, and Buell, the theory examines the relationship between. Ecocriticism has other branches like Eco-Marxism, and Ecofeminism, which attempts to examine the subjugation of women to the dominance of the earth. Eco-Marxism can otherwise be known as Ecological Marxism.

Tracing the history of Eco-Marxism, one cannot ignore names like Raymond Williams (1973), James O' Connor (1988), and John Bellamy Foster who developed the concept of metabolic rift. Another worthy mention is Murray Bookchin whose work focused more on social ecology and eco-anarchism. The Eco-Marxist literary theory has other sub-divisions like metabolic rift, capitalism's second contradiction, cultural ecological criticism, Eco-socialism, and capitalism criticism. Commenting on the global impact of capitalism, Matthias Lievens (2008) observes that the clear link between the development of capitalism and ecological catastrophe does not mean that there were no environmental crises in precapitalist societies. However, these usually remained limited to the local area (e.g. the depletion of the soil, the burning of forests). With the arrival of the global systemic logic of capitalism, however, the environmental crisis has likewise become global. Explaining what metabolic rift means, Lievens asserts that its importance is real, since it demonstrates that the environmental crisis is not a crisis of nature, but of society, and more specifically of the relationship that society has had with its natural conditions for the last two hundred years or more. Therefore, in Lievens' view, metabolic rift occurs as a result of societal mishandling of nature. Establishing a striking relationship between Marxism and Ecocriticism, Lievens notes that the social and ecological questions are fundamentally linked: the historical process that brings about the modern rift between rich and poor is also the process that created the rift between man and nature. In alignment with Lievens' stance, the rift that occurs between the rich and the poor also occur between man and nature, and they are children of the same mother. Examining the ecological crises that are caused by the destruction of the ecosystem by the capitalists, Amal (2020) opines that one of the negative aspects of modern technology is the fact that we live in an age of

environmental crises, resulting from man's eco-unfriendly practices that damage the livelihood on our planet. Grave ecological disasters such as shortage of drinking water or food supply, climate change, deforestation, depletion of natural resources, the extinction of some birds or animal species, global warming phenomenon, loss of biodiversity, contamination...etc. have become a major threat to man's life and well-being on earth. To further buttress Amal's submission, man has been using modern technology against nature and consequently, against his own existence.

William Rueckert (1978) opines that Ecocriticism applies the ecological principles to the study of literature. Buell (1995) affirms that Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist's praxis. Emphasizing another branch of Ecocriticism called Eco-theatre, Amal (2020) notes that Eco-theatre refers to the intersection of ecology and performance. It aims at drawing the public's attention to the issues related to the environmental preoccupations as well as suggesting ways of conciliation between the human and the physical world. Amal also defines Eco-Marxism as a political belief system that combines the Marxist belief of anti-capitalism with ecology and pro-environment policies. Therefore, Eco-Marxism is but a branch within the big tree of Ecocriticism that combats capitalist ideologies with socio-environmental policies. In like manner, David Pepper (1993) defines Eco-Marxism as a sociopolitical ideology that fuses the Marxist critique of capitalism with ecological issues and pro-environmental movements. Establishing the inseparable relationship that exists between man and nature, Marx (1975) asserts that man lives from nature, that is, nature is his body, and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die. To say that man's physical and mental life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature. In alignment with Marx's submission, man is a part of nature while nature is a part of man; therefore, one becomes dead and almost irrelevant and useless without the other. Ecological Marxist, John Bellamy Foster, used Marx's four concepts in his Eco-Marxist writing. These four concepts are social metabolism (interrelationship between man and nature, but which have been abused by capitalists), metabolic rift (the destruction of the ecosystem as a result of the activities of the selfish capitalists), commodity economy (the commodification of labourers who are used and dehumanized by greedy capitalists), and the concept of second nature (an attempt to create another nature through artificial means). Patterson (2010) opines that the environment cannot sustain capitalism and capitalism certainly cannot sustain the environment. Noting the destructive impact of capitalists on nature, Foster (2000) asserts that the greater capitalism's expansion, the more intense its ecological demands, and the greater the level of ecological destruction it imposes. This shows the devastating effects that the activities of greedy capitalists have on nature and man. John Bellamy Foster caused an ecological turn when he rejected the idea that Karl Marx was against ecology and productivity. He brought different concepts like the "metabolic rift, the critique of Capitalists' production, and a call for ecological revolution". Williams Raymond brought the concept of cultural materialism by bringing nature into

cultural studies; he also started long revolution which Foster later developed into ecological revolution. Raymond and Foster's concepts are tools for my analysis because they capture key factors in Eco-Marxist studies like the rift caused as a result of man's unconscious destruction of his physical environment, the danger of excessive capitalists' production and the urgent call for long/ecological revolution against industrial revolution. The first part of this review focuses on scholarship on social critique and cultural revival based on Beautiful Nubia's oeuvre, while the second part focuses on the review of theoretical concepts like Ecocriticism, Eco-Marxism, and Marxism. Collectively, these studies establish the need to fill the observed gap in the Eco-marxist evaluation of Beautiful Nubia's works.

