

# Literature and Social Entrepreneurship: Shadrach Ambanasom's Artistic Vision of Dudum in *Son of the Native Soil*

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## Abstract

This paper investigates the intersection between literature and social entrepreneurship in Shadrach Ambanasom's *Son of the Native Soil*. His work has been interpreted from different perspectives by scholars and researchers and the intention of this paper is not to duplicate those interpretations of meanings but to demonstrate how Ambanasom uses the above mentioned-text to lay bare his artistic vision as a social entrepreneur and identify the causes of the general human suffering in order to carve a path for the future. Through a careful reading of the text, this paper demonstrates that the problem leading to the chaotic situation in Ambanasom's society is the lack of appropriate human resources especially at the level of those who hold major positions in the society and not just political, historical and geographical issues as many have pointed out. Through a new historicist lens, the findings revealed that the inability of some people in cardinal positions to consult their consciences and exercise justice is the main cause of the unresolved conflict in the imaginary society of Dudum. The conclusion here is that the main problem faced by this society is strictly moral. The study assumes that the leaders in key positions should act in conformity to the social normative charter to encourage development and peace.

**Keywords:** Artistic, Entrepreneurship, Dudum, Literature, Vision

## 1. Introduction

Shadrach Atege Ambanasom is one of Cameroonian novelists of English expression whose Contribution made to the African literary enterprise with the publication of *Son of the Native Soil* in the year 2000 cannot be underestimated. From twifnews.org John Nkemngong Nkengasong has this to say: "Professor Shadrach Atege Ambanasom is the most prolific and best known literary critic with plethora of publications which have been important in highlighting the prevalence, significance and contribution of Anglophone literature to the body of Cameroonian literature". He adds that, "His novel, *Son of the Native Soil* served as an excellent contribution to Cameroonian (African) culture, philosophy and worldview". On his part, Tah Protus observes that, "The main issues in the novel are closely related to geographical, historical, sociological facts observable in Ngie .... He seeks to place a mirror before his people so that they may see themselves, their weaknesses and strengths" (2012:231). The implication here is that the author treats issues of universal interests and application. From [https:// www.LibrarieNumeriqueAfricaine.Co](https://www.LibrarieNumeriqueAfricaine.Co) "*Son of the Native Soil*" is a work whose quiet majority glows in both subject and style. Though a lot has been written on Ambanasom's text under reference in this study, there is a gap in the exploration of how the text intersects with literary entrepreneurship to capture the interdisciplinary character of literature. Studying the above text in relation to social entrepreneurship will aid to put more light on the fact that though literature whether written or spoken recreates, its didactic role is the author's primary concern because every writer is a teacher.

This paper investigates Ambanasom's artistic vision of Dudum. It considers his mission in the text an entrepreneurial business and reads the author as a social entrepreneur who sets out to examine his society with keen interest. The work explores the intersection between literature and entrepreneurship to highlight the main causes of turbulence in the Dudum rural community and demonstrates that the writer here is an engineer of peace who in his creative endeavour has a vision for change and social transformation. The paper makes use of Ambanasom's novel to illustrate the fact that literature can be used to trigger the desired positive change in the society due to its multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary character. Like every other work of literature, *Son of the Native Soil* which is our text under study in this work brings all sectors of the society together and examine their weakness and strengths through human actions as will be seen in the analysis in this paper. The study demonstrates the fact that Ambanasom is not only a writer who writes to entertain but an educator who x-rays the political, economic, social and cultural domains of his society to effect the desired positive social transformation.

The concern here is the manner in which the author exposes the blunders of the people bringing out their strength and weaknesses so that the leaders might leave the artistic world of the novel with renewed insights on how to sustain harmony, avoid conflicts and bad leadership. The work further seeks to illustrate the fact that as a social entrepreneur, the author has as duty to build confidence in his people through his entrepreneurial aspirations. The study is concerned with how the author uses entrepreneurial values to identify the causes of turbulence and respond to the turn and twists of events in his ever-evolving community. In this vein, Ngugi Wa Thiongo is of the opinion that, "a writer responds, with his total personality, to a social environment which changes all the time. Being a kind of sensitive needle, he registers, with varying degrees of accuracy and success, the conflicts and tensions in his changing society" (1972:47).

