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When the “Microphone” Poet Speaks: Hiplife Rapper’s Construction of Reality

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Abstract:

The expression “the youth of today” in Ghana is gradually beginning to have meanings other than a group of people belonging to a generation. The youth in Ghana is now believed to be notorious for being a generation that is irresponsible in their cultural expression. This paper argues that this notion of being irresponsible in their cultural expression, especially the manner in which it expresses its worldview, attributed to it by the old generation, is a mistake. The paper uses the example of a music video, “the Crusade”, by Donzy and Kofi Kinata to demonstrate that the youth, unknown to many members of the old generation, have a very complex way of expressing and constructing reality. This study draws on the Performance Theory and uses semiotics and discourse analysis to show how the hierarchy in the divine chain of being and discrepancies within the same binary system are used to frame meaning. These framing of meanings make it very clear how certain pastors have turned themselves into pastorpreneurs, using the word of God to enrich themselves. In this hidden transcript approach, the youth may not openly criticise these pastors but they use music as a platform for such an attack.

1. Introduction

There is indeed a thin line between the fantasy and the reality in cultural expression. This thin line finds expression in the relationship between entertainment and social reality (Fearing, 1972). What we call entertainment is a reflection of a social reality. Indeed, contrary to what most of us believe that entertainment is just fantasy, a “dream factory”, as Hollywood is described (Katz and Foulkes, 1962), a withdrawal into private communion with the picture tube and private life of fantasy” (Schram et al, 1961), some also believe that entertainment or “fantasy” is directly related to reality. Fantasy or entertainment is considered to be an intertext with the social reality (Riffaterre, 1984: 142) and the relationship is so close that without social reality, there cannot be the fantasy or entertainment. The question therefore is: is the work of the artist a mere fantasy or a reality? This is an age-old debate and we can start this conversation by referring to Plato, who in memorable history started theorizing the relationship between fantasy and reality.

Plato closely examines the relationship between the two, using the work of the artist as the intermediary and he concludes that the artist’s work is nothing but a work of fantasy and seriously lacks reality (Buchanan, 1976: 674). To him, the “imitator or the maker of images knows nothing of true existence; he knows appearances only” (Buchanan, 1976: 667). In other words, the work of the artist has nothing to do with reality; it is purely a fake representation of reality. As expected of him, the father of Western logic will never go without providing the logic behind his reasoning. Plato sees the truth in reality nothing less than a scientific process that should present facts; experimental, verifiable and empirical. He argues that if you are not a carpenter armed with what goes into making a bed, you are not qualified to copy it in any form. Your copy is only ersatz (Buchanan, 1976: 661). And what does the artist do apart from copying? He thus dismisses the poet on the following grounds. One: the poet “is a manufacturer of images and is very far removed from the truth” (Buchanan, 1976: 674). Two: The poet stirs up emotions that make us weak (Buchanan, 1976: 674). Three: The poet creates anger and lusts and makes jests that make him look morally inferior. In *Republic X*, Plato wastes no time dismissing the poet as being egregious for using fantasy as a crucible for constructing reality. To Plato, therefore, fantasy is fantasy and reality is reality and the two do not share any common grounds to be put together under any circumstances; art is too superficial to be accorded such epistemic status. Indeed, David Hume sees poets as liars as well (Clough, 1994). But while Plato is seriously attracting support in critics many centuries after his death, his own student and therefore a contemporary, Aristotle provided the necessary challenge to Plato’s not too friendly mimetic theory in their time.

Aristotle however finds easy accommodation in the mimetic theory, looking at mimesis not merely as a superficial or an appearance of the reality as Plato claims in *Republics X*. With Aristotle, the tables have turned: imitation or mimesis is not producing an inferior copy of the ideal form but “we must represent men either as better than real life or, or as worse, or as they are” (Koss, 1997: 3). The poet is no more a villain, no more a liar but a creator, for “Be that as it may – Tragedy – as also Comedy – was mere improvisation” (Koss, 1997: 7). The artist is now granted all the favours of knowledge generation: the ontology, the phenomenology and the epistemology of social reality. Even though some critics are of the view that Aristotle does not directly challenge Plato, it is clear here that Aristotle seriously undermines the validity of Plato’s logic which reduces the relationship between fantasy and reality to that of indoctrination, the sole context within which the truth-value of art can be found. In copying social reality, Aristotle identifies three

main categories: medium of imitation, object of imitation, and mode of imitation. For Aristotle, the medium of imitation is a form of art that represents life through the artist's sense of imagination and life is also represented through the object of imitation, the action. He stresses that tragedy as an example of an art form, "is an imitation, not of men, but of action and of life" (Koss, 1997: 12) and this makes it clear that for Aristotle, action is life, a social reality.

Indeed, "the action" must be plausible; it should have semblance with reality. The "action", in Aristotle's definition therefore is a product of the reality; reality is therefore a cause and the dramatic action is the effect. Let us turn it the other way round. In this analysis therefore, without reality, there could be no "action". The "action", in the dramatic art, is, in fact, not a pragmatic reality but a stage performance, by impostors who call themselves actors who pretend to do what they do not do in real life and be what they are not in real life or characters who do not exist in real life. That is where the boundary is; the reality and fantasy. To Aristotle, however, there is a thin line between the two because, as discussed above, one is a cause and the other is the effect and that the artist's copy what is real and the validity of what the artist is saying is predicated upon the reality that feeds it. Take reality away; there is no fantasy. Aristotle therefore concludes that the "action", representational in nature though it may be, is in itself another form of reality. By implication therefore, in modern development planning, the artist's place is not solely relegated to entertainment but is elevated to providing resource for development planning. The concept of Oedipus complex in psychology, which is now very famous in clinical psychology, a very important area in medicine, is taken from Sophocle's *Oedipus Rex*, a literary art, that, but for Aristotle's approach to the relationship between fantasy or the arts and reality, could only have been considered for its literary merit.

Michael Riffaterre (1984: 142) fully endorses this binary system between fantasy and reality and even goes to the extent of calling it intertextuality, when the meaning of the text is incomplete without the other text. Luiz Costa Lima adds a lot more energy to this debate. To her, the object of mimesis, life, is the "outside" and that the "outside" is assumed to exist before its representation" and the representation or the art is an illustration of a certain worldview. Her conclusion is even more interesting: representation or the work of art is "the bridge which links reality and the mimetic text" (Lima, 1985: 449). It is on account of this that Havelock rushes to the defence of mimetic art, dismissing Plato's position on mimesis, that Plato treats poetry as if "it was science or philosophy or mathematics or technology" (Havelock, 1983: 27). Havelock believes that the poet reproduces reality and that this is to the benefit of the audience and the artist should be able to keep the interest of the audience from the beginning to the end of performance.

