University of Reading

In pursuit of the "real" Nigeria/n through the archives of Heinemann's African writers series

Article

Published Version

Creative Commons: Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY)

Open Access

Walsh, S. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5574-1074
(2023) In pursuit of the "real" Nigeria/n through the archives of Heinemann's African writers series. Humanities, 12 (5). 88. ISSN 2076-0787 doi: 10.3390/h12050088 Available at https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/113159/

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from the work. See Guidance on citing.

To link to this article DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/h12050088

Publisher: MDPI AG

All outputs in CentAUR are protected by Intellectual Property Rights law, including copyright law. Copyright and IPR is retained by the creators or other copyright holders. Terms and conditions for use of this material are defined in the End User Agreement.

www.reading.ac.uk/centaur

CentAUR

University of Reading

Central Archive at the University of Reading

Reading's research outputs online

humanities

MDPI

Article

In Pursuit of the "Real" Nigeria/n through the Archives of Heinemann's African Writers Series

Sue Walsh

Department of English Literature, Whiteknights Campus, University of Reading, Reading RG6 6EL, UK; s.a.b.walsh@reading.ac.uk

Abstract: This paper will depart from the premise that with the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe as its flagship author, exemplar and editorial adviser, Heinemann Educational Books, which aimed to represent Africa and Africans through its African Writers Series (AWS) had a tendency to privilege and prioritise realist literary expressions coming out of Africa. This, combined with the fact that the series was published by an educational company looking for a way to market its product in an environment that did not yet have a place for African writers when it was first launched, might also be regarded as having fostered a tendency within the publishing house to treat the works submitted to it more as socio-historical documents than as works of literary fiction and to lead to their framing in anthropological terms. The paper will investigate the precise terms in which this takes place in two case studies of some of the archival material relating to Heinemann's interest in representing Northern Nigeria and Nigerians in the early years of the series, and it will investigate the consequences and implications of a drive towards producing a series that could be marketed as representative.

Keywords: authenticity; African Writers Series; Africa/African literature; Nigeria/Nigerian literature; education; representation; origin/original

check for updates

Citation: Walsh, Sue. 2023. In Pursuit of the "Real" Nigeria/n through the Archives of Heinemann's African Writers Series. *Humanities* 12: 88. https://doi.org/10.3390/h12050088

Received: 17 October 2022
Revised: 24 July 2023
Accepted: 4 August 2023
Published: 24 August 2023

Copyright: © 2023 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

Launched in 1962, during a period when African nations were gaining independence from their former colonial masters, the African Writers Series was an imprint of the educational publisher Heinemann Educational Books (HEB), itself originally set up as the educational arm of William Heinemann Ltd. As Phaswane Mpe has noted, its managing director, Alan Hill, originally articulated the plan as having been "to start a paperback series confined to *black* African authors" (Mpe 1999, p. 108)[1] to be sold at an affordable price in Africa. Drawing on Henry Louis Gates' analysis of "'writing' [as] a racialised category in the self-understanding of the modern West" (Barnett 2005, p. 77), Mpe goes on to argue that African writers "almost always position[ed] themselves with regard to colonialism, political independence and politics of orality and the written word," and in doing so inaugurated a "tradition of black difference" that, in particular, asserted a sense of history that "differed from the African history of colonial discourse" (Mpe 1999, p. 108). While there is much that supports Mpe's claims, it is clear that, as the series developed, and as Clive Barnett points out, "race never wholly defined the *AWS* as a series of *Black* African writing" (Barnett 2005, p. 87), instead the issue may be said to revolve more broadly around the claimed "Africanness" of the series and how that was defined, as I will go on to discuss.

In order to explore HEB's approach and attitudes to Africa and African literary productions, this article will focus on two case studies: the publication of Cyprian Ekwensi's *Burning Grass* in 1962 (Ekwensi [1962] 1964) as the second volume in the African Writers Series, following Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe [1958] 1962) as number 1, and the publication of *Amadu's Bundle*, published as the 118th in the series in 1972. These case studies will elaborate on the tensions between the series' educational origins and its more literary ambitions that others have argued lie at its heart.[2] In these two case studies

the tensions become most clearly evident in an apparent desire for the series to be truly representational of the country which launched it; produced its flagship author, Chinua Achebe; supplied the majority of its writers (Bejjit 2009, p. 232); and for about the first 20 years of its existence, was probably its greatest market: Nigeria.[3] Consequently, this article will address some of the curious contradictions and discordances that arise in the face of that representational desire.[4].

In a correspondence that dates from mid-January 1961 to 24 September 1962, we can trace some of the motivations behind the development of the African Writers Series, from the publishers' point of view, and see how Ekwensi's novel, in particular, was viewed as fitting into the series. The series itself is described in an undated draft of a blurb as being designed "principally for use in schools and colleges" (Milne n.d.). Moreover, in a similarly undated memo suggesting *Burning Grass* as a new title for the African Writers Series "scheme", Van Milne, the original architect of the series[5] and its first overseas editor, writes that he regards the novel as "very suitable" because it is "full of incident and authentic details of life in North Nigeria", and argues that "It would fall well into place beside THINGS FALL APART (East Nigeria), THE AFRICAN (Ghana) and Fagunwa's promised book on life in West Nigeria" (Milne n.d.).