The above citation is true of Ambanasom in *Son of the Native Soil*, where he does not only respond to conflicts and tensions in his socio-cultural environment but identifies the areas that lead to continuous antagonistic tendencies, and underdevelopment in his society. The implication here is that the author as an educator is concerned with human resources with the understanding that the human mind is the primary element in every development endeavour. What this study seeks to investigate is the author's view that for a society to achieve the desired positive change, the right mind must be cultivated and put in the right place at the right time. In exploring the causes of underdevelopment, he proposes solutions to the problems that have cost human lives and brought misery to his community. This study shares Ngugi's view by demonstrating that in his entrepreneurial endeavour, Ambanasom is a social surgeon, for besides registering events in his society, Dudum, he uses the events and characterization to diagnose the problems hindering social cohesion and development the way a surgeon diagnoses an ailment. This is in line with Ngugi who also says: "A writer and a surgeon have something in common – passion for truth. Prescription of the correct cure is dependent on a rigorous analysis of reality. Writers are surgeons of the heart and souls of a community" (1997: ix).

Ambanasom has concurred to the above revelations in these words: "A novelist is someone who has experienced life and has been so profoundly impressed by its complexities, excitement, and ups and downs that he is motivated to transmute his real experience into functional forms of consumption by the critic and the reading public (2007:29). To put his entrepreneurial values to live he uses his work as a tool to examine the failures, weaknesses and strengths of his people in order to carve a path for the future. To corroborate this point, he further writes:

There is no doubt that many of us have been through comparable experiences in life but it is equally true that only an artist, a novelist would be driven to commit his experience to paper. Only one with the creative impulse would be propelled to produce a work, the means by which he intends to share his vision of life with the rest of the world. (2007:29)

The above citation illustrates the fact that his passion for the truth has taken an entrepreneurial ethos. To this effect, McMullen and Warnick have stated that social entrepreneur literature exhibits characteristics associated with prosocial behavior such as strong ethical fibers, moral agency and socio-moral motivation (2016:45). On their part, Neubaum and Shulman have pointed out that literary entrepreneur displays characteristics considered typically entrepreneurial, such as a propensity to take risks, innovativeness, ability to recognize opportunities and resourcefulness (2009:18).

The above point demonstrates that social entrepreneurship is an outlet in literary creativity which demands of the artist the truthful historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Moreover, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic representation of reality must be linked with the task of ideological transformation and education of characters.

## 2. Entrepreneurship

As stated above, this paper examines the intersection between literature and entrepreneurship. David Audretsch has observed that, "entrepreneurship does not correspond nicely to any established academic discipline... rather the subject of entrepreneurship has been the topic of scholarship and research in a variety of academic fields" (2003:1). Scholars have proposed a broad array of the definition of entrepreneurship but our concern in this paper is what constitutes entrepreneurial activities in relation to literature in general and *Son of the Native Soil* specifically.

Herbert and Link have identified three distinct traditions in the development of entrepreneurship literature which are: the German tradition based on Von Thuenen and Schampeter, the Chicago tradition based on Knight and Schultz and the Australian tradition based on Von Mises, Kirzner and Shackle (2003:2). This paper finds the Schampeter tradition relevant since it upholds the notion of innovation and emphasizes that, "the function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionize the pattern of production by exploiting and inventing, or more generally, trying an untried technological possibility for producing a new

commodity or producing an old one in a new way” (2003:3). This perspective is relevant to literature and this paper in particular because Audretsch argues that entrepreneurship is about change and innovation just as entrepreneurs are agents of change.

The implication here is that entrepreneurship crosses a number of key units of analysis which include the decision and actions of individuals to bring innovation through new ideas or products and techniques of production in a social unit or business enterprise. This paper links entrepreneurship to literature, specifically Ambanasom’s *Son of the Native Soil* because of its change-oriented activity and innovation through the perception of leadership, conflicts management skills and the morality of the machinery in place to drive society towards development.

Maxim Gorky’s views are relevant here when he points that, “The writer must also have a good knowledge of the past history and of the social phenomenon of contemporary society in which he is called upon to fulfill his role as midwife and grave digger” (1971:33). What Gorky means is simply that a literary entrepreneur provides new and effective ways of dealing with pressing social problems. Social entrepreneurship like any other change-oriented activity has not evolved in the vacuum. Rather, it has evolved within the framework of political, social and economic changes occurring at the global, national and local levels. This study further reads Ambanasom through *Son of the Native Soil* as a social entrepreneur and as an individual who has a vision for social change since he sees opportunity and mobilizes others in the community to work towards their collective wellbeing.

