

MAKERERE



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SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION

DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE

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PROJECT TITLE: POLITICAL FIGURE

A Project submitted to the Department of Literature in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Education of Makerere University.

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DECLARATION.

I **ACAYO DEBORAH** hereby declares that this project is my original work; I have not plagiarized anybody's work; neither have I hired anybody to produce this work for me.

NAME: ACAYO DEBORAH

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE: 27th JUNE 2023

Endorsed by Dr. /Pro. Danson Sylvester Kahyana, Project advisor



DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to all the young people across the world including my siblings Olwoch Bob, Akidi Diana, Aol Esther and Anying Daphne. I also dedicate this project to the community at large

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the following people who contributed to this project work. First of all I would like to acknowledge my course tutor Dr. Danson Kahyana for taking me through the course and giving me the knowledge to think creatively and also giving me the basic of creative writing. I also want to acknowledge Peter Kagayi, Dr. Susan Kiguli, Okot Alfred and all my friend and relatives who supported me in this project.

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PART I: INTRODUCING THE PROJECT

1. INTRODUCTION

I have used a mixed genre in my project, that is to say I have used both short stories and poems. This mixture includes three short stories and twenty poems in a row. I have basically used the theme of suffering in my short three short stories. In the short story “Exiled” and “destitution” the characters suffer because of their lack of listening to their parents this is because they are in adolescent stage and while in this stage many young people face a lot of challenges and also find difficulty in making up good decisions. If not given proper guidance young people at this age ends up making decisions that ruins their future for example many get in to early marriage, others becomes victims of teenage pregnancy while others become drug addicts.in the second short story “my second mother” the main character suffers in the hands of her second mother after her mother who was battling with HIV AIDs passes away, she worked very hard to see to it that she becomes successful. The three short stories presents to the readers two types of adolescents, the one who is given less but work through thick and thin to achieve success and the one who is given everything on a silver plate but still choose the road that leads to failure.

In the 20 poems I have exhausted quite a number of themes like tradition and culture of the Acoli people, the theme of love, politics and religion.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The project is based on various themes and topics. The short stories dwells around childhood, growth and development and transition to adulthood. The two short stories “my second mother” and “Destitution” highlights the dangers of HIVAIDs to the community. The project is a creative writing research work for academic purpose. The project is also written from a student point of view and purposed for grading.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To promote the Acoli tradition and culture

To expose political hypocrisy

To promote religion

To educate adolescents and youth

4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT

The believe or reasons behind my project is that many people have a misconception about my culture and many deems my culture as unworthy therefore I have written down poems to clear the misconceptions that people have about my culture(the Acoli culture).

The hypocrisy of the political leaders also needs to be exposed therefore the reasons for writing some of my poems is also to expose the hypocrisy of the leaders, for example the iron sheet saga of Karamoja region. Instead of distributing the iron sheet that was given to the poor people of Karamoja, some of the political leaders decided to distribute it amongst themselves this led to the arrest of some political leaders Agnes Nandutu.

The insecurity that is in Northern Uganda is also one of my reasons for writing my project. The Karamojongs are killing very many people and taking away their cattle in northern, people are living in fear, others have even abandoned their homes and gone to camps in order to secure their lives, yet the government of Uganda is so quiet about this matter. The government is not taking any serious action to disarm the Karamojongs while the people of northern Uganda are left in pain and mourning.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

The project is important because it provides education to the youth, when the young people read the three short stories, they are able to draw a lesson from the short stories, and therefore the project provides education to the readers.

The project also helps in promoting culture and tradition, some of the poems about culture and tradition also educates readers not to abandon culture completely as they adopt westernisation.

The project also helps bring out the voice of the oppressed as it exposes political hypocrisy.

6. STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

The project arranged in the following structure

- a. The three short stories
- b. The 20 poems
- c. The devices deployed in the project

PART II: THE PROJECT

EXILED

A taxi door spreads open in a small trading centre in a cold evening and the traveller who seems to have been collecting transport fare throughout the journey jumps out to stretch his bones, he spreads wide his arms, stretches forward his limbs as if bending down his back, living his stomach hanging in the air like that of a monkey jumping hurriedly from one tree trunk to the other in search for food. He later announces to the rest of the travellers to empty the taxi because they had reached their destination.

Ojukwee who had been sleeping throughout the journey now opens his eyes widely both confused and excited, confused because of the long nap he had taken and excited because the long journey has finally come to a stop. Realising he was the only passenger left in the taxi, he waves to call the conductor who was standing just one metre away from where the taxi has been parked. "Is this Mbarara town?" he asked with a confused look on his face that showed he had never been to the place in question, the conductor then confirms to his query. Ojukwee steps out of the taxi with his bag on his back and stands on a deserted road as the taxi he had boarded drives past him. His dark, short, giant figure on a blue faded pair of jeans and a grey long sleeved shirt now comes to a full view as he stands there confused. He looks blankly ahead of him for some times before he finds himself hesitating on a wide open street that joins a trading centre.

He talked past strangers, taking slow steps as if in need of making himself acquainted with the area. As he passed by, different heads turn to look at him with questioning eyes, others murmured whether they had seen such a face anywhere, while others even tap on their neighbours who had not recognised he was passing to look in his direction. To them he looked to be a total stranger, after realising that he is being stared at by very many people as he perused along the trading centre, Ojukwee looks straight ahead of him speeding up as if

he was late for his errand, he walked hurriedly like he was sure of where he was going in order to avoid suspicion by the people in the trading centre.

It was clocking half past 7:00pm and the street was becoming silent, the crowd who were gathered when Ojukwee had just arrived have now retired, a good number of shops where already shut, in less than thirty minutes, the street was dark and quiet, at this time, one can hardly notice or even recognise the face of another person next to them

Ojukwee very tired and exhausted from both the journey and loitering around looking for a safe place to rest now retires in front of a building to have his first night in a town that seems very far from home, he puts down his bag, looks around the area to pick some old empty sacks to lay his head on, he lays down, draws his bag closer to him and pulls out a bedcover that looked old and dirty, he then uses it to cover himself.

He lays down on his back with his hands supporting his head, stares blankly in the sky, he takes a deep breath as his mind looks back home, he starts to think about different things with a faint smile that later turns in to a frown, "I have been of no help to myself" he murmurs to himself, his mind moves back home where he first met his grandmother with a faint smile, "I will make you proud grandma, I will study hard, finish University and become a doctor, I promise you will see. I will take care of you and my siblings, you will not have to work so hard anymore by then" "I will be very proud of you" replied the old woman "I have always been very proud of you my son, all your young ones look up to you dear, as a first born you need to work hard to change the status of this family, my blessing surely follows you my son", "I will work hard Grandma that I promise.

He turns to face the wall as his mind shifts to think of how he messed up his life in a secondary school and how he spent all his tuition that his mother worked hard for in drinking and living a reckless life. All this memory comes to him with a lot of pain and regrets, "after all its all over" he murmurs to himself, "I have become the worst mistake of life, even when

my grandma pleaded with me to change my ways of life, I ignored her effort and chose to live life recklessly, “I still remember one evening when she told me that I would lose everything trying to chase a life I don’t even understand well, I will jump into the truck of such life and end up in a place I have never been to before, lonely and needy”, he whispered to himself and turned to face the opposite side, at this moment everything started making sense, “what curse does the lips hold that states peoples fate?” he thought to himself, as he lay there all exhausted with a lot of thought, his mind became dense and tired.

A faint voice called to him “Mukonjo”, this voice comes in as a dream and at the same time as a thought that comes vividly to him. As the voice draws nearer, it becomes so clear and so real to Ojukwee. “Mukonjo”.....” Mukonjo”, now the voice is accompanied by a body shake “wake up or we shall be late” announces the voice “ and they say our master is visiting to check how we have managed to progress with our assignment, therefore it will be wise if we show up earlier than expected today to avoid punishment by master”, Ojukwee jumps on his feet after hearing this announcement, spreads out his arms in search for a match box which he lights up, the hut becomes bright then the face of an old man with a grey hair that looked compact and dirty comes to a full view, he looked to be a man in his sixties, with a slim, tall and week body, very brown but the dirt and poor care of his body made him look a little dark.

