

## Suicide as Redemption: an Analysis of Elechi Amadi's *The Great Ponds*

**Wazha Lopang**

Lecturer, Department of English

University of Botswana

Faculty of Humanities, Department of English

Private Bag UB 00703, Gaborone, Botswana

### Abstract

*This article looks at Elechi Amadi's The Great Ponds and explores how suicide is for Wago a state of self healing. It will argue how Wago takes his life not out of cowardice but as a rejection of what society demands of him. The fatal removal of the self will be shown as an attempt to reject that society for the finality of death. It will be argued how suicide is a weapon of choice that heroic characters make use of when all other methods, civil and military, have failed. The damnation of death is seen not as a curse of the self but a final statement about society and its relationship with the individual. In essence the text explores how suicide in African literature is appraised especially in a setting where Christian or European notions of sin are nonexistent.*

**Keywords:** suicide, honour, heroism,

### 1. Introduction

Albert Camus famously stated that, "there is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide." In African Literature suicide is approached in a complex manner. It has many faces both in terms of the way it is represented as well as the implications it has on the individual, the community and the ancestors. However, instances of suicide are infrequent in African Literature but where they do occur they tend to focus on texts with an ethnographic setting or a setting that has little or no contact with the outside world. Texts such as Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* and *The Great Ponds*; Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* readily come to mind.

The complexity of suicide makes its study intriguing in African Literature, even in situations that have similar geographic settings. For instance, Okonkwo's suicide in *Things Fall Apart* is seen as a great taboo whereas the ritual suicide expected of Elesin in *Death and The King's Horsemen* is a time of celebration and a good omen for the future. So you have death as abomination and purification respectively. The concern of this essay, though, is not to have a comparative study on why these texts seem to have occurrences of suicide or if the setting itself contributes to cases of suicide amongst the male characters. This essay investigates whether suicide can be seen to be an alternative choice, without that choice being seen as desperation or hopelessness. For instance, Socrates chose suicide over the state's decision to murder him. Friesen (2006) explores a similar topic in his argument that Okonkwo's suicide is one that is carried out for the good of his people. The focus of my paper though is different in that suicide is not presented as having any communal benefits that the character intends to leave for his people. The paper will focus on the circumstances surrounding why a character commits suicide and the society's assessment of it within their philosophical outlook.

### 2.0

Suicide is a choice. It is freewill. The choice to end one's life is voluntary despite the agonies that one may encounter leading up to the final act. This action however, is fundamental to understanding the meaning of life and one's role in it. In simple terms, if life is absurd, does one find meaning in suicide?

To consider suicide as a defining feature of the brave man is not easy especially to contextualize how one justifies such an action. Bigelow (1961) states that, "reason is important to deal with the depths of human life. There are two points to this proposition – first, that human reason is relatively weak and imperfect, and second, that there are dark places in human life which are 'non-reason' and to which reason scarcely penetrates." (Bigelow 1961, 172).

It will be interesting to determine whether contemplating suicide is for the hero part of a well thought strategy or a mark of desperation. The German Philosopher Immanuel Kant raises a pertinent point on morality which can be used to explore suicide. In *The Groundwork to the Metaphysical of Morals* Kant was adamant that human beings should treat themselves and each other differently than the way they would treat animals and as such though it would be acceptable to torture an animal doing so to the self or to a fellow human being would be morally wrong. Rachels quotes Kant when he says, “Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only.” (Rachels, 1).

What this means is that to treat someone as “an end” is to acknowledge them as a rational being that has freely chosen a course of action for which we can hold them accountable. In other words if a character commits suicide we can pass judgment on them. As Abass and Asiata state (2010), “In Kant’s view, the human capacity for moral action – the ability to have one’s will directed by reason and not by the inclination of the moment – clearly distinguishes the moral worth of humans from the value of other sentient creatures.” (Abass and Asiata 2010, 51) Yet when it comes to identifying what suicide is, besides viewing it through a moral window, Albert Camus states that “suicide is a repudiation. The absurd man can only drain everything to the bitter end, and deplete himself. The absurd is his extreme tension, which he maintains constantly by solitary effort, for he knows that in that consciousness and in that day to day revolt he gives proof of his only truth, which is defiance.” (Camus)