### 3. Theoretical Consideration

#### 3.1 Cultural Studies Criticism

Given that entrepreneurship does not correspond neatly to any academic field, the paper employs cultural criticism to its analysis since this approach does not offer a single way of analyzing literature. Cultural criticism is relatively a recent interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry which borrows methodologies from other approaches to analyze a wide range of cultural products and practices. The approach is apt in the analysis *Son of the Native Soil* since literature is an academic field that cuts across other disciplines. Since 1964, proponents of cultural studies criticism expanded a range of literary study beyond traditional approaches to canonic literature in order to explore a broad spectrum of historical, cultural and political issues. According to X.J Kennedy and Dana Gioia, Raymond Williams who was an influential teacher at Birmingham center in Britain argued that scholars should not study culture as a canon of great works by individual artists but rather examine it as an evolutionary process that involves the entire society (2010:1496).

This approach is seen to be appropriate to the analysis of this paper because it does not only focus on fixed aesthetic objects and dynamic social processes. It also identifies and understands the complex forms and effects of the process of culture. Kennedy and Gioia have it that, “this approach flourished in the United States, where it is called New Historicism. Cultural studies approach is also deeply anti formalist, since the field concerns itself with investigating the complex relationship among history, politics and literature” (2010:1496). The main goal of cultural studies is therefore to illustrate that aesthetic realm, social, economic, ethical and political categories are all interconnected with respect to a literary text. This study makes use of the approach in the analysis of the intersection between entrepreneurship and literature in *Son of the Native Soil*, because cultural studies seeks to understand the nature of social power as reflected in text. Kennedy and Gioia clarify: “cultural studies are, above all, a political enterprise that views literary analysis as a means of furthering social justice” (2010:1496). The implication here is that cultural critics use widely eclectic strategies drawn from new historicism, functionalism, postcolonial criticism and psychology to analyze literary texts. Michael Meyer has maintained that, “cultural studies like new historicists, focuses on the historical contexts of a literary work, but they pay particular attention to popular manifestations of social, political and economic contexts” (2006:1547).

From the above discussion, we assume here that cultural studies is relevant to our analysis of the intersection between literature and entrepreneurship in *Son of the Native Soil* in that the literary text is tied to a particular historical, political and social context. Therefore, the political, cultural, social and historical issues of a given milieu and moment can not escape the attention of a committed writer who seeks to effect social change and justice in his community. The text under reference has a social function since the author examines the Dudum community keenly in order to reinvent, innovate and effect the necessary social change thus giving the novel an entrepreneurial flavour.

### 4. Literature and Social Entrepreneurship

#### 4.1 Conflict

Ambanasom in the above text is an observer, a participant in, and a commentator on the social, moral and political condition of the people of Cameroon in general and those of his native imaginary Dudum in particular. In both form and content, Ambanasom produces literature that is politically corrected and artistically profound. The central theme in this novel is that of conflict between two chiefs about land and leadership. Dudum is made up of nineteen villages divided into two conflicting zones: Upper and Lower Dudum. Through characters like chief Akaya, chief Umeitoh, Ubeno, Abaago and Achamba, the author subtly explores what has gone wrong and has affected social interaction and cohesion in Dudum. By so doing he succeeds to present his artistic vision.

In the above text, the author explores the theme of conflicts to call for an effective dialogue. As a social entrepreneur, he shows disapproval in the actions of some rulers like chief Umeitoh who resorts to violence to solve problems rather than

inclusive dialogue. His attitude toward the land issue is brought out in chief Akaya's worries thus: "How can Umeitoh suddenly stand up and lay claim to the entire area? Have our two villages not been farming Ukob for a long time now? Are we not all off springs of Ngiekum?" (13). These rhetorical questions attract the reader's criticism on chief Umeitoh who seems to have no respect for peace and the fact that they are both descendants of a common ancestor, Ngiekum. These disturbing questions give chief Akaya sleepless nights because his view on the problem is that violence cannot bring a lasting solution to the land conflict that has existed between the two chiefdoms for so long. He sees in chief Umeitoh the kind of greed and exaggerated thirst for power which in his opinion can only lead to destruction. Chief Akaya shows his disgust to this greedy attitude through this proverb: "When appetite overreaches itself, it is looking for death" (13).

