



## **Conceptual Analysis of Links between Religion and Marriage in Mariama Bâ's *Un Chant Écarlate***

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### ***Abstract***

*This study examines the conceptual relationship between religion and marriage in Un chant écarlate. It employs Durkheim's sociological theory of religion and historical methodology for the analysis. It aims to provide explanation of the concepts of marriage and religion. It examines the conceptual link between both phenomena. This would give answer to long-term questions on frequent collapse of marriage set-up and conditions of human existence in the society. It is the synopsis of un chant écarlate, discussing reasons in the minds of parents before looking for whom to marry their daughter or son. The strategies include Belief and behavior, Primitive and Christian practices and doctrines and recognition of religion in marriage among the Senegalese. It mentions the steps: enquiries into family history, religion, reputation among other virtues taken by parents, relatives and children on man or woman to marry in the selection of partner. The study concludes that religion and marriage are related concepts in social life. Literature reveals our attitudes, beliefs, values, training, socialization or what we call ideology. It recommends that the curriculum content of our contemporary education should provide for learners the understanding of the efficacy of our age-long practices of enquiries as remedy to present-day marital problems and by extension exploiting African resources for sustainable development. People should*

*believe in the supernatural in order to unravel things which surpass the limits of their knowledge and understanding.*

**Keywords:** *Religion and marriage, marriage, belief, race and historic misrepresentation.*

## Introduction

Religion and marriage are two different but related notions. The sense of non-recognition of historical fact of the society, religion and marriage bring about the various challenges of the community people. These challenges include discontinuity of love, home break, depression, anxiety, madness, separation and death. There is need for every individual to understand the manner in which modern day practice of religions have been progressively composed in history. The historical analysis of each religion is necessary to resolve any intrusion into its constituent elements. Then to place every religion in its right place, that is, to go back to its primitive and simple form as at that time it was developed and before gradual complication is at the moment the question under focus. This study explains the concepts of marriage and religion in the novel. It goes further to the analysis of the relationship between the two concepts as viewed with the consequences in

the novel. Existing studies viewed ‘la modernité chez les Sénégalais dans *un chant écarlate* de Mariama Bâ’ to trace the Senegalese history since medieval period to independence to discover ancient and new lifestyle of the inhabitants of Senegal. This brought about the analysis of some elements of modernity such as Islamic practice and doctrine, Christianity in Senegal, the use of social media and other elements that prove Senegal a modern nation (Akande, 2018). What have existing studies left undone? This study fills the research gap with the conceptual analysis of links between religions and marriage in Mariama Bâ’s *un chant écarlate*. This study aims to provide explanation on marriage and its forms. It goes further discussing religion and typology. The conceptual link between both phenomena is examined to give answer to long-term questions on collapse of marriage set-up and conditions of human existence in the society. It would also show that

religious cosmologies are the most primitive ways of ordering man's view of his world as this article gives an idealized view of the society (Senegal), showing its origins. It would also show that there are no false religions. All narratives are true in their own fashion as each brings about the understanding of an existing ideology that relates to a given religion and marriage, tracing its historical development.

### **Synopsis of *Un chant écarlate* (1981)**

The story brings early in the morning with the commencing hour of Niary's factory. Khady Yaye gets up early to prepare breakfast for Ousmane who resumes at a post-primary school. Djibril Guèye is already at the mosque to call other Muslims to prayer. Ousmane goes to school, on his way to the school. He recollects stories of his father in religious education and his journey to the war front with the massive recruitment of Senegalese skirmishers in Senegal and L'AOF's territories where he returned a half-legged man but with many decorations. Djibril Guèye gets his wife, due to his admiration and generosity of his core religion. He is a monogamist due to his weaknesses; being a half-legged man with little pension he receives. Pathé Ngom, a neighbor to Djibril Guèye is a polygamist with many wives, Muslim, but unable to abide by Islamic prescriptions in marriage. Ousmane assists his mother in domestic work, the attitude his father and his friends like Ousseynou and others disregard. Djibril Guèye refuses to send his son to Coranic School for his martyrdom experience with his masters in his time, but prefers white school wherein Ousmane enjoys scholarship as a result of his hardwork in his studies.

