

**MAKERERE**  **UNIVERSITY**

**TOPIC: PROVERBIAL IMAGERY IN SONG OF LAWINO**

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO LITERATURE DEPARTMENT, FACULTY OF  
ARTS, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
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**Declaration**

I Opiyo Pius Bruno Oloya with pleasure declares that this dissertation is fully my own work and never had it been submitted anywhere else in this university or any other University for the award of degree.


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**Abstract.**

This research study focuses only on the proverbs used in the text Song of Lawino by Okot p'bitek and specifically the effectiveness of the images used in the proverbs for thematic development and enriching meaning.

This research uses several methods of getting data which included document review of published and existing literature on oral literature. This research also utilized group discussion and library search as well.

### **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my beloved sister Cynthia oloya who developed the love for literature through my inspiration and dearly my close friend.

I love you Cynthia Oloya.



### **Acknowledgement**

I thank the almighty God for enabling me overcome all challenges and complete my research work within the stipulated time despite the tight schedule.

I would also love to with gratitude appreciate my parents , Mr Fred Odongkara and Mrs Proscovia Lakot for all the financial and emotional support through encouragement and prayers.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

This is a significant part for the study where researcher gives a brief background of the study, state the research problem, research objectives and purpose for study.

A proverb is a short, pithy statement of a general truth, one that condenses common experience into memorable form. Or, as defined by Miguel de Cervantes, "a short sentence based on long experience (Shapin, S. 2001).

Vivid imagery on the other hand is a technique which involves the inclusion of all senses while describing something in a piece writing. These senses include hearing, tasting, smelling, seeing and touching

Based on the topic therefore, this research will focus on demonstrating how the effectiveness of the proverbs in song of Lawino is derived from the images used in the proverbs.

### 1.1 Background of study

Song of Lawino is poem written by Ugandan poet Okot P'bitek. First published in 1966 in Acoli Luo, it was quickly translated into languages, including English. Song of Lawino has become one of the most widely read literary works originating from Sub-Saharan Africa. It has also become culturally iconic within Africa, because of its scathing display of the post-colonial effect on africans and Africa at large.

Song of Lawino was originally written in a wide spread usage of proverbs which is regarded by the Acoli- tribe of the author as mode a of mocking or guidance depending on context.

These proverbs contribute to the development of different themes in the text.

For example, post-colonial effect on Africa, women inequality, cultural diversity and many others as will be discussed subsequently below.

From this also a link is intended to be created between the images used in the the proverbs in the text and its contribution to the effectiveness of the main ideas in the text as will be analysed later.

BOOK REVIEW : Song of Lawino By Okot P'Bitek

This text portrays Lawino, a non-literate woman constantly complains of the husband's adoption of the new colonial culture and abandoning his own acholi culture with disprice and resentfulness. "Husband, now you despise me, now you treat me with spite and say I have inherited the stupidity of my aunt ". Her university-educated husband has adopted Western ways, rejected her, and taken another, Westernized woman.

Ocol decides to go polygamous which is culturally accepted of in the author's Acholi's culture. however, he has chosen to favour the 'new' wife instead of treating both wives equally as culture would dictate.

Lawino claims that her husband has lost his manhood by reading books: "Bile burns my inside ! I feel like vomiting! for all our young men were finished in the forest, their manhood was finished in the class-rooms, their testicles were smashed with large books!" Lawino says that Ocol has learned how to speak English, and no longer engages, or has any interest in, African dance but prefers the ballroom dances introduced by Europeans, and this 'loss of culture' on the part of Ocol is what disturbs Lawino the most. The poem is an extended appeal from Lawino to Ocol to stay true to his own customs, and to abandon his 'desire to be white.'

Song of Lawino was initially written in Acholi, one of the Luo dialects in northern Uganda in 1971 but later given an English translation by its author who according to his own words clipped a bit of the eagle's wings of the original Acholi poem "and rendered the sharp edges of the warrior's sword rusty and blunt, and also murdered rhythm and rhyme".this therefore would make a luo or acholi speaker to enjoy and relate better with the text's deeper meanings with the rymings and rythms and the original proverbs from the original first edition 'wer pa lawino' more as compared to a non acholi speaker.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his writing lamented that, "Song of Lawino is the one poem that has mapped out new areas and new directions in East African poetry, it belongs to the soil. It is authentically Easy African in its tone and its appeal.... Its read everywhere arousing heated demands..." This is a depiction of how widely the text is celebrated.

