

ENYO

**ENYO: A Multi-Disciplinary Journal
of African Studies**

Vol.5 No.1 2024

ISSN 2756-5874

Enyo:

Vol. 5. No.1 2024

Enyo : A Journal of African Studies, is a multidisciplinary peer-reviewed, original researches that focuses on African issues relating to: Arts, Humanities, Philosophy, Medicine, Science, Technology, Geography, Education. This annual journal accepts well researched and original submissions from: languages, linguistics, history, religion, philosophy, creative and performative arts, mass communication, sociology, anthropology, education, sciences, political science, information technology, and any study that relates to Africa.

Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Thecla Ngozi Udemmadu

Editors:

Dr. Ifeyinwa Cordelia Isidienu

Rev. Fr. Dr. Patrick Ikenna Umezi

Dr. Florence Uju Ibeh

Associate Editors:

Dr. Ann Onyekelu

Department of Igbo, African and Communication Studies,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Dr. Onyinye Amamgbo

Department of Igbo, African and Communication Studies,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Dr. Gloria Nkiru Egwuonwu-Chimezie

Department of Linguistics and Igbo Imo State University,
Owerri

Dr. Anthonia Ephraim-Chukwu

Department of Igbo, African and Communication Studies, Nnamdi
Azikiwe University, Awka

Consultants :**Prof. Benjamin Mmadike**

Department of Linguistics

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Prof. Nkechinyere Nwokoye

Department of Igbo, African and Communication Studies

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Prof. Ikechukwu Okodo

Department of Igbo, African and Communication Studies

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Prof. Cecilia Eme

Department of Linguistics

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Prof. Tracie Utoh-Ezeajugh

Department of Theatre and Film Studies

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Prof. Boniface Mbah

Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigeria Languages

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

IS ADULTERY MORAL?: THE REALITY OF SEX SCANDAL BY BALTASARENGONGA IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

By

Asike, Jude Chinweuba Ph.D

Department of Philosophy
University of Port Harcourt
asikejude@yahoo.com

Abstract

This work explores the value of sex and sexism in the discussion of the enforcement of morality of sex by law in 21st century world order. Many discussions of the enforcement of morality by the law taken as illustrative, the problem underlying the regulation of various types of sexual behaviour by the criminal law and not just only by the religious cum the traditional institutions. The enforcement of morals on the reality of sex escapades by BaltasarEngonga has provoked important philosophical responses from many people across the globe. Many have seem it as immoral, which appears to take for granted the immorality of the sexual behaviour in question. The purpose of this paper, at least, is whether such things as adultery ought to be made illegal even if it is immoral in the sight of some people. This paper is purely based on the qualitative analytical research from books of recent philosophical literature and some current issues by the social media bloggers. The finding of this work therefore support the thesis that there are moral grounds of sex and sexism in the society, but “we do not find it easy to apply general moral principles to our sexual lives” (Ruddick, ed. By Wasserstrom in Today’s Moral Problems, 1979:190). We therefore, came to the conclusion, that there may be all sorts of intimate, interpersonal relationships which will resemble but not be identical with the typical marriage relationship presupposed by the traditional sexual morality. There may be a number of distinguishable sexual and loving arrangements which can all legitimately claim to be called marriages.

Keywords: Sex and sexism, morals, illegal, law, and sexual morality, marital-fidelity.

Introduction

Adultery is a complex and sensitive issue with varying ethical implications across cultures, societies, and individuals. Here in this work, we give views on the ethical implication of adultery in Equatorial Guinea and elsewhere in the world. We did this by taking solace in the recent happenings by BaltasarEngonga in Equatorial Guinea.

In relations to the Western and African philosophical thought, the issue of the morality of adultery are viewed differently. In Africa, both in cultural and social norms, adultery is often viewed as a serious offense, particularly for women. The country’s cultural and social norms emphasize the importance of marital fidelity and the consequences of infidelity can be severe. Thus, with the views to the patriarchal society, Equatorial Guinea is a patriarchal society, where men often hold more power and authority than women. This scenario can lead to a double standard, where men are more likely to be forgiven for infidelity, while women are often harshly judged. More so, under religious influence on the marital vow in the Equatoguinean society. They emphasize the importance of marital fidelity and the consequences of adultery.

Adultery is a serious issue in Africa and it is a more grievous issue amongst women who violated it. In comparative analysis, adultery is viewed as a personal issue in many Western societies. So, under this perspective, there is notion of individual freedom and autonomy, while also acknowledging the potential harm caused by infidelity. In the Eastern oriental countries, like Japan, and South Korean, adultery is often viewed as a serious offense, particularly for women. More so, in the Islamic countries, adultery is considered a serious crime, punishable by the Sharia (law). The

Quran prohibits the extramarital sex and as such allows men to marry multiple wives, instead of infidelity.