The narrator cites Tante Kiné, a friend of Yaye Khady. She is the third wife in her husband's house. Tant Kiné enjoys lending almost all home items including clothes, pepper, salt, palm oil and many more from Yaya Khady. She comes for counseling in the time of her marital problems. Her son is named Moussa. Ousmane meets his new girlfriend named Mireille, a French lady at the school in Dakar. She is the unique child (daughter) to Jean and Malthilde de la Vallée. De la Vallée family leaves Dakar for Paris in May, 1968. Ousmane prefers to stay in Dakar instead of France for his scholarship study by the National Ministry of Educational Services. The two lovers exchange letters to share and rob minds together from both angles of the world.

Women at Niari Talis quarters arm themselves with talisman and safara (holy water) against the invisible witches. Ousmane and his friends, Boly and Ali

discuss on enthusiastic and illusions of people of their age in Senegal and cite Soundiata, the late valiant king of Mali, in a newspaper he holds there. Jean de la Vallée prefers Engineer Pierre, the son of Les Dubois as future husband to Mireille but the latter's choice is Ousmane, the boy, Jean de la Vallée usually refers to as 'ça' since he sees Ousmane's picture in his car. The Guèyes are in the new modern building at Gibraltar. Djibril Guèye appreciates his son, Ousmane, for chances and opportunities granted to the family in various ways; building of the new mansion, his father's visit to Mecca and Medina, care for parents beyond expectation. At their gathering, Djibril Guèye proposes to his sister, Tante Coumba's wishes that Ousmane should marry Marième, his sister's daughter but Yaye Khady rejects the offer for she has lost her mother-in-law and does not want her sister-in-law, tante Coumba, to come and place herself under her roof. Ousmane and her sister, Saffiétou leave their parents for other places to continue their discussion.

Ousmane is always with Mireille's pictures in his room. His parents observe this especially his mother. He says Mireille is an artist, that he buys those postal cards. The artist sends gifts to Ousmane's parents which they accept but are ignorant of the secret behind the offer. Ousmane announces his journey to Paris to his parents. In Paris, he resides with his uncle Lamine who takes charge of the preparatory formalities about Ousmane-Mireille's wedding. The couple is joined together in a civil marriage followed by the benediction at the Jussieu mosque. Ousmane and Mireille write letters to inform their parents about their wedding. The information cut both parents unaware. The new couple arrives at Dakar. Yaye Khady recollects her visit to native and white doctors before Ousmane could overcome childhood ailment. Mireille disregards wolof cultures; dialect, hospitality, music, food and more but gives reference to her culture in all manners. This causes conflicts between Mireille and her new community. A European couple, Geneviève and Guillaume live in the same compound with Ousmane-Mireille. Ousmane mentions kinds of African traditions such as riddles, proverbs, legends, drum, music and their importance to his wife.

When Ousmane falls sick, Yaye Khady consults local healers when Ousmane does not recover with capsules and injections. Djibril Guèye also recites Quranic verses at night in Ousmane's apartment. Yaye Khady orders Mireille to stop feeding Ousmane with foreign food and replace it with fufu and yalé soup. Mireille opposes her mother-in-law's continual visit to her apartment.

Ousmane detests this attitude, having loved his mother, he empowers her and the woman insults Mireille, Yaye Khady visits the couple when it pleases her. A gynecologist confirms Mireille's pregnancy. The narrator narrates the visit of Boly, Ali and his wife, a Christian named Rosalie. The latter gives piece of advice to Mireille on mutual rapport that should come up between family-in-law and wife in Africa tradition. Ousmane is forced out by inconveniences he faces in his intercultural marriage with Mireille. He joins her old lover, Ouleymatou Ngom, the lady he later impregnants. Her parents inform Ousmane's parents. The latter send delegates to Ngom family according to tradition. They pay dowry and other necessities as they celebrate naming ceremony of the new born baby. Later, Mireille gets the secret, takes taxi and goes to search for Ousmane's second home. She then understands her father's comment about 'ça' (Ousmane). She cannot go back to her parents with 'Black child', (Gorgui). She is disappointed and confused. She drugs Gorgui to death; she herself runs mad and finally wounds her husband. The story ends at the Police station where Ousmane is arrested and his parents come to witness the scene.

### **Theoretical framework and Methodology**

This study employs (Durkheim , 1915)'s theory of religion sociology to analyze the link between religion and marriage in *Un chant écarlate*. It applies sociological methodology and historical analysis of the concepts. The French sociologist, Emile Durkheim, is a key figure in the development of sociology, and was largely responsible for the transformation of the earlier diffused philosophy of Comte and others into a systematic discipline. Durkheim focused on religion; it was viewed by him as part of a larger project. His intention was to demonstrate that sociology could provide an answer to questions that previously had been asked by philosophers, that is, questions about the bases of knowledge itself that could show that religious cosmologies were the most primitive ways of ordering man's view of his world.

