

PARATEXTUAL AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF CYPRIAN EKWENSI'S *PEOPLE OF THE CITY*

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Abstract

An author's purpose is the main reason he or she has for writing. The three basic purposes are to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. He uses compositions in a language to make himself understand. However, the surroundings of his production may help readers believe or suppose the content. This leads to paratext which is a suitable concept in literary interpretation. It is in this perspective that the present paper focuses on paratext constituents as well as stylistic devices Cyprian Ekwensi has used in *People of City* to address his readers.

Keywords: Paratext, style, people, city, Cyprian Ekwensi.

INTRODUCTION

It is agreed that any literary production is based on fiction. Artists use tactful manners to compose or produce and present to the public a finest work capable to be consumed, analyzed, assessed, and interpreted. Such is *People of the City*, a novel written by Cyprian Ekwensi (1963) from which is based our investigation. *People of the City* is a story about Amusa Sango, a dance band leader from the countryside who comes to try his luck in the city. After a while, Amusa becomes a crime reporter and popular musician for a short time before losing his job and being expelled from the house by Lajide, his landlord. Unexpectedly, Amusa gets married with Beatrice the Second, a young woman from a wealthy family and they move to Accra for a new start. As it sounds, *People of the City* is about life in the city with its multifarious facets. However, on a side, a mention should be put on paratext as it is a keyword of our topic. Paratext is a concept in literary interpretation which was first coined or analysed by the French literary theorist Gerard Genette though it may be nowadays viewed in a different way by other critics. Accordingly, Gerard Genette (1997:1) defines it as 'what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public'. Therefore, we come to understand with the author that

a literary work not only consists of the main text itself but is also surrounded by other elements, such as the title, cover, preface, and all those elements that help to present it to the public and that "ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption" (Genette 1997: 1).

In this way, paratext is about added elements that form a frame for the main text and can change the reception of a text or its interpretation by the public. It is most often associated with books, as they typically include a cover, title, subtitle, front matter, back matter footnotes, and many other materials not crafted by the author. However, our concern lies on the paratextual aspect as well as the way Cyprian Ekwency depicts the realities in this novel. In this connection, our preoccupation is to answer the following central question: what is the nature of paratext and stylistic devices used by Cyprian Ekwensi in *People of the City*? The hypothesis backing up this question is that *People of the City* is an artifact which bears not only elements of paratext but also expressions of style the author has used to address the intended recipients of the message. The review of literature reveals that several scholars have already undertaken works on this novel but no study so far has been focused on its paratextual features in our alma mater except

Ndounda Mpompa Bernard who scantily refers to this issue for his master dissertation.

Concerning the methodology, we will be concerned with the contextual approach as the novel paints a determined and precised context: life in the city. This will help us assess the text within the context of its historical and cultural setting. In addition, the sociological approach will also matter as it focuses on the relationship between literature and society, knowing that literature is always produced in a social context. It is germane that writers may affirm or criticize the values of the society in which they live, but they write for public or a people that in fact is society. However, in a view to answer the question raised above, we will divide our work into two parts known as the paratext and stylistic devices.

1. The Paratext

No scholar can talk of paratext without referring to the literary theorist Gerard Genette. That is why, though mentioned aforesaid, we come again to learn from Genette (1997) that the term paratext is 'a combination of the Greek word 'para', meaning beyond, and the word 'text', referring to the main body of text in the book.' Paratexts are thus subordinate to the text, which constitutes their *raison d'être*, and their main function is "to ensure for the text a destiny consistent with the author's purpose" (Genette 1997: 407). Therefore, Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the City* is characterized by many features of paratext from which two have been selected as illustration. They are title and subtitle.

1.1. *People of the City*, title of the novel.

In 'Introduction to *The Paratext*' (1991), Genette argues that 'the main content of the book, be it a novel, poem, or non-fiction never appears on its own. It is accompanied by elements that, in a way, present the text to the world. These factors, thus, influence the perception and reception of the work'. As a matter of fact, the title of a book, or any other published text or work of art, is a name for the work which is usually chosen by the author. A title can be used to identify the work, to put it in context, to convey a minimal summary of its contents, and to call forth the reader's curiosity or emotion. In other words, a title is a word or phrase given to a text to identify the subject, to attract the reader's attention, and forecast the nature of the writing. Accordingly, the main title of the novel of our corpus is a perfect illustration: *People of the City* unveils the content of the book as it is centered on the variabilities and annoyances faced by rural people once in cities where they had dreamed living a better life. This title reveals the understanding of the entire book. Thus, labelling the importance of the title in African novel, Jean Pierre Makouta-Mboukoub believes that a title is not chosen for the sake of choosing. In this connection, he (1980:73) writes:

Le roman africain est un genre qui s'exprime réellement aux nègres d'Afrique. C'est sans doute la raison pour laquelle les romanciers choisissent avec soin les titres de leurs oeuvres dans la mesure où ceux-ci résument en un, deux ou plusieurs mots l'oeuvre toute entière.