From the above proverb and message it carries, chief Akaya seems to have a more humane and functional philosophy than chief Umeitoh and Abaago, his closest collaborator. Chief Akaya has understood that mankind in order to live relatively fulfilled needs not just, wealth, power and authority but equally love, humane and harmonious relationships. When he learns that the Akan people attacked and seized hoes from his Anjong people, he takes time and patiently explores ways to show them his disapproval without provoking his opponent to more violence. Akaya calls all his quarter heads for a meeting in the palace and after series of talks for and against war, he succeeds to dissuade his people from war and settle on a peaceful and nonviolence approach to Umeitoh's attack. Akaya sees the performance of the squirrel hunt ceremony to determine the rightful owner of the land as a way to avoid pain on the two people.

From Akaya's role and attitude in the face of challenges, the author seems to read the problem of conflict and how to manage it through his thoughts and actions because he (chief Akaya) is visionary and seeks to see that the long age conflict between Anjong and Akan should be resolved. His approach indicates the fact that literature is a means of affecting the necessary critical awareness in the consciousness of the people for whom it is created. As a social entrepreneur, the author uses contrast between the two chiefs to register his cry of distress. He seems here to be of the opinion that the problems plaguing Dudum should end because the social malaise triggered by the conflict has overwhelmed his society beyond imagination.

Reading his position as a chief, Umeitoh's actions make him a villain, a vain and tyrant leader who wears society to death. When chief Akaya chooses to have the land issue resolved through the squirrel hunt ceremony and it is proven that Ukob, the disputed land belongs to Anjong, he refuses the verdict of the squirrel. His refusal complicates the situation of the conflict and makes the matter very difficult for both parties because it brought in the voice of the government administrator, the D.O who decides that Ukob is government land. The D. O's decision has negative effects on both Akan and Anjong and this reveals what Ambanasom sets out to let his readers take home, which is the fact that our inability to settle problems using sincere and inclusive dialogue can always lead to disaster. Here literature read within the realm of social entrepreneurship proposes solutions to the social problems it identifies in order to reconstruct a more sensible society. Umeitoh's lack of vision and love for peace due to his wounded pride has brought the progress of the Dudum society to a standstill. In his savage arrogance and reckless pride he forgets that they have a common ancestor, Ngiekum and that what affects Anjong negatively will also affect Akan. His lack of vision prevents him from looking objectively at the situation.

Chief Umeitoh, in his arrogance does not listen to the voices of the significant consultants like Asoja and Embuta, Achamba's father who warn him against the dangers of war using their situation as war victims as evidences of the negative and painful consequences. The narrator makes the reader to understand that chief Umeitoh lacks foresight because he has not consulted the past and has not also looked at the problems critically and honestly. It is clear that,

The main causes were rooted in the power struggle between the chiefs, the question of who should rule over the whole of Dudum. Closely related to this was the question of the location of the courthouse, the postal agency and the health centre, all which were in Anjong. The geographical location of Anjong made it a suitable site for such infrastructure, being the only village situated on a rare plain in an area largely dominated by hills. But Akan will not accept this, and there begin their struggle (21).

Ambanasom here is of the opinion that when people fail to accept the truth, a lot of damage is caused to humanity. Achamba dies because he stands for the truth as he digs into the archives in Yaoundé to prove and convince chief Umeitoh and Abaago that Ukob belongs to Anjong. His belief is that standing on the truth and doing what is right is the only way one can maintain peace and justice for the progress of humanity. He is seen here as a peace entrepreneur who tries to get Chief Umeitoh in to his peace business.

Also, Ambanasom's vision on the issue of gender and marriage is brought out here. Echunjei who was betrothed to Eziaga from birth chooses to marry Achamba and her father, chief Akaya respects her decision and Eziaga and his family show a considerable level of understanding as they accept and collect all what they had spent on her. Eziaga refuses Echunjei's sister as substitute and chooses to marry Akeh who was betrothed to an elderly polygamist whom she does not love. Here, *Son of the Native Soil* resonates entrepreneurial values such as ambition and innovation on how to resolve conflict on gender related issues. The way this matter involving Echunjei, Achamba and Eziaga is resolved without any party living with an emotional pain illustrates the fact that Ambanasom is a calculated decision maker who shows his willingness to challenge the status quo. He dreams of a society where development is enhanced and achieved through happy and harmonious relationships borne out of freedom of choice and love in marriage.