The old man then stood up to pick out a roll of weed from his pocket, and later hands it to his colleague, draws back his hands again and picks up another roll puts it in his mouth and lights it, he puff out a stream of smoke that sets him coughing for a minute, he slowly squat down to inhale a little more of the substance in his hands, Ojukwee now stands still looking at his colleague as if in shock for some times, then he slowly squats down next to the old fella, “you need to light up that staff, it’s good in the morning than when the sun comes to full life, make sure u inhale enough of that because we have a long day ahead of us, if you don’t take

enough of that am sure u will not be able to bend in the for even half of your fortune” says the old man, they both laugh sarcastically.

Ojukwee picks up the roll of weed from his colleague’s hands, puts his own in his mouth and lights it using the other one and later gives it back to the old man, “there you go” says the old man, “I got in love with weed 45years back, it has been there for me even when everyone else left me, it has been my strength and daily motivation, whenever I inhale this, I feel a sense of belonging wherever I am, this is the best that has ever happened in my life... it’s a good gig as many say it’s the medicine of the brain you know” they both laugh while each inhale the substance at a go “I am getting high on this now” Ojukwee comments as he puff out a forest of smoke out of both his mouth and nose “there..... Therethere.... just in a few, you will be in paradise” says the old fellow, “it feels higher than mount Calvary, so sweet to be up high, higher than the rooftops. Hang in there and wait just for me, am almost there friend”, the two continues to inhale and puff out for a couple of minutes until every little inch was complete.

Ojukwee then raised up, picks up a hoe from the back of the door then carried his bed slightly and picks out a panga that has been popping out slightly from the half inch old mattress that he had been sleeping on, “ready?” asked the old man, “ready”, replied Ojukwee, the old man then got up picked up his panga from the exit of the house where he had positioned when he entered the house. The two rushed out of the house and Ojukwee closed the door behind him.

The two started on their journey, moving side by side while discussing a number of things. “I have seen a lot of reasons why people of this area focus a lot on farming and cattle keeping”, Ojukwee landed on a random topic, “I just hate the fact that we have to labour too much on their farm for little pay, yet they mistreat and starve us”, replied the old man. “I am tired of working for bosses who shouts and make a lot of noise and when they are around, we are forced to work like machines, moreover on an empty stomach, I still remember last week

when I fainted twice in one day, I thought that was my last, I had not eaten for days you know, it was a bad week on my side, I had sent all my allowance to help my family back in my village, my daughter left her marriage with five kids because her husband wasn't taking good care of her, the man is a beast and a woman beater, the last time I heard that he almost killed my daughter when he found out that my daughter had joined a VSL women saving group, he claims that the women who are in such a group are always in a constant discussion to kill their husbands and give away their properties to the bank for loans they can't even afford to pay", what a joke" Ojukwee comments in pity, "first of all he drinks too much and contributes completely nothing to help my daughter with the kids" the old man continued looking straight ahead of him like a journalist giving a report to a camera," yet he produces like hens, I asked my girl to pack her things and leave the husband's home before the husband kills her for me, so she had to come back home with all her five children who we have even failed to send to school.

Now as I talk they are all seated at home getting me some more mouth to feed you know?, "I understand your point Rwebikona", replied Ojukwee "you see these days men have their own frustrations, some of them fail to provide for their loved ones and the people who are supposed to benefit from them, when they look for ways to settle their frustration and fail, they resort to aggression instead of working hard to keep them going, I have always admired you Rwebikona for example, you are already an old man but you still do not give up in life, you keep on working so hard in these farms of Kiruhura and you don't even get tired.

Sometimes I admire you a lot but again I didn't plan to live my life in this manner, working for people in a land I never dreamt was not in my plans, but then I found myself in exile and worst of all in an alien land of Kiruhura, far away from my home" talk about it" replied the old man " what brought you to a far land like this one in particular?, I hear rumours that you come from Agago, is it?, where in the world is that place?" and the people here have nicknamed you Mukonjo, which means a short man from Kasese". I come from Agago not

Kasese replied Ojukwee “ it’s in northern part of Uganda”, and my mother’s people call me Ojukwee a name that was given to me at birth as a first born

“Ojukwee” means someone who does not listen. You see my mother was advised several times to leave my father and concentrate on her studies but she didn’t listen, she went ahead having an affair with my father and ended up getting pregnant and gave birth to me, when my father abandon her with four children, the name became even more famous. Now there is a way I feel that name is somehow following me up, you see the thing is that I came here to hide from authority, they are looking for me back there in my village, it’s my grandmothers idea that I should run away in hiding because they might send me to prison”, “what crime did you commit?” the old man asked furiously, “They claimed I defiled a girl of eight years old” continued Ojukwee “and they say it’s a juvenile offense.

I was seventeen years by then, and my grandmother thought the punishment was too heavy for me to bear, sometimes I feel like I would have stayed back in my village and faced the penalty because life out has been so rude and harsh on myself, maybe I would face whatever penalty they have to give me and after that I would continue with my education, I wouldn’t have been suffering with hard labour, working here in peoples farm like an orphan, the people here treat me like am mad, they think I am not from this part of the world”.

“Last time I worked at Rujooga’s farm” he continued, “I had agreed with his wife that she would give me a piece of land to farm in my tomatoes and she would also give me a spray to treat the tomatoes while growing, this was in exchange of the heavy work I performed for her in her garden, I cleared her five hectares piece of land alone and it took me like a month to fish. I used to go to her garden as early as 6:00 am in the morning and could work and sweat until 7:00 pm, the work was so stressful and tiresome for me since sometimes I could work on an empty stomach with nothing completely to eat the whole day and when I get back, her young son Lugambamazzima would feel pity on me and get me some left overs to eat, but

when his mother gets to find out this, she would give me an extra work to do for her in order to pay off for the little food her son had given me without her permission, she claims that she had already made a clean deal with me for a piece of land and tomatoes spray not food for the labour am doing at her garden, therefore anything out of that would be a different contract.

So it was harsh on me, I managed to clear her garden and indeed she offered me a piece of land where I planted my tomatoes and I was able to spray it too, so time came when the tomatoes were ready, I didn't have means to transport them to the trading centre, so I would pack them in the tomatoes box one of my good old friend Mr Byaruhanga gave me, I would carry it on my head and trek from here up to the trading centre, while there, the market venders where just something else, they force me to sell to them at a very low price yet they buy from other sellers at a high rate therefore I had no option since when I don't sell off my tomatoes, it would be a loss on my side.

I kept on struggling that way, I could pick up the ripe tomatoes from my small Garden, pack it in the box and carry it to the trading centre so I was getting some small amount of money out of this business, this made Rujogas's elder son Kayesu so jealous he asked her mother to withdraw the tomato garden from me since I had benefitted enough, but the mother told him that it was a contract we had agreed upon and it wasn't a good idea to withdraw the garden at that time, this made Kayesu even more jealous.

One evening he followed me to my hut when I had just retire from delivering some tomatoes to a customer in the trading centre, it was a little bit dark, I did not notice that he was following me around, when I entered the hut I had a bang on my door followed by my name and the voice commanded me to get out or else he would put my house on fire, when I got out to ask what he wanted from me I received a slap on my face and found myself roaring on the ground like a lioness in labour pain, he kicked me several times before I could get up on my feet, looking up I noticed a sharp panga coming hungrily down on my head, I then

brought forward my hands to guard the panga and it felt just on my last finger, blood sprang like water my whole shirt got bloody, then I saw my small last finger just about to fall down. Scared of my blood, Kayesu took off to the direction of the bush, I made an alarm several times but no one showed up since no one was around by that time, I then tore some piece of my shirt and tied the falling finger and rushed to the trading centre since there was no nearby clinic around, this explains why this small finger of mine isn't straight up like the rest" he handed his hands to Rwebikona in this case for clarification, Rwebikona than observed turning the little finger around as if examining a sample in a laboratory, he then shook his head in fear and terror than dropped off Ojukwee's hand to wait for the events that followed, "reaching the clinic", Ojukwee continues, "I had already lost a lot of blood, the nurse cleaned up the excess blood and gave me first aid.