Ultimately then, a line has to be drawn that in African Literature, and in *The Great Ponds* in particular, how does suicide express itself? Does it take a Kantian approach or is it sympathetic to Camus’ view modelled as it is on The Myth of Sisyphus? Obviously it is more complex than this and my brief paper will not do justice to a question that seeks to analyse how the hero in African Literature contemplates and carries out suicide bearing in mind the organisational structure of a community in touch with its ancestors and spirits. However, my focus on Elechi Amadi’s *The Great Ponds* will help us understand why the hero takes his life and the implications this has on those who interpret his actions. This text displays the qualities of a hero beset with problems as well as explores how the character faces adversity. In speaking of adversity one needs to decide if this condition contributes to one’s alienation which in turn could be responsible for one’s suicide. Sayes (2003) states that in existentialist writing alienation, “is used primarily to refer to a psychological, perhaps even spiritual, kind of malaise which is pervasive in modern society but not specific to it. Rather it is symptomatic of the human condition as such.” (Sayes 2003, 2). This paper shall determine how Wago displays a restless spirit to influence events in his society<sup>1</sup>. Wago is impatient to allow the course of natural justice to work.

## 2.1

This article will cover three areas. It will analyse the type of warrior Wago is; secondly it will explore how he uses the supernatural to fortify and condemn himself and finally, how as a consequence of the above two points, suicide becomes not an escape but an extension of his honour.

## 2.2

It has to be determined what type of hero this character is for one to be able to contextualize the role that suicide has in his life. The concept of the Hegelian hero raises some interesting comments on the character of Wago. According to Pour (2012), the philosopher Hegel “believes that the real hero creates harmony between his internal motives and external elements.” (Pour 2012, 441). This means that the desires that one has should not be at a tangent with those around him. The hero should fight for his people and not against them. Suicide then could be a sign that this harmony that Hegel identifies is a sign of a fractured relationship. Pour goes further to state that, “the Hegelian hero takes his nobility from the fact that he has merged his individuality with god’s universality in order to have their support.” (Pour 2012, 441) Balance is important for Hegel. Wago operates outside this balance. The hero’s search for equilibrium as Hegel puts it, is one that is base, without any spiritual foundation. The notion of a higher being does not play an important role in the decisions that he takes, especially for Wago who is an atheist and even views traditional spirituality in a parasitic manner. Wago censors himself and has no moral compass that tempers his strong drive for success. Albert Camus sees the hero somewhat differently from Hegel. Laskar (2004) explains that for Camus, “the hero of ordinary life is the person who resolutely shoulders the responsibilities that life imposes, knowing full well that all is futile and meaningless.” (Laskar 2004, 409).

---

<sup>1</sup> Kierkegaard’s position is that human existence is a work in progress in which ‘an individual must take responsibility for achieving an identity.’

While it is not wrong to focus mainly on western philosophies in order to explain the African condition, Soyinka cautions the analyst of African Literature against always seeing it in relation to European worldview. One needs to consider the indigenous philosophy that sees the African in a cyclical relationship with ancestors and the unborn. For instance, Friesen states that in *Death and the King's Horseman*, "Elesin's ritual destiny is continually explored (by himself and others) in terms of a transitional phase – a movement through a passage or gateway." (Friesen 2006, 11). Therefore, seeing suicide in African Literature as a finality or, morally speaking, as a plunge into an abyss is misleading. The extent to which all this is true for Wago and how it contributes to his suicide is something that needs to be explored. Firstly, one needs to understand the type of character he is.

Wago is addressed by the colourful title of 'Leopard killer.' The description that the narrative gives shows that this is a man of substance,

"I am Wago, the leopard-killer, if you want to know," the prisoner replied. For a moment a hush fell on the company. Wago the leopard killer was well known and was a man to be reckoned with. He had three magnificent leopard skins to his credit, a feat unequalled by any man they knew of. His skill in hunting was uncanny. He had on several occasions brought home live antelopes whose bodies bore no traces of any violence or struggles whatsoever. (Amadi 1969,14)

Essentially, Wago is akin to a general given the status he holds in the community. He is a slayer of men and animals alike. He is unmatched by most characters for his thirst for blood and chaos and desire for victory whatever the consequence. The idea that one gets in this society is that honour is the foundation on which Wago builds his reputation and paradoxically, the mantra with which he falls. Wago is the epitome of Aliakoro's superiority over the other villages. Wago's power is magnified in stature by that most troublesome ideal, honour. Wago is through his deeds publicly and repeatedly praised. Yet Wago commits suicide. We need to understand why. Camus states that "there is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy." (Camus 1942, 10). Is the option of suicide (it can be nothing other than this) for Wago a way of honouring himself when all else fails? Is it Wago's means of reclaiming for himself that which he has lost? For these questions and others to be answered fully we need to understand the context in which Wago's character (and by extension the society) interrogates suicide and determine if the ultimate fate that befalls him is redemption or cowardice, if indeed it is personal salvation or futility.

