

Editorial: KÍÀBÀRÀ Returns — Mapping the Horizons of Humanities Inquiry

Can the humanities still matter in an age dominated by algorithms, markets, and technological speed? Can art, religion, and philosophy still speak truth to power in societies shaped by anxiety, cynicism, and commodified values? These contestations frame the Harmattan 2025 issue of KÍÀBÀRÀ Journal of Humanities, which reemerges not as a passive archive of scholarship but as a revived conversation about meaning, morality, and human becoming.

This issue reaffirms that the humanities remain indispensable for interrogating experience and for nurturing ethical imagination. Each contribution demonstrates that to think humanistically today is to resist simplification—to insist that cognition, faith, art, and culture remain vital lenses for interpreting the complexities of life.

The collection opens with Chukwudinma O. Ezuoke and Nkechinyere O. Chidi-Mbah's "Voices Under Pressure," which exposes the cognitive and emotional intensity of human communication. The study's psychological depth serves as a metaphor for the humanities themselves—a discipline negotiating tension between precision and empathy.

Following these insights, George Esebameh's "Poster Design and Visual Impact" examines the visual and aesthetic

strategies that enhance communicative effectiveness. Focusing on typography, imagery, colour, composition, and timing, the study highlights how visual design captures attention, conveys meaning, and engages diverse audiences. By synthesizing perspectives from design theory, visual communication, and persuasive media, the work underscores that effective poster design is not merely aesthetic but a form of strategic, audience-centered communication.

From language to ritual, Chibuike Chidi Egbua's "Sacred Signs" extends the conversation to the spiritual. Through ethnographic interpretation, Egbua demonstrates how ritual objects act not as relics but as living mediators of meaning, affirming the continuity between the material and the metaphysical in African religious imagination.

The issue's literary and psychological turn emerges in Adadgogo Brown's "Structures, Irony, and Themes in Damilare Kuku's 'Òdè-Pus Complex.'" Drawing on structuralist theory, Brown explores the symbolic and relational tensions that animate Kuku's narrative—a modern oedipal drama revealing the psychological conflicts between dependence and autonomy. The analysis situates Kuku's story within the broader field of postmodern African fiction, exposing how irony, repression, and emotional ambivalence illuminate deeper cultural discourses on masculinity, identity, and familial attachment.

This recovery of African spirituality deepens with Blessing Uenoden Okoh's "Rereading Living Water: African Cultural Symbolism in John 4:13–14." The paper

offers a refreshing hermeneutical dialogue between African cosmologies and Johannine theology. By situating the biblical image of living water within Yoruba, Bambara, and Aladura traditions, Okoh reinterprets Christian spirituality through African symbolic systems, proposing a theology that integrates personal salvation with communal renewal.

The ethical thread continues with Innocent Karibo and Ndidi Justice Gbule's "Revisiting Braide," which repositions Garrick Braide as a moral compass for contemporary Pentecostalism, revealing both the liberating and corrupting potentials of revival religion. Their use of allegory transforms the essay into a prophetic critique of the modern church's captivity to charisma and capital.

This moral and theological engagement finds resonance in Ndidi Justice Gbule's "Fanon's New Humanism," which exposes how Pentecostal spirituality has been subtly absorbed into the neoliberal order, fashioning believers into self-optimizing subjects of the market. The essay calls for a decolonized, justice-oriented faith, offering one of the volume's most provocative interventions.

Further enriching this dialogue on faith and modernity, Raphael Baribela Kpeden's "Urban Christianity" examines denominational switching in Port Harcourt, revealing how social negotiation shapes urban religious life. His study situates the city as a microcosm of African Christianity's adaptive resilience amid globalization and urban pressures.

The question of inclusion and power extends to the secular sphere in Jeremiah Mbadiwe and Esther Luke-Omenihu's "Gender, Ethnicity and Power in Nigeria's Aviation Industry, 1960–2025." This historical discourse study interrogates the intersections of gender, ethnicity, and institutional culture in one of Nigeria's most symbolically modern sectors. Tracing the experiences of pioneering figures such as Chinyere Kalu, the authors demonstrate how aviation reflects broader postcolonial struggles over visibility, equity, and representation—reminding us that progress is never neutral but socially negotiated.