When I reported this case to the LC1 of the area, Kayesu surprisingly denied ever meeting me that day and the LC1 dismissed off the case, I was told by a friend that the very day the incident happed, Kayesu ran to the LC1 and spend some good time talking to the man the following morning Kayesu gave him some money, that was the reason why he might have dismissed the case claiming that I didn't know exactly who attacked me".

By this time the two labourers, an old man and a young boy approach their destination, the clouds was already formed, the wind was a little harsh, the mountains had swallowed up the sun behind it and it became very dark, the wind blew extremely more harsh, with maximum coldness, the bedcover that Ojukwee had used to cover up his body earlier was already covering him half way, his body so frozen shook heavily with the cold wind, he open up his eyes slightly to draw the bedcover back to the rest of his body but loses strength to even move his hands from in between his thighs, his body now weary and week from the long journey freeze up with the morning dew, he shuts his eye softly to go back to sleep.

MY SECOND MOTHER

“Open this door before I go mad, you filthy little smelly thing”, she started at me minutes after my father had just stepped out of the house. I was a tinny young girl by then, about fourteen years of age, my mother had just passed on, she was a total opposite of my step mother, she was a slightly light skinned woman, about seven feet tall, her beauty is what might have driven my father crazy, she had extremely white organised teeth with a gap in between her front teeth with a wide dimple that popped out whenever she slightly smiled, she looked very energetic, engaging and lively, with a slightly cool temper, even at the age of thirty two with three kids, she just looked like a eighteen years old adolescence.

Even after she got sick, she was still very beautiful, I still remember her faint smile on her sick bed, when she held my hands and prayed for me and whispered weekly in my ears to always work hard and take care of my siblings, she knew she was not going to make it because the disease had already eaten her up, she looked very pale and weak, she had lost a lot of weight and her bones were already protruding from her flesh like the two tusks of an elephant. ”promise me child” she whispered to me, “that you will always work hard to look after your brothers and study hard such that you don’t end up like me who left studies for marriage even when my parents worked tooth and nail to make sure I didn’t lack a thing in my studies and made sure they see to it that I study, but I still let down their efforts and choose marriage over my education”.

“I didn’t know by then that I was making a big mistake of my life”, she continued. “ I was young by then and I failed to choose the right path of life, and this is where the path I chose lead me, “a dying sick bed”, As she says this a drop of tears rolled down sideways on her cheeks, “don’t cry mother” I comforted her and cleaned off the tears from her face using the back of my hands, “if I had chosen the right way back then” she continued, “I wouldn’t have died at my age, I became so independent on a man, your father, I realised I couldn’t do anything much since I wasn’t educated and my family had denounced me the very day I got

pregnant with you, I left my father's home to Roberts home, by then I didn't know that Robert was a married man, so I moved in with him since I was expecting his child" she coughed weekly, took a deep breath and continued " after giving birth to Daniel your follower, your father started to miss behave and he then showed me his true colours, I didn't expect this from him.

"I suffered so much in my marriage, my husband was never the same again, he used to beat me up every day. From nowhere he became a serious drunkard who could sleep out often, I put up with him for quite some good years. I only realised I couldn't change anything after I had given birth to Justine, Daniel's follower. I later got to find out that I had contracted HIV AIDs, and up to then my life has never been the same again my child, I realised the world is a very harsh place to stage".

" I met the darkest part of this world that turned my life into a living hell dear", she continued "my daughter you need to work very hard and study hard so that you don't live to see the days of my life, don't rush in to marriage no matter the forces that is driving you towards it dear, put your studies first, say no to men, they will only ruin your future for which they are not worth it, no one will ever discuss this with you my daughter take a leaf from my book and learn from my experience, she then starts to cough endlessly with her eyes stuck on me, this got me so scared.

I sprang on my foot calling out for a nurse since I didn't know what to do, the corridors of the health unit was so cold and quiet, all the nurses were not in vision, I rushed out to see if I could get myself one but all in vain, I stood for a minute in shock, my brain had frozen and I didn't know what else to do from that moment. I felt a strong force coming down on me, sweat started flowing from my head down my neck, fear came down on me like a darkening cloud and I suddenly started shivering, I knew the worst had happened, an idea crossed my mind to check the doctors room so I run as fast as I could, reaching the doctors door, I spread

open it without even a knock at it, the doctor was seated scrutinising through a piece of paper that looked to me like a report, “doctor” I shouted with a heavy breath that withdrew the doctor’s attention, “what is it?” he questioned me softly without shifting his eyes from the piece of paper that he held in his hands “ my mother is dying” I replied hurriedly “go and tell the nurse who is at the counter” he answered softly with his eyes still fixed in the content of what was in his hands “ no one is at the counter sir” my voice now changed to that of a person crying, “okay young girl go back I will be there in a few” he replied now looking at me from under his glasses, I stood there waiting for him as he took his time, he stares at the paper for about five minutes, drops it down removed off his glasses and put it back to its case that way laying redundant on his table .He stood up and moved slowly away from his table, whisper something to himself then walked majestically towards me, he walks pass me and I followed immediately without saying a word.

Reaching my mother’s room he opened the door slightly, then we both entered, my mother was already laying lifeless on the ground, the doctor walked towards her and bent over her to check her impulse from her neck, he then put a tool that was stuck on his neck all this while on the poor woman’s chest to feel whether her heart was still pumping blood, he then shook his head in negation and asked immediately “where is your father”, “I don’t know” I replied “ the last time I saw him was when he brought mummy here” I replied with tears running down my cheek, “your mother has breath her last” he announced after some silence and walked out of the room.

At this moment, everything didn’t make sense to me, I felt a sharp pain through my heart, my legs were frozen and I couldn’t move a step, I stood there stuck in shock for about five minutes then made a sharp scream followed by a loud cry, I met the greatest loss of my life the world around me became so dark, I cried not only for my lifeless mother laying on the ground but also for siblings and myself, I couldn’t imagine life without my mother because I knew my father wasn’t a serious person in life.

After the burial of my mother, we all moved in with my step mother, from then life gave me and my siblings a second mother but since my mother died life has never been the same for me and my siblings.

“I am telling you to open this door” my step mother’s voice now comes clearly at the door of the room that I shared with my young brothers, she banged the door as if she had quarrelled with the door the previous night, I hurried up to the door to open it up, the moment I threw the door aside open, she came at me like a hungry lion, banged my heads on the walls several times while pulling my ears “am tired of a stupid swine like you” she started at me. “ why do you want to sleep like a queen in my own house when I myself can’t even afford to sleep the way you do, last time I warned you about your luxurious life but it seems my words fell on a deaf ear, I told you that when you are in this house you will wake up by 5:00 am, clean the whole house, make fire, cook breakfast and leave lunch on fire before you organise yourself and your other brothers for school but you thought I was a fool for having given you such instructions, you decided to do the opposite of what I always tell you to do, look at the time right now, it’s already 6:00 am and you are still snoring your teeth out, in my own house, do you want to know why your mother died? It’s because she was a lazy bone, she couldn’t provide for herself so she decided to come and dry on my husband so that she gets everything on a silver plate, she was a snatcher and a prostitute just like you.

“I already know where you got your laziness from; looking at you alone is a pain to my eyes”. She continued “get out of my sight and go finish up with the house work. Since you failed to wake up early enough you will not go to school today such that you learn your lessons and next time you will be able to do what’s right, now get lost” she shouted at me with a lot of hatred that came direct to me by the look in her eyes, I moved hurriedly past her to the seating room and started on my daily duties.