### 2.3

Wago's ambition is to see Olumba his rival fail, for in achieving that, he and his people will achieve rights to the ponds of Wagaba. What Wago cannot get through force he will do so through sorcery. He is a man who does not fight fair and why should he? Wago owes his community nothing, yet he has done much for it.

Consider this analogy, for one to stand out one must swim against the tide (which is what suicide would be). However, one can also swim with the tide but swifter and faster than one's peers (which is what heroism is). These two qualities of human nature make Wago the character that he is. Death in whatever form it takes is an extension of his beliefs. In his eyes suicide represents a tangible option. It is part of what makes him who he is. Wago kills himself after failing yet again to take the law into his hands and influence the will of Ogbunabali, the god of darkness. After his attempt is thwarted by Olumba's friends he decides to take his own life. We do not see him contemplating this tragic decision but we learn through the elders that it is a decision taken swiftly. Wago dies the way he lived, spontaneously and with little care for the consequences. He dies at the centre of the dispute, the Wagaba ponds. His death is a final statement that underlines his selfish attitude. Eze Diali states that 'It would be an abomination to fish in a pond in which someone committed suicide.' (Amadi 1969,192). The ponds have been contaminated and none can use it anymore.

Wago's death spells disaster for his people since the ponds are the lifeblood of the people. He leaves a lot of grief behind, some of it directly influenced by him, some by the dictates of fate. The suicide Wago commits is not a sign of cowardice. It is reckless, yes, misguided, probably but by no means cowardly. His resolve is strong to the end. Wago's attempts to kill Olumba do not come to fruition and rather than let fate decide he decides and damns all in the process. Suicide then, for Wago is a necessary piece of arsenal. He is a warrior who has embraced death in all its forms even if it comes at his own hands. A hero knows when his time has come, when his exploits have run their course.

Furthermore, for Wago to meekly step down from that pedestal of power and influence he has yielded over his community would be to extinguish his eminence, the only logical option for him is to commit suicide<sup>2</sup>. Being a proud man he decides to blow out his own candle. The elders in Aliakoro know suicide to be a great sin but they also know that for Wago to choose to do so in the ponds is a tactical and overly insensitive gesture. Personal interest has sought to overcome the communal good. As Ogbeide states, “the individual is artistically meaningless without the community.” (Ogbeide 2011, 35). So, in a way the existential meaning of life for the African at least can be partly answered by considering the African’s bond with his kinsmen. Wago is a sore loser but the egos of heroes have always been fragile, massaged as they are by those who fear and love them in equal measure. For one to come down from that stature, especially when facing personal and public humiliation, is to debase oneself.

For people like Wago there is no humility in such a decision – only bitterness and regret. The society has no say or knowledge of this hero’s decision to kill himself. It is an individual matter. Ogbeide (2011) states that, “well demonstrated in *The Great Ponds* is the claim of the group over the individual, a common feature of Igbo culture. In this context a man’s success is not only for himself and family but for the whole group.” (Ogbeide 2011, 35). It is therefore not difficult to see why suicide, this most personal form of death causes so much anxiety and soul searching among the people of Aliakoro. Wago kills himself without anybody to assist or dissuade him. We know this death could not have been accidental or due to foul play because “during a divination that evening Achichi confirmed that Wago the leopard-killer had committed suicide.” (Amadi 1969, 192).

Wago is a loner. He is strongest when he acts unilaterally; it is as if working in a group taints his unique abilities on the battleground. He is a great warrior who is almost unmatched in his prowess. However, after he gets over mulling the repercussions of defying Ogbunabali, god of the night, he continues steadfastly on the path he has chosen. The words of Igwu show how destructive Wago has become,

“Listen,” the dibia said slowly. “A bird that flies too fast may fly past its nest. Wago, you think you are upholding this village but in fact you are wrecking it. No one wanted this stupid war in which so many magnificent young men have died. It was all your doing. But you are not content with that. You now want to bring the wrath of the gods on the whole village.” (Amadi 1969, 109)