From this point of view, we agree with Cyprian Ekwensi's title for he describes citizens through their everyday life in the city. It is doubtless that citizens like modernism that is relaxing, dressing, having dates, sightseeing, renting apartments, drinking, and eating in famous restaurants. In *People of the City*, once Beatrice arrived in the city she couldn't find a place to live. On her search for a room she faced one of the social problems citizens often experience: advantage or favour women often benefit, comparing to men as the narrator reports Beatrice's explanation on how to get a room in the city:

'Is not easy', Beatrice said and told him how Lajide wanted her to be his woman.

'When you're a man', Sango said 'they want six months' or a year's rent in advance. When you are an attractive woman, single, or about to be single, they want you as a mistress. That's the city. What am I to do, Sango? (1963:67)

By the same token, illustrating the running of the city, the narrator portrays what happened between Zamil and Beatrice the first who go to the snack bar near the lagoon, when he (1963: 66) attests:

He drove to the department store by the lagoon. Gingerly Beatrice walked along the pavement between the two men. As usual, the snack bar was crowded with people of the city out to relax and look at the lagoon. They were mostly girls of the Dupeh type, fashion plates of the most devastating type — to young men. With every swing of the door, the restaurant filled more than it emptied.

Actually, Dupeh Martins serves as a model of young girls living in cities and therefore attached to Western sophistication as offered by the city. The following excerpt tells more:

She smelt sweet...yet she knew all about Western sophistication - make-up, cinema, jazz... This was the kind of girl whom Sango knew would be content to walk her shoes in the air-conditioned atmosphere of department stores, to hang about all day in the foyer of hotels... (1963: 29)

One can understand through this passage that people of the city are attached to 'high life.' And Beatrice is among those people, because she too, likes the splendors of the city, as the narrator (1963: 68) runs by again: '*Beatrice had disclosed that she came to the city from the Eastern Greens, from the city of coal. She made no secret of what brought her to the city: 'high life.' Cars, servants, high-class foods, decent clothes, luxurious living.*' As it appears in this passage, Beatrice is attracted by the showiness of the city, in the same way as urban dwellers go for it. Actually, the probing of *People of the City* reveals that Beatrice was not only attractive but also fond of big functions of the city. She confesses the purpose of coming to the city while looking for housing in the following terms:

You are very kind Mr. Sango. When I live on my own, I'll be happy. I came here to live and enjoy life. For a

short while I enjoyed my life, went to big functions, night clubs...I always wanted to be free. Then I met Grunnings and he married me. You will not believe it when I say that he was surprised to find me as a complete girl who had known no man before him (1963:41).

Later on, Beatrice decided to leave Grunnings in 'Rokiya Hill' where they were living since the room was quiet and not showy comparing to a grave. Accordingly, she (1963:40) declares '*the place is a grave; too quiet and lonely. I like noise; it is not so boring as silence. And I like high life and drinks and music*'. We can understand that 'high life' means more than one thing for Beatrice: going to snack bars, restaurants, nightclubs, cinemas; drinking; dressing clothes of high quality; et cetera, a kind of life which corroborates the title of the book. So far, Beatrice refers to these things to show how much she enjoys high life when talking to Sango:

'My husband knows I like this place ... He always lets me sit at the bar and suck a cold drink – by myself. You are not playing today? I enjoy your music; I've always wanted to see you more closely... My husband has just returned from England and is very busy. I wish he would bring me here more: I like night life. (1963:40).

People of the City is also read through Aina's lifestyle. As a matter of fact, Aina takes pleasure to lead modern life as citizens do, which is eating in famous hotels, riding in taxis, visiting bazars as we can read from the following excerpt:

It was a way of life she liked. The glamorous surroundings, the taxis, the quick drinks. This was one reason why she had come to the city from her home sixty miles away: to ride in taxis, eat in fashionable hotels, to wear the aso-ebi, that dress that was so often and so ruinously prescribed like a uniform for mournings, wakings, bazars, to have men who wore white collars to theirs jobs as lovers, men who could spend. (1963: 88)

This quotation reveals the nature of Aina, especially her 'likes' in the city. She adopts a behavior which pushed Amusa to point out her cynicism. Her wordings often referring to material are visible when she replies to Amusa: 'It's money I want now ... I'm coming to visit you, Amusa, so get some money ready.'(1963: 89). Admittedly, Aina wanted to ruin Amusa Sango and this is what characterizes young ladies living in cities. The declaration she (1963:90) made to Sango illustrates her behavior as the narrator puts:

'I want to ask you a favour. I want new clothes: the native accra dress ... really special. The clothes I had before I went to jail, they're no use to me now. From now on I want to be wearing glamour specs. Nor for my eyes – my eyes are okay – but for fancy. And a gold watch. I have suffered for three months hard

labour. Now, I must enjoy all I dreamed of at night in my cell.'