The study focuses on one of four main studies that exemplify Durkheim's contribution to sociology: *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, it was the last of Durkheim's major works published in his lifetime. It adopted the method of in-depth examination of totemic religion in a clan-based society, the Australian aborigines. The theory represented the most elementary forms of religion and social organization, in Durkheim's view. It includes an explanation

for the relations between the most sacred elements of social life, the most mundane aspects and principles of structural correspondence that link the two sets of phenomena. It brings the key to understanding the originating principles of phenomena in Senegalese society.

One important sense was that of “misrecognition” of itself by society, in that members were given an idealized view of society, which had its origins in elevated and awe-inspiring experiences of great periodic gatherings of a religious or sociopolitical nature. Among the typical products of such ideological idealization and sanctification were the authority attributed to political leaders, and the sense of “oneness” and belonging (as in nationalism and patriotism).

From his discussion of primitive religion, Durkheim aimed to show the social origins of all categories of thought—cognitive, evaluative, and the emotionally expressive. It can be seen that the *Elementary Forms* was the most ambitious of all Durkheim’s works. Religious institutions—beliefs and practices could not be explained as a complete fantasy, corresponding to nothing in reality. Sociologists, in particular, could not hold such a point of view: “In fact, it is an essential postulate of sociology that a human institution cannot rest upon an error and a lie, without which it could not exist. Durkheim attempted to attribute religious beliefs and practices to some sort of deep-rooted error. But one must know how to go underneath the symbol to the reality which it represents and which gives it its meaning. In reality, then, there are no religions which are false. All are true in their own fashion; all answer, though in different ways, to the given conditions of human existence\_The next point was that, in order to understand an existing ideology, whether it related to religion, politics, economics, or any other institution, it was necessary to trace its historical development, which had produced the present layers and combinations of elements. It should not be thought that there will be a direct correspondence between ideology and existing social structure; ideology is a historical product, (Kenneth, 2002).

### **The Concept of Marriage**

Bassek (1990) highlights marriage as ‘*Le mariage est une chose importante dans la vie d’un être humain...*’ Marriage is an important thing in the life of human being (The translation). Marriage is a very strong and very deep bond that functions to connect a man and a woman in a household or a family, (Nugraheni, 2019). Marriage is, (Quran reading , 2018), ‘an act of pleasing Allah Almighty because it is in accordance with His commandments that

husband and wife love each other and help each other to make efforts to continue the human race and raise their children to become true servants of Allah'. The significance of marriage in the life of human beings particularly in Africa makes African people take marriage and its customs very serious. One of the three fundamental characteristics of marriage in most primitive societies, West Africa inclusive, is: African society regards marriage as an obligation between groups (groups of man and woman in the union). It has been the practice of parents to make all the decisions with regard to who their daughter or son should marry and when. Neither the young man nor the young woman is consulted, unless after a thorough and satisfactory study of families of wife and husband to be especially as regards the health conditions together with knowledge of religion and family status; they consult and appease their oracles. But, on a day agreed on by the parents, the two are seized by their age-mates or otherwise, and they are thrown into a large hammock together. African girls of ages between thirteen and fifteen are given to men in marriage.

Another type of marriage in some cultures is the style in which a man is required to marry his brother's widow for biological reason. In West Africa, if a man dies, it is natural for a brother to take the widow, for she has already been "paid for" by equilibrium payments from the husband's family. This practice also exists to the extent that she is to 'raise seed' for her dead husband. The 'cross-cousin' marriage takes place in the society where a man marries the daughter of his mother's brother or his father's sister. It is a way of keeping the royal house intact (Nida, 1953). Early marriage or forced marriage is when a girl in her early years between the ages of 11 and 15 is made to marry, (Ogunniyi, Ehon, Azubike and Mohammed, 2016). In his discussion, further on who marries who, (Nida, 1953) explains Brother/sister marriage as a form of marriage practiced as a means of preserving the purity of the lineage and the inheritance within the same family. Interracial marriage is a marriage somebody of a different race or from a different country or of a different religious group, and a mixed marriage is between two people of different races or religions (Hornsby, 2015).