Existentialists believe that whatever man does has consequences, if not for himself then for those around him. One does not live life in a vacuum insulated from society. The actions that people take reverberate throughout the community. In *The Great Ponds*, Wago is reminded by the dibia that his desire for war and conflict has put Aliakoro under siege. The villagers cannot go about their day to day activities. The women live in fear and have to be escorted by heavily armed men. The children also play in a subdued manner. For Wago, the desire to be victorious overrides all else. He has a strong resolve to ensure the ponds of Wagaba become the sole property of Aliakoro. Yet the threat of war disrupts not only life in his village but in Chiolu as well. What should have been a simple duel of life and death between Olumba and the god Ogbunabali spills over to engulf the villages, mainly due to Wago’s initiative. Death is an ever present feature in *The Great Ponds* and existentialism calls on people to deal with death and its meaning. However, the death we see in Amadi’s text is of two types. One is influenced by the warring villages led by Wago and Olumba respectively in the battle over ownership of the ponds. The other is influenced by something the villagers cannot comprehend but which they have named Wonjo. Olumba, upon whose shoulders the destiny of the ponds rest, is a victim of Wonjo and at the same time he has to contend with the real danger that Wago and the people of Aliakoro will destroy him before the new moon rises. Wago cannot rely on the possibility of the sickness killing Olumba before the deadline. Should this happen then it will be understood that Ogbunabali has done his job. Wago cannot be certain of this. The fear of the unknown is what makes Wago’s resolve even more pressing. The hero cannot leave things to fate. Honour cannot be achieved by allowing circumstance to dictate events. Wago must create his own truth and for that to happen Olumba must die.

### 3.0

Wago is a man of action from the beginning and he has little respect for the supernatural although at first he reacts with trepidation to the unknown. However, overtime his resolve strengthens the more he realises that the stakes are high. A good example of this is when he does the unthinkable and challenges Igwu, the dibia to a wrestling match as a way of proving his assertion that the dibia is a weak man. His disdain for Igwu is ill-advised but he is a proud man and refuses to acknowledge that Igwu has powers that can harm him. Igwu casts a spell on him but Wago is unwilling to credit him with causing his sickness.

<sup>2</sup> Christine Daigle <http://philosophynow.org/issues/53/Sartre'ss> Being and Nothingness.

“My illness soon after the wrestling bout was a mere coincidence,” Wago said. “If you want to brag about it, you can go ahead. You are like the troublesome wife who is always ready to fight with her husband but runs away from other women in the streets.” (Amadi 1969, 112).

It is only when his illness has been treated does he come close to apologizing for the way he underestimated the occult. He says to Eze Okehi after the elder asks him to apologise for disrespecting Igwu,

“I say I won’t,” Wago said, his eyes flashing.

“But you’ve got what you wanted.”

“That is true. However, you have settled our differences and I don’t see why I should go and beg to him. After all, we embraced each other in public.” (Amadi 1969, 113)

Nyamndi argues that “The Great Ponds...is a transitional novel in which myth and the supernatural are receding and human will is affirming itself more and more perceptibly. The gods in this work have shed much of their omnipotence and become for most of them only names whose importance is dwindling by every passing day.” (Nyamndi 2004, 210). This observation is not entirely accurate because the gods and the dibias cause much of the tension in the story. As Obasi and Okpiliya point out there is an interconnectedness that needs to be appreciated. They state that “the position of the dibia, the ancestors and the gods in the affairs of man in the universe is established and recognized.” (Obasi and Okpiliya 2011, 8)

Wago’s involvement with the dark forces is also important since it is him who takes it upon himself to cut a piece of Olumba’s cloth so that Igwu can ‘cook’ him. Wago seeks to alter the future; he actively seeks to manipulate fate. At the end it all comes to nothing and he kills himself. Does this association with the occult make Wago more susceptible to suicide? It needs to be considered if by embracing the supernatural the hero in turn destroys in himself the natural. What needs to be understood is if Wago takes his life as a consequence of associating with the supernatural or if suicide for him is a decision without influence from the dark forces. To answer this one needs to determine how the supernatural aids Wago in the decisions that he makes, the extent to which he relies on the agents of darkness. It would not be farfetched to argue that when one works with the supernatural this can be so debilitating to the psyche that suicide is an inevitable result. Wago’s association with the supernatural is complex. Here, ritual and magic are a way of life and it is expected that people protect themselves against them and attract goodwill and fortune in equal measure. The households have impressive shrines. For instance,

Olumba’s wives and children were bedecked with charms and amulets, his little son enjoying the greatest share. There were amulets for travelling, against poisoning, for social gatherings, against evil spirits by night, against mischievous imps by day, for growing big yams, for wrestling, for fishing and so on. (Amadi 1969, 27).

