

The 'Abiku-Soul' Regurgitation in Cyprian Ekwensi's *Iska* Narrative

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Abstract

Cyprian Ekwensi's *Iska* is implanted with significant layers of symbolism which engender an elevated estimation of his craft within Nigerian/African literature. It is quite symbolic that the protagonist, Filia Enu who is invested with Ogbanje, obtains a more positive portraiture of sexism and a determined feminist patronage than was achieved in his earlier novels with the protagonists in *Jagua Nana* and *Jagua Nana's Daughter*. It is even more symbolic that the author rejuvenates the Ogbanje/Abiku myth in a satirized re-creation of the socio-political conflicts in the Nigerian geographical space. In this emblematic re-enactment of mythology, Ekwensi certifies the potentials of the oral tradition with its capacity to yield meaning and identity to contemporary events. The *Iska* narrative is not only deemed to regurgitate certain paradoxical submissions at the cradle of modern African literature, it also mediates the ensuing conflicts which tended more towards invalidating the significance of magical realism employed by the early African writers. It is within such episteme that this discourse interrogates how regions in the Nigerian society, as locale are involved as worlds whose spatial (re)presentation instigates shades of philosophies on the Abiku reality.

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