Song of Lawino contains a number of proverbs used throughout the text to either mock or guide most especially Ocol and his adoption of the western culture and negligence of his african or acoli culture.below are a sample of the Proverbs and their meanings.

"The pumpkin in the homestead must not uprooted. This is a common proverb in the Acoli community as used by Lawino being addressed to Ocol warning him to not totally



abandoning his culture for the western/European culture. It also warns him not to tally abandon her (Lawino) since she was at one point also precious to him.

“A mans manliness is seen at the arena.” SOL Pg 13. This proverb used by Lawino tries to portray how the Acoli or African men confronted their challenges and fear by not cowardising but rather facing them.

“No leopard would change into a hyena.” SOL pg 56. With this proverb, Lawino is trying to mock her co-wife Clementine and her husband ocol who think since they are all human like the whites they can try to adopt their ways but they will never be them. Since however much a leopard may have patches on the skin like an hyena, they will never change into one, so they all should also remain in their originality,

“Competition for a mans love is fought at the cooking place.” SOL Pg 41.

This proverb doesnt necessarily mean physical fight between the co-wives but rather cooking the best meal for their husband so they are loved more by the husband. This proverb is used by lawino to warn Clementine her co-wife of the exact thing to do in order to win a husbands heart (Ocol) in the tradition of the Acoli but not necessarily pleating the hair and coloring the lips but of course unless ocol is no longer an Acoli. This proverb outsources the theme of unity where co-wife don't fight with each other for their husband as it's the case with others but rather compete in cooking which is uniting factor that brings joy and happiness.

“..Let the fool continue to deceive himself.”

This proverb is a common one among Acoli community which portrays tiredness of correcting one from their same mistakes. Lawino in this case is trying to show how new converts are wasting time doing according her with meaningless activities with the white mans religion instead of carrying on with the usual activities. This proverb is mainly used to show disgust for an unchanging individual in the society.

“Ostrich plumes differ from chicken feathers.” Pg 51. This proverb is used to show the difference from similarities however much they are both birds, their feather differs. In this case lawino is trying to illustrate how Africans and whites are both human but still have different hair types however much all hair. She is warning Clementine her co-wife of adapting to the white ladies Hair style which doesnt suite her.

Song of lawino exhibited a number of themes with modernity versus traditional being the major theme in the text with Lawino as a representation of tradition who constantly reminds Ocol who has now adopted to the modern European culture of the various good in the tradition other than the European culture. The constant clash between the two in the whole text summarizes as the major theme in the text.

Another theme that is portrayed in the poem is gender inequality which is clearly seen by how ocol has the right to do whatsoever pleases him unlike Lawino. Ocol being the man in the Acoli culture has the right to have as many wives as he pleases as stated by Lawino, "who has ever prevented men from wanting women?" this might not be the case for a marriage woman like lawino however much she feels mistreated.

Theme of gender based violence as Ocol constantly mentally or psychologically mistreats lawino by insulting her of her ignorance and inability to perform modern or European cultures

There is also a theme of immorality, as portrayed in western culture by their dance in a house where there is no light and shamelessly holds each other tightly and with no respect for relatives. " girls hold their fathers, boys hold their sisters close, they dance even with their mothers". This clearly portrays immorality in society as relatives and everyone ought to respect others and dance in daylight. She further explains this by describing how a big woman staggers and pisses on herself and the stench of the place of dance. Society expect old and mature people to have order and be able to control and conform to societal settings and failure in that is implied as immoral hence a theme in the text song of Lawino.

### **1.2 Problem statement**

This research aims at analyzing how imagery in proverbs used in song of lawino enhances thier effectiveness in enriching meaning in the text.

This research aims to demonstrate how the effectiveness of proverbs in song of Lawino is derived from the images used in the proverbs

This research also targets on how Okot Pbitek stylistically utilizes imagery in the proverbs to illustrate his thematic concern.

Candidate is not sure what this section should be about

### 1.3 Scope of study

The research will mainly use text song of lawino by Okot PBitek as text in context although referring to other sources like the internet and published dissertation as guide in the research process

### 1.4 Research question

In what ways does imagery enhances the effectiveness of proverbs as a way of illustrating themes in Okot's song of Lawino?