Methodology

The paper adopts an interpretative and qualitative method of data analysis. The primary data analysed are two selected songs of Beautiful Nubia namely; "Jangbalajugbu" and "Lekeleke", to see how the poet-musician portrays the idea of the oppression of the poor and the destruction of nature by the activities of greedy capitalists. The secondary data are obtained from books, essays, articles, literary journals, and websites.

Socio-environmental Marxism in Beautiful Nubia's "Jangbalajugbu"

"Jangbalajugbu" (2002) is both Beautiful Nubia's breakthrough album and a song within the album that carries the same title. The Yoruba lyrics of Beautiful Nubia songs were translated into English by the artiste himself. The song has received numerous scholarly attentions; it has been analysed as a tool for social advocacy, protest song, as a song that uses African Indigenous oral tradition to project Marxist ideology, as an archetype of musical structure, to mention but a few; however, scholarly attention has not been given to the issues of Eco-Marxist concerns in the song. This section aims to unearth the salient issues of Eco-Marxism in the song. In "Jangbalajugbu", the opening stanza of the lyrics goes thus:

Who made the earth shed tears of sorrow
who makes the children cry so much
who's going to bring back the smiles on their faces

who's going to make us laugh?

From the above extract, Beautiful Nubia poses many rhetorical questions to awaken the consciousness of the people to the suffering of the poor masses through the activities of the capitalist elites who are oppressing them. These greedy capitalists, who can do anything in the process of production to make profit, are the ones "making the earth shed tears of sorrow, they are the ones making the children cry so much, they are the ones who have taken the smiles on the faces of the people". In other words, they are the ones

oppressing and dehumanizing the low class people. It is important to note that in the last line of the lyrics, the singer raises another vital rhetorical question to call the attention of his audience to the need for someone who will put an end to the suffering of the ordinary people, but it seems that like the rhetorical question that it is, there is no answer to that question. This is because as long as people are allowed to privately own a business organization, they will continue to destroy the physical environment to their own profit, but to the disadvantage of the common man, and the destruction of the ecosystem. One is made to see the Eco-Marxist orientation of this song right from the opening line of the lyrics. In the opening line of the lyrics, the troubadour raises a question that is of great Eco-Marxist concern, he asks: who made the earth shed tears of sorrow? It is important to note that the singer personified the earth making it into a character that is capable of shedding tears. This shows that the singer has made the earth a character that has been so endangered, raped, and destroyed that it has begun to shed tears because of the mayhem unleashed on it through the activities of greedy and nonchalant capitalists. This personification of the mother earth as a character shedding tears shows Foster's metabolic rift which emphasizes the destruction of the ecosystem as a result of man's unfriendly relationship with nature. The proceeding lines of the lyrics give explanation to who the songwriter considers as the earth: the children, everyone who has lost the smiles that used to be worn on their faces, and the people who have lost the ability to laugh because of the selfish and wicked activities of the capitalists and bourgeoisies. This perfectly aligns with Karl Marx's submission that man is a vital part of the earth and whatever endangers the earth inadvertently endangers man. The poor masses are the ones left to suffer whatever havoc that is wrecked on the physical environment through the capitalists' exploitative activities on the earth. The next line of the lyrics goes thus:

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| E ba ngbon'do yi gbe | Come let's empty this pond |
| Jangbala jugbu Jugbu Jugbu jangbala | |
| Ojo to ro lana yen, gbogbo ile lomi ro si | Yesterday's rain flooded the house |
| Gbogbo aso lo tutu | All our clothes are wet |
| Baale ile ti sun lo fonfon o | the head of the house was in deep slumber |
| Gbogbo omode lomi ti ko lo o | the flood carried away all the children |