Ogbunabali the god of the night who plays a key role in the fate of the ponds is according to Osundare, “regarded by the people as the bastion of morality and the ultimate arbiter of justice.” (Osundare 1980, 107). The strong belief in gods cannot be underestimated; even the warriors have rooms dedicated to various gods. Olumba’s reception hall is a case in point. As Abdou points out, “In *The Great Ponds*, Amadi portrays the tribal wars and the whole traditional Ikwerre’s life before Independence as one that was conditioned by charms.” (Abdou, 219). What one understands in *The Great Ponds* is that the supernatural can be channelled towards good or evil depending on the ability and will of those involved. For instance, an example of good magic is that which the great warrior of Chiolu displays. We are told that Olumba had a myriad of charms all geared to accord him success on the battlefield. However, the one that he cherishes is beyond his finances. “He had one regret, that he had not been able to get that famous amulet that could make knives bounce off his body as off a rock. If he had it, he would be invincible. But it was forbiddingly costly.” (Amadi 1969, 29).

It is through Olumba, an experienced warrior in the arena of battle and learned in the charms that go with it, that we learn that “Wago evidently had the arrow deflecting amulet” (Amadi 1969, 35). Wago’s ability as a warrior of repute is part skill and part protection. Thus, Wago depends a lot on the supernatural such that his success would be severely limited in different circumstances. Wago is so determined to claim the ponds for Aliakoro that even at the end it is this knowledge of the occult that he calls upon in his attempt to kill Olumba. It is Wago who forces Igwu to cast a spell on Olumba. It is Wago who volunteers to cut a piece of Olumba’s wrapper after stalking him for several days until the ideal opportunity presents itself. It is Wago who attacks Olumba while transformed into a leopard. Unfortunately for him, he fails in his efforts despite the assistance of the dark forces. Till the very end this hero, assisted as he is by evil strives to overcome those who represent good. He almost succeeds. It is in failure that he realizes that he has defeated himself more than the legacy he is fighting for. In suicide Wago calls judgement on himself.

Existentialists examine what it means to exist as a human being in the world. Thus one's purpose in life is thrust under the microscope and it is in trying to answer this that the individual is made aware of his own mortality. In the actions of Wago the mortal nature of humanity is not far from his mind. Wago fortifies himself with countless amulets in his preparations for battle. He even has the arrow deflecting amulet. More significantly, he refuses to swear at Isiali giving the excuse that "I am a hunter and can die any time." (Amadi 1969, 108). Existentialism believes that life and death are forever linked. So how does suicide enable one to understand the existentialist approach? It should be remembered that atheistic existentialists such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus are more concerned with the here and now, the temporal space within which man exists<sup>3</sup>. To them, the presence of God is an illusion.

The Christian god is absent in Wago's pre-colonial community and so the afterlife in the way these philosophers understood it does not apply to Wago. However, what is relevant is that although Wago displays a fear of death he embraces suicide. Why? It could be that in suicide one has control over how and when one dies. Dying in a different manner means this control is removed. Wago does not dwell on the afterlife. Whether suicide is a good or bad choice is a moral minefield even though it appears the victim harms no one but himself. To understand how existentialists would interpret this, Paredas (2010) quotes Kierkegaard as saying "the ethical applies at all times." (Paredas 2010, 31). Thus, it can be argued that suicide defies ethical standards such as respect for life which should be seen as a universal aspect of being. In killing himself at the ponds of Wagaba, Wago contaminates the fishing ground and effectively destroys the livelihood of many people. Wago's suicide is not even a victory for Aliakoro. Wago's suicide is the act of a bitter man who has failed in his endeavour to win the ponds for Aliakoro. The choice that Wago makes is irrational for all but him. From the accounts of witnesses, Wago seems to enjoy what he leaves behind, "My lord, what frightened us most was the ghastly smile on the dead man's face." (Amadi 1969,191).