Havelock's position is still informed by Aristotle's generic approach to literary studies. Havelock informs us that using the system of differentiation in imitation – medium, object and mode, Aristotle is advocating generic studies of the arts; he is theorizing conventions that go into defining a particular kind of art and these conventions, in turn, constitute "interpretative frame within which the message being communicated are to be understood, and that this frame contrasts with at least one other frame" (Bauman, 1977: 11). Thus, Bauman's Performance theory which mainly posits performance on genre considerations seems to have taken inspiration from the Aristotelian mimetic theory. We must point it out here that while Aristotle's emphasis is on the relationship between the mimetic object and the mimetic representation, Bauman's emphasis is on the performer and the audience but, be it as it may, the two agree on the shareability of culture, that is, the cultural common grounds that unite people of the same culture, that should exist between the "outside" and "inside" texts (Riffaterre, 1984). And these two texts are so close that Ricoeur observes that "the sets of symbols which are integral to the unfolding through characterization, action, or other aspects of the cultural structures implied are actualized by the reader who shares the tradition but brings also additional elements of the reader's world" (Dornisch, 1989: 316), thus echoing Riffaterre. Ricoeur's conviction is also shared by Vierra de Carvalho Mario, who opines that the audience are "people who brought with themselves into the theatre their social hierarchies, roles, differences, even antagonisms were transformed into a community of spectators" (Mario, 2013: 1369). By implication therefore, Mario draws a common ground between Aristotle and Bauman in the sense that both the audience and the art/performance find intersection in the object of imitation or life, in the parlance of Aristotle, and once this intersection is actualised through the object of imitation, all those present become a cultural community, armed with the necessary knowledge of conventions needed to understand the art at display.

Hiplife, the Ghanaian hip hop, a genre of music generally practiced and patronized by the Ghanaian youth, as a performance, is a mimetic representation of the Ghanaian society. Certain questions however come up. How does hiplife, as a genre, imitate or express the Ghanaian social reality? Again, to what extent does the audience respond to the mimetic representation of hiplife? In answering these questions, this paper takes a closer look at the hiplife ideology of "keeping it real", a mimetic expression by Ghanaian youth which indicates that "the rapper has nothing to hide to construct dominion over anybody. They indirectly invite the general public to judge, between them and the dominant culture, which keeps secrets for the sinister motive of domination" (Arthur, 1914: 162). The hiplife rappers, who for want of a better expression, we call the "microphone" poets, imitate the Ghanaian society the way they see it, keeping nothing and bringing out certain otherwise obscure cultural values that they believe destroy the society. We undertake this exercise by closely interrogating the multimodal text of the video of "the Crusade" by Donzy and Kofi Kinata, hiplife artistes. This study disinters the subterranean meaning of this video, that is, closely examines the imitative art of Donzy and Kinata, by interviewing the audience, both in- and out-groups (dyadic, multiple and focus group), how they use culturally available resources in their responses and by using discourse analysis and semiotics to interrogate the discursive and non discursive practices of this video on one hand and the transcriptions of the interviews of the audiences (Silverman, 1993) on the other.

2. Discussion

Hiplife is a genre of music, generally patronized by Ghanaian youth. Rap in highlife in Ghana has a long history with one musician in Ghana, Gyedu-Blay Ambolley, claiming to be the originator, while musicians like K.K. Kabobo, who himself, according to studies (Arthur, 2014) is credited to have started what in modern day is called rap, claims it dates back the art of Bob Cole (Arthur, 2014). There is however no doubt that rap in hiplife was started by Reggie Rockstone who was able to develop the rap art into a culture now

called hiplife. One of the conventions of hiplife is video because before hiplife, music video might have existed but it was not part and parcel of the meaning of the music as it is in the hiplife culture. Indeed, in the hiplife culture, some songs owe their popularity to the kind of music video that goes with it and this fact is even made more convincing considering that there is a special category in Ghana Music Awards called “the Best Music Video of the Year”.

The history of music video in Ghana has not been that smooth. Reggie Rockstone, the one credited to have been the father of hiplife, in an interview (Arthur, 2014) claims he started the concept of music video in Ghana with his “Maka a maka” (I have said it; come what may) in 1996. Of course, Ghanaians do not doubt the effulgent presence of Reggie Rockstone in his music videos in the middle of the 1990s. Azigizar Jnr. however challenges Reggie Rockstone’s claim and points to his music video “Abena” in 1992. Some critics support Reggie Rockstone’s claim due to the fact the music video is part of the song in hiplife. They continue that since Azigizar Jnr. belongs to the highlife era when music video was not part of the song, the claim of Azigizar Jnr. must be dismissed. Other critics believe a music video is a music video and there is no way a musician produces a music video which is not part of the music he has created. Be it as it may, music video is now such a huge development in the music industry in Ghana and it has moved from video shooting of artists standing in front of beautiful hotels and singing in just one scene to a media praxis which uses all modern camera and filming techniques. Indeed, the relationship between the music videos and the audience is now an interaction that attracts a lot of not only mass media but linguistics researches as well. The concept of music video in Ghana is getting more interesting especially when you look at the culture import that informs the audience’s appreciation and, most significantly, involvement. This investigation reveals that Ghanaian music video being a linguistic code used by the youth, when the youth, is from infancy to age 35 and even people above 35 who exhibits certain youthful behaviour like penchant for certain kinds of sport and music and other so-called youth practices, and is a form of expression that constructs meaning using certain culturally linguistic frames that keys meaning (Bateson, 1972; Bauman, 1977).