This is to say that *People of the city* doesn't limit itself to glamorous or exciting aspects of life but also disloyal aspects that favour one side while disfavouring another one. Such is the case of Amusa Sango who took out his wallet and found some pound notes and gave them to Aina. The latter took them from him without one word of thanks, nor did she smile. The narrator concluded that 'it was then he knew that nothing could alter the bitterness she felt towards him'. P.90. In addition, Lajide takes pleasure in sinister actions in order to make money. Accordingly, the narrator (1963:104) puts: '*while they talked, Lajide kept thinking how he could double-cross these men. The idea did not come all at once. Slowly he rose and went indoors to change*'. In fact, aware that lorries could provide him a lot of money, Lajide wanted to swindle the men who came to sell him stolen lorries. As such, he becomes a crook since he intends to use fraudulent means to get money.

The title *People of the City* also describes unsuccessful men in the city who by all means want to become wealthy. They came to the city with a specific purpose: that of earning their life. Unhappily, this was not the case for them. Such is the case of a young man discovered by Amusa as the narrator (1963:70) reports: '*by uncovering this veil, he had discovered where all the depressed people of the city went for sustenance. They literally sold their soul to the devil*'. This is a common practice in cities where people consult magic men to satisfy their needs. Actually, Buraimoh's plight was not satisfactory, and complaining about it, a friend who enjoyed the good things of life said: '*Have you not heard of the Ufemfe Society?*' We believe that *People of the city* is also concerned with failure followed by an immediate success once you agree with 'Ufemfe Society' practice. If *People of the City* is mainly about glamorous effects on one hand, it also reflects fatal effects on the other hand as some citizens lose their life. To this effect, the narrator (1963:151) puts: '*There is too much death now among the people of the city*'. Facing the difficulties of life in cities, some city dwellers couldn't stand and risked their life on disloyal practices that regrettably led them to death.

1.2. *People of the City*, the Subtitle.

The subtitle is one of the many constituents of paratext. If the title is the name of a book, poem, and picture, the subtitle on its side is a second or additional title of a book. Accordingly, *Oxford Advanced Learning Dictionary* (1910:1490) defines subtitle as 'a second title of a book that appears after the main title and gives more information'. This is to say that subtitle is dependent on the title without which it cannot exist. And *People of the City* comprises two subtitles opening the two parts of the book known as 'How the city attracts all types and how the unwary must suffer from ignorance of its ways' and 'When all doors are closed?'

The first subtitle, 'How the city attracts all types and how the unwary must suffer from ignorance of its ways' goes from chapter one to chapter eight. It foretells not only the circumstances that happen in cities, the pull factors that attract countrymen to cities but also the adventures of young people who immigrate to towns without heed or caution. This is because in cities we find all sorts

of situations (accommodations, employment, betrayal,) and people (gangsters, hooligans, robbers, murderers, rich men ...). As evidence, the narrator reveals the reason why some characters decide to leave rural areas for cities. In this connection, talking of Beatrice, he (1963:68) writes: “*She made no secret of what brought her to the city: ‘high life’. Cars, servants, high-class foods, decent clothes, luxurious living.*” So far, Aina also helps readers know her motivations for an urban life, especially in her conversation with Sango as, the narrator (1963: 88) puts:

Let us go to the Hollywood, Aina. I’ll call a taxi and we’ll go and eat. Where is your stall? Have you anyone to look after it for you? It was a way of life she liked. The glamorous surroundings, the taxis, the quick drinks. This was one reason why she had come to the city from her home sixty miles away: to ride in taxis, eat in fashionable hotels, to wear the aso-ebi...

Both Beatrice and Aina are attracted by urban life which provides a lot of opportunities or facilities for the youth insertion. It is in this connection that Gbemisola Adeoti’s wordings are significant when he writes:

The city provides better access to alluring products of European economy. It also offers Western ways of entertainment and recreation. Consequently, radio and television houses, bars, hotels, theatres, and cinema houses are features of urban right life (2007:4).

It is certain that the novel counts much for fiction but it often remains stuck to real facts that people daily experience. In particular situations, people often phrase that ‘cities never sleep’. This conception proves evident in some big cities in which the nightlife begins when people in other cities are ready to go to sleep. This is the atmosphere which prevails in *People of the City* where citizens experience vibrant nightlife, can still find entertainment, dine out or go shopping into the early hours among whom Beatrice, Aina, and many others.

