

Book report

[Parts of the World, Africa](#)



The name of the book I choose to analyse for this book report is Nativity. It was written by Lasana M. Sekou and published by House Of Nehest Publishers in the year 2010. The ISBN of the book is 9780913441978 and the soft cover edition of the book cost \$140. 00TTD. The English version of the poem has nine chapters (9) and consist of forty-one (41) pages. The main characters discussed in the poem were the enslaved Africans. The setting of the poem takes place in several different locations such as the Caribbean which is referred to as the New World and Africa. It also includes the journey from Africa to the Caribbean, which is known as the Middle Passage. However, the geographical focus is based on the Caribbean. The poem is based on past events, however, the writer Lasana Sekou gives a present day analysis of this past event. I found this book quite thought-provoking because I have a great interest in learning about African cullture, which is a major part of our Caribbean culture. At first I found the book difficult to apprehend, however after careful evaluation and analysis of it, I found it gratifying. It gives us a comprehensive and heartfelt view of how African culture was created and re-invented through the slavery system. Slavery was a fundamental part of African history therefore it is integrated within African culture . Furthermore, topics discussed in class also supported my knowledge of the concept of nativity. Learning topics such as African Chattel Slavery, Creolisation and Syncretism enhanced by understanding of the topic discussed in the book. “ Nativity refers to the occasion of someone`s birth. ” One of the most popular nativity is the nativity of Jesus Christ, which refers to the accounts of the birth of Jesus. In the poem, nativity here pronounces the birth of African culture. It rationalizes how African culture as we know it

today, was created or in this case how it became what it is today. In the poem the writer recreates the concept of becoming a new nation as well as a new Black love. He desires that black people can love themselves. During the slavery era, black people were seen as ugly and inferior when compared to whites, the writer reimagines that these insignificant discrepancies would be forgotten so that black people can move on and live a life of love for each other. A simple definition of culture “ is the way of life of a people. ”

Therefore, African culture incorporated everything the Africans went through during the slavery era. Hence, “ culture is work, culture is born here, culture is marronage, culture is borning change, culture is solidarity and culture is all over”. All the parts mentioned earlier are related to African culture in some way. ‘ Culture is work’, in my view this statement is more profound than it appears to the average reader. Working on plantation fields was part of the culture of African slaves. The core principle of slavery was to create wealth for the plantation owners. Therefore, Africans toiled on plantation lands, their sweat, blood and tears went into producing wealth for European nations, while their country and economy remained underdeveloped. Plantation work becomes a culture for African slaves because some slaves were born into slavery, which was the only thing they knew at the time. Slaves on the plantation had one imperative, which was to survive. They were socialized into slavery, therefore slavery and plantation work became their way of life, thus becoming their culture. ‘ Culture is marronage.’ Marronage plays a major part in African culture. It was one of the most popular forms of non-violent resistance used by slaves. Maroons referred to runaway slaves from the plantations who retreated to the mountain tops and forests to form

independent settlement. In the article he stated, “ meh culture killing meh like this” , which referred to the demanding work that was performed by the Africans on the plantations. Plantation work had become part of their culture, thus their culture was killing them. This further led them to rebel, hence the origin of marronage. The poem indicated, “ we coming together” As stated in the poem, the first victories for the maroons, were in Suriname Boucoo, Brazil Palmares, St. Vincent, Jamaica Nanny, Haiti, Cuba and Grenada. However, before these victories were achieved there were rebellions that lead up to it. For example Morant Bay rebellion in 1865, the rebellion was headed by Paul Bogle, he led 200-300 black men and women into the town of Morant Bay in the parish of St. Thomas in the East, Jamaica. However, militia took control of the town and the rebellion did not end very successful for the Africans. This is a very clear example of unity among the Africans which the poet is calling for. An example in the poem that emphasizes this point is, “ pan people are nation, the world pan against apartheid. ” It suggest that African people should form a new love for one another and unite against any system that is trying to keep them oppressed. “ We is the buzz of bulter organizing workers in the fields” . A pun is used, when the poet stated the name of trade union leader Uriah ‘ Buzz’ Bulter in the above statement. Also, in this statement the poet is comparing the rebellion of African slaves to that of Uriah Bulter fighting for the rights of oilfield workers. Another point that stood out to me while reading the poem was the fact that “ culture is self. ” This gives the reader an idea of how Africans created their own culture through their self determination, self realization and self-actualisation. When Africans arrived in the Caribbean to work on sugarcane

plantations they were deprived of practicing their culture. Europeans imposed their culture onto the Africans and Africans were severely punished if they were found practicing their own culture. However, Africans still managed to keep part of their culture and incorporate it into European culture. This process is known as syncretism. Syncretism also allowed Africans to keep their identity with them. In the poem the writer, elaborated that Africans mostly African women should engage in the act of self love which is loving the “ I-Self . ” In conclusion, I think that I received more than my money`s worth. I say this because I really appreciated the contribution that the writer made to African history. The writer professed a profound side of African culture that many people may not know or may tend to overlook. I value the fact that the writer gives us this understanding of African culture.

----- [1]. En. wikipedia. org/wiki/Nativity_of_Jesus
[2]. Jennifer Mohammad, Cape Caribbean Studies, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2007, pg 43. [3]. Lasana M. Sekou, Nativity, House Of Nehest Publishers, 2010, pg 4. [4]. Lasana M. Sekou, Nativity, House Of Nehest Publishers, 2010, pg 4 [5]. Lasana M. Sekou, Nativity, House Of Nehest Publishers, 2010, pg 6 [6]. Lasana M. Sekou, Nativity, House Of Nehest Publishers, 2010, pg 5