From the outset then, three things are linked in the argument for the novel's acceptance in the series: its suitability for school reading, its inclusion of "*authentic* details" of Northern Nigerian life, and the fact that it was about a different region of Africa to other books already considered for the series. This already indicates the extent to which the AWS was not just intended as "a publishing service for African authors [. . .] awaiting a publisher with the confidence [. . .] to launch them on a world-wide market" as Alan Hill liked to claim (Hill 1988, p. 123), but was envisioned as representing different regions—initially of Anglophone Africa only—doing so *authentically*, and in doing so, representing to its readers the continent's diversity.[6] Why then were the designers of the series so concerned to "represent" Africa authentically? And what did that mean? Discussing the identity of the series, Nourdin Bejjit observes that,

> Perhaps the salient feature of the Series was its outspoken 'Africanness'. The initial plan to confine the series 'to black African authors' [. . .] meant that neither form nor political ideology were as significant as the overall African racial and cultural roots which bound together the then burgeoning African writings. (Bejjit 2009, p. 51)

If, as Bejjit argues, the "overall African racial and cultural roots" of the texts were the primary rationale for their inclusion in the AWS, and these roots were originally conceived of in terms of Black Africanness, this perhaps accounts for the much later adoption into the AWS of works from North Africa, the first of which, in 1969, was *The Wedding of Zein* by the Sudanese author Tayeb Salih (Currey 2008, p. 171). This eventually led in 1976 to the launching of a separate series—Arab Authors—which, according to James Currey, became necessary because "people in the Arab World were snobbish about the African label" (Bejjit 2008a). As Keith Sambrook noted: "like everything else in publishing", decisions like these were "essentially commercial" regardless of any original motivating idealism (Bejjit 2017, p. 4). The distinction made between the African Writers Series and the Arab Authors Series[7] and the concomitant relative exclusion from the canon of African literature of North African writers influenced by and writing in Arabic (Bentahar 2011, pp. 2–3) might then be viewed as also contributing to the relative lack of Northern Nigerian presence in the AWS because of the greater influence of Arabic literature in the North (Sani et al. [1997] 2022, p. 23) and the fact that the "most popular language for literary purposes" in the North was, and still is, Hausa rather than English (Sani et al. [1997] 2022, p. 4).[8]

To some extent, this might be said to have led inexorably to a search for what could be counted as authentically African, but as Achebe observed, the appeal to authenticity when defining "African Literature" could very quickly degenerate into absurdity, for if African literature must be "writing in which an African setting is authentically handled or

to which experiences originating in Africa are integral", Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* might qualify, while a novel written by the South African Peter Abrahams "based on his experiences in the West Indies" would not. Furthermore, Achebe's rhetorical question as to whether "African Literature" "could [. . .] be on any subject, or must [. . .] have an African theme" reveals precisely the essentialist[9] and potentially reductive conceptions of identity in which appeals to authenticity are prone to get mired, for what is an "African theme" anyway? (Achebe 1975, pp. 55–56).

In actuality, Heinemann was far more pragmatic than consistently ideological in this respect, operating according to James Currey (overseas editor of the AWS between 1967 and 1984), on the basis of a "rough and ready philosophy" that the series' writers "should have been born in Africa or spent their formative years there" and justifying the inclusion of Doris Lessing on the grounds that though she "wasn't born there [. . .] she wrote about something which was of concern within two black African countries" (Bejjit 2008b, p. 2). Ultimately though, it perhaps makes more sense, as Bejjit has argued, to consider the series' identity as forged from its commercially driven efforts to "fill a gap in the publishing scene hitherto overlooked by other British publishers operating in Africa" (Bejjit 2009, p. 51). To do this it drew on its existing strength in educational publishing and the attendant marketing outlets. HEB's most significant market for the AWS was in Africa, and it marketed the series through its direct contacts with the principals and teachers in individual schools, teacher training colleges and universities; and by making and maintaining contacts with Local Education Authorities, Education Ministers, and Exam Boards, as well as with the small number of bookshops based in some larger cities. Sales were made by employing someone to travel to these individual establishments and ministries to actively present and sell HEB's textbooks, and the marketing of the AWS effectively piggy-backed onto this system. By no means was the African Writers Series HEB's most important product in financial terms; these were the science textbooks with which HEB had initially carved out its place among other British publishers in Anglophone Africa.[10] In time, what the AWS did for the larger HEB business, according to James Currey, was open the door for more lucrative textbook sales in places where these had not sold before; its reputation gave schools, colleges, universities and others a reason to consider HEB's textbook offerings alongside the offerings of other, rather more major players in the textbook market such as OUP, Longman, and Nelson (Bejjit 2018, p. 288). All of this suggests that from the start of the existence of HEB's Nigeria office, the company would be looking to extend its profile beyond the East and West of the country and into the North.

There were several reasons for HEB's relative lack of presence in the North: firstly, the Nigeria office had been established in Ibadan (in the West), originally under the managership of the famous Yoruba author Daniel Fagunwa, and then when he died, a new appointee to this position of Edo ethnicity was found in the mid-West: Aigboje Higo. In a sales and marketing system that relied so heavily on the personal, familial[11] and wider ethnic and religious connections of the manager and his travelling representative, it was not surprising if a significant chunk of the Nigerian business' sales were made in the West of the country (Higo 1967).[12]

Secondly, the fact that the AWS's flagship author and editorial adviser was Chinua Achebe (an Igbo from the East) meant that his example acted as a particular encouragement to prospective writers from that part of the country,[13], who, again, were often people that he knew personally—the archival material relating to *Burning Grass* includes, for example, letters from Ekwensi to Van Milne, passing on gossip about Achebe's travels and marital status (Ekwensi 1961). Moreover, as Olabode Ibironke argues, Achebe's influence over the AWS can also be seen as significant in terms of its realist style and content, his novels acting as "the seeds of the series, simultaneously producing in advance, anticipating and fulfilling the pedagogical criteria of their co-optation and their foundational role within the series" (Ibironke 2018, p. 98).[14]