#### 4.2 Morality

Ambanasom seems to be more interested in the morality of those in power for he focuses on their actions and how they affect society and humanity in general. This helps him to weave all the events that he portrays into the fabric of his story and characterization. When Achamba hears of the trade embargo which has also extended to social relations, he shows concern for both Akan and Anjong as he travels to Anjong by mission ambulance to discuss with both chiefs to look for a solution to the

meaningless decision by chief Umeitoh about the economic war and poor treatment Akan detainees are receiving from the gendarmes in Mbambe. In his love for justice and peace he tells the chief Umeitoh that Dudum people especially the Akan have a very bad reputation in the eyes of the divisional authorities in Mbambe and pointed out to the chief that his Akan people who attacked Anjong people went wrong. Achamba is not afraid to stake his life for the freedom of his people.

The author's criticism on chief Umeitoh's morality comes out particularly clearly on his conversation with Achamba as he gets angry with him for daring to say that Akan people are wrong. He is of the opinion that Achamba should forget the fact that his people are wrong and say only that which will favour them even if they do not deserve it. He continues to lay a foundation for future conflicts. Conflicts characterize groups of people and independent states in sub-Saharan Africa mostly because of the leaders' inability to apply relevant knowledge that will produce a favorable climate for peace, unity and prosperity to reign. Middleton et al write that, "These conflicts are not simply feuds over power between rival leaders or factions or even tribes; more important, they are struggles over the present and future structures and practices of government and its beneficiaries" (1997:358).

The implication here is that Dudum is a representation of all that goes on in African communities, especially in the sub-Saharan African region where there are intertribal wars and rampant deaths, famine, acute poverty, diseases and untold misery. Achamba's approach signifies hope for he is one of those who look at situations and thinks about the consequences of every negative action on the future of Dudum in general. His insistence on the truth is triggered by his inner belief that the only solution to a lasting and effective peaceful coexistence is the truth and he wants his people to practise justice by standing on and accepting the undisputable truth that they are wrong to have attacked Anjong people and that Ukob belongs to Anjong. Ambanasom's cry for change for the general good of his people is brought out through Achamba's determination to see his community develop from the fruits of unity and justice.

Achamba dies because he stands for the truth as he digs into the archives in Yaoundé to prove and convince chief Umeitoh and Abaago that Ukob belongs to Anjong. His belief is that standing on the truth and doing what is right is the only way one can maintain peace and justice for the progress of humanity. His death brings Abaago's morality to question as it is later revealed that he is the one that sent assassins to kill Achamba. The fact that Achamba dies in the path he has chosen which is standing on the truth as the only way forward for his people validates the entrepreneurial flavour of the text. One can comfortably state here that he is an expression of Ambanasom's artistic vision in the novel under reference in this study. His activities and the efforts made to bring Chief Umeitoh and Abaago to their senses illustrate the fact Ambanasom's vision as an artist is intertwined with activism and social impact. Therefore, using vain characters like Abaago, Ambanasom paints a vast fresco of absurdity, letting the tragedy reveal itself in the degradation of human behaviour and desperate quest for power to the detriment of honesty and peace.

The need for change as a component of social entrepreneurship is illustrated in the novel through characters like Achamba and chief Akaya who think of development as a benefit and growth of every element of Dudum and not just their specific village. This is because as Henton et al in <https://www.academia.edu/social> have asserted, a social entrepreneur operates in time of dramatic change, sees opportunity and mobilizes others in the community to work toward their collective wellbeing. Ambanasom in this novel operates within a context of change which many like chief Umeitoh and Abaago have not yet realized.

The D. O's decision that Ukob is government land symbolizes the author's protest against narrow minded leaders who care very little about peace and unity as essential ingredients to development, revealing the fact that our inability to manage what we have can always have disastrous consequences on our future. In his social entrepreneurial activity, Ambanasom points out that greed and exaggerated taste for power as demonstrated by chief Umeitoh and Abaago can rob people of the most valuable thing they own here on earth. Both Anjong and Akan used to benefit from the crops from the fertile land of Ukob. But pride and dishonesty demonstrated by chief Umeitoh brings in the voice of one whose decision ignores the significance of this piece of land to the people. The D. O's duty is to stop the conflict between the two villages. The negative impact of what the D O hurriedly considers as a solution is huge.