However, on a related note, regarding the concept of “Adultery”, the human rights are universal and it is very unethical to indulge in the adultery because, adultery is immoral. It is a deceit, and a harm to others. Adultery can cause significant harm to spouses, children, and other family members. The deception, betrayal, and emotional distress caused by infidelity can have long lasting effects. Adultery often involves deception and dishonesty, which can erode trust and damage relationships. Adultery can be seen as a violation of the respect and dignity owed to one’s spouse and family.

The Moral Significance of Adultery: Its Implication to Baltasar Sex Scandal in Equatorial Guinea

The moral significance of adultery is a complex and multifaceted issue, and it has influenced by various cultural, social and philosophical perspectives. There are many issues we have to discuss to know if it is morally justified or not.

First is **the violation of commitment**. Adultery involves breaking the commitment made in a romantic relationship which can be seen as moral failing, and the virtues required of a moral person are directed to preserving right relations and social order. Breaking the commitment as in the case of adultery is to make the sexual desire not to be more amenable to regulation. But whereas the regulation of perverted desires is extrinsic to them, those of completeness in marriage contracts modify the desires themselves in cherishing their bonds of unity and trust.

For example, in the case of Baltasar Engonga, it might be argued that the coincidence of sex acts and several valued emotions is a cultural matter. It is notoriously difficult to make judgements about his sex emotional and particularly, the sexual lives of others, especially culturally alien others. There is however, some anthropological evidence that at first glance relativizes the implications of cultural ties to his emotional cause of adultery. For example, among Equatoguineans, it seems that relation of affection and love are encouraged primarily among them in their hegemonic cultural heritage. It is on a related note, that Peter Winch suggests that “culture provide their members with particular possibilities of making sense of their lives, and thereby with possibility of good and evil” (Peter Winch, 1964: 307-34). More so, Manus (1942) asserts that their “cultures including our own, allow this possibility, whose realization is encouraged in varying degrees by particular groups and members of the culture” (Manus, 1942: 107).

Thus, in the case of the consideration of the immorality of adultery throughout the paper, I shall refer to the immorality of such things as breaking a promise, deceiving someone, etc. In a very rough way, I mean by this that there is something morally wrong that is done in doing the action in question. I mean that the action is, in a strong sense, of “prima facie” prima facie wrong or unjustified. I do not mean that it may never be right or justifiable to do the action; just that the fact that it is an action of this description always counts against the rightness of the action. I have entirely open the question of what it is that makes actions of the kind immoral in this sense of “immoral”.

The second preliminary point concerns what is meant or implied by the concept of adultery. I mean by “adultery” any case of extramarital sex, and I want to explore the arguments for and against extramarital sex, undertaken in a variety of morally relevant situations. In many case the immorality involved in breaching the promise relating to extramarital sex may be more serious than that involved in the breach of other promises. This is so, on the grounds of the importance of the two parties involved in the marriage contract. The breaking of this promise may be much hurtful and painful than typically the case.

Why is this so? It is so on the grounds that one did not keep the promise and this is a state of unfairness on the part of the other spouse who kept to the promise. This is an indication of a kind of indifference on the part of the adulterous spouse. If really cared about me and my feelings – the spouse might say – you would not have done this to me. This is also an indication of affection to another person who is not in the marriage contract. This is in fact, immoral because it is a breaking of promise.

Another argument for the immorality of adultery focuses not on the existence of a promise of sexual exclusivity but on the connection between adultery and deception. According to this argument, adultery involves deception. And because deception is wrong, so is adultery. Deception is always immoral and so also, corroborates that adultery is as well immoral. Thus, it is under this, that it cannot be attached to any cultural acceptability. What is immoral is immoral, deception is wrong and it is immoral. More so, adultery is a deception and as such it is immoral. Deception as to adultery has no cultural attachment, because it is wrong to break a promise. Thus, it is against this trajectory, that we absolved the ethics of the traditional sexual morality. The prohibitions of the traditional sexual morality may be good psychological sense, in the grounds that it preserves marriage to its logical truths.

For example, in the case of Baltasar Engonga, “married women in Baltasar’s sex scandal run to their husband’s family house to apologise, say that they were deceived” (<https://phoenix-browser.com/kwEfgshuuuh>). They accused him of deception. In an interview with news media, the women alleged that Engonga lied to them about the camera’s purpose, claiming it was for security reasons, unaware that he was recording their encounter. Perhaps, the above facts, express that adultery is a deceit and a deception in the principles of a genuine marriage.