The conventions used in these videos are so contextually situated that it is a common phenomenon for the older generations to dismiss both hiplife songs and videos as making no sense. The old do not seem to understand what the youth are saying in their songs and videos. Uncle Abeeku, 54, in an interview with the writer reveals, “I have a small boy in my house. You go mad when you hear him play the kind of music he plays. We are past their age. Their age is what is current.”¹ In fact, he moves from this premises and generalises youth behaviour as being culturally deviant, citing youth fashion as an example, “Now look at the kind of dress people² put on. Just go to the beach and you see all kinds of dresses: some expose all the back.” The face showing a lot of disappointment, he adds “There is no more respect”. All the other participants in the interview strongly support what Uncle Abeeku says and having compared the music of the youth to that of Nana Tuffour, Thomas Frimpong, Amakye Dede, all of the highlife tradition, Uncle Abeeku concludes that “The kids of this generation are generally bad”³. Uncle Abeeku has indeed spoken the mind of a very huge proportion of those who belong to the old generation⁴. Is it really true that what the Ghanaian youth stand for or their way of seeing and expressing their world is inferior? Is it also true that the Ghanaian world view, or object of mimesis to be represented in art, is only seen and expressed only by the old generation to the extent that any form of expression of world view of the Ghanaian youth is illegitimate? Clearly, this prejudice of some of the old who believe Ghanaian youth expression is illegitimate stems out of a misunderstanding of the linguistic code being used by the youth to express their world view. Linguistic code in this paper is “a meaning common to the addresser and the addressee (Seboek, 1960: 353) or the “systems in which signs are organized into groups” (Bignel, 2002, 10) so that the youth have a way of communication that is not just a social expression or a subculture (Hebdige, 1987) but an expression of poetics – making a verbal and non-verbal expression a work of art (Seboek, 1960; Bauman, 1977; Bauman and Briggs, 1990) that puts them in a particular linguistic community, different from that of the old. The aim of this paper is therefore to investigate these codes and how framing is used in constructing meaning in hiplife videos to represent reality of the world in which the Ghanaian youth find themselves. To be able to interrogate this, the discussion is divided into two sections: how hierarchy frames meaning and how discrepancies frame meaning, all in the video in question. Before we can get into any serious discussion, we need to have a narrative of the video.

2.1. Narrative of “the Crusade” Video

The first part of the video, which features the first verse, starts with two pastors under a tree. Pastor 2, who does the translation, calls Pastor 1, obviously a visiting Pastor to the church of Pastor 2, to start preaching the word of God to the congregation. Pastor 1 speaks in English while Pastor 2 translates what Pastor 1 says into Fante. There is something interesting about the translation of Pastor 2 of what Pastor 1 says. Pastor 2 makes sure he echoes certain sounds in what Pastor 1 says. Pastor 2 is in no temperament to entertain the good message Pastor 1 is giving and manages to twist and distort all the meaning to the congregation, still making sure the echo, or what some hiplife musicians call rhyming, is perfectly coordinated between the two presentations. The fake message from Pastor 2 is not captivating enough so the members of the congregation are seen dozing off, conversing with each other, taking *selfies*, demonstrating body language that is not very compatible with a place supposed to be holy and minding their own business. This disconnect is also reflected in the dresses of the congregation; too mundane, some wearing tattered jeans and the drummer enthusiastically playing without the shirt on, bare-chested. The preaching and the translation are interspersed with the kind of choral music prevalent in most churches in Ghana; a smooth and mellow voice leading the choir.

¹ Interview with the old school, Sekondi-Takoradi, 25/08/09.

² The word “people” here refers to the youth as the context indicates.

³ Interview with the old school, Sekondi-Takoradi, 25/08/09.

⁴ See Peter Arthur, *The Textuality of Contemporary Ghanaian lyrics*, 2014.

The second part, going with the second verse, follows the same trend. Pastor 2 keeps on distorting the message of Pastor 1, but carefully weaving lyrical artistry out of the echoes of the sound produced by Pastor 1 so that even though the message may not be true, it is very pleasing to the ear. Indeed, one of the characters in the congregation is aware of the contortions of the message and starts moving towards Pastor 2, the translator, with wild gesticulations. He is quickly whisked away by the ushers. Pastor 2 tells Pastor 1 to cut short the preaching to make way for collections and he personally brings the offertory bowl for collection. He stands watchfully beside the bowl, ostensibly to make sure no one pulls wool over his eyes by taking some of the money without his knowledge. The congregation show their appreciation to the cantor and some spread money on his forehead. Pastor 2 quickly takes off his coat and throws it on the money on the floor meant for the cantor, collecting both the money and the coat at the same time and dancing off to his former stance.

The last section is when the church ends. Pastor 2 finds a dark secluded place to count the offertory. He expresses happiness about the amount of money received and promises to have a second crusade. Pastor 1 appears on the scene and Pastor 2 is visibly surprised; Pastor 2 promises to “WhatsApp” Pastor 1 about what the audience do not have any idea about. Pastor 1 stares at Pastor 2 in a way that suggests shock but Pastor 2 loses his temper, saying he invested heavily in the church, takes the bowl away claiming it were better he moved out of the sight of Pastor 1 who wanted to interfere in his church “business”. He walks away into the dark background with the money, not giving a penny to Pastor 2 and Pastor 1 is left bewildered and speechless.

2.2. How Hierarchy Frames Meaning in the “Crusade” Video

Hierarchy is a very prominent structure in this video. The video, having a religious setting, follows the structure of the Renaissance concept of the divine chain of being which puts God first, followed by the angelic beings, then humanity, the animals, the plants and finally the minerals. This is not only a vertical relationship but top-bottom one that invests superiority on the being above and inferiority on the one below. It is easy for beings on the same stratum to relate to each other. According to the Christian faith, God the Father sent his son, Jesus, to come to the earth and save mankind and even though we think of the Father as being the most powerful, Jesus tells us in John, Luke and Mark that He and the Father are one. When the daemons, which, according to this chain, belong to the family of angelic beings, inflict harm on human beings, apart from God intervening directly, the angels can also deal with the daemons. On the side of human beings, we find it easy to communicate or interact with each other. Of course, horizontal communications among lesser beings than human beings have not evoked enough studies. Even though horizontal relationship among peers is very prevalent, so far as this chain is concerned, we put premium on vertical relationship in which God reigns over the angelic beings, the angelic beings reign over human beings and it goes down the ladder. Man in turn looks up to God (and the angelic beings) for his salvation, safety, provision, protection and survival. In the Ghanaian environment, for example, traditionally, it is believed evil spirits or daemons are all out there to harm man and he needs the protection of God or His representative from the angelic group. This fear, to a large extent informs traditional worship but this type of fear has as well been entextualised in Christian worship in Ghana to the extent that the practice of Christianity in Ghana is mainly seen as a fight against evil spirits, hence most Ghanaian Christians go to church more for the sake of protection than to praise God. These Christians who go to church more for the sake of seeking protection than praising God is what Mbon calls “protectionist” Christians because they are more particular about feeling “the need to be protected against life’s undesirable circumstances” (quoted in Adesua, 2015: 259). For such Christians, the church is the most fertile ground for prosperity.