### **The Concept of Religion**

The word religion is derived from the Latin noun *religio*, which denotes both earnest observance of ritual obligations and an inward spirit of reverence. In modern usage, *religion* covers a wide spectrum of meanings that reflect the enormous variety of ways the term can be interpreted. Religion is not an object with a single, fixed meaning, or even a zone with clear boundaries. It is an aspect of human experience that may intersect, incorporate or transcend other aspects

of life and society. Religion includes not only patterns of behaviour but also patterns of language and thought. It is sometimes a highly organized institution that sets itself apart from a culture, and it is sometimes an integral part of a culture. Religion may be expressed in visual symbols, dance and performance, elaborate philosophical systems, legendary and imaginative stories, formal ceremonies, meditative techniques and detailed rules of ethical conduct and law. In some ways, there are as many forms of religious expression as there are human cultural environments (Paden, 2009). Forms of religion include African/traditional religion, Islam and Christianity (Olawuwo and Akano, 2021). It includes also kinds of monogamy and polygamy.

### **Conceptual Analysis of Relationship between Religions and Marriage among Senegalese in Mariama Bâ's *Un Chant Écarlate***

Religion and marriage are related phenomena in the social life. This study examines and analyzes the relationship between the two concepts through the reading of *Un Chant Écarlate*. It looks into the necessity of religion in today marriage, how religion matters in marriage. This would show that religious beliefs and practices are attributed to truth and that any marriage forms must not rest upon an error or a lie rather there is the need to trace and understand the existing ideology whether there is relationship between marriage and religion (past or present). This section of the study answers the question; does religion matter in today's marriage? It discusses reasons in the minds of parents before looking for whom to marry their daughter or son. It addresses the various steps taken by parents, relatives and children (man or woman to marry) in the selection of partner. It analyzes the consequences of their actions and reactions.

### **Strategies for the selection of whom to marry by parents**

#### **Belief and behaviour**

One of the ways to search for whom to marry a man or a lady in the social life, especially in African tradition is through parent. Some parents in *Un chant écarlate* search for partners for their young man and woman to marry. For instance, Khady's father sees the qualities of belief and good behaviour in Djibril Guèye. This relates to history of religion (indigenous and Islam) since the old man gives her daughter to a man of his choice: 'L'admiration et la générosité d'un coreligioniste l'avaient nanti une épouse jeune et belle, Yaye Khady Diop' (*un chant écarlate*, 12). 'Through the admiration and generous



offices of a fellow Muslim, he had been able to obtain a young beautiful wife, Yaye Khady' (*Scarlet song*, 6). Surprisingly, the couple is blessed with three children: 'Ousmane, Soukeyna and Safiétou' (*Un chant*, 61, 228). The family enjoys meal on the same table 'L'heure de dîner la famille Guèye était réunie au rez-de-chausée de la nouvelle demeure Yaye Khady présenta "MBoum" le mets favori de son mari. Les mains puisaient dans le plat commun. Yaye Khady arrosait le couscous de temps en temps avec une louche remplie de sauce ... ' (*Un chant*, 91). Ousmane provides fine building for his parents and sponsors his father to holy cities of Islam (*Un chant*, 83-84).

The same story would have repeated itself. Djibril wants to marry Marième to Ousmane but Yaye Khady disagrees. Djibril reminds Khady of her father's choice of who to marry in those days to silence her in a discussion on choice of partner of their son, Ousmane: '- N'oublie pas toi, que c'est ton père qui m'a choisi. C'est une pratique courante de choisir un bon mari pour sa fille. Je ne te connaissais pas. On ne t'a pas forcé!' (*un chant écarlate*, 87). 'Don't forget that your father chose me to be your husband. It's current practice for parents to choose good husbands for their daughters. I didn't know you. But you were not forced to marry me!' (*Scarlet song*, 57). This step taken by Khady's father as a Muslim man is the same in African tradition. This is a reflection of African tradition and resemblance of the same ideology in the modern Islamic religion. Ideology of the parents' religions now links marriage between the young couple. The religious ideology enables Djibril Guèye to maintain his family. He follows his religious practice to keep with only one wife and four children because of his little pension when he knows he cannot afford to cater for more wives. His children admire his philosophy especially Ousmane who is grateful to his father. ... Ousmane savait gré à son père d'avoir résisté à la tentation de nouvelles épouses. Djibril avait conscience de ses faibles moyens de subsistance, limités aux rentrées trimestrielles de sa pension ... (*un chant écarlate*, 13). ... Ousmane was grateful to his father for having resisted the temptation to take more wives. Djibril Guèye was very conscious of his small means, limited to his quarterly pension ... (*Scarlet song*, 7).