This development in the case of Engonga sex scandal in Equatorial Guinea, which including married women, has sparked widespread outrage, that it is immoral and wrong in having affairs with the married ones. The incident has raised question about consent, deception, and the consequences of infidelity. As the situation unfolds, the women pleaded for forgiveness as it has resulted in a debate about accountability, personal responsibility, and the complexities of relationships.

Another incidence of immorality in Engonga adultery sex scandal, is the lure of deception in the use of camera to record the escapades of his emotional sex and sexism. Thus, it is under this consideration I envisaged that he “never had any doubt that it should be used which gives us reason to think that he was sincere in the conviction that he was justified in making an exception of himself” (Glover, 2000: 104). However, it is at the instances of this, that adultery raises several moral issues including: the betrayal of trust. Adultery involves breaking the commitment made in a romantic relationship, which can be seen as a moral failing. More so, adultery involves deception and dishonesty, which can erode trust and damage relationships. Adultery, can as well, cause significant emotional harm to the betrayed partner, as well as to any children involved whom their parents involved in such scandal. Adultery can be seen as a disrespect for the betrayed partner, as well as for the institution of marriage or committed relationships. Adultery can involve objectifying others for personal gratification rather than treating them with respect and dignity.

Conceptualizing Adultery in Philosophical Perspective

The question of whether adultery is moral is complex and depends on various cultural, social and philosophical perspectives. Baltasar Engonga’s adultery sex scandal on the reality of sex and sexism in Equatorial Guinea, likely provides nuanced exploration of this issue within the context of Equatoguinean society. Adultery is generally understood as consensual sexual relations between a married person and someone who is not his/her spouse. The morality of adultery is often debated, with some arguing that it is inherently wrong due to its potential harm to individuals, relationships, and families. Others argue that adultery can be a symptom of deeper issues, such as unhappy marriages or societal pressures.

From the philosophical perspectives, the morality of adultery can be evaluated through various ethical frameworks, such as:

Consequentialism: The perspective argues that the morality of an action is determined by its consequences. From this viewpoint, adultery might be considered immoral if it leads to harm or negative consequences for individuals or relationships.

Deontological: This approach emphasizes the importance of moral rules and duties. From this perspective, adultery might be considered immoral because it violates the moral rule of fidelity in marriage.

Virtue Ethics: This framework focuses on the development of character traits and moral virtues. From this viewpoint, adultery might be considered immoral because it reflects a lack of virtues such as fidelity, honesty, and respect for others.

Conclusion

This work really explores the moral significance of adultery, the reality of sex and sexism as epitomized in Equatorial Guinea by BaltasarEngonga. This work likely provides the nuanced exploration of the complexities surrounding adultery in Equatoguinean society. Engonga's perspective here, helped in given account of cultural, social and historical contexts that shape attitudes toward adultery in Equatorial Guinea and possibly elsewhere in the world.

Here in this work, we have envisioned that adultery is immoral because it involves the breaking of a promise between the two spouses. It defeats the reasonable expectations of bond between the spouses. In many cases the immorality involved in breaching the promise relating to extramarital sex may be more grievance than any other promise. More so, by breaking such social contractual agreement is illegal and also immoral on the grounds of the breaking of promise. The breaking of this promise may be much more hurtful and painful than is typically the case. It is also a deception and adultery involves deception. And because deception is wrong, so is adultery.

So far, in this work we have to understand the reality of sex and sexism through BaltasarEngonga's sex escapades in Equatorial Guinea. Here, we have realized that there are lots of impediments to the case of adultery, irrespective of cultural, social and philosophical perspectives. Adultery causes a lot of harm, distrust, divorce, division, depression etc. to the parties involved, and even to the children of the spouses. Thus, it is under this trajectory, that I subscribe the use of the traditional sexual morality in prohibitions of adultery in the society. It gives incentive to unity in the marriage institution. Irrespective of whether it is instrumental to the sustenance of marriage, it is also very vital moral concerns in keeping the society together in diversity.

References

- Ruddick, S.L. edited by Wassertrom *Today's Moral Problems*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1979.
- Peter Winch, "Understanding a primitive society", *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1 (1964), 307-334.
- The evidence about the life of the manus comes from Margaret mead, growing up in New Guinea (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1942).
<https://phoenix-browser.com/kwEfg8huuuuh>.
- Jonathan Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).