Taking from the Yoruba Indigenous oral folk songs, Beautiful Nubia has through this song passed across a strong message by creating an imagery of a house flooded with water and thereby depicting the condition of the poor masses and their children, who are directly affected by such evil occurrence like a flood, which is caused mostly by the destruction of the physical environment by the exploitative and profit-driven capitalists. The flood here represents the consequences or the results of the activities of the greedy capitalists in the society. They destroy both the land and labourers (the low class people working for them) that they are expected to protect. This aligns perfectly with Foster's concept of commodity economy and the exploitative use of labourers. No wonder, the singer says "gbogbo aso lo tutu/ all our clothes are wet", which means that all the people are affected because

whatever affects the earth automatically affects the man that inhabits it. Another striking aspect of the lyrics is the line that says “baale ile ti sun lo fonfon o/ gbogbo omode lomi ti ko lo o/ the head of the house was in deep slumber/ the flood carried away all the children”. Here, the head of the house signifies the few capitalists and their greedy political counterparts (who, more often than not, are owners of private organisations themselves, and sometimes, shareholders in a private organization), who are expected to protect the earth and the people but instead of doing this, they have all neglected their responsibilities to the earth and by extension, to the people who inhabit it. The result of their action is glaring; the helpless children are the victims of their activities of the environmental degradation caused by the carelessness of greedy capitalists, as they are carried away by the flood. These helpless children are the children of the poor/ ordinary people. When the singer says “ojo to ro lana yen, gbogbo ile lomi ro si/ yesterday’s rain flooded the house”, it emphasizes that flood does not just happen, more often than not, man’s activities always contribute to it. Some capitalists in the construction companies will order their labourers to pack sands to the detriment of land topography of the area, and whenever it rains, this will lead to great flood. When the songwriter says “gbogbo omode lomi ti kolo/ the flood carried away all the children”, it shows that it is the children of the common man that will mostly suffer from the destruction of the physical environment, hence the earth (our earth) must be protected from the greedy capitalists by all means. The call “eba ngbon do yi gbe/ come let’s empty this pond” establishes the artiste’s belief that a society owned organization and means of production is the solution to the environmental hazards and ecological problems caused by the activities of greedy capitalists.

Ecological Marxism and Lamentations in Beautiful Nubia’s “Lekeleke”

“Lekeleke” is a song within Beautiful’s Nubia 2015 Album titled “Soundbender”. It is a song that explores the issues of Eco-Marxist concerns, as it addresses socio-environmental degradation through the activities of self-centred capitalists. It is important to note that the Yoruba version of these lyrics was translated into English Language by Beautiful Nubia himself. The opening lyrics of the song go thus:

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| Lekeleke nfò l’ókè, ẹyẹ funfun ni | Lekeleke, white bird flying high |
| Lékeléke nfò l’ókè, ẹyẹ funfun ni | |
| Aṣọ àlà ni mo wọ elépo yà fún mi | I’m in my pure white garment, steer clear of |
| me palm- oil bearer | |
| Lékeléke nbọ l’ónà ẹyẹ funfun ni. | Here comes Lekeleke, a white bird. |
| Fò, máa fò, máa fò, ẹyẹ ọlọlá | Fly, fly high, you affluent bird |
| Bọ, máa bọ, máa bọ, ẹyẹ oníre | Fly, fly high, you affluent bird |

From the opening stanza of the lyrics, it is obvious that the song explores both issues of Eco-critical and Marxist concerns. Fadero (2023) has rightly noted that Beautiful Nubia always uses the African indigenous oral tradition to project his Marxist ideology, but the lyrics above focus on both a celebration of the beauty of the flora, and a social comment on critical issues affecting the low class people of the society. “Lekeleke” could be translated into English as Cattle Egret (that is, a type of Heron, often seen following Cattle in the fields); however, it has both physical and spiritual significances in the Yoruba culture. It signifies purity, beauty, tranquility, good fortune, bearer of good news, and it also has a nexus with “Obatala”, the Yoruba deity of purity. Lekeleke as used in the opening stanza of this song could be seen from two different perspectives: first and foremost, it is a celebration of the beauty of the flora (with “Lekeleke” being one); secondly, “Lekeleke” is also allegorical in this lyrics as it could represent Beautiful Nubia himself as an agent of truth and change in the society. Beyond the celebration of the beauty of nature, which the Cattle Egret is an integral part of, Lekeleke is also an allegorical character in the song and it represents the voice of truth championed by the songwriter himself. When the singer says “aso ala ni mo wo elepo ya fun mi/I’m in my pure white garment, steer clear of me palm-oil bearer”, the phrase Palm-oil bearer signifies anything that can ruin or destroy the purity of the Cattle Egret or the purity of nature, and it also signifies anything can contaminate the allegorical “Lekeleke” as the bearer/messenger of truth. The proceeding lines of the lyrics go thus:

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| È má fi’yà j’opó, àt’omọ òkú òrun orphans | Be good to the widows and the |
| Ó ní ẹ f’èsò s’ayé, ẹ má tẹ tálákà mọ’lẹ mọ o | Stop trampling on the poor |
| Ó nbọ l’ónà, ẹyẹ oba ni... | Here he comes, the king’s bird, don’t upset him |