Indeed, the attachment to glamorous things or the desire to be citizens is diversely expressed by characters. This is seen in Aina’s wordings through her conversation with Sango when she said: ‘*I want to ask you a favour*’. Sango lit her cigarette and after she had inhaled deeply, she said: ‘*I want new clothes: the native Accra dress... really special*’. (1963: 90). Of course, Aina needs new dress because one the ones she had before going to jail were no use to her. Accordingly, Aina said: ‘*From now I want to be wearing glamour specs. Nor for my eyes – my eyes are okay – but for fancy. And a gold watch. I have suffered for three months hard labour. Now, I must enjoy all I dreamed of at night in my cell.*’ (1963:90). However, if Aina and Beatrice have been attracted by high-life of the city, some characters think otherwise. This is the case of Sango who draws his aspirations from peace as the narrator puts: ‘*Yet Sango’s one desire in this city was peace and the desire to forge ahead*’. P. 3. However, Sango’s mother expected a grandchild from her son since the latter was engaged to young decent girl from a good family. This can be read from her wordings when advising Sango about the choice he made: ‘you might not dissipate your youth, but sow the seed when your blood is young and runs hot in

your veins... that I might have the joy of holding a grandchild in my arms’p.4.

‘How the city attracts all types and how the unwary must suffer from ignorance of its ways’ is also about the adverse of interests or welfare when you don’t follow the path that guides the city. In other words, people who are attracted by the city suffer when they ignore its ways. This is bucked up by a corporal when addressing to Sango in these terms: ‘But listen. Man to man, go and warn your gal. Yes, I know she’s your gal. You see, person who’s not careful, the city will eat him’ 1963: 13). This is what happened to Aina. Indeed, she was arrested and jailed for having robbed a piece of cloth, though she was warned. Once in the police’s car, Aina scowled as if to intimate that she was prepared to face the worst. The police bundled her into the car, the crowd boomed and sighed: ‘Ole! Ole!’ as a woman (1963: 13) said:

I’m sorry. Such a beautiful girl!

‘Listen, the thief is saying something. She is talking. Listen to her’

Amusa, come and save me! Come and save me, I beg you. If you love me, come and save me! Don’t mind what the’re saying ... Come and save me!

This is a call of rescue that Aina made to her beloved Sango who unfortunately refused. ‘No,’ Amusa said to himself. ‘*I can’t go. I really can’t. I was impulsive. I liked you. We had an affair. Let’s forget it, Aina ...*’ p.14. Aina looked up from her humiliation as Amusa didn’t make up his mind. It looked as if she was trying to remind Amusa on what he swore: ‘Didn’t you promise you would always love me? For that, Amusa couldn’t find any answer in his mind. Another character who ‘suffers from the ignorance of its ways’ is Amusa who in fact was sacked from his dwelling house. As a matter of fact, Lajide warned Amusa about city women regarding their behaviours as we can read:

The girl... didn’t I warn you about city women? They’re no good. They dress fine, fine, you don’t know a thief from an honest one. Just be careful, Mr. Sango. Don’t bring more thieves her. I don’t want them on my premises. Hear that? (1963: 14).

Another telling character who suffers from ignorance of the city ways in this first ‘Subtitle’ is Layeni. In fact, renting a house requires to pay at the end of the month. Unfortunately, Layeni was unable to meet or discharge financial obligations. Then, a misunderstanding happened between the tenant and landlord. Actually, Layeni was monthly paid but surprisingly couldn’t accomplish his daily chores. This is one of the many situations citizens face. Accordingly, the narrator (1963:21) presents this conversation between Lajide and Layeni as illustration:

Well, Layeni stammered. I - I must be going now. He looked about him, smiling uneasily. Lajide blocked his way. It’s you I’ve come to see. That’s why I’m up so early. Me? Said Layeni. I’ve come to collect my money. Ha, Lajide! Give me some more time!

Every day you say give me time, but I don't see a penny. And you are paid every month.
I'll pay ...
That's what you always say.
End of this month, Layeni pleaded.

If Layeni has been insolvent, Muri on her side also falls on the trap of the city for her own carelessness. In fact, the woman had been killed by drunken men for a quite trivial reason. 'Gramophone! Gramophone!' that was the leading source. In the world, many people die defending their own things, which are either material things or just a belief. Such is a fate Muri had known. Indeed, after lending her husband's gramophone to Thomas and his friend, Muri had to ask it back. Unhappily, when it came to taking it back, the two bachelor men brought her in the Magamu Bush pretending that the repairer lives there as something went wrong with the gramophone. Muri wouldn't go. 'Come on! We won't take long.' They persuaded her. Unhappily they strangled her though arrested by the police. Accordingly, Ndounda Bernard (2022: 47) quotes:

The men who killed her borrowed a gramophone of hers. When she went to collect it, they would not part with it, but lured her into the Magamu Bush. The young woman, unsuspecting, followed the drunkards. And having defiled her in bacchanalian triumph, they clubbed her to death and strangled the child.

As a crime reporter, Sango announced that murder in *West African Sensation*. Some weeks of investigation only confirmed Sango's information, revealing also that the two men arrested were bachelors who lived on the outskirts of the city, originating from a fishing district in the delta of the Great River.