From the seating room, I could hear her beating up Daniel and Justice, who were sleeping by the time she entered the room, the two innocent souls hurried out crying, I consoled them to keep quiet, bathe them and asked them to run to school or else they would be late. As soon as they left I continued with the cleaning work, organised the house and made my step mother breakfast, she pulled my ears for bringing her a cup of tea without sugar, when I brought sugar, she was ready waiting to pour the hot tea on my face claiming that I had brought her a cold cup of tea. She asked me to feel whether the cup of tea I brought her could burn off the layers of my skin. She later shouted at me to go and make her another hot cup of tea, so I went back to the kitchen and made her another tea before I could go and deep my burnt face in some cold water that was outside in the drum so that I could save my face from getting swollen.

I later went out and sat down at the back of the house so that I could wait to serve her anything that she would request at any time. I felt so bad when I started thinking of all the bad things my step mother did to us, she sometimes denies me and my siblings food in the name of punishing us, sometimes I think that she finds pleasure in beating us up, what pains me the most is the fact that she abuses my mother as if she was alive, I don't think the poor woman is even resting in peace at all. Sometimes I don't blame my step mother a lot because maybe she just feels bad for being infertile and not being in position to give birth to children. Maybe seeing children around her tortures her. But that isn't reason enough for her to treat us the way she does, we are also human beings and we deserve to be treated well just like any other human around.

We continued suffering for the 15 years we stayed under my second mother's watch, I persevered since I had a goal of looking after my siblings and finishing my school as I had promised my late mother, I made sure I worked very hard and passed my primary leaving examination with a first grade I then attained another first grade in my "O" level final exams, later I was able to emerge the best in my UACE exams so I had to join the University

on government scholarship in medicine, I studied hard and graduated with a first class honours.

I am very happy that I made it through thick and thrones, I believe my mother got very happy from whenever her spirit is because her voice kept ringing in my head on the last day she died and her advice is what kept me pushing hard in whatever I did, even when my step mother tried hard to stop me from achieving my goals I never gave up, in fact her insults helped me to become a strong and tolerant person, I learnt how to be patient and handle difficult situations that came my way.

I immediately got myself a well-paying job when I graduated from the University, I worked for three years as a surgeon at Mulago hospital and later went to Sweden for further studies, I graduated and came back to the country, I was able to support my siblings studies through college and university, I was happy and impressed with them when they successfully finished their studies and got themselves a good paying job, my brother Daniel took arts, literature in particular in his Advance level and studied law at Makerere University, he is became a successful advocate while Justice, studied sciences at his Advanced level and later studied Engineering from Kyambogo University and got himself a job with some company in the United states of America.

I heard that my step mother died of HIV AIDs and my father died of the same course a year later, I couldn't make it for their burial since I was far away so I had to send my brothers to represent me, I also sent financial assistance to help with burial expenses, so I made sure they got a decent burial. May their souls rest in peace.

DESTITUTION

It was a tiresome day for me when we arrived at the congested slums of Kamwokya. It had been a very long journey since it took us about eight hours to reach Kampala. We were already tired of our small town back in Gulu, since everyone knew us very well and no one seems to be interested in us. The men there used to tell our new catches that we were already some batch of old sluts around, our reputation was already in a bad shape, clients were not showing up, our survival had become so stiff, our colleagues in the same field used to laugh at us because we were stars at the beginning and we had taken up business from them.

We had faded up, so life became difficult for us since there was no food for us, sometimes we even slept on an empty stomach with completely nothing to feed on. Time came when we lost everything, our landlord confiscated our belongings because we had failed to pay rent for about four months, and he sent us away from his house. So we had to convince a friend to help us stay at her place for two weeks as we look for money to get ourselves a new apartments.

One day as I was washing outside the house, Nancy came screaming to me in excitement, telling me that she got a good gig for us, there was a very rich man who recruited people like us in his company and he was looking for more recruits, so Nancy convinced me that we should join the man, good enough he leaves in the city and we would be working in the city where no one knows us, there we would start over again, far away from all the trauma that we were going through back then. I quickly agreed to her suggestion and confirmed it was a great idea, so we had to look for money desperately, we even worked more hard to get enough money for our plan.

Two weeks later, we realised we had accumulated enough money to support us through our journey therefore we arranged everything we needed for the journey.

I felt so eager that night being my first time to travel to the city. I turned sleeplessly on my tiny bed having countless imaginations. I tried to figure out how life in the city looks like, I couldn't bring myself to imagine how life in a new place would treat me with no friends or relatives around, just me and my friend against the world. To me it was quite extra ordinary, it sounded very funny to me since I would have no friends around, meet different people with different ways of life. I turned several times in my bed trying to figure out how I brought myself in to this horrible kind of business. I couldn't imagine what life would have been for me if I had not taken this very path, sometimes I felt I was trembling a lot on this path, at times I felt worried for myself, sometimes I get confused and then I tell myself to take life the way it presented its self to me.

I still remember when I was five years old, I could tell everyone that I wanted to grow up to become a mid-wife, I was so determined about my dream that whenever I was asked what I wanted to be in future I could tell people with a lot of determination that I will become a mid-wife so I could welcome new born into the world. I didn't know how life channelled my dream from becoming a mid-wife to a prostitute, sometimes I feel cheated by life, but sometimes I feel it was a choice I made so I had to deal with my choice

My parents gave me the best life any other parent would give their children, I am a third born in a family of five, my parents used to love me more than any other child they had, I was quite a funny character who used to eat too much, cried often many times and hated my elder sister, because of reasons I personally can't even explain. My parents took me to a boarding school at the age of eight, by then I was in primary three, I was a very young intelligent girl who focused a lot in books than in childish games, I studied in quite good schools in the country, I was academically a very successful child. I sat my primary leaving examination from almost the best school by that time, and managed to attain a first grade.

Everything turned upside down when I joined secondary school, it was still moderate when I was for my first year in secondary school, but in my second year, things started happening in a way that I couldn't understand, I became extremely a stubborn young girl, I could involve myself in physical fights with my other colleagues, this got me suspended very many times, I became a very notorious young girl back then. when I reached senior three I became even worst, I joined a very bad group of girls, we would escape out of the school to go to the club, we spent most of our time in drinking alcohol and taking drugs, I got very wasted those days, I could even spend the money my parents gave me to pay my school fees in bars and expensive night club wears, I was living a life of a spoilt child, my concentration in academics became very low and my performance in class dropped, one time I was caught climbing the school fence so I got dismissed from school, I couldn't go back home because I couldn't face my parents and explain to them how I squandered my school fees so I decided to rent with some of my bad friends with whom I shared a group.

Means of survival became a problem to us since we all didn't work, and so we decided to resort to hanging out with rich men such that we get money for survival. We could frequently visit night clubs and seduce sugar daddies who gave us good money. Life didn't change much for us over the past years, our lives become so defined, we could feed on the money we get from sleeping around with men who were our father's age mates. We could change men as if we were changing clothes, we slept in all kind of lodges and became famous as we became the talk of the town, we drank alcohol and smoked cigarette and such became a lifestyle to us. We were trapped and caged into prostitution and we couldn't break free because we were desperate for a luxurious life.

As time passed by, I had friends coming in and out of my life because I was a girl who was very poor at keeping friendship. Nancy who became a valuable close friend joined me after my friend Faith had left because we had a misunderstanding over some random guy that faith

hard started falling for, yet it was against our rule to fall for any man, so she went hard on me.

With Nancy everything seemed to be good. We were very compatible and transparent with each other, we did things together and hustle together, we treated each other like more of sisters, we loved ourselves and looked after each other but when things failed for the both of us, we decided that we would relocate when the right time comes. Gulu town was already a very small town for us, and things were already in a bad shape, we thought we could get a better life far away from this small town.

This was the last night I was spending in Gulu town and all the memory came back to my mind fresh as if they had just happened the previous day, and now I can't wait to go to the city, a place that I have never been to the whole of my life. I slept very late that night because I couldn't help but revisit every event that life passed me through.

Night passed away and at dawn we had to wake up and prepare for the long journey we had ahead of us. everything was summarised for us as we had packed all our stuff, we showered one at a go, and we later organised ourselves and hurried up to the bus park, we took the first morning bus and set off at around 7:00 am, I slept the whole journey but I could wake up for about five minutes to check if we had reached, Nancy stayed awake the whole journey because she slept well the previous night, as for me I couldn't even sleep, by the time I started sleeping it was already morning and we had to leave, so I didn't have enough rest. It took us about eight hours to reach the city, on reaching the city, we ask the bus conductor to take us to Kamwokya stage such that we could board a taxi that would take us to Kamwokya.