The congregation we have in the video is not different from Mbon’s “protectionist” or “prosperity” Christians. The choir’s song betrays this sense of vulnerability and prosperity.

→ Oni bi woama menya bi 2X	The Lord has changed my poverty to richness
→ Menya akwanhyia so Yesu oama mennwu o	I had an accident but the Lord saved me from death
→ Sñ mehwn m’abrabō mu nea Onyame aye ama me	Indeed, if I look at what the Lord has done for me
→ Mōtow ndwom na meyi Ewuradze ayñw	I will sing in praise of His name

The text quoted above is the second verse of the choir’s song, a song beautiful enough to match any sacred song in any of the churches, and it speaks a lot of the kind of Christians in Pastor 2’s church. Such Christians who normally belong to the Neo-Prophetic Ministries (Aboagye Aryer, 2015) make no secret of their conditions for going to church and their ears therefore itch for a particular form of Biblical message; prosperity and prophecy. This leaves them vulnerable to predator pastors who prey on their itching ear for desire for protection and prosperity. Such predator pastors in Ghana are nothing but businessmen who see the congregation as customers and so far as he, the pastor can supply their needs, that is, giving the congregation promises and prophecies, the congregation follow him, irrespective of the fact that he, the pastor, is leading a model life or is fulfilling the demand of the Great Commission in Matthew 28. The pastor as a man of God is higher up in the divine chain. And this is part of the demand of the hierarchy of the divine chain of being in the sense that this top-down order says that those on top control those down and those down look up to those up for their survival. It is therefore not the issue of man looking for the help of God in this text that constitutes the concern in this paper. It is however the abuse of the demand or the conditions in the hierarchy that is the matter of concern to the artist. This abuse becomes possible when man is made to act as the mediator between God and man.

Intermediaries are beings who mediate communications and interactions between beings of different strata in the hierarchy. God sent Angel Gabriel to Mary in Luke, chapter 1. The Catholics and other Christian denominations also believe that angels and saints are intermediaries between God and man. But there could be a situation where man is supposed to mediate between God and man within the context of the divine chain of being as said earlier. In the video, we have two pastors playing this role: Pastor 1 and Pastor 2. Pastor 1 is exercising commitment to the Great Commission, Matthew 28. He is therefore receiving message from God and delivering it to the people. This is his rap text:

2.2.1. Pastor 1 (Donzy)

- Ladies and Gentlemen, this is your pastor Donzi
- And I bring you greetings from the Church of Christ 1
- This is the day the Lord has made 2
- Let us be glad in him²
- Lord we thank you for goodness 3
- We thank you for giving us your mercies and for giving us beyond what we deserve³
- No, listen, Lord we thank you for your goodness, we thank for giving us your mercies beyond what we deserve 4
- Father, as we stand before you strengthen our heart and light our path like beam⁵

→ 2nd Verse

Lord, Pray for Ghana just like you prayed for Israel 1
 We really need strong leaders to build the nation to help us solve the problems we face 2
 Psam 33, verse 12, blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord 3
 So, be Christlike to your neighbour 4
 I said be Christlike to your neighbour 5

➤ Chorus

→ 3rd Verse

I remember, back in Germany 1
 In the US, somewhere in New Jersey 2
 I been to Uganda Somalia Liberia but now I am back 3
 Because home sweet home 4
 God has been good to me; He can be good to you 5
 So give yourself to Him, He can use you 6
 Be your brother's keeper, have a good heart, be a cheerful keeper 7
 Extend a helping hand to the less privileged, the street children and the orphan 8
 Orphans 9
 Who knows, nobody knows, only God knows 10
 Before we take our offering, let us show some love from our Women's Fellowship from Virginia 11
 I said Virginia 12

Clearly, he is very mindful of his mission as an intermediary between God and man. All what he is saying can be grouped into two parts: praising God and exhorting the believers to be their brothers' keepers. Obviously these messages are inconsistent with the expectation of the congregation whose penchant for prosperity and prophecy is so much well known in Ghana. Indeed, it must be pointed out, and strongly so, that even some members of the orthodox churches have developed spiritual expectancy similar to those of the Neo-Prophetic Ministries (Aboagy Aryeh, 2015) and even though the setting in the video does not indicate any orthodox church, we must not completely turn our attention away from them. For this study however, the emphasis is on the Neo-Prophet Ministries whose prophets "claim certain endowment of gifting which seem to make them 'last stop' for life challenges" (Aboagy Aryeh, 2015: 196). And Pastor 2 quickly sees that Pastor 1 is not playing by the rules so as an interpreter, he has the power to repair the "damage" done. But repairing the damage done involves truncating the word of God that Pastor 1 has painstakingly presented. This "repair", of course, is to temper with the natural order of the hierarchy.

To be able to repair the "damage", Pastor 2, who is a partner to Pastor 1 on the intermediation stratum and in whose church Pastor 1 seem to be "goofing", quickly enters into a dialogue with a series of texts which are current issues and resonate harmoniously with the expectation of the believers. These issues do not necessarily need be Biblical. The intertexts (Riffattere, 1984) include migration, stardom, football, and urbanization, each of which is a topical issue in Ghana and the Ghanaian individual is directly related to at least one of them. They are issues or topics that will make the average Ghanaian jolt up if dozing. All what this means is that Pastor 2 jettisons the text offered by Pastor 1 and creates his own text, which being familiar with his congregation, he believes will be accepted by them. Let us have a look at his rap text, which is supposed to be a fake translation of the text of Pastor 1:

2.2.2. Pastor 2 (Kinata)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Ah, hwñ òayñ dñw | Ah, look, how sweet it is |
| 2. Hwe w'asñm na bo no pōw | Conclude whatever you are saying |
| 3. Call me Kofi Kinata, Sofo ma yenko | Call me Kofi Kinata, Pastor, let's go |
| 4. Īse hōn ho tse dñ | He wants to know how you are doing |
| 5. Wofrñ no Pastor Donzi | He is called Pastor Donzi |
| 6. Na òwō ha ma hōn a wonnyim Christ 1 | He is here for those who don't know Christ |
| 7. Īse sister kō dei, enyim hō fo no wonyñ no dei 2 | He says sister go this way, and those in Front go that way |
| 8. Sister Gladys yi wo handkerchief 2 | Sister Gladys wave your handkerchief |
| 9. Ewuradze yenntse ase dñ wo ndze no òtrike dñ bassist 3 | Lord we find it difficult to understand |