Given the type of character that he is, one is shocked but one expected no less from him. Redemption presupposes the need to make amends, to right a wrong. It carries the underlying notion that one has wronged and must rectify this through deeds or appropriate discourse. Suicide is the taking of one's life. So, there is something within or without that a character is unhappy about. A hero can be upset at somebody or something and death could be an outlet. Also, a hero can be upset at something within, a personal failure, and so he redeems himself by his death. The hero cleanses his conscience through suicide. Wago does this. He has failed to ensure the ponds of Wagaba belong to Aliakoro. Suicide redeems him and that is all that matters.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

This essay has tried to show how suicide is not necessarily a sign of hopelessness but that it can have a redeeming quality from the point of view of the hero. It is a choice that the hero has at his disposal to use to complete his interpretation of how he relates to the world around him. The character of Wago shows that suicide can be used to account for one's failure or disappointment in a manner that redeems. He employs sinister tactics from the spirit world to ensure his success in the natural world. The stakes are high and he pays the ultimate price. Suicide then is for the hero both a rejection of the society that cannot accommodate his ideals and it is atonement for letting oneself down. Wago chooses death as an option because he feels he cannot live with the alternative way of life represented by Olumba. His death is not a death of shame; rather it is an honourable way to depart.

---

<sup>3</sup> Paredas, Daniel. "Kierkegaard and the didactic of faith." *Filosof*.30-41 (Accessed January 3)  
<http://www2.fiu.edu/~filosof/site/currentissuefile/4DanielParedes.pdf>

## References

- Abass-Lare; Asiata Bolatito. 2010. "Science and Human Dignity: An African perspective." *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal* (5): 50-62.
- Abdou, Labo Bouche. 2010. "The Force of charms in Elechi Amadi's 'The Great Ponds' and 'The Concubine'." *Journal of African Studies and Development* 2 (9): 216-223
- Albright, Daniel. 2005. "The witches and the witch: Verdi's Macbeth". *Cambridge Open Journal* 17 (3): 225-252.
- Amadi, Elechi. 1969. *The Great Ponds*. London: Heinemann
- Bigelow, Gordon. 1961. "A Primer of Existentialism". *College English* 23 (3): 171-178
- Camus, Albert. 1942. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Stories*. Translated by Justin O'Brian. New York: Penguin. 2000
- Daigle, Christine. "Sartre's Being and Nothingness: The Bible of Existentialism?" Accessed January 12<sup>th</sup> 2014. <http://www.philosophynow.org/issues/53/>
- Friesen, Alan. 2006. "Okonkwo's suicide as an Affirmative Act: Do Things Really Fall Apart?" *Post Colonial Text* 2(4):1-11.
- Kierkegaard, Soren. 2000. "Fear and Trembling", in *The Essential Kierkegaard*. Edited by Howard V. Honey and Edna H. Honey. Princeton: Princeton UP.
- Irele, Abiola. "Introduction: Perspectives on the African Novel." *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*. January 2009. <http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/companion/ebooks> (Accessed December 13 2013)
- Lasker, Benjamin. 2004. "Suicide and the absurd: The influence of Jean Paul Sartre's and Albert Camus' Existentialism on Stephen R. Donaldson's The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 14 (4): 409-425.
- Mahdipour, Alireza. 1999. "The Existential idea of Self in Shakespeare's Hamlet, A Justification for the Renaissance convention of play-within-the-play." *Research on Foreign Languages Journal of Faculty of Letters and Humanities* 49 (200): 133-147
- Nyamndi, George. 2004. "Elechi Amadi's Women: Voices of Reason." *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 13 (2):216-227.
- Ogbeide, Victor. 2011. "Cultural Innocence, Commitment and Education in Elechi Amadi's The Concubine and The Great Ponds." *Stud Home Comm Sci* 5 (1): 29-37.
- Osundare, Niyi. 1980. "As grasshoppers to wanton boys: The role of the gods in the novels of Elechi Amadi in *African Literature Today*, edited by Ed Jones. Vol 11, 97-109. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Paredes, Daniel. 2010. "Kierkegaard and the Dialectic of faith." *Filosof*. 30-41. (Accessed January 3 2014.) [http://www2.fiu.edu/~filosof/site/current\\_issue\\_file/4DanielParedes.pdf](http://www2.fiu.edu/~filosof/site/current_issue_file/4DanielParedes.pdf)
- Rachels, James. 1986. "Kantian theory: The Idea of Human Dignity." From James Rachels *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, p114-117, 122-23. Retrieved from [http://public.callutheria.edu/chenxi/phil345\\_022.pdf](http://public.callutheria.edu/chenxi/phil345_022.pdf)
- Sayers, Sean. 2003. "The Concept of Alienation in Existentialism and Marxism, Hegelian Themes in Modern Social Thought." Accessed January 4, 2014. <http://www.kent.ac.uk/seal/philosophy/articles/sayers/alienation.pdf>