Thirdly, Nigeria's colonial history meant that regional, ethnic and religious divisions both developed from and were reified by the British in the very process of nation formation,

as Eghosa E. Osaghae and Rotimi T. Suberu argue, and "the most fundamental of the cleavages [was and] is that between North and South, these being the initial structures of the colonial state which were administered separately even after the two units were amalgamated in 1914" (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, p. 12). Osaghae and Suberu note further that though the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates to form Nigeria was in fact followed by a wave of migration of Southern Nigerians, "especially the Igbo and Yoruba, into northern cities", this did not lead to greater integration because the British discouraged "movement of non-Muslim migrants into the core Muslim areas", and effectively kept Southern migrants segregated in "*sabon gari* or strangers' quarters" (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, pp. 15–16).[15] Consequently, Iheanyi M. Enwerem argues, "it was not surprising" to find that "animosity, suspicion, and all sorts of divisive practices" developed "in the religious and socio-political life of the country":

> For instance, while the Islamic North perceived the Christian South as 'invaders' and inferiors and labelled them with derogatory terms [. . .], the Christian South generally looked down on the average Northerner as unintelligent, conservative, a zombie in the hands of British colonialists. (Enwerem [1995] 2013)

Richard Ali, a contemporary Northern Nigerian author and publisher,[16] is perhaps less even-handed with his claim that the North was the *primary* victim of the kind of ethnic stereotyping that resulted from British colonial policies:

> Nigeria did not start in 1960. It started in 1914, and from that time, a process of [Othering] the North and its people was set in motion with the connivance of the dividing-and-ruling British and the active participation of the Southern Nigerian elite. (Ogundipe 2016, p. 181)

These sorts of attitudes, stimulated and reinforced by colonial policy prior to independence, perhaps explain to some degree the apparent reticence on the part of Higo and his travelling representative, to stray beyond the borders of the region and clientele they were most familiar with. This was particularly understandable in 1966–1967, because of the volatile political situation just prior to the outbreak of the Nigeria–Biafra civil war; but handwritten notes exchanged between Alan Hill and his "partner and Number Two in the business", Tony Beal (Hill 1988, p. 75), suggest that from their point of view at least, there was more to it than that. Having been asked to comment on a report written by Aigboje Higo when the latter finally did get to Northern Nigeria for HEB in June/July of 1968, Tony Beal wrote "Aig seems to have had a useful trip–at least it's proved to him that they are not all wild savages in the North" (Higo 1968). Although Beal's condescension towards Higo is palpable, within the latter's report itself there is something of a Freudian slip when Higo writes of the difficulty of finding a "single creative textbook writer" in the North and his consequent recourse to buying "two copies of KANO Studies" to get in touch with a number of "Northern-Nigerian" contributors who are only identified as such after he has crossed out his first description of them as "*Non*-Nigerian" (Higo 1968, emphasis added).[17]

Another reason for HEB's relative lack of presence in the North that was related to Higo's difficulties in finding Northern textbook writers was that both the East and West were more embedded into the English-influenced education system than the North because Frederick Lugard, the first high commissioner of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, had "opposed the spread of the Missions" and their associated schools about which Achebe writes so tellingly in *Things Fall Apart*, "so as to protect the Muslim beliefs of the Hausa and Fulani [. . .] to please the Emirs, whom he depended on for his policy of indirect rule" (Sambrook 1967).

Nevertheless, though the Northern market would become absolutely crucial to HEB during the civil war years (1967–1970), when the company was effectively cut off from what had been South-Eastern Nigeria, there is certainly evidence right from the start that HEB was keen to be seen as representing all of the nation's regions. With its office in the West and the prestige of its Eastern AWS editorial adviser, HEB seemed to be on the look-out for

a way of gaining a greater foothold in the North and it appears than Van Milne saw the potential of Ekwensi's *Burning Grass* in this role.

In view of this, it is worth noting that the author biography on the back cover of the first edition of the novel was careful to stress that Cyprian Ekwensi's birthplace was "Minna in Northern Nigeria". It also emphasised that Ekwensi was a "keen photographer [. . .] and traveller", with the implication that he was both knowledgeable about the different regions of the country and had an investment in recording what he saw accurately. This appeal to the idea of the author as a reliable recorder can be inferred when it is put together with Van Milne's publication pitch, which had hinged on the novel being "full of [. . .] authentic details of life in Northern Nigeria" (Milne n.d.). However, despite the fact that Northern Nigeria is ethnically diverse,[18] and the fact that Ekwensi was born in Minna and did his primary schooling there, his status as a Northerner seems not to have been completely secure either for the AWS (which gave up the claim that Minna is a Northern city in the 1964 edition of *Burning Grass*) or for his critical biographer, Ernest Emenyonu, who wrote that "When the war brewed in Nigeria in 1966, Ekwensi *returned* to his Igbo homeland [. . . in] Eastern Nigeria" (Emenyonu 1974, p. 11, emphasis added) in spite of the fact that most of Ekwensi's life up until that point had been spent outside of the East.[19]

Under the title "A Sense of Place", however, a review in the *Times Literary Supplement* of the first edition of *Burning Grass* took up the notion of authenticity that Van Milne's original publication pitch had laid claim to, noting that "this book is the first Nigerian novel to deal with that vast region [– the North –] in which more than half the country's population live" and going on to claim that

> Mr Ekwensi has written his book in spare, austere language which suits the landscape of the savannah and the comfortless life of the nomad. And the diction of his pastoralists seems just right: a trifle archaic, formal and full of that reverent courtesy of greeting which is the best of Islam.
>
> No Nigerian writer has a wider knowledge of the country than Cyprian Ekwensi, who has lived and worked in so many parts of it. (*TLS* 1962)