10. Ose, ōso dae bi dñ fight bi ribesi
11. Ntsi young boy ekō hō a ebuhu 4
12. Beam, ansaana Stone Boy bñba no,
13. Singing Bandfo woma hñ ndwom 5

That You sound like the bassist
He says he dreamt there is going to be fight
And any youth who goes there will suffer
Beam, before Stone Boy comes
Let's call the Singing Band for a song

2nd Verse

14. Yedze reba Ghana, first match yñ Ghana na Isreal,
15. Training a yeayñ no dze mannka 1
16. Īse hñ a woabre na chases,
17. Hñ a wobñba na wobeface hñ 2
18. Sofo se ōtñ 33, 30, 12,
19. Sofo sñ euse ne battery no dze ōkyñr rough 3
20. Sofo se Christ ba a, yñdze hñ enyiwa bohu no 4
21. Sofo se Christ ba a, yñdze hñ enyiwa bohu no 5

We are bringing it to Ghana, first match Ghana vrs Isreal
You can't imagine the training we have
He says those of you being chased
You will be empowered to confront them
astor says he is selling 33, 30, 20
astor says his battery lasts very long
Pastor says we will see Christ with our naked eyes
Pastor says we will see Christ with our naked eyes

➤ Chorus

→ 3rd Verse

22. Īse ōyñ member wō asōr bi wo Germany 1
23. Youthfo e, woabrñ hñ new jeysey 2
24. Īse oako Uganda, Somalia na Liberia 3
25. Eho mpo de bad, ekōm esi hñ kurom 4
26. Sōfo se, Nyame ayñ pii dei 5
27. Yeanya nkwa aboodoo, yeanya fruit juice 6
28. Asafo yehia goal keeper a ōtse dñ Joe Hart
29. Nyñ Hulio Caesar 7
30. Īkyerñ a mboframa nyina wodze hñ fir village
31. Nso wodur kuro mu a bohwn more fans 8
32. Noara nye no, noara nye no, more fans 9
33. Īse, ōyñ woana ne hwen a?
34. Nnyñ obiara ne hwen o,
35. Īyñ Nyankopon ne hwen 10
(Pastor 2 speaks to Pastor 1)
36. Sofo, ekyiri yi, obiara ntow no collection 11
37. Women's Fellowship, (Pastor 2 speaking to Pastor 1),
38. Morunntum nnka ma ōsōw do no 12
39. Sōfo, mefñr, maamefo na mboframma nyinara wō ha,
40. Sōfo wo so asee o, mohun woara na mohun dñ asee.
are spoilt

He says he is a member in a church in Germany
Youth, you now have new jeyseys
He says he has been in Uganda, Somalia and Liberia
It is even worse there, there is famine there
Pastor says the Lord has done a lot
We've got *aboodoo*, we've got fruit juice
The Church needs a goal keeper like Joe Hart
Not Hulio Caesar
He says children brought from the village
Attract a lot of cheerleaders when they come To town
Its right, its right, they have more cheerleaders
He asks whose nose is it?
He says it is nobody's
Its that of God
Pastor, hold on so that we can have collection
Women's fellowship
As for that I can't say it.
Pastor I am shy, women and children are around
Pastor, you are spolt; the moment I set my eyes on you, I realised you

➤ Chorus

(Takes the offering bowl to a secluded place so that he could count the money in secret)

41. Hee, coins nso gu ase, I say,
42. Crusade no dze Part 2 beba pee.
43. Hei, ōroko do.
(Pastor 1 appears on the scene and touches the shoulder of Pastor 2).
44. Abade, (chukles) Kō mo whatsapp o,
45. My goodness! Kō mōwhatsapp o ae.
(Pastor 2 takes the bowl away from the sight of Pastor 1).
46. Mara me chapel a; obiara runntum nnyñ obiara hwee. Nobody can do any harm; after all it is my Own church
47. Monkō na ōanyñ long
(Pastor 2 puts the bowl under his arms and walks away. Pastor 1 leaves the scene, very disappointed).

Hee, there are a lot of coins under
Crusade Part 2 will definitely come off
Things are going on as expected
What is it? Go, I will whatsapp you
My goodness! Go, I will whatsapp you

Comparing Pastor 1's text to the supposedly translated text of Pastor 2, one may dismiss the second text on the grounds that the Pastor 2's text is totally inconsistent with that of Pastor 1, just like Pastor 1's text is inconsistent with the expectation of the believers in the church. But that may not be the main cause for concern in this development. The main cause for concern may be the fact that one may again dismiss the second text of Pastor 1 as being incoherent and unintelligible. A close look at the second text however reveals a careful structuring and organization of text purposely crafted to suit the needs of the congregation. Again, these needs are not necessarily spiritual. In fact, they are the need to face everyday's life challenges (Aboagye Aryeh, 2015) so the needs are secular and mundane, and as said earlier on, it is not necessarily spiritual. Pastor 2 finds activities that answer these needs and in the Ghanaian environment, activities related to making money could be the answers to these needs.