On reaching Kamwokya, a young beautiful girl was already waiting to pick us up, she warmly welcomed us with a broad beautiful smile filled with life, and she introduced herself as Sanyu. Indeed, her smile was a real reflection of her name, and she smiled so beautifully. I

immediately handed over my small bag to Sanyu who asked us whether she could give us a helping hand.

we then walked past the filthy congested slums of Kamwokya, I had not seen such kind of a place my whole life, the place looked very dirty, with different kind of people, the people looked very weird to me, most of the men had swollen faces, red eyes and distorted figure, I started to think that this was the nature of people who lived in this area, even the women looked the same, most of the young girls looked older than their actual age. We passed several small bars positioned in corridors that are very dirty filled with faeces, then we move past a church that was closed. After moving for some times we met some group of boys who were drinking some local spirit, others where chewing some leaves. Then we passed by a restaurant that looked very dirty seated next to a sewage that had smelly running water. We walked for about an hour and I was already feeling tired, as we moved past some group of people who looked to be drinking some local brew, they all turned to look at us while whispering to each other, other men signal to us to stop but we ignored them and we kept moving in silence.

Minutes later Sanyu stopped at some dirty compound, I think it was the most dirty compound we had ever seen in that area, the house looked like those one built around Idi Amin's regime, it looked very old with cracks that looked like one of the narrow roads that lead to a stream in my village, the roof had turned from silver to a mixture of grey and brown with small holes all over it, the house bent as if it was falling down any second, the place was so quiet. On my mind I kept on wondering what kind of people would live in such a house in such a condition. A voice inside me asked me what if this was the house we are brought to live in, "God forbid" I cancelled it in another voice inside me, how could I live in such a house," I would rather go and live on the streets than in that kind of a house" commented the third voice.

Sanyu went right In front of the closed door of the dirty house, she dropped my bag down and went peeping through the small hole that was seated right at the window, she later came back to the door and knocked it three to four times but no one open the door. I stood helplessly looking at Nancy who looked back at me with a lot of confusion, we had no idea of what was happening so we stood there stiff and rigid as if we were waiting for instruction even to move a step forward.

After very many attempt, the door was opened at last and a view of a brown short girl surfaced to us, she looked tiny and old, her two red eyes covered with sleep rolled into its socket like that of a chameleon looking for which colour to change, she staggered back into the house followed immediately by Sanyu who shortly came back to ask the two of us in. we then followed Sanyu obediently. On entering the small house, my eyes landed on six girls lying on the floor deeply asleep except for the girl who opened for us the door. My eyes went on searching the house from corner to corner, the house was dense with toxic smell, with piles of dirty clothes seated at one corner of the house, a small container cover filled with remains of cigarette laid next to the piled dirty clothes, couples of dirty utensils was positioned next to the door, some pairs of dirty torn shoes peeped from under an old green paper bag, next to it was an old small table that had old tooth brushes on it.

Part of the floor had a map drawn out of dirty water that had dried up leaving the floor covered in total dirt; I sat at the edge of the only bed in the room while Nancy and Sanyu sat at one corner of the house on some dirty piece of cloth.

Sanyu cleared her voice and began to talk, “this is the place I was asked to bring you to and these are the girls with whom you are going to be working, I think the boss will come by 7:00mp to give you girls more instructions” as Sanyu said these words I felt even more confused, my heart became heavy and I was very disappointed in what I was seeing, the worst had happened, I couldn’t bring myself to believe that this was my new home, I mean

how would I live in such a house and area, I started looking within my options but it looked like I had no other options left for me and Nancy except to lower our pride and settle for less after all Gulu town was never an option now. Sanyu then went ahead to show us around the place and told us that the girls would be up by 7:00pm as they will have to get ready for work, she even assured us that the boss might ask us to start off with work right away.

One hour later the boss arrived and gave us some briefing and orientation, he as well gave us terms and condition of the job, we were to hand in 50% of our daily earning while super and rent is provided by the boss, he also asked us to start work right away that very night. He summoned the rest of the girls and informed them of the new recruits and asked them to be kind to us, he also asked them to be free with us and show us whatever we did not know.

We started work right away that night. The men in the night club were throwing their selves at us like rain drops falling harshly on the ground surface, we looked new in the area and most of the men wanted us. We got some good business that night and manage to come back home in the morning with some good amount of money. Work was promising since we could at least manage to get clients who could give us good amount of money.

After two weeks we got used to our new home, we managed to grab some few friends around the slum area, we became more wasted day in and day out, my friend Nancy and I could spend most of our time drinking in the small bars around the place, we mixed up quite a lot with the slum young boys who could buy us the local spirit that was sold around. Sometimes we would go and drink from one of the cinema hall that was not so far from where we stayed, from there we could give some bad rubs to the attendant who in turn let us in for free and gave us cigarette that we smoked the all-time while in the cinema hall.

I was growing thin every day; my cavy figure had turned in to a stick like shape. Sometimes I thought it was the hunger I went through and much alcohol I took since I could not go a day without taking alcohol, we would drink from morning to sunset, we were never sober in our

life, we hunted for men from whom we could fetch money in exchange for sex. As time went by men started losing interest in us, this was so frustrating to us and made our business gain a bad shape. Sometimes our boss could get at cross with us claiming that we are failing to work hard, he could then resort to denying us food staffs since he said that we were not performing our duty to the fullest, this brought a lot of hunger as we had completely nothing to eat and we also had no money since business wasn't going on well.

It was a very cold morning that day, the room was quiet and dense, the sun outside was dull as Nancy laid on one of the hospital bed fighting for her life, she had been lying on the same bed for over one and half years now, the doctors had given in their best but my friend exhibited no signs of getting better. She laid helplessly on the bed, with her tiny body covering a quarter of the bed, her bones sprang out as if they were coming out any second, her hair had turned grey and spaced like that of a cat which had fallen into hot water, she moved her eyes slowly to look at me with tears rolling down her cheeks, she moved her very tinny hands slowly and turned to face me, her face was all bony with muscles running all over her face like a cobweb, her eyes sunk deep into her skinny head, her eyes were as red as blood. She then whispered something I didn't even understand.

I passed her a glass of juice to drink, she tried drinking it but failed, she didn't even have the energy to open her mouth. I served some meat soup in a bowl, picked up a spoon, lifted up Nancy to sit upright letting her head land on me, I pulled her a little on my laps and supported her skinny head with my arm like that of a mother breast feeding her child. I then used the spoon to scoop soup from the bowl and then put it in her mouth. I manage to feed her two to three spoons of soup but as I fed her the forth spoon, she cling the spoon in between her teeth. She became very cold and stiff with her eyes fixed on me, she immediately stopped breathing, her heart skipped and stopped pounding, her mouth spread open, and my friend breathe her last at the comfort of my hands, I knew for sure she was relieved from all the pain

and suffering that she had gone through. My heart was at peace since I knew I was following her soon because we suffered from the same virus just that my time had not yet come.

After Nancy's burial something in me changed, I became a born-again Christian, I prayed and cried to God every day and night to forgive me for all the sins that I had committed, I joined charity work and we moved in villages caring for the poor and the needy. I started preaching the word of God and I became a living testimony to the girls and women in my society, from then I knew God had saved my life for a reason and I thanked him very second of my life. I got relieved knowing that my friend Nancy was happy with me wherever she was.. That's how I changed my name from Daphne to Destiny because God knows everyone's destiny in life

AFRICAN BEAUTY

Walking through the thick

grass thatched houses of my two mothers.