The second subtitle entitled "When all doors are closed" goes from chapter nine up to chapter sixteen. As it sounds, this subtitle announces the gloomy end of characters, mainly townspeople who left rural areas for diverse reasons and whose dreams do not meet their expectations. This second part stands as the intersection of misfortune for most characters as they could not have new issues: deaths on one hand and discharge from an office or position on the other hand. In fact, the love affair leads Bayo to death and the girl to serious and fatal injuries as the narrator (1963: 127), talking to Sango observed:

You're a good journalist, perhaps the most original in the city. All your writings invariably present a fresh viewpoint. But in your handling of the Zamil murder case, you seemed to overreach yourself. You made an issue of it, and not a very satisfying one at that. Bayo fell in love with Suad Zamil. Right! The brother, Muhamad Zamil, objected, wanted to fly the girl out of the country. Bayo decides to elope with the girl: Zamil, drunk, shoots Bayo, wounds the girl who later dies in hospital. Zamil runs away and is later found lying on the beach with bullet wounds in his head. That's your storyline...

This is to say that Bayo and Zamil's doors are closed. Muhamad Zamil murdered them because he did not approve their union. As a

matter of fact, Bayo was Sango's personal friend and was on the spot when the murder had happened and the least he could do was to fight his dead couple in the press. Additionally, Lajide, passed away in hospital after a curt discomfort as the narrator (1963: 151) puts:

Lajide's end had come suddenly. Like this – he got up in the morning, put on some clothes. He was to go to court that morning. Then he complained that he felt queer. He stretched himself on the bed, fell into a coma, and was taken to hospital. There he passed peacefully away without ever recovering consciousness.

Lajide dies, but the circumstances of his death remain uncertain as everybody wonders how he is died. However, Sam, Sango's boy reports that Lajide had drunk himself to death. Accordingly, on the same page, Sam reveals that "the man drink too much! Gin – every time. O.H.M.S. – illicit gin, the one they make in the bus." Actually, Lajide was disappointed by the everyday life in the city that he has recourse to 'drink' which unhappily drives him to death. Meanwhile, prior his perversion he lost his favourite wife called Alikatu.

Another character whose a door is closed is Beatrice. Indeed, girls often leave their happy homes and come to cities hoping that some man will pick them up and make them into something. However, not just one man but many men and catch disease as the narrator (1963: 145) writes: "And some disease, something incurable picks them up. You see them dressed, and they are just shells. Hollow and sick..." This is the case of Beatrice who was not content with poverty and did not remain where fate has placed her. Actually, Beatrice dies after catching sickness through sexual intercourse as she counted more than one men in the city. Thus, commenting on Beatrice fate, the narrator (1963: 156) writes: "The truth was singing in but she threw her life away. The city eats many innocent life like hers every year. It is a waste of youth! It must stop." The conversation between Sango and Kofi confirms Beatrice's death as the narrator (1963: 144) mentions:

Kofi came down. Sango, is that you?
What's wrong Kofi? Where's Beatrice? Why are your eyes so red?
Dead ... she died last week. And what pains me most ... she was buried as a pauper. No one to claim her. I I.

Moreover, Sango who came to the city in order to go ahead is not an exception as his dreams did not meet his expectations. Though he was hired as crime reporter for the *West African Sensation* Sango not only loses his job but is also sacked from his room by Lajide, his landlord, and from the *All Language Club*. In his dance band the boys had dispersed as the narrator (1963:109) mentions: "The boys in Sango's band had already begun to disperse to undertake free-lance assignments. Another door had been closed in his face. It is certain that Sango was in a blue mood as he walked about the city, drifting with the aimless ones, looking but not seeing and regretting illusions of the city. After a while, Sango took the first step towards reinstating himself in a job but he was

not surprised to hear of 'no vacancies'. In this connection, the narrator (1963:140) puts: "Now he was well and truly up against the city which attracted all types."

People of the City, made of sixteen chapters divided into two parts comprises tangible representations of paratext from which we focus on title and subtitles. It sort out from this analysis that push and pull factors attract people to the city but unfortunately the vicissitudes of life in the city turn their dreams into fatal adventure. However, how does Cyprian Ekwensi succeeded to paint the story of city dwellers in *People of the City*?

2. The Style in Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the City*

As the title indicates, this section deals with the stylistic devices Cyprian Ekwensi has used in *People of the City*. This means that we will refer to the writer's mode of expression or the writer's particular use of common language to carry out his literary expression, knowing that the style is not about the life of the writer as Suberville (1946: 486) writes: "the style is the man in his nobility and creativity; it is not necessarily the life of the writer, but his mind." Actually, a novel is made of stories but in the current section we will focus not on stories as such, that is what is said rather than how stories are said. Therefore, the style in Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the City* for this analysis will be viewed through the exploration of figures of speech, diction, and sentence patterns.