The first need expressed in the text is prophecy. Pastor 2 quickly goes for his prophet garb and starts prophesying from line 10 to 11, that there is going to be a civil war in Ghana which will necessitate the youth to travel outside the country to escape the resultant suffering. This is foretelling, “declaring the message of God as revealed to a prophet” (Aboagye Aryeh, 2015: 197). The question is: is the message from God when he is supposed to be translating what Pastor 1 says? He is clearly twisting setiology, or the theology of salvation from Pastor 1, who stands for God, to meet the mundane needs of the church members. Asamoah Gyedu (2013: 46) describes prophets as being “between the two realms of existence – the natural and supernatural, physical and spiritual, seen and unseen – are religious functionaries who are basically persons of sacred power with the ability to ‘see’ into and ‘discern’ development with the realm of the supernatural”. Pastor 2 is fraudulent making the congregation believe he has the endowment Asamoah Gyedu is describing basing his claim on the intertext of migration, which Ghanaians, on the account of current economic hardship in the country, resort to as a means of solving their “life challenges” (Aboagye Aryeh, 2015: 196). The migration intertext in the Ghanaian socio economic environment therefore has audience and Pastor 2 finds it appropriate to smuggle it into his text. This prophecy, a flagrant disconnect between what God, who is talking through Pastor 1, is saying and what Pastor 2 is saying is a deliberate attempt on the part of the artist to expose and excoriate false prophets who seem to be growing in number in the country. The phenomenon is of grave concern to Aboagye Aryeh (2015: 208) who complains, “Barely a month passes by without reports in the media about the giving of prophecy concerning political, social and economic issues in Ghana”. Pastor 2 enters into the same dialogue with the migration intertext in verse 3, lines 22 to 23, the West, European and American cities and because Pastor 1 has been to these cities, he is bringing them new jerseys for their football, after all, as Ghanaians also say, only the best come from the West. Pastor 1’s original version in verse 3, labelled 1 and 2, talks of remembering being in Germany and New Jersey and he says nothing of bringing the youth any jersey. Again the insertion of the jersey is to satisfy the itching ears of the believers. The opposite is the case when he refers to Pastor 1 going to African countries – Uganda, Somalia and Liberia – countries bedevilled with war. This exposes the negative self-image prophets of the Neo-Prophet Ministries plant in their congregation just to make them more vulnerable for exploitation.

The second intertext smuggled into the text of Pastor 2 is stardom. Stars are not only known for the attention they attract to themselves but are also known to have money. Indeed, the celebrity culture, even though not as developed as we find in the developed countries, is a Ghanaian social reality that achieves legitimacy in the branding culture of artistes. This is a step towards making money by the artistes according to the present Ghanaian society. Pastor 2 so quickly translates Pastor 1’s saying that, “Father, as we stand before you strengthen our heart and light our path like beam” to the presence of Stone Boy, the proud holder of the Best Musician Award of the Ghana Music Awards in 2015. Stone Boy’s slogan is “Beam” which makes it easier for Pastor 2 to bring him in here but, of course, Stone Boy with his celebrity status will be highly welcome by a group who is mainly youth and who knows the significance of Stone Boy’s stardom. Pastor 2’s intertextuality is therefore calculated to satisfy believers who are looking for nothing but success as that of the stars.

No wonder, the third intertext in Pastor 2’s text is football. In Ghana, it is believed the quickest means of making money is playing football. Football stars like Michael Essien, Sulley Muntari, Kelvin Prince Boateng and Assamoah Gyan, all footballers who ply their trade outside the country are believed to be very rich so while mentioning the first match being between Ghana and Israel in lines 14 and 15 the second verse, we are not told which tournament it is but he quickly adds in lines 16 and 17 that those who are being chased by difficulties in life will be empowered to face their problems. Clearly, these inconsistencies in presentation give Pastor 2 away as only being interested or being just too quick to dismiss the fears of the believers in telling them that their problems will be solved without giving them any concrete approach as to how the problems will get solved.

The fourth intertext brought into Pastor 2’s text is business and this is not surprising. In line 18, Pastor 2 is encouraging the believers to go for lotto numbers 33, 30 and 12, as sure numbers that will drop over the weekend. This practice may seem absurd but we see some of these prophets on Ghanaian TV screens flagrantly offering lotto numbers for sale. It must be pointed out that the practice of lottery is inconsistent with most Christian teachings and how it found its way in that church still remains a mystery. Pastor 2 is not satisfied selling lotto numbers during church service. In line 19, he is advising the congregation to buy battery from Pastor 1 and describes that battery as “ōkyñr rough” (it lasts very long). At this point, there is no doubt that Pastor 2 is purely and simply nothing but the CEO of his church, seriously involved in using the church for financial gains.

From the analysis above, the sanctity of the hierarchy in the divine chain of being has been breached. Pastor 1, who has the right message is now insular and is cut off from the congregation to enable Pastor 2 to set out his financial agenda. By setting aside what Pastor 1 says, the natural hierarchy of things have not only been undermined but destroyed. He destroys this natural order through misrepresentation, a situation that is very common in most Neo – Prophetic Ministries. The symbolic communication here is that the leadership of the church now places money before the message, and putting the cart before the horse can only bring about chaos.

2.3. How Discrepancy Frames Meaning in the “Crusade” Video

One of the most significant ingredients in the pragmatics of every situation is the context. Once the context is established, we can then go on and talk about oppositeness in meaning, similarity in meaning, consequential meaning, indexical meaning and many other types of meaning. It is therefore imperative that we look at the context, which in this case is the setting, the church service which takes place in the video in order to come up with the needed evaluation or interpretation of the video. In linguistics, the concept context has various definitions and while the positivistic definitions equate the context to a “set of discourse-external conditions that exist prior to and independently of the performance” (quoted in Bauman and Briggs, 1990), many linguists and folklorists share with Dundes (1964: 23) who says that the context is the “specific social situation in which that particular item is actually employed”, in other words, an item peculiar to a particular social situation and presence of which gives substance and meaning to that social situation. Indeed, linguists like Bateson (1972) and sociologists like Goffman (1974, 1981) refine the meaning of context to “attending to the

'contextualization cues' that signal which features of the settings are used by interactants in producing interpretive framework" (Bauman and Briggs, 1990). Bauman and Briggs even move a step further, claiming that the context should allow the assessment of the performer or the audience to predict what should be part of the performance and what should not.

Christian church services in Ghana also have their contexts or contextualizations that elicit the right interpretive frame for the context. In other words, Christian church services in Ghana have their conventions that characterize these services. A Christian church service, not only in Ghana, is supposed to be mainly a prayer service, when prayer can be divided into both expressive and reflective patterns of prayer. Whether expressive or reflective prayer, since the service is supposed to be in the presence of God, certain practices of decency, propriety and decorum are observed to show respect to God. We expect a particular kind of behaviour, dress code, attitude and teaching. Anything that does not conform to this expectation is out of context of the normal notion of Christian church service in Ghana. It is precisely these out-of-context practices, both discursive and non discursive, the artists use in patterning the performance in the video. These out-of-context patterning of performances are what this paper refers to as discrepancy frames. They are not normal and have the power of attracting attention to themselves and by so doing, they constitute a message that talks about itself and it is this met communicative function of these discursive and non discursive practices in the video that engages our attention.