Yellow beads dangling east in controversy to the west

rounds up a folded... ring... laid... thick long dark neck

like that of an ostrich swinging in the air,

to catch the fresh brand breath so rare

with *kigoyi* wrapped round my bulging hips

folded just into rings of *Merinda*

like that of a proud traditional herbalist.

sunshine reflecting green beads just reluctantly loosen above

my tiny string bee liked waste

ready to twinkle... in the courtship mid night dance

when the sun ...sets to ...rest.

my breast standing sharp pointedly firm below my chin

accompanied by the sense of womanhood

from the destruction of my creepy attire

to meet you my African king

eager to showcase my waist break.

dangling with beads in a flash of moon light

dedicating my Africanity at the arena of your comfort

my beauty beats the men of my twelve clans

and you Ocwinyo.... the king I chose

among the twelve clans of Acholi... land.

to worship in my mother's hut

performing ritual of the heart

betroth to an African eloquent beauty

maidenhead in the sixth village of virgin booty

DEAR SEX

Dear sex

what a pleasure to dine with you
on the same table, you in me, me in you
your parachute drives me into paradise
mounting a thousand hills of pleasure

Manipulating my senses into sweet directions
keeping me put, warm and tired
performing a job of zero pain
keeping me intimate inside and out

Body to body we pray on your temple
skin to skin two becomes one
lips to lips we exchange privacy
warmth to warmth we keep the whole night

Your power drives me to the world of unconsciousness
your hands gives me rubs of the soul
your fingertips types my body into craving for your nudity
you drive me crazy, you obsesses me
you warm me cool, you take me places

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

SPIRITUAL REALM

In the presence of the spirit

I knelt, covered in guilt.

trembling in the holy box,

thumb to thumb my hands kissed

feeling the drop of sweat through them

My eyes shut with pain

roaming in its socket with flood of tears,

the weight of sins heavy on my knees

my soul tired and weary

My heart filled with remorse

beating with echo in my chest

strength draining at every breath I took

at this moment my sins felt heavier than my faith

weakness over flow both in my body and soul

For the I know that if I repent, my sins shall be forgiven

if I come to the lord my burdens shall be washed away

for the forgiveness of Christ is my chain breaker

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

PENIS

With eighty eight muscles you rock
ready to expand fourteen feet deep
elasticity with a speed of light
driving the mind eighty four kilometres per hour
with a smooth soft and hard board

You rock in different sizes
some tall, some short
some big and some small
some thin and some fat

Your extra weight is body healing
standing up hard and strong
with muscles running across from every direction
like a cobweb positioned at the corner of my hut

Ready to dive into the sweet promised land
coming out wet and slippery
your unlevelled muscle body sets for you
the gravity that holds you tight back in

Your strength keeps you going
oh, the sweet pain that you bring into a woman's soul
I admire your strength dear penis

MY FATHER'S *BILLA*

My father's *billa* sounds

just like the song of *atir tir* bird

he plays it with passion.

my father's *billa* sounds like the footsteps

of the *Abili* on the tall *abiya* grasses

The *billa* sounds like leaves clashing in Mabira forest

the sound of his *billa* is a treat to my soul

the music that sets the little grinding stone in my hands moving

the engine that gives strength to my mother's *kabir* flour

The motivation that keeps

my neck dancing in sure enjoyment

it sounds like the chanting of the *ajoka* across the road

its pitch is as high as the queens thrown

its volume as slender and tender like that of my mother

When my father plays his *billa*

right at the back of my mother's hut,

its melody feels my heart

with a calculated beat

moving in the heart.

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

MOTHERS HUT

When I smear my mother's hut
with the darkest
cow dang in the whole village
the maiden heads of my village
thinks I use magic

When I smear my mother's hut
with the hottest cow dang of the whole village
you might think I used a spell to make
the zig zag lines on the walls

When I smear my mother's hut
with the smoothest cow dang in kraal
you might think I used cement
yet it's a talent I inherited from my mother

When I smear my mother's hut,
with the most attractive cow dung in the whole village,
you might think I used rituals
yet it's the love I have for my mother's hut

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

WESTERN MADNESS

They say we are primitive
countrymen, we are ancient
a tradition of barbaric fella
they say we are barbarian
yet we strive day in and out

To keep matters of the tradition
at heart
the only true tradition
that desist transition
to western civilisation
that seeks self-cognition
of its cultural fashion

I'm tired of pretending
to live a second hand life
a life that bonds me to colonialism
initiating me to alien tradition

I withdraw my application
for the admission to western madness
in the delusion of this generation
I put in my signature to the judicature
To cut off all strings to westernisation
because their culture, values, norm's etcetera
is extracurricular to my wellbeing
even the education they preach is draining

I love the education of my fore fathers
because I will not need to read
and cram theories to pin me intelligent.
Even the Christianity they preach
Is a total destruction to my health
I do not need to strain my eyes
to read fruits that sweetens my soul
for my soul has been purified at initiation
I resign from that bought culture
I dig back to my great grandfathers
where my blood thickly belongs

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

POLITICAL SERVICE

deceit taste sweeter

to the leaders and keepers,

the power drunkards

so much merged into

falsification and lies

a life filled with destruction,

greed and exploitation

served with luxury and opulence

draining this country for the worst

even the iron sheets to keep

the poor man warm has been

plucked off by their

extravagancy and profligacy

because they are the keepers of

niceties

their fangs are kept sharp

and alert, to sting

deep into the poor man's business

to drain every little blood left

they say leaders are keepers,

they say leaders are feeders

but my country breeds man eaters

who have turned into traitors

preaching matters they do not practice

CRY OF MY LAND

Who will stop the dramatic trauma
in the northern region of this country
the cry is too loud for the deaf man's ears
the cattle raiders are unstoppable

Killing innocent souls for their possessions
the wailing is deep in my land
the cows, our only hope for the future
long gone, the pain is heavier
on our chest than in our hearts

We are sitting on a ticking bomb
every other days of our lives
the raiders are angry for both blood
we live in fear and terror

Will my blood be the next
to warm the desperate soil?

I am more curious than patient
our children's future is being robbed off
our lives are being taken away

The Karamojong, well-armed
fierce, heartless and ruthless,
angry for the wealth
they did not work for
ready to gun down my fathers

destroying any obstacle standing
between him and his adopted wealth.
my land bleeds with innocent blood
flooding to swallow up the land
My homestead is quiet and silent
my people are being speared down
my fathers are being killed
my home completely destroyed
My wealth has been robbed
my future shattered
the Karamojong cattle raiders
destroyed my wealth, health and land

Acayo Deborah (Uganda)

DEMOCRATIC AFFAIRS

You said my voice matters.

but you tied my mouth

you shut my breath

and suffocated me

with toxic substances

You drained my energy,

held my hands at my back

and chained me.

I can hardly move.

You said I am entitled to freedom,

liberty of speech and expression

freedom to democratic affairs...

you said I was free.....

But when I blink you send me behind bars.

Article three thousand thirty..... I don't remember

"disturbing the peace of this country".

When I relax a bit,

you say I am trespassing.

A crime of life imprisonment by law

you said I am free to vote

but you kidnap me during rallies

because I make too much noise

that contaminates political wind
and therefore distract political peace.
you said this is my, and your country
you said that we have equal rights as citizens

But your rights are of political importance
above my physical existence
to serve political affair, on luxurious tables
this makes the two of us

Acayo Deborah

MATTERS OF MY LAND

I am tired of speaking in parables

I am tired of talking in the dark

I am tired of sitting on my boil

I want to speak in simple phrase

Am tired of speaking in slangs and jargons

I want to speak and I want to speak plainly

about the insecurity of my land

that has been ignored for years

by the country that serves peace

and equality to all it citizens,

is my home land out of this country?

is my land out of your leadership?