Much rests here on the idea that Ekwensi's novel presents an accurate portrayal of the North, its people and their mode of expression. This can be read from the claim as to Ekwensi's knowledge and direct experience of the region (a knowledge that is here attested to by a non-Nigerian). It can also be seen in the claim that this text, as opposed to Ekwensi's earlier Lagos-set books, is shorn of the excesses of "sentimentality and melodrama", and so is regarded as mirroring what is claimed as the *actual* austerity of the landscape through an appropriately equally "spare" and "austere" language.[20] Finally, it can also be read in the assertion that "the diction of his pastoralists *seems* just right", where at last there is perhaps just a chink of an acknowledgement that the reviewer might not after all have the authority to make this observation, despite the claimed knowledge of "the best of Islam". Fundamentally then, in contrast to Emenyonu's later reading of *Burning Grass* as a "make-believe" world that stands in welcome relief to the Lagos-set novels which earned Ekwensi the sobriquet of "the Nigerian Defoe" (Emenyonu 1974, p. 1), the value of *Burning Grass* is articulated by the *TLS* reviewer in terms of its mimetic relationship to its subject matter.

In this respect, the *TLS* review of *Burning Grass* is not unlike the early reception of *Things Fall Apart*, which both within the publishing house and without, was more often than not focused on the novel's "authenticity", "ethnographic timelessness" and "simplicity", for as Gail Low has observed, the 1958 *TLS* review of that novel "emphasise[d] Achebe's 'authentic' presentation of 'tribal life from the inside'" while David Machin, editorial manager at William Heinemann, "praise[d] Achebe for his very accurate and real portrayal of African village scenes, even while acknowledging that he, Machin, had never set foot in Africa" (Low 2011, p. 90).

Further evidence that this view of *Burning Grass* as having a representative function existed not just amongst reviewers in Britain but also amongst the publishers themselves

can be found in a set of curious exchanges regarding the illustrations for *Burning Grass*. Part of the rationale for including illustrations can be seen to be to do with consolidating the identity of the series. In terms of series identity, Low also notes that as well as being "fronted by the iconic map of the continent", the illustrations for the covers of the AWS paperbacks were often "realist" in character in comparison to those for the hardbacks meant for sale outside of Africa, which "were more abstract," "less representational [. . . and . . .] seemed not to draw attention to the Africanness" of the works, (Low 2011, p. 86). Van Milne originally approached the British artist Dennis Duerden to illustrate *Burning Grass*, but he assured Ekwensi that "In future we shall make more use of Nigerian artists" (Milne 1962a). Duerden had been an education officer in the Nigerian colonial service, became assistant curator at the Jos museum in central Nigeria in 1956 (Price 2007), served as a producer for the BBC Hausa Service and, in 1962, became director of the London-based Transcription Centre that produced and distributed radio programmes for and about Africa.[21] As Gail Low notes, Duerden had been the one to design the cover of the AWS paperback of *Things Fall Apart* (Low 2011, pp. 68–69), and so it made sense, from the point of view of providing a coherent branding for the series, to approach him again for Ekwensi's novel.

In the end, because Duerden was otherwise over-committed, the illustrations for *Burning Grass*, apart from the front cover, were provided by a Nigerian artist after all: Agbo Folarin, described to Ekwensi by Van Milne as a protégé of Duerden (Milne 1962b). However, if Heinemann's intention was to position *Burning Grass* within the AWS as authentically representing *Northern* Nigeria specifically, the choice to use a Yoruba illustrator born and bred in the South-West might seem somewhat perverse. Furthermore, I would argue that it also highlighted some fault lines in Heinemann's apparent desire to make authentic Nigerian self-representation possible within the AWS, since the regional and ethnic categories through which one kind of authenticity was claimed could also end up troubling other categories such as the national and the continental ones that the series also relied upon.

In any case, though Folarin replaced Duerden for the main illustrations, there remained the question of a map for the novel, the commission for which went to a Sussex-based illustrator, Cyril Webber, at the beginning of April 1962. The instructions that went to Webber with a rough sketch were as follows:

> It should be very simple, although please if possible make the border and the path of the rivers rather more accurate [. . .] I have also enclosed a proof of the book for you to check the place names if necessary. (MacGibbon 1962)

Not only does the requirement of a map in itself make certain claims about the novel's relationship to reality, but the plea for accuracy, even when set against the demand for simplicity, again resonates with the idea that what this novel was being required to do for the series was provide a trustworthy representation of Northern Nigeria. Indeed, as Graham Huggan observes of one of HEB's later editions of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* complete both with maps and "a formidable battery of prefatory notes", such editorial moves may be taken as an invitation to read "anthropologically" (Huggan 2001, p. 42). What followed in this case, however, perhaps illustrates the extent to which Ekwensi and his publishers might be said to diverge on this point. Later that April, Webber wrote that he had completed the map as follows:

> I am enclosing the finished drawing of the "Burning Grass" map which I hope you will like.
>
> There are some mountains in the north-west of the country which would have lent interest to the drawing but I hesitated to include them since you asked that the map be a simple one. However I have named two neighbouring countries to give some location & included a dotted [illegible] boundary in the south partly to break the expanse of white space & partly to give meaning to "Northern" Nigeria. (Webber 1962a)

Here, the illustrator's own sense of tension between accuracy and artistic production (particularly when circumscribed by the requirement of simplicity) is made manifest. The mountains in the North-West are existent in the "real"—they are "there"—but are also conceived of in terms of their impact on the "drawing" for the putative reader/viewer: they "would have lent interest" to it, but have not, in the end, been allowed to do so. Moreover, Webber claims for himself the naming of "two neighbouring countries"—Niger and Dahomey (now Benin)—but not the other two that flank Nigeria—Chad and Cameroon—and this is explained in terms of locating the region represented in the map in "some" rather nebulous way. Likewise, the "dotted [. . .] boundary" is provided "to give meaning" to the relational nomenclature of "Northern" Nigeria as part of a greater whole, as well as to provide visual interest. All these features reveal the way the map (like any map) both situates its reader and constructs the place it is supposed to represent. As such, the map gives no indication of the ethnic diversity of Northern Nigeria but constructs it as a blank that only really has meaning in relation to the un-named and only partially visible "South".