Sydney Chigonum Imoh's "Gender and the Bible" anchors the moral discourse, deploying feminist and womanist hermeneutics to challenge patriarchal misreadings of Scripture and showing that critical interpretation can itself be an act of emancipation.

Expanding on this focus on gender and agency, the issue includes three contributions foregrounding women's roles in society and faith. Igwechi Hope Wotogbe-Ozuzuma's "Burden of Expectation" examines reproductive and social pressures on women in Ikwerre culture, highlighting how religious narratives and patriarchal traditions shape autonomy and well-being. Similarly, Church-Hill Amadi-Nche and Zerubbabel Goodluck Wokama's "Women's Roles in Ministry and Society" investigates transformative contributions of women in Jesus' ministry and Ikwerre society, showing that leadership, agency, and community impact extend beyond formal recognition. These insights complement Abubakre Samiat Olúbùnmi, Oyekulehin

Ridwan Oyekulehin, and Abubakre AbdulQahhar Olakunle's "Female Agency in Wheels," which demonstrates how gendered power structures are negotiated and contested through literary practice. Together, these studies underscore the humanities' capacity to amplify marginalized voices and interrogate social power.

As the volume shifts from moral to aesthetic inquiry, Anamaleze Obiora and Kenneth Iheukwumere Njoku's "Female Body in Art" confronts the enduring ambivalence of representation, illuminating how Nigerian artists navigate celebrating beauty while confronting objectification. Their second collaboration, "Studio as Inquiry," broadens the epistemological conversation, persuasively arguing that the studio is a laboratory of knowledge production where theory and making intersect.

The ecological turn arrives with Hopeful Honesty Bafamodei's "Sacred Forests," which examines the moral, spiritual, and cultural significance of Niger Delta forests amid environmental degradation. This contribution underscores how humanistic research can inform culturally grounded approaches to ecological stewardship.

Transitioning from ecology to entertainment, Achibi Samuel Dede's "Night of a Thousand Laughs" situates stand-up comedy within Nigeria's cultural economy, tracing its evolution from entertainment to social commentary. This cultural reflection resonates with Samson Osariemen Eguavoen's "Poetics of Collective Resistance," which explores how poetry functions as both therapy and protest in the face of social trauma. Lola

Akande and Nzube Nlebedim's "Postcolonial Cityscapes" then extends this reflection to literary geography, reading Achebe and Kan as chroniclers of moral and spatial struggle in the African metropolis.

The issue closes on a resonant note with Ebere Celina Krisagbedo, Chris Uchenna Agbedo, and Walter Ugwagbo's "From Legal Remedy to Political Retort: A Pragmatic Acts Study of 'Go to Court' in Nigerian Media." Their essay offers a sharp linguistic and philosophical reading of how a once-neutral expression of legal recourse has become a cynical trope of power and resignation in Nigeria's public discourse. In its deft mix of sociolinguistic and moral critique, the article encapsulates the enduring task of the humanities—to confront the manipulation of meaning, resist the corruption of language, and reclaim speech as an ethical act.

Together, these essays reaffirm KÍÀBÀRÀ's commitment to the humanities as a space of critical renewal and interdisciplinary engagement. Each contribution, in its own way, speaks to the tension between faith and reason, language and power, art and society. The issue thus becomes a forum not only of ideas but of human struggle—for meaning, for justice, and for the rediscovery of voice in a noisy and unequal world.

KÍÀBÀRÀ thus returns not simply as a journal but as a forum of conscience—a space where inquiry meets imagination and where scholarship serves as an act of hope. The Editorial Board remains committed to sustaining this vision, inviting contributions that challenge,

enrich, and expand the horizons of humanistic knowledge.

¹ The Review-and-Own initiative is designed to encourage active scholarly engagement with recent publications across the humanities. Reviewers may select books relevant to their specialization, submit a critical review (1,500–2,000 words) for editorial consideration, and retain the reviewed copy. This programme affirms KÍÀBÀRÀ's commitment to building a culture of reading, reflection, and responsible scholarship in African and global contexts.

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