### 1.5 research objectives

The study will be carried out to;

Identify the proverbs in Okot Pbiteks song of lawino and its effectiveness in the given context

Analyze the relations between the proverbs and themes in Okots song of Lawino

Identify and analyze images in each of the key proverbs in the text song of lawino

Discuss the effectiveness of imagery in generating meaning and enhancing the effectiveness of the proverbs in the context of Okot Pbiteks song of Lawino

### 1.6 literature review

Proverb as form of art and consequently partner in social development as viewed by many is as true as the social nature of their conception

Proverbs among different communities has been conceived as a means of behavioral modification, that is deriving from it lessons and warnings in our everyday life to better our life in the community.

In Taylors view of proverbs as terse, Okpewho (1982:320) explains it as;

“...a piece of old wisdom expressed in charm and terseness- it contains truth about life whether local or universally accepted by the people and appeals to their imagination by the neatness and beauty in which it has been framed.”

This therefore portrays how proverb is used as a form of behavioral modification since wisdom is expressed and truth about life which may be a source of lesson to the community which therefore explains why its highly used in the different communities.

Bukenya and Nandwa (1983; 100) defines a proverb as “.....a terse pithy statement containing wisdom...” This gives an accurate insight into the nature of proverbs. A



proverb is terse, that is, few words are used. Pithiness according to Bukwenya and Nandwa refers to their vigor and richness and also their ability to influence through the meaning that can cause change in the community which is preferable why it is used by different and various communities and authors in their texts just like Okot Pbitok in song of Lawino. Finnegan (1972:35) adds a moral debate by stating that .....they prefer moral wisdom in form of sayings. They deal mostly with practical everyday experiences, common sense acceptable manner all forms of relationships in the family unit. This line of reasoning ably brings out the exact role played by proverbs in social development and behavioral modifications which is a major reason for use of proverbs in African setting and most especially in the text song of Lawino which is directly mocking and advising Acoli on his diversion from original African ways of the Acoli tradition.

Proverb in the Acoli community is referred to as *Caro lok* and is mainly used by adults or elderly persons in amidst or by privileged individuals with sound minds to appropriately articulate it to suit the message they are passing out. Finnegan (1970:415) also argues that people use proverbs to increase clarity as well as semantic effect of what they want to say. They are most often taken seriously since proverbs are also used for emphasis. However, most times they may be undermined when used by less privileged like children or wives in the traditional settings.

Darson (1972:184) argues for critical analysis that reveals proverbs as.

.....used by a speaker in particular context because he wishes to embellish or elevate a message with pastille dimension, or to demonstrate superiority, sophistication, education, elegance and sensitivity of language use. This brings out the argument that, may be when the speaker is seen as less sophisticated or educated may be undermined as portrayed in song of Lawino, however much Lawino uses proverbs to mock and teach Acoli, he sees Lawino as less sophisticated, educated or even a subject to him being his wife hence ignoring her. This therefore to a larger extent may dilute or frustrate the main intention for usage of proverbs since it is now entitled only to a few privileged ones only. Finnegan's contention suggests that society dictates to the speaker on the kind of language used. It is therefore assumed that there is a specific manner in which a proverb is said. This is supported by Bauman (1992:128) who says;

*too long a quotation*

“.....effect is enhanced by an introductory formula at the beginning such as: it is said, the old people say.....” this view is popularly and widely supported by renowned and legendary writers in Africa for example Okot Pbitok in his text song of Lawino



“Let no one uproot the pumpkin”(pg56). The way its stated coins with an indirect authority which portrays conservation from how the old people said it its being maintained and therefore exhibiting warning and prior lessons once the proverb is clearly understood as intended by the speaker.

It can be concluded that proverbs not only represent human wisdom but also guide mankind in performance of its various functions and also a means in transmitting ideas, motive, knowledge and social morality from generation to generations. This is because it reflects societal value of the people. In reference to that, Tywo argues that proverbs deal with all aspect of life, they are used to emphasize on the words of the wise and are the stock-in- trade of old people, who use them to convey precise moral lessons, warnings ad advice since they make a greater impact on the mind than ordinary words. The judicious use of proverb is usually regarded as a sign of wit. This therefore is a guide to man's behavior and everyday life which includes up holding cultural values with refernece to Ocol in Song of Lawino.