3. Figures of speech

The phrase figure of speech can have more than one definition provided that all attempts converge to the same purpose. If it may be considered as a deliberate manipulation of ordinary language in order to create a literary effect on one hand, figure of speech is also a creative use of language to generate an effect on the other hand as opposed to literal language, the type of straightforward writing we find on road signs, in [office memos](#), and even in [research papers](#). Yet, the comment (online) makes it easily understandable as we can read: "Writing is a craft. If you think of yourself as a craftsperson, then words are your raw materials, and figures of speech are one of your tools." In this way, the writer uses words, handles them to build a work of art susceptible to be analyzed, assessed by scholars. Such is Cyprian Ekwensi's novel under consideration where figures of speech are used. Among the many, simile and metaphor, also known as figures of resemblance or relationship have been considered for their recurrent use throughout the novel.

Simile is one of the figures of resemblance as it involves at least two elements. According to *Advanced English Dictionary Offline* (online) simile is a figure of speech that expresses a resemblance between things of different kinds (usually formed with 'like' or 'as'. In *People of the City*, the author alludes to simile in order to say whether one character differs or not to another in what they are, what they say, or in what some characters say to others. One of the instances Ekwensi uses this figurative language is through the conversation between Sango and Aina. As a matter fact, Aina has been jailed for having robbed a cloth in the residence of Madam

Foley of 19A Molomo Street. Then, on a meeting with Sango, the latter tried to find out what the prison had taught her. Actually, she was bitter not only against Sango but also against everybody and especially the city that had condemned her, and for that Sango was deeply shocked by her cynicism:

'It's money I want now,' she said. 'I'm coming to visit you, Amusa, so get some money ready.'
His heart sang. 'Er...Lajide sacked me...er-'
'Said he doesn't want thieves and jailbirds, like me-eh?'
Don't deny, I know! p. 89

From this conversation, we read a cynical feeling of distrust Lajide has for Aina taken as a criminal who has been jailed. Since she is Sango's girlfriend, Lajide fears her coming in his house. However, Aina recognizes that she was compared to a thief and jailbird but promised to visit Sango whatever the circumstances: "Well, I'm a thief! I've been to jail, and I'll still come to Twenty Molomo Street, and I shall visit you! Nobody can stop me, not even Lajide!"P.89. Prior to this, just after committing that robbery, Aina was compared to a model posing for a group of drunken artist as the narrator (1963: 11) puts: "A girl was seated on a stone, and for all the world she looked like a model posing for a group of drunken artists who yelled and threw missiles to her". They were not artists at all rather people who had wanted her but could not. It was a mere humiliation for Aina who faced 'the side of the coin' as she went to the city hoping to live a happy life.

Another figurative language is read in the relationship between Sango, the tenant, and Lajide, his landlord. Indeed, after paying his rent, Lajide had come later on to Sango's home for the electricity bill stipulating: 'I just want you to see something for yourself; because of next time.' Accordingly, the narrator (1963: 10) writes: "Sango regarded Lajide as his one great obstacle in this city, and Lajide in his turn called Sango a vandal, sent by the devil to destroy his property at Twenty Molomo Street." From this comparison, we can read the conflicting relationship between them.

The city attracts people for many reasons but some girls leave their happy homes and go there on their own, without any support hoping assistance from men to build their life. The case of Beatrice tells much. Indeed, Beatrice trusted on Kofi but unfortunately, things had worsened as she died without meeting her expectations. Thus, Ekwensi uses a simile through the character of Kofi when it comes to breaking the news of Beatrice's death who was buried like pauper. Sango, strangely sees Kofi getting down from the lorry and asks: 'what's wrong, Kofi? Where's Beatrice? Why are your eyes so red?' Sango was really embarrassed and Kofi (1963: 144) announces: "Dead...She died last week. And what pains me most...she was buried as a pauper. No one to claim her. I—I". We can learn from Kofi's wordings the feeling of regret for Beatrice who, away from her relatives as she has been living in the city was awfully buried. She expected living a luxurious life in the city but unhappily she was disillusioned. Though the novel approaches fictitious realities, this is a true fact people experience, especially African countrymen who dream meeting happiness in cities.

In his novel, Ekwensi also uses metaphorical expressions to describe characters or their behaviours. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1995: 734) defines metaphor as "the imaginative use of a word or phrase to describe somebody or something as another object in order to show that they have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful." As a literary device, metaphor creates implicit comparisons without the express use of "like" or "as." Metaphor is a means of asserting that two things are identical in comparison rather than just similar (on line). The basics of metaphor is that one thing is another thing. Ekwensi resorts to this figurative speech through the misunderstanding which happens between Lajide and Layeni when he asked for money. 'I've come to collect my money', said Lajide. Commenting on the point, the narrator (1963: 21) puts: '*He had become a snake contemplating his hypnotized victim.* This is to say that the tenant did not approve the renter's answer who timelessly makes a verbal commitment to give money but unfortunately never kept his word. Disappointed, Lajide's mental state to act changes as we can read: 'the warm and friendly smile vanished into the hot morning air. On his face appeared that cold metallic sheen so familiar to financiers'. Another circumstance leading the author to use metaphor can be read on the description of citizen girls. Indeed, Bayo was trapped by Dupeh Martins whose eyes held nothing but infatuation for Bayo. Accordingly, the narrator (1963: 29) writes: '*She was a girl in that dangerous age which someone has called the mad age: the mid-teens. Her eyes held nothing but infatuation for Bayo.*'