Do people of my land lack human characteristics?

why do you keep quiet to us

when we cry for your help.

the Karamojong are killing us daily

Yet you are deadly mute about our matters

is it because my people are not your people?

now that you desert my land

and care about only yours

Let me speak plainly

because you might be triggered to listen.

my homeland is bleeding

with innocent blood

And yet it's none of your concern
is it because my people are alien to you?
why are you silent?
yet when your grandson coughs
Or sneezes, the tax payer's money
suffers the accounts for it
the tax that includes my own
but the cry of my land is noise
to your ears

Acayo Deborah

OUR COUNTRY PRAYER

Our country, who art in quagmire
hallowed be thy peace
thy your serenity reign
thy will be done on our land
as its in other countries
pay us this day our daily hustle
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive the leaders
who trespass against us
lead us not into corruption
but deliver us from the hands of the corrupt ones
expose and send them behind bars
as you exposed the iron sheet thieves. Amen

Acayo Deborah

SPIRITUAL SHIELD

Holding so tightly to religious dogma

a thing that bonds me to faith

no matter how hard I fall

I shall hold firmly the book of faith

I shall walk down the bridges of life

because I hold the shield at heart

hunted down from generation to generation.

I shall read with eyes closed

I will question no lines

because religion wrote it with sanity

packaged all loose ends of my faith

made it sacred and divine

Dag up a clear path for me

that I shall trek in all the days of my life

to shape my spiritual line

and put me on the path of righteousness

Acayo Deborah

WRECK SOUL

Trembling in your presence
as I assemble my faith at your temple
hesitant because my spirit is weak
and my soul less pure
to visit your presence

I know I am not pure enough
yet your holiness strikes me
like lightening upon the mountain.
my soul is terrified and
restlessly, seeking your divine mercy
only available in your divine integrity

For in your mercy I seek to drown
oh, Lord
decline me not master
but scratch off the stain on my weak soul

Acayo Deborah

BUILDING RELIGION

Today I did my part

in building religion

I drove a church chaplain

to a charity organisation

which looks like an orphanage

The haste reflected its Urgency

Bars of soap to help keep dirt away

then sacks of rice to keep the orphans full for a day

couples of clothes to keep them warm

sanitary pads to give the girls comfort

then some sexy smiles to keep the nuns interested

I drove the chaplain back

he dozed off back of the car the whole journey

then in between dreams, he suddenly asked

did you have enough sleep brother in faith?

I laughed faintly at the back of my hand

and suddenly smiled at his guilt

and then I replied to him that I had not

because I was praying.

my brother in faith, I too had none

I attended to matters of religion you know

I animated an overnight mass for the sisters

highly religious spiritual duties you know

and bother, it goes against my grain

cause my eyes hurts now

Ah, he continued dozing off

the pain we suffer in building religion

So the church chaplain had

eye ache too

my eyes ache I think are equally painful

only they are caused by sleepless night

waiting for my master

not adulterous feast.

So two religion builders

arrived at the rectory this morning

with terrible eye ache

the result of building religion

different ways

SINFUL HEART

My heart is as cold as my sins
my feet frozen in the worlds doom
my burden swept off my faith
scrambling to belong in the world's face

Fighting forces my head claims
my soul tired and weary
my spirit thirsty for Gods mercy
my feet searches peace

On the rocky path of thorns
I cry with my heart
lonely on mount Calvary
with my eyes fixed on you crucified art

To intercede for me in the Lords paradise
where judgment shall be my pillar
and you creator, my hearer
bond me O lord to divine mercy

Acayo Deborah

NATION AFFAIRS

Many things vague my blood

we are men and citizens

carrying the same blood that

flows in our veins

In them... in us..... in we

in you... in me and in all

we cried for peace but war was served

we cried for democracy but

tyranny was served

We cried for expression

suppression was served

we cried for equality

but nepotism was served

we cried for health facilities

They built luxurious homes

for their families

sent their children overseas

and ruled over us

Cause their leadership is so toxic

for their own sons.

we are drained in poverty

yet they serve themselves with wealth and comfort.

Acayo Deborah

MY GRANDMOTHER'S KITCHEN

When in my grandmother's kitchen

I feel at home

when she balances a calabash

filled with a mixture of sim sim

and white aunts paste

on her only *chel*

Swinging side by side

above my head

I feel at peace

the aroma of her mixture carries

me to places I can't imagine

When I am in my grandmother's kitchen

the aroma of her *lapena aleya* is appetite healing

to my inner soul.

the way she balances a pot of *lapena*

on a three stone firewood side at the corner of her hut

with bright burning flames

makes the enzyme of my stomach

bite harder

Acayo Deborah

POLITICAL FIGURE

That permanent secretary

fat like a cat that feeds under

a king's table

with bulging belly like a pregnant

woman in labour pain

Speaking so eloquently to his prey

the innocent victims of his greed

bossing around in a hesitating manner

as if not sure of whether to take

The next step or not

moving around to show the whole world

his influence and power

that he has it all, money and wealth

Twisting his waist left and right

like a prostitute in Buganda

pub in northern Uganda

waiting for her next victim

Acayo Deborah

LIFE IS SHORT

Life seems long but short

as short as a petty coat

beneath the thigh

as brief as a g string nicker

in between the two swollen balloons

of the anus

Sometimes comfortable

for the job but tiresome

honour every little beat of life

smile at any chance that it tables

Life is beautiful

life is sweet

life is fun

life is pain

life is short

enjoy every beat of life

PART III: A NOTE ON MY STYLE

IMAGERY

images in poetry refers to the use of language to evoke sensory experiences, it is the use of language to paint mental images at the back of a reader's mind. They use descriptive language characterised by feelings and memories. Imagery is specifically the use of vivid or figurative language to represent ideas, objects, or actions. Imagery is one of the devices I have dominantly deployed in my work through vivid description and figurative language to bring out a clear painting of the images that I have used to comprehend my message, the following are the types of images I have used in my work

Visual imagery

visual images is the use of language to paint mental images that can be seen for example, colours and shapes, I have been able to deploy visual images dominantly in my work for example in the poem "African beauty" I have use descriptive language to bring out vividly the picture of a village setting, in the first stanza, we are able to see vividly the speaker walk through the grass thatched houses in her village, the outfit she wears is also vividly described to the reader. After reading this poem we are able to paint a picture of a dark African beautiful girl with yellow beads around her long neck, from the image drawn in the reader's mind we are also able to observe that this African beauty has got a bulging hips. Images in this case helps to bring out the Acoli culture and tradition.

Vivid imagery is also used in the poem "political figure" where the figure of the politician is vividly described to the reader for example in the first stanza "with bulging belly like a pregnant woman in labour pain", this paints clearly a picture of a man having a big stomach, and therefore imagery in this case helps to describe the state of the people in power as people who live a luxurious and a corrupt life, images in this case also help to represent power.

Auditory imagery

Auditory imagery is the use of language to describe sounds such as rustling of the leaves or the chirping of birds. I have also often been able to use auditory images in my work through the use of poetic language and vivid description for example in the poem “my father’s *billa*” I have dominantly deployed the use of auditory images for example in the first stanza “My father’s *billa* sounds just like *atir tir* bird’s song, *atir tir* is an Acoli name given to some traditional bird that is very small in size with small beak but it makes a very loud sound, it is a very noisy bird that is always singing, there for the speaker describe her father’s sound of *billa* to that bird, *billa* is a small instrument that is common among the Acoli people, its normally blown by men more especially in times of joy and happiness. In the first stanza the speaker is able to capture the readers mind in the sound of her father’s *billa* as well as the sound of the *atir tir* bird. Auditory imagery in this case brings out melody, peace and love, it also brings out the culture and tradition of the Acoli people. Auditory image also helps to praise tradition and creates a sense of belonging to the speaker.

Olfactory imagery

olfactory imagery is the use of language to describe smell such as the scent of flowers or the aroma of food among others, I have also been able to deploy the use of olfactory imagery in my work for example in the poem “My grandmother’s kitchen” I used language to describe smell such that when the reader is reading the poem he or she can smell what’s described in the poem through the power of language for example in the first and second stanza which reads “when she balances a calabash filled with a mixture of sim sim and white aunts.....I feel at peace. The aroma of her mixture carries me to places..... The aroma of her *lapena aleya* is appetite healing” when we read this lines, we are able to smell of sim sim paste mixed with white aunts paste, a mixture that is very common with the grandmother in Acoli land including mine, we are also able to smell *lapena aleya*, this is a

type of traditional food that is very common among the Acoli people. Therefore Olfactory imagery in this case brings out the nature of Acoli kitchen and the local food of the Acoli people, this then helps to promote the Acoli culture and tradition.