First, the dress code of some of the church members is out of context. A Christian church service is supposed to take place in the house of God and that place is supposed to be sacred and holy. In the Ghanaian context, one way of indicating being in the presence of God is to dress decently; men and women should cover all parts of their body, leaving the legs and hands, which according to the Ghanaian culture do not constitute erotic appeal. What we see in the video is the opposite. The gentleman playing the bass drum is bare-chested, spotting hairs all around the chest, coming down to the stomach region. To the ladies in the Ghanaian culture, hairs in the chest have an erotic appeal. The question is: are the ladies to pay attention to what is going on in the service or to this gentleman who is displaying his masculinity? Another gentleman, bare-chested, also playing a drum but hits the head of the person next to him with his drum sticks. The irony here does not only reside in his being bare-chested or wearing a cap in church but leaving the wrong he is involved in and point out that of the neighbour. Another discrepancy in dress code is a male chorister who blatantly displays earrings in the ear, a dress code considered to be for rascals and street boys in Ghana. We also see a gentleman in rasta hair-do gleefully exchanging greetings with those around him. Is he a rasta man? If so what is he doing in the church that is not for the rastas? Another church member is wearing a singlet, an underwear that is supposed to absorb body fluid to prevent external sweat and odour. Is it the case that the sweat and other body fluids are now being made public, an allusion to Barima Sydney's "Scent no" in which sweat and other body fluids constitute the metaphor of Ghanaian social ills (Shipley, 2009)? Another discrepancy in dress code is a gentleman who is wearing tattered jeans which in the Ghanaian cultural context should be worn for recreational purposes but not for serious exercises like the worship of God. All these discrepancies are not mere refractions. They are non discursive practices that will make you ask questions as to whether the right practices are being effected in this particular context. It is the answers to these questions that will bring about the right interpretations for such practices for the answer is a big no and, if no, why should these practices be entertained in such a sacred place. The answer is that such practices have the meta-communicative function of drawing attention to what is not normal in the context and therefore draw our attention to what is going wrong in Ghanaian church services.

Second, the behaviour of some of the church members is also out of context. The gentle who plays the *conga* is spotted sleeping and it took the drummer who plays the bass drum to hit him in the head to wake him up. Whether it is sleeping or hitting someone in the head with drum sticks, we are not expecting such behaviour on the part of church members during church service. Some members are also taking *selfies*. Taking *selfie* is a narcissistic practice that draws attention to oneself. The question is: are we in the church service to pay attention to God or to pay attention to ourselves? If the answer is to pay attention to God, then taking *selfies* is a practice that competes with the attention we give to God. Such practices, indeed, diverts our attention from God and defeats the purpose for which we attend church services. No wonder that same lady who was taking *selfie* goes to the gentleman playing the *conga*, earlier spotted sleeping, to exchange telephone numbers with. All this while, the service is in progress! Can you therefore blame the lady who is eating during the church service? The observer or the audience of the video will definitely question why these discrepancies. The church members, as depicted in the narrative, are far removed from the presence of God; they are empty of the fruits of the spirit. Being empty of the spirit, they resort to doing their own thing in the church just to kill time. Is it really their fault? The answer is in the attitude of the resident pastor, Pastor 2.

From the multimodal text of "the Crusade" video, the main concern of Pastor 2, the resident pastor, is money; the collection and counting of money. Apart from twisting around the real message of God by Pastor 1, he stops Pastor 1 from continuing preaching, ordering him to give way for collection. Under normal circumstances, it is the duty of ushers to bring the offertory bowl for collection. Pastor 2 considers that to be a luxury. He fetches the bowl himself, a very big one for that matter. He himself supervises the exercise, standing close to the offertory bowl with eagle eyes. The cantor of the choir performs marvellously to the admiration of some of the members of the church and they show their appreciation by spreading money on the forehead of the cantor. Pastor 2 quickly takes off his coat and throws it on the money which is now lying on the floor. When he takes his coat, you are sure to know that the money is part of the coat. After the service, he is seen in a very dark corner jubilantly counting the offertory:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| → Hee, coins nso gu ase, I say, | Hee, there are a lot of coins under |
| → Crusade no dze Part 2 bñba pññ. | Crusade Part 2 will definitely come off |
| → Hei, òroko do. | Things are going on as expected |

If we were wondering why he was more interested in saying what the church members were more interested in instead of the word of God, it is now clear that his main preoccupation is money and not the word of God. Indeed, he is so fixated on grabbing money from the congregation and it is this grabbing spirit that controls his behaviour during the service. Little wonder why the congregation is starved of the word of God and why the members of the congregation are so mundane. Pastor 2's love for money may even account

for why the church service is held under a tree, a place that would attract very low fee for renting or that may attract no fee at all. When Pastor 1 appears on the scene and touches him on the shoulder, ostensibly to ask for his transport fare, as is usually the practice, Pastor 1 suddenly becomes angry and tells Pastor 1 to go and wait for a *WhatsApp* message and while Pastor 1 expresses surprise through his body language, Pastor 1 challenges the request of Pastor 1, claiming “Mara me chapel a; obiara runntum nnyñ obiara hwee” (Nobody can do any harm; after all it is my own church). He explains his action, “Inyim kaw a maabõ a?” (Do you know much I have invested in this church?). Clearly, the church service is a business project and since he has invested in it, it stands to reason that he reaps profit. And he is not in any mood to entertain any interference that could compromise his business so he quickly grabs the offertory bowl and puts it under his armpit, moves away, grumbling, “Monkõ na õanyñ long” (I am going away just to avoid any trouble). Of course, he needs to take the necessary precaution to enjoy his booty.

All these discrepancies or social deviancies serve as a fodder for all kinds of social interpretations. These discrepancies are symbols, the meaning of which can only be derived from the community that produces them. First, I draw from the semiotic structuralist style of interpretation of Edmund Leach who posits that the “individual symbol have layers of meaning which depend upon what is being contrasted with what” (Leach, 1976: 59). The real meaning of these discrepancies resides in what the community expects the context to be. Pastor mediates between God and man and carries message from God to man and prayers from man to God. Instead, the right message coming from God is massaged for the purpose of pleasing the congregation, obviously for the sake of adding numbers in the membership of the church. His main focus is winning souls to God and not making money. These and other discrepancies which deviate from the norms of the society makes Pastor 2 look eccentric. Imagine a pastor throwing his coat unto money on the floor. Imagine a pastor hiding in a dark corner counting money. Clearly, he has lost flexibility of human thinking, especially his free will and in the process loses touch with certain social realities. He is thus reduced to an automatism that makes him fixated on money.