### **Primitive and Christian practices and doctrines**

Marriage relates to Christian practice and doctrine. Their belief is to marry among the fold of co-believers. Senegalese societal tradition influences the thought of Jean De la Vallée. He makes a request for Pierre Du Bois to marry his daughter, Mireille. Disrespectfully, the young woman ignores her parental

instruction. She engages herself in sex with Ousmane in Ali's room before marriage (*un chant écarlate*, 41). Likewise, she denounces her religion (Christianity) to marry a Muslim man, Ousmane in the civil marriage ceremony followed by a blessing in the mosque at Jussieu (*un chant écarlate*, 98). She writes to inform her parents after her secret wedding to Ousmane. 'Chers parents, <<... Majeure et responsable, j'ai épousé, à l'état civil, puis à la mosquée de notre ville, après avoir embrassé la religion islamique, Ousmane Guèye, professeur de philosophie>>' (*un chant écarlate*, 115). My dear parents, ' ... I am of age and responsible for my actions. I have embraced the Islamic faith and married Ousmane Gueye, a teacher of philosophy' (*Scarlet song*, 75). Her failure to understand, recognize and regard the historical analysis of her identity puts her in marital problem. Ousmane goes back to his tradition and religion, keeps night with, impregnates and remarries to a Muslim woman, Ouleymatou (163-206). She stays lonely with her son, (Gorgui). Later, she regrets her decision to disobey her parents' instruction and religion but can no longer go back to them because of her Negro child. 'Le Nègre a préféré une Negresse! Ah! Ah!' (*un chant écarlate*, 241). ' ... Negro ran with a Negress! Ah, ah!' (*Scarlet song*, 161). She belongs to a polygamous family instead of being in monogamy.

### **Recognition of religion in marriage among the Senegalese**

Recognition of religion in marriage is very important among the Senegalese. Coumba asks for the hands of her brother's son in marriage to her daughter, Djibril Guèye to allow Ousmane marry to Marième. Disappointedly, Yaye Khady disagrees with her sister-in-law's request and her husband's wish (*un chant écarlate*, 85-88). Coumba and her daughter, Marième, disappear from the Guèye's house (*un chant écarlate*, 90).

This is misrepresentation of religion practice in the behaviour of Yaye Khady. Religion calls for submission from wife to her husband. 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means' (Quran: al-Nisaa'4:34). Islam gave husband the responsibility of heading the household because he is more perfect in rational thinking than her in most cases. Yaye Khady's rejection of her husband's choice of Marième to marry their son causes them many things; Ousmane marries to a foreigner 'Cher père, Je m'adresse à toi avant de me tourner vers ma mère ... je me suis marié ici avec <<mon

actrice>> ... Mireille ... A bientôt, Ousmane' (*un chant écarlate*, 98-99) 'Dear father, I am writing to you before communicating with my mother ... I have got married here to my "film star" ... Mireille ... We shall be seeing you soon, Ousmane' (*Scarlet song*, 64-65). Yaye Khady regrets his son's choice 'Si j'avais su! Si j'avais su!' (*un chant écarlate*, 101) '... If I had only known! If I had only known!' (*Scarlet song*, 66). Despite Rosalie's advice to care for her family-in-laws, Mireille's habit prevails. She cannot afford to spend much for her in-laws. Yaye Khady tells Mireille after having brought one chicken in a soup-tureen for her father-in-law. What is not sufficient to serve her women friends to show off Mireille's generosity. 'What can you think of? For the father-in-law one cooks at least five chickens' (*Scarlet song*, 97); their first grand-son dies Mireille tells Ousmane 'Le Gnouloule Khessoule est mort' (*un chant écarlate*, 246). 'The Gnouloule Khessoule is dead' *Scarlet song* (164, 165), their first grand-daughter runs mad (*un chant écarlate*, 165), the only son gets wounded and arrested by the police (*un chant écarlate*, 166) and the parents themselves are not at rest (*un chant écarlate*, 166-168).

Rosita and Ali misrecognize the potential of their religions and ancestors. Ali alters his tradition as praise-singer. He leaves his duty for French school and then marries to Christian and an educated woman. Ali, a praise-singer and Muslim man, marries to a Christian lady named Rosalie. Yaye Khady references element of good relationship in Rosalie despite the fact that she is a Christian and marries to a Muslim and 'griote' man: 'Rosalie, l'épouse d'Ali, faisait partie du secrétariat des services administratifs universitaires, à l'époque de leurs études. Elle était musulmane, malgré son prénom à consonance chrétienne (*un chant écarlate*, 147)'. 'Rosalie, Ali' wife had been on the secretarial staff of the university administration during their student years. She was a Muslim, in spite of her Christian –sounding name (*Scarlet song*, 96)'.