Akaya, Ubeno, Asoja, Embuta and Achamba have the courage to look beyond the conflict into the future for the sake of peace and development of Dudum in general and not only focus on their various chiefdoms. They see their past of common ancestry as a unifying factor that should sustain them as one people. To these characters, conflict, power struggle, and land problems are absurd phenomena that cannot bring progress to a people. This is why Asoja and Embuta who are victims of past wars draw lessons from their experiences to caution chief Umeitoh against the undesirable consequences of war. These two characters are like Abdulla in Ngugi's *Petals of blood* whose amputated leg stands as a testimony to the horrors of the Mau Mau liberation struggle in Kenya. Like Abdulla, Asoja and Embuta occupy the periphery of human existence since they cannot actively engage themselves in money making activities due to their conditions as war victims. The author seems to praise their morality and willingness to educate their leaders on the dangers and negative consequences of war. As a social entrepreneur the author in the novel under scrutiny uses two categories of character to leverage a platform to address social injustice and drive positive change through his narrative.

Ambanasom in his social entrepreneur validates his vision for change as he registers his protest against violence. In his novel under scrutiny, Usonjim from Abang who, visits Mbambe and stays the night with Achamba laments: "The rebels came like a swarm of locusts, destroying everything in their way, slashing down plantain stems and butchering animals that they found. At their approach children scuttled in disorder; in vain, old men tried to hide from their fury. The attackers got the men and children badly beaten ...." (62). This statement is a savage mockery against the Akan people's inability to look beyond the situation and remember that they are one people. They are compared to "a swarm of locust" and this comparison further explains the level of

destruction caused by Akan raiders in Ajong. Ambanasom in his social entrepreneur scheme uses this situation to suggest possible solutions to a more harmonious existence. As Gorky has pointed out above, "A writer must have a good knowledge of the past history and of the social phenomenon of contemporary society" (1971:54). Ambanasom's literary canon suggests features such as optimism and hope. His work is meant to conscientize his people against party politics and against division. Through chief Akaya's approach to every attack on Anjong, one can spot hope and optimism as he chooses to "discuss what measures to take against the unprovoked aggression" (63).

In the novel, the narrator writes: "It was a long and angry debate, with some people opting for an-eye-for-an-eye, while others, among them chief Akaya and Ndifon, called for calm and suggested the matter be the responsibility of the government" (63). Through chief Ayaka and Ndifon, the author, portrays his vision for a society that must sit up and apply dialogue as a way forward rather than violence which is destructive to the whole of Dudum. Ambanasom uses situations of violence to indicate his persistent cry for a positive and meaningful change in his society for the well being of his people. Ambanasom in his social entrepreneurial vision through *Son of the native soil* seems among other things to share Achebe's opinion that our literature, "must seek the things that belong unto its peace, speak of a particular place, evolve out of the necessity of its history, past and current, and the aspirations and destiny of its people" (1973:7).

Ambanasom incorporates words, rhythms, language and concepts drawn from the Dudum culture into the English text in order to attempt to bridge a cultural divide and most importantly, "ascertain the place of African culture and identity in the scheme of globalization" (2015, 31). He uses proverbs which are the most significant element in African parlance to explore the wisdom, philosophy, and worldview of his people's past and present. He uses the tribal tradition of the squirrel hunt to emphasize the African past, which remains significant in the lives of the Dudum people. Chief Akaya is of the opinion that this is the undisputable way of maintaining peace and justice in the land. His perspective on the problems of Dudum points to the fact that a people who ignore their past are like plants without roots.

#### 4.3 Leadership

In his literary entrepreneurship scheme Ambanasom brings forth his vision about leadership. Through characters like the D.O, chief Umeitoh and Abaago who are used in contrast to others like chief Akaya, Embuta, Achamba and Ubeno, the reader easily deduces that bad leadership is one of the causes of underdevelopment and the unresolved conflict in Dudum oral community. He seems to suggest that leadership approach in Dudum society is one of the areas that needs innovation because most of them lack foresight and their methods to conflict resolution are limited and therefore inefficient.

The author focuses on the minds and the kind of ideas that characterize the leadership skills of those shepherding the community. Achamba is an expression of ambanasom's entrepreneurial projects for development. He has become the peace engineer through his activities to sustain unity. This is illustrated in the fact that elites and elders "made him the president of the Dudum Cultural and Development Association, DCDC" (173).