As we can realize, Ekwensi uses this figurative expression 'the mad age' not to describe Dupeh Martins as affected by insanity but rather as a young girl with a foolish and usually extravagant passion for urban life and with it love. In this connection, the narrator (1963: 29) comments:

This was a girl who belonged strictly to the city. Born in the city. A primary education, perhaps the first four years at secondary school; yet she knew all about Western sophistication, make-up, cinema, jazz ... this was the kind of girl whom Sango knew could be content to walk her shoes thin in the air-conditioned atmosphere of department stores, to hang about all day in the foyer of hotels with not a penny in her handbag, rather than live in the country and marry Papa's choice.

Actually, Bayo saw the faith in Dupeh's eyes and Dupeh obviously believed implicitly in Bayo. However, Bayo did not make up his mind despite advices formulated to him about teens: Do not be deceived by those perfectly mature breasts. Girls ripen quickly in the city- the men are so impatient. So far, the author uses metaphor when talking to the relationship between Kofi and Beatrice. As a matter fact, Kofi falls in love with Beatrice and invites her to his dwelling place, in the outskirts of the city. Amusa, aware of Beatrice's lifestyle and having affection to Kofi could not bear such a friendship between them. Therefore, the narrator (1963: 131) reports: 'He liked Kofi and in a way was sorry for him. That dog-like attachment to Beatrice!' In this connection, Ndoounda Mpompa (2022:65) writes: 'Kofi ignores that Beatrice is a city woman who runs after many men at the same time. That is why

Sango feels pity for him.' Indeed, Sango also was the city man, fast with women, therefore knows how citizens live. The following wordings from the narrator (1963: 7) are convenient when he writes: '*Every Sunday men met girls they had never seen and might never see again. They took them out and amused them.*'

Most African novels are flourished with stylistic devices, a path chosen by authors to address readers. Indeed, the use of metaphorical qualities and simile has been proved significant in Ekwensi's *People of the City*. The same reality has precise and logical relevance to the matter at hand in Flora Nwapa's *One is Enough* through the character of Amaka as the narrator (1981:127) writes in the following terms:

There is something in that word that does not suit me. As a wife, I am never free. I am a shadow of myself. As a wife, I am always impotent. I am in prison, unable to advance in body and soul. Something gets hold of me as a wife and destroys me. When I rid myself of Obiora, things started working for me. I don't want to go back to my 'wifely' days. No, I am through with husbands. I said farewell to husbands the first day I came to Lagos.

From this quotation Nwapa through the use of a figurative language tries to compare the status of a woman as 'wife in her freedom when she is not married and woman as 'wife in prison' when she is married. In fact, a woman lacks power and ability when she holds a household under her husband's roof. Thus, aware of that, Amaka decides not to live her 'wifely' days since marriage is all about woman's sufferings. From 'I am a shadow of myself' Amaka uses a metaphorical language though without any comparative word to refer to herself as wife living in a dominating and pervasive presence, in boundaries or darkness.

The title *People of the city* is full of meaning. In fact, the author has chosen this phrase to forecast light on the life people experience in cities, especially people from countryside. This leads us to refer rural flight or rural-to-urban migration. Put differently, *People of the City* is mainly concerned with the migratory pattern of people from rural areas into urban areas with employment and opportunities as most common pull factors. Though the title is significant, the author throughout the novel resorts to referential words with positive and negative connotations, also taken as two faces of the same coin. We have on one hand soft words as money, cars, fashionable hotels, luxurious living, decent clothes, high-class foods, restaurants, city life, drinks, and more others which attract people to cities, and hard or stricken words which wrongly sound dreadful on the other hand. Some of them are prostitution, crime, jail, suicide, murder, thief, and many others. This choice made by the author is part of diction as it refers to the linguistic choices a writer makes to effectively convey an idea, a point of view, or tell a story. Otherwise, diction is the careful selection of words to communicate a message or establish a particular voice or writing style and this is what Ekwensi has done in *People of the City*. As evidence, the author reveals Aina's motivation for moving to the city using special words as the narrator (1963: 88) writes: *this was one reason why*

she had come to the city from her home sixty miles away: to ride in taxis, eat in fashionable hotels, to wear the aso-ebi. Also, the conception of style by Cuddon et al. (19: 689) corroborates the above thought when they write:

The analysis and assessment of style involves examination of a writer's choice of words, his figures of speech, the devices the shape of his sentences, the shape of his paragraphs-indeed, of every conceivable aspect of his language and the way in which he uses it.