Nevertheless, that the illustrator was also caught up in the idea that his role was to depict artistically an authentic and existent Northern Nigerian geography, becomes evident from a querulous little note received by the publishers a little over two months later in which Webber accounted for his delay in sending in his bill for *Burning Grass* and complained that "with regard to the latter you may recall that I was obliged to spend some time in attempting to verify place names & distances which later proved to be fictitious" (Webber 1962b). The "map" then appears as an attempt to determine and fix the region and its people (or at least the Fulani *as* its people) but is frustrated, in these terms, by its inevitable failure to match up to an agreed-upon reality because of, precisely, the imaginary nature of the landscape it portrays.

This would not be the last time that Ekwensi would frustrate HEB's "anthropological" and realist pedagogic impulses. When it came to the publication, in 1976, of his post-civil war novel, *Survive the Peace*, the editorial manager suggested that an accompanying "MAP" showing the Biafran/Nigerian boundary as well as a number of key towns in both East and West "would be useful" (Lederman 1975). Though he initially seemed to acquiesce, Ekwensi's response could be said to reveal the naivety of viewing maps simply in terms of being representations of an on-the-ground reality that could be stabilised through them:

> During the war, the territory claimed by BIAFRA did not quite agree with the territory KNOWN as Biafra by the Federals. Since this is a work of fiction which is meant to be non-political it might be best to leave the territorial aspect out of the story. 'Territorial integrity' was one of the issues on which the war was fought. (Ekwensi 1976)

Nevertheless, Ekwensi was willing enough to play up to the HEB editors' apparent conception of him as uniquely well-travelled in Nigeria for an Igbo writer and thus the man to represent for the AWS what they had not found a Fulani author from the North to do. He was certainly quick to promote his novel in the North and to capitalise on the interest shown there in it, writing to Van Milne on 3 September 1962 with a copy of a letter sent to him by the acting Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Mines and Power, which requested "complimentary copies of your wonderful book on the Fulani of Northern Region" for the Federal Ministers and the Premier of the Northern Region, "Alhaji the Hon. Sir Abubka Tafawa Balewa".[22] At the bottom of the copy, Ekwensi wrote:

> You might like [to . . .] let me make a special point of delivering [the complimentary copies] personally.
>
> All this is by way of opening the way, preparing the ground for the 'Africanisation' of our text books.
>
> BURNING GRASS, your pet book, has been very highly thought of all round. (Ekwensi 1962a)

Clearly, Ekwensi understood the value to him of the connection between the AWS and HEB's wider educational business, as well as understanding very well his own role in

furthering HEB's attempts to corner the textbook market in Africa by publishing works authored by Africans.

However, while Ekwensi could be regarded as eager to present himself as able to convey the voice of the North, and as uniquely able to represent it accurately, in other respects his words and actions present him as something of a tourist. In July 1963, Ekwensi wrote as follows to the new overseas editor, Keith Sambrook:

> While on a tour of the Federation of Nigeria I was able to take some quite beautiful pictures of the Burning Grass people. Here are some of them
>
> Dennis Duerdin *[sic]* who illustrated the cover, and Folarin who did the inside drawings, would have benefited infinitely if they had seen these very beautiful people.
>
> My favourite one is that of the boy and girl exchanging confidences, laughing at us no doubt and wondering why we want to 'take their picture'. (Ekwensi 1963)

While it seems that, to him, his experience of "being there" in the North and among the Fulani elevates him over both Duerden and the Yoruba Folarin in terms of being able to represent the region and its people, his reference to his travels as a "tour" and his acknowledgement that he does not actually know what the boy and girl in his photograph are sharing with each other, or why, or at whom they are laughing, also in a sense acknowledge his outsider position, as not himself Fulani.[23] Though *Burning Grass* is said to be "based on" Ekwensi's "real life experience" of "liv[ing] with a Fulani family for three weeks" when training to be a forestry officer in the 1940s (see Abdurrahman 1988; Emenyonu 1974, p. 95), the accounts he gave of the Fulani as a result of that experience are shot through with an exoticism in which the Fulani are characterised as steeped in an "atmosphere of magic and superstition which dominated their every thought and action", and as being a people that are "proud, distinct and *ageless*" (Abdurrahman 1988, emphasis added). It is worth noting that this latter characterisation is perhaps not so very distant from the kind of investment in Northern Nigerian "changelessness" that British colonial officials had displayed "even when chiefs and Native Authorities wished to break free of tradition" (Olusanya 1969, p. 167).

All of this, by implication, highlights the necessarily questionable position of Ekwensi's novel as authoritative on the Fulani, albeit as a work of fiction. However, Ekwensi, even while exoticizing "these very beautiful people", is not above claiming that his photograph is an authentic capturing of them (though they are quite precisely constructed in terms of his own fiction as "the Burning Grass people") since in closing he writes: "*This* is it, and *these* are the people" (Ekwensi 1963, emphases added).