Achebe (1994) argues that proverb Is the palm oil with which words are eaten(Pg.7). In this case Achebe is trying to illustrate how significant a proverb is, since in West Africa, Nigeria in particular, palm oil is the main ingredient in food. This indirectly to him means that proverb is the main part of speech.that is, any expression makes more meaning when fused with proverbs. Finnegan (1970: 390), also agrees to this by saying In many African cultures a feeling for language, for imagery, and for the expression of abstract ideas through compressed and allusive phraseology comes out particularly clearly in proverbs.

Okot couldn't agree less as seen by how he utilises proverbs in his text in study now, Song of Lawino to mock and advice Ocol and his new wife Clementine with whom they have deserted from the traditional Acholi culture for the western, European culture.

Imagery can be expressed as the use of figurative language to represent objects, actions and ideas in a way that appeals to our five major human senses that is sight visual images, hearing that is auditory image or sense, smell that is olfactory, touch that is tactile sense, that is gustatory sense imagery utilizes figures of speech like simile, metaphor personification and onomatopoeia in order to appeal to the human senses.

Imagery may use contrast to describe something which in terms of sense is not usually associated with for example in song of Lawino. PBitek uses contrast to describe ocol. “ ..Ocol behaves likes a child” we expect Ocol, being a husband and grown not behave like

a child and conform to the traditional culture of his tribe. This contrast in the description enables to vividly imagine or paint of a picture of Ocols unculturedness or diversion.

Imagery may vary from individual to individual since scent or smell appeal may not be obvious to all depending on the environment culture and many other factors like personal experiences. Emmanuel courtial and Donald A. Wilson state that “..... The piriform cortex plays a key role in creating olfactory percepts, helping to form configurable odor objects from the molecular features extracted in nose, dynamic interactions with other olfactory and nonolfactory and resulting behavioral response. Description of scent, smell or olfactory may then vary with time and individuals.”

In other wards, imagery used by different writers may not necessarily be understood by every reader. For example local imagery used in song of lawino may not be comprehensively understood by someone who doesnt know or associates with the culture. For example,

“The pumpkin in the old homestead must not be uprooted.”

Someone who doesnt know how a pumpkin was important in the Acoli homestead might not really relate the credibility of the image used in the proverb.

Song of lawino utilises local and relatable imagery in its proverbs to convey the major ideas and message being potrayed in the text. Charlotte H.Bruner(1985) argues that okot's earthly imagery, his insertion of traditional lyrics and proverbs, his witty Satire on both traditional and westernised african behavior have won this poem critical praise and wide readership. Women readers however liberated they may be, easily identify with lawino.The use of this local and understanding imagery makes most people relate to the text therefore enhances the effectiveness of imagery in proverbs used in the text song of lawino which is the major aim of this research.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o also argues that Song of Lawino is the poem that has mapped out new areas and new directions in East African poetry. It belongs to the soil. It is authentically East african in its tone and in its appeal. This can be seen in its reception. It is read everywhere, arousing heated debates. This can still be attributed to the use of local and relatable imagery that gives clear meaning to the text and the major themes in the text.

However, some readers have failed to utilize the simple imagery employed by okot p'bitek in his proverbs and text atlarge to understand his intended message. David Rubadiri in the development of writing in East Africa stated that,

"some readers have suggested that okot's message is the negative rejection by Okot of a world heritage, a negative cry of: "back to savage nature; that one shouldn't read books; that what okot is saying is that one shouldn't go to university; one shouldn't wear shoes, one shouldn't use forks and so on,.... I reject this view myself. It is a narrow and subjective reaction to what the poet is actually trying to say.." This therefore fullfills the intension of this research, which Is to bridge the gab between the misinterpretation of the intended mesage by creating a link between the images used in the proverb and its effectiveness in prevailing the intended meaning or idea in the text. Ofoego, O (2010) ...Okot's songs- Song of Lawino [...] deal illuminatingly and well with matters of central importance for contemporary Africa. And they do so using authentic African imagery, proverbs, laments, invocations and curses, thereby successfully rooting the modern in the traditional (1980:195).



## CHAPTER TWO

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the process and ways through which the entire study was conducted. It presents the various methods and instruments that the researcher used in data collection and the sources from which data was obtained. It portrays the methods that were used in the analysis and interpretations of the research findings. It also shows the problems encountered in the research and how they were overcome.