I have also deployed Olfactory imagery in my short story “Destitution” for example the speaker describes the environment of Kamwokya as dirty, filthy and smelly, she uses language to describe the smelly running water in the sewage, after reading this part the bad smell of the sewage water comes into contact with the readers nose. When in their new home in Kamwokya, the speaker also describes the state of the room they are supposed to be living in, she say that the room was so dirty and smelly, with pile of dirty clothes in one corner and remains of cigarette in a container cover, this brings to the reader a sense of smell. Olfactory imagery in this case emphasises the state of people living in Kamwokya slum as people with poor hygiene and also brings clearly the theme of destitution in the story.

Tactile imagery

this is the use of language to describe touch for example the feeling of sand between ones toes of the softness of a feathers, through the use of language and vivid description, I was able to achieve tactile imagery effectively for example in the poem “Mother’s hut” the speaker uses cow dang to smear her mother’s hut. The action of smearing the hut with cow dang involves touch. For example in the third stanza the speaker says “when I smear my mother’s hut with the smoothest cow dang in the whole village, you might think I used cement” after reading this line, the speaker is able to feel the texture of the cow dang as smooth. Tactile imagery in this state help to bring out the stage of adolescent since the speaker is in her adolescent stage who involves herself in competitions of this stage, that is to say competitions like who smears their mother’s hut better, this imagery also help to bring out the theme of tradition and culture.

Tactile imagery is also used in the poem “Sinful heart” for example in the eighth and ninth line which reads “my feet searches peace on the rocky path of thorn” after reading this the reader is able to feel the texture of a rocky path of thorns, tactile imagery in this case brings out the consequences of sins and the need for one to self-evaluate and repent for the forgiveness of their sins, the writer is able to achieve tactile imagery through the use of vivid description.

In conclusion, imagery is a very powerful device in creative writing as it sets the reader face to face with the events that the author creates to communicate his or her message. Therefore by using the above different types of imagery I have been able to create a rich and multi-dimensional experience for the readers of my work.

Irony

irony is a device that uses words to convey a meaning that is opposite to their literal meaning, therefore irony can occur in literature whenever a person says something or does something that departs from what we expect them to say or do. by the use of literary language, I have been able to effectively use irony in my work for example;

In the poem “building religion” which is a parody of the poem building the nation by Henry Barlow states out the irony that exist in religion, religious leaders are expected to live a respectful life free from sexual acts yet it’s the opposite of what the chaplain in the poem building religion does, he involves himself in a sexual relationship with the nuns. Instead of going to lead prayers in the orphanage, the chaplain spends the whole night in sexual activities with the sisters. This is a very common activities that goes on in reality, very many religious leaders today involve themselves in sexual relationship among themselves and also commits adultery with married people, irony in this case helps to expose the religious leaders and also brings to light religious hypocrisy that exist today.

Irony is also deployed in the poem “democratic affairs” the title its self is ironical to the subject matter of the poem, when we read the poem we expect to meet democracy in the poem yet the poem presents to us dictatorship, in the first stanza of the poem, the speaker complains that the leaders say that his voice matters but they shut his breathe and suffocate him with toxic substances, they say the speaker’s is free to vote but during rallies they kidnap the speaker. This is all contradicting, the speaker is supposed to be free since the leaders says that he is free and yet in actual sense the speaker is kidnapped and robed off his rights as a citizen, this shows lack of democracy therefore irony in this case brings out political hypocrisy. It also brings out the state of the public in contributing to democracy, they are denied very many rights including rights to vote, right to speak among others.

Irony is also brought clearly by the use of language, for example in the poem “political service”, leaders are supposed to be selfless and exemplary to their subjects but instead in the poem leaders are presented as greedy and extravagant. The iron sheet that have been given to the poor people to provide them comfort have instead been plucked off by the leader, yet they have everything, they live luxurious and expensive life, they are the ones who are expected to be providing for the poor but they instead take away from the poor. They are greedy to the point that they even steal the little that the poor people get, this is ironical. Irony in this case brings out the extravagancy of the leaders and also helps to expose the leaders by bringing out the political hypocrisy that exist among the leaders.

Personification

personification is literary devices that gives human qualities to a non-human being like object or animal, personification therefore gives a writer the power to assign human characteristics to a non-human character. I have therefore used language to describe non-human looks, actions and purposes with language that is reserved for human character, for example;

In the poem “Spiritual realm” I have deployed personification by giving to the thumb a part of human being that does not qualify to become a human being, for example in the first stanza, “thumb to thumb my hands kissed” kissing is a human attribute, we do not expect the thumb to kiss because they do not have lips, this therefore makes the thumb personified. Personification is brought out effectively by using words to give the thumb human character. Personification in this case therefore helps bring out the weight of sin on human being and the need to seek God’s forgiveness.

Personification is also used in the poem “Western possession” for example in the fourth stanza the speaker says “I withdraw my application for the admission to western madness”, westernisation is given a human character of madness, we only expect human beings to have the attribute of madness, therefore personification in this case brings out the theme of westernisation and culture it therefore present cultural clashes with western ideas.

Repetition

repetition is a literary device that involves using the same word or phrase over and over again in a piece of writing; I have been able to use repetition by reaping words severally in a single peace. There is a dominant use of repetition in my work; the following are instances where I used repetition in my work;

Repetition is use actively in the poem “western possession” for example there is the repetition of the word “I” which points out the first person point of view, first person point of view helps the readers to get a first hand information because the information in this case is direct from the source therefore brings in the flow of ideas

Repletion is also used in the poem “democratic affairs when the speaker repeats the phrase “you said” for example from the poem the phrase “you said my voice matters”, “you said I am entitled to freedom”. This helps to bring out the status of the speaker as the one who is

oppressed and also brings out the character trait of the person the speaker is addressing as one who is oppressive, repetition in this case also helps to create emphasis.

Repetition is also used in the poem "Matters of my land", the phrase "I am tired" and "I want to speak" is quite often used in the poem, the speaker says "I am tired of speaking in parables, I am tired of sitting on my boil" this shows the speaker's state of mind as one who is tired of the political injustices that she is faced with about her land, she decides to speak up her mind and tell the authority that she is tired of sitting on her burning issues, the use of repetition in this case helps to expose the incompetency that exists in the government who have failed to bring peace on the land in question, repetition also helps to emphasize the condition of the **people living in this land**

Repetition is also used in the poem "Cry of my land" where the phrase like "my" is often repeated more especially in the last stanza for example, "my homestead is quiet", "My people are being speared down", "My fathers are being killed", "My home completely destroyed", "My wealth has been robbed off". These words are repeated very many times in order to show the state of the speaker and the state of the community the speaker is leaving in, it also helps to expose the leaders as incompetent.

Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question is a question asked to make a point rather than get an answer, it is the type of question that requires no answer through the use of rhetorical devices and language I have been able to use rhetorical question effectively to communicate my message to the reader of my work. Example include;

In the poem "cry of my land" I have effectively used rhetorical question for example in the fourth stanza "will my blood be the next to warm the desperate soil?", this sets the reader of this poem questioning themselves about the condition of the people of that particular land, it also brings out the insecurity of the people living in such area. Rhetorical question in this

case also brings out the nature of the government as incompetent since it cannot solve the problem of the people who are being killed every day.

Rhetorical question is also dominantly used in the poem “Matters of my land”, for example in the third stanza the speaker says, “Is my homeland out of this country?”, “Are my people inhuman?”, “Why do you keep quiet on us?” this brings out clearly the speakers state and also sets the readers critically thinking about the conditions that the speaker and her people live in.

Rhetorical question is also deployed in the short story “Destitution” when Daphne says to the readers “how did I even get myself in this business?” this sets the readers critically thinking about what could have led the young girl in such business, it also makes the readers of the short story sympathise with Daphne who ended up in such kind of the business where she is exposed to a lot of danger like HIV AIDs and sexually transmitted diseases, rhetorical question in this case also helps motivate and persuade readers into reading the story to find out what transpires or what happens next.