Notwithstanding this, and acknowledging that Ekwensi was not Fulani, contemporary Cameroonian anthropologist Francis B. Nyamnjoh assesses *Burning Grass* as "a convincing account of the values and ways of life dear to Mbororo-Fulani" and draws upon it as part of his argument that that the Mbororo-Fulani's "history and socioanthropological reality" is one "of integration and accommodation" that contradicts insistence on a "'pure' Mbororo-Fulani" identity (Nyamnjoh 2013, pp. 107–8). Indeed, despite the reservations I have outlined above, Nyamnjoh sees Ekwensi's novel not as reifying an essential and "pure" Fulani identity but as a "story of sophistication and history of navigation and negotiation of culture and nature, and of different identity margins" (Nyamnjoh 2013, p. 111). In this interpretation, the novel is about a people constantly on the move and resistant to borders, a people engaged in a "flexible mobility" that opposes the map's attempt to predict and fix that movement, at least in part, for ultimately Nyamnjoh concedes that the novel does have a "tendency [. . .] to dichotomize between Mbororo-Fulani" and others, casting the former as particularly associated with "nature and as [. . .] too nomadic to have any lasting ties to place", whereas "the reality of Mbororo-Fulani is much more nuanced and intricate than the novel suggests" (Nyamnjoh 2013, p. 115).

Though part of the issue that has been under discussion in this article is the way the Fulani were taken, by Heinemann and others, to exemplify Northernness *par excellence*,

the African Writers Series' first text to "originate" from the Fulani, *Amadu's Bundle*, was not published until ten years after *Burning Grass* and, unlike *Things Fall Apart* and *Burning Grass*, it was not a novel and did not purport to be realist but to be traditional stories of the "Fulani people of Northern Cameroun and Nigeria" (Amadu 1972, back cover). As such, *Amadu's Bundle* could not be said to be following in the Achebe vein; but as "traditional" tales, their appeal for the AWS was in their representative nature and there were precursor folktale collections in the series to light the way, such as *The Origin of Life and Death*, published in 1966 as number 23 in the series, and *Not Even God is Ripe Enough*, a collection of Yoruba stories published in 1968 as number 48. The archival evidence suggests that *Amadu's Bundle*'s Northern origins were a large part of its draw for the publishers and perhaps constituted the *main* reason for considering it for publication, for when James Currey asked for Aig Higo's opinion on "these Fulani stories" he added that "They don't have the zest of *Not Even God is Ripe Enough*" but "still wonder[ed] whether they weren't worth considering in view of the lack of published material from the north" (Currey 1970).

The archive also indicates that *Amadu's Bundle* was not originally destined for the AWS and in addition to the question of where to place it, there was some discussion as to how it should be presented. With respect to both of these issues, questions of ethnic and/or regional authenticity arise again at several points. To start with, the collection of Northern stories came to James Currey via a somewhat circuitous route. In August of 1970, Currey received a letter from Ronald Moody, a British-based Jamaican-born sculptor, enclosing "'Amadu's Bundle' [. . .], collected and translated by Dr Gulla Kell when she was [in Nigeria] some years ago". Moody went on to explain that he had been given the stories by Kell, a German ethnologist, before "she went to Burma to become a Buddhist where she died after a long illness" (Moody 1970).[24] In line with Higo's view on the stories (Higo 1970), Currey writes to Moody suggesting the collection be published in Heinemann's Secondary Readers, noting that since "there are several selections of stories" in that series, *Amadu's Bundle* "would find a useful place" among them. Currey goes on to state that regardless of Kell's credentials as an anthropologist and the original introduction supplied that gives an account of how she came by the stories, it would not be necessary to have more than "a short one-page note about the reason for calling it *Amadu's Bundle*" because "We, of course, view the book from a literary rather than anthropological point of view". Having noted this, he also goes on to stipulate that "Our editors, Mr Windsor and Mr Higo would also need to be able to prepare the manuscript to fit with the needs of the series, both from the point of view of length and of language structure" (Currey 1971a). It is at this point that difficulties start to arise.

Despite the claim to privilege the literary over the anthropological, Currey was also in correspondence with Nicholas David, an anthropologist at New College, London, on the subject of the book. And even while the publishers continued to debate over which stories from the collection they should publish, David expressed the view that "the book, however produced, would be greatly improved by the addition of photographs of the Fulani of the Adamawa" (David 1971). At the same time, there was the question of how to arrive at a manuscript that would meet the needs of the series as a series for secondary school pupils. Consequently, *Amadu's Bundle* was also sent for review to Martin Okeyere Owusu, a Ghanaian middle school teacher and playwright who was at that time working on his master's degree at Bristol University. Owusu's report was to prompt a re-think of the imprint under which *Amadu's Bundle* was to be published. Noting that "thematically" the bulk of the stories "are not suitable for the H.S.R. series" with "Themes of incest, infidelity, elopement, nakedly treated" and "to my mind, too much for the young student", Owusu nevertheless made a selection of ten that could be "improved" and enclosed an adaptation of one of the stories as an example (Owusu 1971). Currey's response confirmed that Owusu's report had "finally convinced us that we shall have to put out *Amadu's Bundle* as an African Writers Series book", but proposed alongside this, that Owusu "take the stories you suggest as the basis of a Heinemann Secondary Reader". As a caveat, Currey observed that "obviously we will have to get permission from Ronald Moody for this" (Currey 1971b).