#### **2.1 Method of data collection**

These are the various ways in which the researcher gathered the available information of the research about the images in the Proverbs in Song of Lawino and its thematic development in the text.

##### **2.1.1 Document review**

This method used by the researcher as to get the basic idea and borrowed knowledge from already existing document or publications. Through reviewing and analyzing the already existing literature on oral poetry pertaining the analysis of proverbs more especially in song of lawino and other context by the different scholars. This method helped the researcher to have an insight and guide in doing their research without plagiarizing the content.

Document review involved searching the internet for relevant and related content, reaching the text itself and published journals and articles which contributed a lot in the gathering of data.

##### **2.1.2. Group discussion**

The researcher engaged in a group discussion with different age groups in the universities who pointed the different proverbs used in the text song of lawino. This discussion comprised of students of age of (23-27) who had just read the text. This made it easier for them to spot out the proverbs in the text. This method also got to engage the elders of the Acoli community who had read the Luo version of song of Lawino “we pa Lawino”. The elders being familiar with the Acoli proverbs were able to explain in length the proverbs and their relevance in the context as used throughout the text. This left the researcher to now analyze the imagery in the proverbs already spotted and how it contributes to the thematic development of the text song of lawino.

### **2.1.3 Library search**

This enabled the research in achieving important information about the topic of study even before going into the field which contributed to the information or findings from the field. This gave research guide about the relevant and irrelevant information later got from the field. Some of the guide included research dissertations of previously done research. This however has not been the major source of data

Some of the libraries visited included Makerere university main library, faculty of Arts library and book bank. These were sources of information or data and aided in the research process.

## **2.2 Source of data**

This unveils the specific place or area from which information is got for the research.

### **2.2.1 Text song of Lawino” by Okot pbitek**

The researcher mainly used the text as the main source of data since the research only concentrates on the proverbs only used in the text and not any other. From the text, the researcher was able to spot out the proverbs and later analyze the imagery in then and how they contributed to the thematic development of the text song of lawino. It also from the text that the researcher is able to analyze how the effectiveness of the proverbs in derived from the images used in the proverbs

### **2.2.2 "Text wer pa Lawino"**

The researcher used also this luo version of the text song of lawino to supplement and get more meaning into the proverbs cited in the English version 'song of lawino'

## **2.3 Data analysis.**

This chapter will present the final findings of the research which is the imagery in proverbs used in the text Song of Lawino and its effectiveness in thematic development.

Song of Lawino is a text that potrays Lawino, a non-literate woman who constantly complains of the husband's adoption of the new colonial culture and abandoning his own acholi culture with dispise and resentfulness. “Husband, now you despise me, now you treat me with spite and say I have inherited the stupidity of my aunt ”. Her university-educated husband has adopted Western ways, rejected her, and taken another, Westernized woman.

Ocol decides to go polygamous which is culturally accepted of in the author's Acholi's culture. however, he has chosen to favour the 'new' wife instead of treating both wives equally as culture would dictate.

Lawino claims that her husband has lost his manhood by reading books: "Bile burns my inside ! I feel like vomiting! for all our young men were finished in the forest, their manhood was finished in the class-rooms, their testicles were smashed with large books!" Lawino says that Ocol has learned how to speak English, and no longer engages, or has any interest in, African dance but prefers the ballroom dances introduced by Europeans, and this 'loss of culture' on the part of Ocol is what disturbs Lawino the most. The poem is an extended appeal from Lawino to Ocol to stay true to his own customs, and to abandon his 'desire to be white.'

Song of Lawino was initially written in Acholi, one of the Luo dialects in northern Uganda in 1971 but later given an English translation by its author who according to his own words clipped a bit of the eagle's wings of the original Acholi poem "and rendered the sharp edges of the warrior's sword rusty and blunt, and also murdered rhythm and rhyme".

A proverb is a short, pithy statement of a general truth, one that condenses common experience into memorable form. Or, as defined by Miguel de Cervantes. "a short sentence based on long experience (Shapin, S. 2001).

Vivid imagery on the other hand is a technique which involves the inclusion of all senses while describing something in a piece writing. These senses include hearing, tasting, smelling, seeing and touching.

Here the proverb in luo version is stated in bolds, translated in English in the brackets and the relevance in the context in which its used is discussed.