Western education unveils hidden facts of ancestral praise-singers to Ali; he dislikes his raced woman's bad attitude towards their homes and for being illiterates and they prefer their 'griot' business to family care and growth. This makes him neglect women from his race and chooses to marry outside his race and religion:

- *Ma famille me reproche d'avoir épousé une catholique. Mais que pouvais-je faire d'autre quand les parents des jeunes filles aimées me refusaient leur main parce que je suis griot? La majorité des*

*filles de ma caste ne sont pas évoluées. Elles sont plutôt téléguidées vers les cuisines. En travaux domestiques, des championnes, ces filles ! Mais elles ignorant l'importance du foyer. Elles abandonnent mari et enfants dans une maison non-balayée pour s'épanouir dans les cérémonies qui sont leurs sources de revenus ... (un chant écarlate, 224).*

*'My family reproach me for having married a Catholic. But what else could I do when the parents of girls I was in love with refused to let us marry because I am a griot? The majority of girls from my caste are not educated. They are steered in the direction of the kitchen. As far as domestic work is concerned, griote girls are champions! But they have no idea of the importance of a home. They leave the house unswept and neglect their husband and children, so that they can perform at functions that are the source of their income ...' (Scarlet song, 149).*

Modernity cannot resolve the problem behind non-recognition of the past history of their both religious foundations and identities. Marriage is the result of divine intervention (Bâ, 1981). Unfortunately, the couple bears no child till the end of the story.

Mère Fatim enjoys respect and dictatorship of the senior wife by her co-wives in Pathé Ngom's house while she references her gods. Metaphorically, she is a tigress in her behaviour to her junior wives due to her supernatural power with which she is endowed and her position in the family. Her husband gives her chance to be respected, even, any other wife who fails to honour her will go for it:

*Mère Fatim, la première épouse de Pathé Ngom, régnait entigresse dans leur logis étusait exagérément de ses prerogatives de 'Awo'... Ses co-épouses se méfiaient de la langue de vipère qui savait dénaturer les faits anodins et tourner à son avantage toutes les situations. Surtout, elle déclenchait contre les autres les vociferations du chef de famille toujours enclin à lui donner raison. Combien*

*d'épouses nouvelles avaient plié bagage, répudiées par Pathé Ngom à cause de leur impolitesse vis-a-vis de Mère Fatim? Une nouvelle venue, Maïmouna, ... évitait de croiser la <<vieille>> pour ne pas être traitée <<d'effrontée>> (un chant écarlate, 210-211).*

*Mother Fatim, Pathé Ngom's first wife, ruled the household like a tigress. ... added to her position as 'Awo' or senior wife, allowed her to make exaggerated use of her prerogatives. Her co-wives feared her viper's tongue which could distort the most harmless facts and turn every situation to her advantage. And, in particular, she would get the head of the family, who was always inclined to take her side, to hurl abuse at her adversary.*

*How many new wives had packed their bags, repudiated by Pathé Ngom, because Ma Fatim said they had been rude to her? One newcomer, Maïmouna ... took care not to cross the 'old lady's path, to that she could not be accused of 'impertinence'. ... (Scarlet song, 140).*

Her failure to recognize her primitive religious practice makes her lose her dignity in marriage. Her *rab* disgraces her publicly to remind her of the fact that she is born of religion and needs not to become ignorant of her belief in the supernatural. Her youngest co-wife beats her to the ground the moment she loses her power to *rab*.

## **Conclusion**

Literature yields insight into the social and cultural lives of a society at a given period as portrayed in the work. It is often said that the best form of introduction to a culture is Literature. Literature reveals our attitudes, beliefs, values, training, socialization or what we call ideology. (Adebayo, 2010:3, 8-9). Literature is the culture and civilization of a people...The curriculum content for our education must be properly structured. This education must be brought to the level of needs and interest of the learner and of the nation too to

understand the century and society in which we are living, and how to understand and work out solutions of present-day problem if one is to make the best use of the knowledge and skills one has acquired in marriage (Okolie, 2007:146). This novel is a classic. Mariama Bâ is a recognized authority on traditional concepts. Her work calls the attention of individual to recognition of religion in marriage and vice-versa and that people should believe in the supernatural in order to unravel things which surpass the limits of their knowledge and understanding.

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