The permission was not forthcoming. Moody's reaction to the redrafted story was most unfavourable. He regarded it as changing the "whole meaning" of the story and as making it "*less* simple" rather than more so. Here again, as in the case of the map for *Burning Grass* and the reviews of that novel, Northern Nigerianness is being constituted in terms of quintessential simplicity. Consequently, the requirement that *Amadu's Bundle* be "simple" was not only a reiteration of its role as representational but also the expression of a concern that it could after all somehow fail to represent the North authentically by failing to be sufficiently "simple". While still "agree[ing] to using *Amadu's Bundle* for AWS and to have a simpler version for HSR" it was made clear that "in no circumstances" was the collection to be "re-written by this man" (Moody 1972a). A pen note for the attention of Keith Sambrook, made by the editor Ann Scorgie on a letter from Moody that enclosed his own version of the story Owusu had adapted, indicates some further issues that would seem to have been in play: "Here is Moody's version [. . .] Personally I like it & it does preserve the flavour of a *Muslim* story rather than a Ghanaian which is what Owusu transmuted it into" (Moody 1972b). Scorgie's note, which constitutes "Muslim" and "Ghanaian" as mutually exclusive categories (which might come as news to the large minority of Muslim Ghanaians), points to the kind of slippages that occurred, in the publishers' deliberations, between the different categories that are called upon to determine the cultural authenticity of a work.

A further issue arose with respect to the title page of the volume and the question of who should be credited with the stories' authorship. A production proposal from 22 December 1971 lists Moody and Kell as the authors, (Production Proposal 1971) but in a letter to Moody dated 8 May 1972, Currey writes that "it would really be more logical for this book to be ascribed to Malum Amadu" and proposes that the title page should look as follows:

AMADU'S BUNDLE

Fulani Tales of Love and Djinns

Malum Amadu

Collected by Gulla Kell and
translated into English by
Ronald Moody
(Currey 1972a)

As can be seen, the page deals with the question of authorship in a somewhat ambiguous fashion. The "bundle" is acknowledged as belonging to Amadu, but the tales themselves are identified as "Fulani", which potentially questions Amadu's ownership of them. This effect is amplified in the blurb on the back of the published volume, which makes clear that "Malum" is not a proper name but an honorific, meaning "scribe".[25] Nevertheless, "Malum Amadu" appears in a space that would seem, ordinarily, to be reserved to the name of the author, though other texts in the series, like *Burning Grass* for instance, place the author's name above the title on the title page. Malum Amadu is also separated from Gulla Kell and Ronald Moody, who are placed in close relation to each other, and ascribed particular functions with respect to the tales, whereas Malum Amadu floats ambiguously between the claim of the Fulani on the stories on the one hand (whether as owners or originators) and Kell and Moody's clearly defined roles in relation to an already existing "bundle" of stories on the other. In the case of the title page of *Not Even God is Ripe Enough*, the AWS's parallel collection of Yoruba tales, Bakare Gbadamosi and Ulli Beier are, like Malum Amadu, positioned below the title, but they are additionally defined as those by whom the stories are "told".

Moody seems to have been discombobulated by Currey's suggestion, communicating through his agents that the suggested title page "would be misleading because Malum

Amadu did not actually *write* the Tales, he merely wrote them down". It was thus proposed that aside from its appearance within the title, the Malum's name should be excised from the title page. Moody further suggested that the blurb be expanded because it was "rather sparse with information on Gulla Kell who did all the work" (Hope, Leresche and Steele 1972a). Currey responded with "I am still rather worried about this. [. . .] I think if all the stories came from Amadu he ought to be credited, or do you think this makes problems over the contract?" Nevertheless, he agreed to the removal of "Malum Amadu" on his own line beneath the title but, citing the example of *Not Even God is Ripe Enough*, proposed that Malum Amadu and Gulla Kell be placed on a line together as those whom the "Fulani Tales" were "by" (Currey 1972b). Though Moody seems to have acquiesced to this compromise (Hope, Leresche and Steele 1972b), the final published version of the title page looks somewhat different from Currey's proposal and reads as follows:

Amadu's Bundle

Fulani Tales of Love and Djinns

MALUM AMADU
collected by GULLA KELL
and translated into English
by Ronald Moody
(Amadu 1972, title page)

In this version, though Amadu's name remains first on the page, and occupies its own line, it is brought into closer proximity with Kell's, and a shared responsibility for the text is asserted through the upper-case script in which both names appear.[26]

The back and forth between Currey and Moody regarding the question of Malum Amadu's authorship and claim to the folktales outlined here above also highlights the almost complete silence of Amadu within the archives. While I do not wish to cast doubt on the good faith animating Currey's persistence over the attribution of authorship to Amadu, there is no archival evidence that there was any attempt to trace the Malum, though such a task may well, and with good reason, have been viewed as so impossible as to not even warrant consideration. However, if one considers again the impetus to publish *Amadu's Bundle* as a work originating from the North, it may well have been felt to appear more authentically so if credited to the Fulani Malum rather than the German anthropologist. In any case, unlike the situation with *Burning Grass*, there was no dialogue to be had with the author of *Amadu's Bundle*, whether this was considered to be the deceased Gulla Kell or the Malum.