These discrepancies are therefore semiotics of binary coding setting the boundaries between the secular and the religious, what is good and what is bad. He has swapped his priestly role with being enslaved by the insatiable quest for money and, indeed, the metonymic sign for the office of priesthood, dignity, has been breached by the new role throwing the new role into question; its propriety in the context. Unfortunately, he never sees the way we see and continues in the manner being described right from the beginning to the end. One is therefore right to point out that he is wearing a comic mask, an automation that takes the place of what is normal or the freedom of the mind and we cannot watch him without laughing; he is absurd and ludicrous, an object of derision, a caricature or a buffoon whose mask prevents him from seeing the reality. Dewitt Parker (1946: 64) is absolutely right that “In order for an object to be comical there must be a standard or norm, an accepted system within which the objects pretends but fails to fit and with reference to which, therefore, it is evil”. This comic aspect, which exposes discrepancies between the ontological and phenomenological realities, was apparently inserted by the artist because in an interview on Alpha Radio, Kofi Kinata says that the artist is obliged to portray wrongs of the society by using comedy⁵.

These discrepancies are now social meanings, metalinguistic that constitute pointers to certain social evils that need to be paid attention to. We tend to look down on such behaviour because as Bergson puts it, it is incongruous to social expectation and our attention is drawn to such practices as being incompatible with societal norms. Unlike the situation in which the tragic hero wins our sympathy, he does not. We rather distance ourselves from him, creating a kind of antipathy between him and us. This distancing is collective for anybody who belongs to the Ghanaian community and who is aware of the ruse some pastorpreneurs use in extorting money from their congregations, would come to accept that such behaviour should not be associated with. Quite clearly, this pastor knows nothing apart from money, not even the word of God he professes to be a messenger of. Pastor 2 is not alone in using the name of God for money in Ghana. This is a practice that has gained currency in all parts of the country and Wofa Kisi, a spiritualist, is known to have expressed frustration at this negative practice on Adom Fm, saying “Man's greed for money is making a lot of people (mostly young men in their 20s to 40s), most of them also fake ones, to use the name of God to amass wealth”.⁶ In another twist, Godwin A. Allotey also reports that “Rev. Ankrah during a media interview allegedly accused Bishop Obinim of using ‘magic’”.⁷ These observations are just a few of the numerous complaints against pastorpreneurs in Ghana. These aberrations on the part of such pastors have not only created doubt in the mind of some Ghanaians about the genuineness of them but have also given cause to some traditional priests to challenge some pastors, whom they accuse of not being true messengers of God but rather taking the people for granted, to meet them for public spiritual duel. Ghana has had such spiritual duels, in which either a pastor or the traditional priest has thrown the gauntlet. Almost in all such challenges, one of them, either the pastor or the traditional priest fail to turn up for the duel, raising people’s doubt about the genuineness of their spiritual powers. Indeed, some Ghanaians believe that some traditional priests and some pastors are in cahoots to throw dusts in the eyes of Ghanaians. Indeed, this phenomenon of certain pastors or traditional priests playing games with the people also came up in various interviews conducted in Kumasi as summed up by the submission of Desmond Brobbey, 34, “These pastors are ‘azaa’⁸ and want a way of making quick money”⁹.

⁵Alpha Radio, “Alpha Radio Entertainment Show”, Kumasi. 16/04/16.

⁶ICACA Africa Sankofa, “False prophets exposed in Ghana”, www.modernghana.com quoting “Asumasñm”, Adom FM, Accra. Accessed 30/03/16.

⁷Godwin A. Allotey, “GPCC chides ‘charlatan’ Obinim for insulting Korankye Ankrah”. www.citionline.com. Accessed 30/03/16.

⁸This is the local parlance for a charlatan who uses ruse to swindle their victims.

⁹Focus group interview at Kotei-Deduako Washing Bay, Kumasi. 20/04/16.

3. Conclusion

The line between what Kinata and Donzy perform in the video and the reality is so blurred that we actually do not know which one is fantasy and which one is the reality. Of course, Kinata and Donzy's video are supposed to be fantasy but they, like writers of realist fiction like Flaubert and Guy Maupassant who are more interested in observable and not imaginable details, seek to project social realities in fantasy, projecting the observable details in a manner that makes it difficult to differentiate between fantasy and reality. It is like the Ghanaian concert parties who go round with their *agyanka ba* (Cinderella) plays and make audience cry in sympathy for the orphan child who is being maltreated. Indeed, at some point in such plays, the "wicked" physically exchange words of abuse and insults. Similarly, all those whom I showed the video to quickly attacked the "fake" pastors in real life and not the characters in the video. Michael, 22, quickly remarks, "We have a lot of pastors in Kumasi here who are only interested in money and not in the soul of the congregation"¹⁰. The video, a fantasy, has turned into reality. This means that the message in the video is so real that audience easily push the fantasy aspect to the background and concentrate on the reality of it. Based upon the presentation of "the Crusade" video, can we say that the poets or artist are manufacturers "of images and are far removed from the truth" (Buchanan, 1976)? Is it also true that only the best poets can judge the work of good poets as Ben Jonson claims? Is it also true that the reality and fantasy have nothing in common as suggested by Hume (Clough, 1994)? At least from the multimodal presentation of "the Crusade" video, we learn that the poet is not a liar as contested by Aristotle (Koss, 1977), Riffaterre (1984) but he reproduces reality (Havelock, 1983), producing a shareable culture between himself and the audience.

Kofi Kinata in an interview claims, "I am the representative of my generation"¹¹, the hiplife generation, and this relationship between the fantasy and the reality is part of their ideology, not a physical but a philosophical banter between the old and the new generation. Uncle Abeeku, and his generation who think like him, as demonstrated earlier on, would dismiss the ideology of the youth as noisy and would have seen the video as mere fantasy. As seen in this study, such a video provides "space for young people to experiment with identity" (Livingstone, 2002: 2) which helps them to interpret their world. For this generation, therefore, this expression of reality, you may call it surrealism, magic reality or any other kind of reality, there is a thin line between the fantasy and the reality.

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¹⁰ Focus group interview at Kotei-Deduako Washing Bay, Kumasi. 20/04/16.

¹¹ Alpha Entertainment Show, Alpha Radio, Kumasi. 16/04/16