In the lyrical excerpt above, the Marxist ideology of the songwriter is solidified. The songwriter says “o nbo lona, eye oba ni/ here he comes, the king’s bird, don’t upset him”, describing “Lekeleke” as the king’s bird. The king’s bird here means the messenger of the king or one who bears the king’s messages. Here, “Lekeleke” is used allegorically to depict a bearer of truth who is confronting the societal ills like bad treatment of widows and orphans, and trampling on the poor by the rich to mention but a few. The lyrics proceed thus:

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| Àwọn àgbàgbà ilú, wọn wá kó’ra wọn jọ and axes | All the adults arise with machetes |
| Wọn fẹ l’éyẹ l’óko | To rid their town of this pest |
| Wọn k’ádà-á jáde, wọn káàké-é jáde, wọn ngé gi oko the | They cut down the trees, one after other |
| Ó di kà, ó di kò-ó | |

In the above lyrical excerpt, the singer points the attention of the listener to the activities of the adults/elders of the land, who in an attempt to suppress the truth, end up destruction the flora and the fauna- the ecosystem. The pest to be gotten rid of is “Lekeleke” the bird of truth, which is both a symbol of the fauna part of the ecosystem, and also a symbol of the voice of truth lamenting and crying for social change. Again, it is important to note that the “adults” here symbolizes the greedy capitalists who do not care about what happens to the ecosystem, so far it does not affect their economic gain. These adults/elders are the ones mobilizing the youth and children sadly to destroy the ecosystem. Bellamy Foster’s concept of metabolic rift is evident in the lyrical excerpt above, in that the activities of nonchalant adults/elders lead to ecological degradation, which is evident in the cutting down of trees and the desperate attempt to get rid of the bird. The proceeding lines go thus:

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|---|---|
| L’àìpé l’ájìnà, wón gé gbogbo igi tán, ó wá ku’gi kan l’óko | Now they’ve felled every tree |
| iroko | except the mighty |
| Igi íròkò, igi tí gbogbo ayé nfé, èyí tí gbogbo ayé nbọ | The one tree beloved and revered |
| Ó di kà, ó di kò-ó, kò mà ku ‘gi kan l’óko o! | But even that soon goes down, now, there is no tree left in the forest! |

The above lyrical excerpt further establishes the metabolic rift that happens to the flora and the fauna as a result of the activities of the greedy capitalists/bourgeoisies. The closing stanza ends in a sober and elegiac manner; the songwriter says “Kò wá pé l’ẹyẹ fò lọ o - pagidari igi dá, pagidari igi dá, ẹyẹ fò lọ o/and then the bird flies off far away, Now, there is no tree left in the forest, leaving the townsfolk to bemoan their waywardness, loss and ruin”, and this signifies the result of social metabolism (that is, man’s unfriendly and abusive interrelationship with nature) and the complete destruction of the ecosystem (the flora and the fauna) to be specific; there is massive deforestation without any plan to plant these trees back by the capitalists in the wood-making industry, and some species of bird have either gone into extinction by being consistently killed as games or being chased far away from where men dwell. The truth, however, is that any act of destruction meted on nature naturally affects man who is also a vital part of nature; no wonder, the singer sang the closing stanza with an unusual elegiac cadence, and also portrays the townsfolk as people who have suffered the real loss and ruin, because they will be the one to suffer the consequences of ecological degradation/ruin. The townsfolk signifies both the capitalists and the low class onlookers, since they are both of nature, they will both suffer the consequences of destruction to the flora and fauna (the ecosystem).

Findings

The findings of the paper include the following:

1. African music goes beyond “art for art’s sake”, rather they are leadership training, ethical, and pedagogical materials for Africa and global scholarship.
2. The solution to the problems of social metabolism and metabolic rift lies in a deliberate advocacy for ecological revolution.
3. The solution to the ecological damage perpetuated by the capitalists is a collective responsibility of the society.
4. Commodity economy as proposed by Bellamy Foster, which is the abusive-cum-exploitative use of labourers, is the hallmark of capitalism.

Conclusion

The paper has closed a critical gap in the scholarly studies of Beautiful Nubia’s works, having carefully studied two selected songs of the artiste from the purview of Eco-Marxist study. It is established that concepts like social metabolism, metabolic rift, and commodity economy are factors that continue to contribute to environmental degradation, and that the solution to the problems of the capitalists’ destruction of the physical environment lies in the hands of a means of production jointly owned by the society. Beautiful Nubia’s works are philosophical and have global issues confronting humanity as its thrusts. It is therefore recommended that more critical attentions should be given to Beautiful Nubia’s works, and further studies could be done on the artiste’s use of allegorical and fable characters in his works.

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