Abaago's lack of foresight makes him to see Achamba as a threat. His concern is on how to have the political capital of Dudum in Akan at all cost. From Abaago's perception on the issue of the political capital, the reader realizes with a lot of dismay that the empty and uneasy rivalry between Akan and Ajong which runs like a brooding dissonance through the history of Dudum is sustained by bad leadership. Abaago does not have the time to consult the past. His excessive pride and restless test for power blurs his vision. Here one notices that as a literary entrepreneur, Ambanasom's cry against bad leadership has fed into his literary culture and his passion for truth has taken the entrepreneurial ethos. What goes on in Dudum reflects the kind of leadership that exists in African countries where people with sound mindsets and relevant philosophical perspectives are given deaf ears or even killed while traitors remain in power to drag the image of the country in mud.

Also, chief Umeitoh's inability to exercise justice, honesty and good will by accepting the verdict of the squirrel hunt draws the reader's criticism towards him. The author uses chief Umeitoh to educate the traditional leaders in Dudum on the issues of tactful administration. The message here is that leaders should always take time to think about the future of their community and keep away reckless and the empty desires for power, for these are obstacles to development. This is illustrated when Achamba visits chief Umeitoh who is in the company of Abaago, accuses him that he has come home to intoxicate the youths of Akan. He nurses bitter feelings against Achamba and later sends murderers to kill him. Ambanasom uses this situation to question the narrow mindedness that characterize most leaders in Dudum in particular and Africa as a continent in general.

His opinion here is that leaders are dishonest and can always kill anyone who tells the truth. Achamba is killed because he contradicts the bad leadership scheme of Abaago and chief Umeitoh. He reflects entrepreneurial qualities through his exhibition of visionary thinking, resourcefulness and a willingness to challenge the status quo. The suggestion here is that leaders should keep away unpatriotic actions and give room to innovative thinking that yield and sustain social benefits for the prosperity of the community.

Through the D. O's decision that Ukob is government land, Ambanasom in his entrepreneurial project laments the kind of leadership in African countries. The people of Dudum oral community sustain a living through agriculture and Ukob is a fertile land from where they make good harvest. The D. O's decision implies that hunger, poverty and poor health are what the people of Akan and Ajong are left with. The situation will further trigger other social ills such as violence, prostitution and stealing.

Looking at the D. O's decision critically one assumes that he is unpatriotic and lacks relevant administrative qualities to reinforce peace, justice and unity. The D. O demonstrates administrative incompetency such as lack of patience to review his decision and consult sound minds like Achamba, chief Akaya and Embuta in order to act justly. His lack of vision, good will and patience to examine the situation critically before exercising his authority signifies the dislocation in the African psyche that always reinforce disorder and the degeneration of a bad social condition due to lack of meaningful social and moral



orientation on the part of leadership. The reader's attention is drawn to the D. O's absurd administrative craftsmanship for closer examination.

## 5. Conclusion

In the above analysis Ambanasom questions the morality of those in leadership position and cries for change. Through the themes and characters he creates, he seems to advise that a plant without its roots cannot stand. He suggests that our leaders should listen to the voice of reason and pay deaf ears to narrow mindedness but persuasive and eloquent politicians whose selfishness and lack of concern for the interest of the people bring pain and disunity. He is also of the opinion that the masses should stand up for their rights and stop being manipulated by the authorities.

As a social entrepreneur, Ambanasom remains optimistic because he proposes solutions to the pressing problems of the society. Achamba's vision for a united Dudum is not dead because his wife gives birth to a son who is a unifying element in the two chiefdoms. Abaago's death through suicide reveals the fact that good triumphed over evil and the nature of his death discourages evil deeds. The author uses characters and situations to conscientize the people who are misled by narrow-minded and proud politicians who only exploit them. The D. O's decision that Ukob is government land brings misery to both villages and this brings chief Umeitoh's perspective on the conflicts in Dudum to criticism. Therefore, in his literary entrepreneurship scheme, Ambanasom in *Son of the Native Soil* wants change for the good and progress of his society.

We therefore contend that Ambanasom's novel, *Son of the Native Soil* is both artistically and socially profound. Readings into his literary canon shares Amuta's view that, "The poet as a man of culture devotes his art and life to the pursuit of justice and freedom" (1989:57). Ambanasom uses literature to legitimize his ideology and encourage those who use their talent to challenge that group in society whose actions retard economic and socio-political development. He has demonstrated that he has the courage to serve mankind as he fights to restore the collapsed humanity epitomized by bad leadership. As a human right activist and a social entrepreneur, his ideological framework which prompts and conditions his literary canon finds expression in a number of aesthetic features including his thematic exercise and his art of characterization.

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