In this chapter still, the extract from the text in which this proverb is used I portrayed and the proverb indicated with a star. From there then the imagery is spotted and the its relevance in thematic development and enriching of the main idea or intended theme in the text is then discussed.

**"Te okono obur bong' luputu."** A loose translation of a common proverb used by the acholi speakers til date. Its as well used in wer pa Lawino, the original acholi verson of song of lawino before translation in English.

(The pumpkin in the old homestead must not be uprooted) SOL pg41.



mostly to warn individuals of their negligence of the past. According to okot (1972:6), pumpkin to the acholi is a luxury food that grows on its own and its destruction even when relocating from the homestead is a taboo. P'bitek uses this proverb through his mouth piece Lawino to warn ocol not to treat his wife like a trash as if they were never in love at any point but rather with a bit of respect and dignity. From proverb also Lawino warns ocol on despising his own culture that saw him grow into a man he is now.

**I do not understand**

**The ways of the foreigners**

**But I do not despise their**

**Customs.**

**Why should you despise yours?**

**Listen, my husband,**

**You are the son of a chief.**

**\*The pumpkin in the old**

**homestead**

**Must not be uprooted! (SOL pg41)**

from this proverb we sight visual imagery of a pumpkin which is a representation of african culture in Ocol that he even wants to destroy.

This image leads to thematic development of neo colonialism where Ocol wants to completely do away with his african culture and retain the colonialist culture which is the western culture. This proverb leads to thematic development of tradition versus modernity, where acol completely detest and wants nothing to do with the tradition versus modernity where acol completely detest and wants nothing to do with the tradition, for the western culture.

**"Mar pa lacoo ki lwenyo pire i tu'keno"** This is an acholi proverb translated as (competition for a man's love is fought at the cooking place.) As used in the test Song of lawino by lawino as she advises her co-wife clementine. This proverb commonly directed to co-wives, doesn't necessarily mean physical fighting but rather cooking competition where the wife who cooks best gains more of the husband's love.

**\*The competition for a man's love  
Is fought at the cooking place  
When he returns from the field  
Or from the hunt,  
You win him with a hot bath  
And sour porridge. (SOL pg.41)**

from this proverb we observe tactile imagery fought. This as used in the proverb is a 'healthy' competition which in the long run brings unity since co-wives advice themselves on competing in cooking.competition is seen as an image of unity. This image therefore also enhances the effectiveness of the usage of the proverb since it brings more meaning in the context in use, p' bitek portrays the difference in which a man's love is fought for In the African traditional setting which is not the case In the European culture where Clementine puts on lips paints, bleaches the skin and does the skin the ways of the whites for Cool to love her.

**"Coo ki neno i bar. "** a loose translation of this proverb in English as used in song of lawino (A man's manliness is seen in the arena.), a provocative proverb used by the acholi community to push men to action in whatsoever they are competing for. This proverb used by lawino is a portrayal of how competitive and active the acholi dance is.

**" but when another youth hits**

**You**

**You take up the challenge**

**as a man**

**And when a girl knocks you**

**You srike back,**

**\* A man's manliness is seen**

**in the arena, (SOL pg43)**

*so where does the proverbs end?*



From this proverb, we see a visual imagery- 'seen' which appeals to sight and in here is a depiction of ones ability to stand to a challenge when dared In the arena. From this proverb still, manliness can be seen as image of comparison of the western(European culture) and the african( acholi culture) since they both in challenge with both representatives being Lawino and Ocol for the acholi and wesren culture respectively This therefore enhences effective understanding of okot's main message of the text, cultural diversity.

**"Yip ongera perom ki yip rii!"** Translation as used in song of lawino (A monkeys's tail is different from that of a giraffe.") This is a proverb used for warning individuals on their behavior based on copying others in what they do.that however much both might be tails, they never be the same. in the same case in the proverb,

**My mother tught me**

**Acholi hair fashion;**

**Which fits the kind**

**Of fair of the Acholi,**

**And the occasion.**

**Listen,**

**Ostrich plumes is differ**

**From chicken feathers,**

**\*A monkey's tail**

**Is different from that of the giraffe, (SOL pg 51)**

Lawino uses this proverb to warn her co-wife Clementine on copying the white ladies hairstyle which doesn't suit her and will never be the same with that of a white lady. This proverb encourages one to be true to themselves.