Meanwhile, the same character of Aina has faced the other side of the coin as she robbed a cloth and was jailed. For having committed this wrongdoing, the policeman rebukes and promises to teach Aina sense in the following terms: *you girls of nowadays, you're too proud. You won't learn something useful, you won't marry, and you're proud. I'll teach you sense!* P.13. After this crime, Sango could not rescue her, and she was angry against Sango and everybody as we can read: *she was bitter against him, that he could see. But she was also bitter against everybody, against the very city that had condemned her. She had become hardened.* P.88. then, Aina has suffered from ignorance of the city's ways; what gives much significance to the second part of the novel: 'When all doors are closed'.

Apart from above stylistic devices approached, Cyprian Ekwensi also uses sentence patterns to tell the story of his novel, with a sentence as 'a set of words expressing a statement, a question or an order, usually containing a subject and a verb'. (1995:1071). Thus, we, first of all, allude to declarative sentences where the author (through the narrator and characters) emphatically and authoritatively states his thought, his opinion about something. However, it is germane to recall that a declarative sentence can be positive and negative. Referring to high life in the city the narrator (1963: 7) announces: 'Every Sunday men met girls they had never seen and might never see again'. As the novel centered on life within the city, the author describes here the way young people spend their time. Most of time, men took girls out and amused them. In addition, the first sentence of the first chapter is declarative: 'Most girls in the famous West African city knew the address Twenty Molomo Street, for there lived a most colourful and eligible young bachelor, by name Amusa Sango'. p. 3. Actually, the exploration of *People of the City* reveals that Amusa Sango, the protagonist, is widely known and esteemed. In addition to being crime reporter for the *West African Sensation*, in his spare time, he led a dance band. For all these qualifications he had to be known and as such his living place.

Throughout the novel, the author also uses interrogative sentences when necessary, and this for several reasons. One of the many instances is the questions Aina asked Sango for what he promised. In fact, Sango swore to love Aina whatever happens. That is why, once caught by the police for robbery she looked up from her humiliation and their eyes met. The accusation in her eyes made Sango feel awkward and Aina (1963: 13) seemed to say: 'Didn't you promise you would always love me? A question to which Sango could not find no answer in his mind. It looks as if Aina perpetrated this crime intentionally regarding the question she

(1963: 6) prior put to Sango: 'Amusa, do you like me still? Do you love me? If anything happens, will you always love me? We are both young, and the world is before us ... All I want is your word.' By the same token, some characters express themselves using different tones as a way to show happiness, joy, surprise, sorrowful facts, or indignations. One of the vivid cases is through Sango's wordings towards the corporal for him to rescue Aina from the crowd. Accordingly, Sango (1963:12) exclaims:

Oh, sorry. Corporal. Are you going to stand there while they will kill the girl? He pointed down the road at the crowd. Please, help her quick. Only your uniform can save her. This is no time for that, Corporal. Protect her first, then judge her. It's your duty!

When the police bundled Aina into the car, the crowd booed and sighed: ole! Ole! However, a woman yelled a loud utterance of emotion: 'I'm sorry. Such a beautiful girl!' P.13. So far, Sango begs persistently and urgently on the case: 'Please now! They're stoning and beating her. Thus, thanks to Sango, Aina was freed and the corporal (p. 13), talking to Sango warns: 'you see, person who's not careful, the city will eat him! One way to certify that Cyprian Ekwensi resorts also to exclamatory sentences to express opinion about situations, to make statements, to convey excitements or emotions.

As we can realize, to write successfully his novel Cyprian Ekwensi has resorted to stylistic devices without which the message would have an uncertain nature or significance. The choice and use of words as well as the handling of the language by the author help readers understand the purest and most concentrated essence of *People of the City*.

Conclusion

At the end of this work of research work, it matters to recall that it dealt with the paratextual and stylistic analysis of Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the City*. It sorts out from this analysis that the novel bears a set of elements constituting its framework among which the title and subtitles. Therefore, throughout the study, we have tried to show on one hand that this title forecasts the kind of life experienced by citizens, especially young people from rural areas. We have certified that the novel is divided into two parts. In the first part (which opens with the subtitle 'How the city attracts all types and how the unwary must suffer from ignorance of its ways'), we have shown that the city is at the same time a place of opportunities and of disillusionment. The second part, opening by 'When all doors are closed' as subtitle has also been rich in significance or implication. From this subtitle, we have revealed the fateful aspect of characters or the shadow that covers characters at 'the night' of their life. This is to say that *People of the City* has an indicative nature leading readers to a comprehensible stage of the story. On the other hand, we have also shown the author's mode of expression and use of language to pass on his message. By so doing, a figurative language, the choice of words, and sentence patterns have been used.

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