'Tale' in the proverb may be viewed as an image of difference between the African culture and European culture Clementine and Ocol hopes to overcome. The tale shows that it will never be the same and we should just learn to embrace our own

From this therefore, cultural identity can be a thematic development from the image used in the proverb above.

**"Wek laming obwole kene"**

(Let the fool continue to deceive himself. SOL pg.79)

This proverb is a common one among Acoli community which portrays disgust in correcting one from their same mistakes. Lawino in this case is trying to show how new converts are wasting time doing according her with meaningless activities with the white mans religion instead of carrying on with the usual activities.

**\*Let the fool**

**continue to decieve himself!**

**Who has ever prevented**

**The cattle from the salt lick?(SOL pg.79)**

This proverb is mainly used to show disgust for an unchanging individual in the society.

From this proverb 'fool' is an image of the Africans who continuously failed to embrace their culture but instead waste time adopting to the western culture. This refers to ocol, Clementine and all the Christian concerts.

From this proverb we realize a thematic development of post-colonial effect which is seen by the Africans 'fool' who cling to the western culture after the colonial error in Africa.

**"Yec udu mat ki yec kweno."**

This proverb just like others is an acholi version of (ostrich plumes differ from chicken feathers). In this proverb, it tries to explain that however much both birds have feathers, ostrich's will never be the same with the chickens. Just like in human, despite both being hair, for whites and blacks, it will never be the same.

**My mother taught me**

**Acholi hair fashions;**

**Which fits the kind**

**Of hair of the Acholi,**

**And the occasion.**

**Listen,**

**\*Ostrich plumes differ**

**From chicken feathers, (SOL pg.51)**

Here Lawino tries to warn Clementine on trying to be like the white woman by trying to adopt their hair style.

In this proverb, feather is an image of difference between the Africans and whites and their culture. From this therefore cultural diversity is made clearer as a message in the text song of Lawino

**"Ngati pe gudu man lawote"**

is a highly competitive and daring proverb used in Song of Lawino as (No one touches another's testicle). This proverb is mainly used to show no fear for the opponent and call for action from the challenged side.

**A man's manliness is seen**

**in the arena,**

**\*No one touches another's**

**testicles.(SOL pg.43)**

This proverb is used by lawino to illustrate how competitive and lively the acholi dance is as compared to the European ball room dance where people dance without singing while holding each other without respect.

**Touching** in the proverb is a tactile imagery that appears to the sense of touch, its also viewed as an image of the competitive nature of the school traditional dance as compared to the European dance. It also contributes to the theme of cultural diversity of the African tradition and the European culture.

**“Kwac pe loke lalur”.**

A proverb used in the acholi dialect directly translated as (No leopard would change into a hyena) it's used by Lawino to illustrate to her co-wife Clementine that however much she tries to change and be like a white lady, she wouldn't become one by doing her hair like that of a white lady. She should simply stay and appreciate her own hair other than trying to be others.

**I am proud of the hair  
With which I was born  
And as no white woman  
Wishes to do her hair  
Like mine,  
Because she is proud  
Of the hair with which she was born,  
I have no wish  
To look like a white woman.  
\*No leopard  
Would change into a hyena,...**

However much they both have patches on their body, they'll never be the same. The image in this proverb is the animals which pictures or refers to the difference similarities though not the same, of the whites and Africans.

This image enhances the effectiveness of the proverb in context its being used since from it, Okot is able to vividly summarize the main idea in the text, of the individual Africans neglecting their own culture for the whites and at the end not becoming whites but simply betraying their own tribe by disowning it. This exactly what Ocol and his new wife Clementine does throughout the text.

Conclusion.

Song of Lawino entails a few but relevant proverbs which contributes to the major themes of the text as discussed above.

## **2.6 Conclusion.**

According to my research, most of the images used in the proverbs are mainly to enhance Lawino's warning and mocking of her husband Ocol and her new co-wife Clementine of their adoption of the new or western culture over their own Acholi traditional culture.

These images are effectively and stylistically utilized to enhance meaning to the text and convey the main idea or theme in it.

### **Recommendation**

Future writers and authors should adopt the usage of local images in their work since it creates a sense of connectivity with the African readers hence loving the content.

Parents, government and the different stake holders should promote and emphasise adoption of oral literature in high schools and even primary since it easily connects with learners and instill moral lessons best to the learners as seen in Song of Lawino.



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— more reading needed