Kell's account of meeting Amadu, as translated by Moody and partially reproduced in the "Editor's Note" to the published volume, itself appears to make a distinction between texts the Malum "wrote down" ("the classics, [. . .] fairy tales, riddles and songs existing only in verbal tradition") and "his own essays composed at my request," but since the Malum is also described by Kell as having "dictated and discussed his texts with me" (Amadu 1972, p. viii).[27], it does not seem that Kell exactly confirms Moody's views either that Amadu "*merely*" transcribed the stories, or indeed that "*all*" the work involved in bringing the collection to the point where it could be considered for publication by Heinemann was Kell's. In fact, another of the unpublished sections of the manuscript held in the archives and entitled "Ilam Tufago", consists of one story "made up", according to Kell, "of three parts of different myths," which Kell separated out from each other so as to be able to "present each part with a commentary which contains an interpretation [. . .] based on Amadu's replies to [her] questions" (Kell n.d.c, p. 77). As such, Kell represents the work as a collaboration between herself and the Malum. For her, Amadu retains ownership of the "stories, poetry [and] fairy tales" (Amadu 1972, p. vii), which are acknowledged as "his", and at the same time, she describes them as being "strange and evasive travellers" engaged in their own somewhat autonomous "journey round the globe" and "lik[ing] to dress

themselves in the local colour and customs of the people among whom they are found" (Kell n.d.c, p. 77). In this sense, the "myths and fairy tales" do not belong exclusively to any individual or people and their origins are always necessarily deferred. However, at certain points within "Ilam Tufago," Kell does distinguish what she claims as certain "personal remark[s] of Amadu", such as his comment that "people contradict each other" over the question of how long "the water covered the earth for" in the story of the Flood; or his fondness for finishing "his stories" with "'some women are very bad'", whenever there was the "opportunity of referring to the shrewdness or deceitfulness of women" (Kell n.d.c, pp. 79, 83). Rather than casting these comments as an intrinsic part of the stories, they are attributed to Amadu himself, but of course, this version of the Malum is framed by Kell's perspective.[28] Moreover, the effect of Kell's translation into German of Amadu's "bundle", and of Moody's subsequent translation into English of Kell's German is not determinable from the extant material in the archives.

Quite aside from the issue of whether or how to ascribe authorship or ownership of traditional tales, an issue that Ekwensi was to come up against with respect to his *An African Night's Entertainment*, which was published by African University's Press in the same year as *Burning Grass* (Skinner 1973),[29] all this indicates something of a lack of certainty at the heart of Heinemann as to how to proceed with *Amadu's Bundle*. This had to do both with the pull of the different claims as to the origin and authenticity of the text and with the publishers' somewhat divided loyalties over whether their focus was on literature *qua* literature or its representative function.

In the end, despite the correspondence with Nicholas David, the published version of the "bundle" did not include any form of illustration, let alone any photographs of contemporary Fulani to anchor it to contemporary Fulani society. Moreover, the cover of the first edition was designed by Uzo Egonu, a Nigerian-born Igbo artist "firmly located within the tradition of modernism" (Appignanesi 2011). Likewise, the more ethnological elements of the manuscript were largely cut out, in line with Currey's claim to "view the book from a literary rather than an anthropological point of view", and traces remained only in the slightly longer-than-one-page editor's note ascribed to Gulla Kell and in the two short paragraphs that form the blurb on the back of the book. Neither was any version of the text made available for the Heinemann Secondary Readers series. Moody's strenuous objection to Owusu's adaption might be regarded as expressing a sense that the tales were being shorn of their essentially Northern Nigerian Muslim character, through a retelling that effectively by-passed their cultural origins, both ethnic and religious.[30] However, if this was the case, Moody's view might be said to only recapitulate a judgement that had already been made on the collection, in which he himself was implicated: Malcolm Barnes, who had read the stories for Allen and Unwin when Moody had sent them there before approaching Heinemann, had already articulated the suspicion "that a good deal of the native simplicity has been lost in the endeavour to adapt them to the principles of European story-telling" (Barnes 1959).

2. Conclusions

What then were the consequences of Heinemann's desire to produce a series that could be promoted as representing, as well as serving, its market, rather than as exclusively literary?

It is certainly the case that Heinemann's pursuit of representativeness with respect to Nigeria, both in terms of achieving a market share that included the North (both as producers and consumers) and its intertwined aim to publish work that reflected the diversity of the country (geographically and ethnically), meant that the African Writers Series found itself entangled in questions of authenticity, which rebounded on and recontextualised notions of the educational and the literary.

Moreover, Heinemann's pursuit of the North almost as an afterthought, and its failure to engage with works written in Hausa in particular[31] meant that it participated, whether advertently or not, in setting the North apart in creative terms in a way that has ramifica-

tions to this day. For, as Carmen McCain notes, "many of the English-language writers [. . .in. . .] the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) seem[. . .] to have little idea that there [is] a Hausa literary scene" and that "[b]ecause this movement [is] in Hausa, it seem[s] to be largely ignored by the larger Nigerian and African literary community" (McCain 2014, pp. x–xi). While Heinemann was clearly not the originator of this state of affairs, which, as I have noted, had significant historical *raisons d'être*, its approach did not really do anything to ameliorate the situation.

At the same time, it is perhaps fair to say that the AWS's focus on representationalism also made visible a lacuna in the representation of Nigeria in Anglophone publishing that also persists to this day, for despite the flourishing Hausa publishing scene that McCain and others point to,[32] Sani, Ibrahim and Omobowale also note that "major publishers [. . .] who are active in other parts of the country do not have branches in northern Nigeria, [. . .] almost none of the southern Nigerian based multinational publishers have promoted literature in northern Nigeria" and "writers from northern Nigeria are less likely to be on the curricula of schools and colleges or to be as well-known as their counterparts south of the Niger" (Sani et al. [1997] 2022, pp. 8, 10). Though this was written in the late 1990s, it is still the case that even though such authors as Helon Habila, Elnathan John, Abubakar Adam Ibrahim and Richard Ali are today published both in Nigeria and internationally, Northern Nigerians remain under-represented amongst Nigerian writers publishing in English. In this sense, it seems clear that Northern cultural production, even when it is in English, continues to play second fiddle in Nigeria to "the Lagos axis of cultural production" (McCain 2014, p. xiv), as perhaps intimated by the decision of Richard Ali and Azafi Omoluabi-Ogosi to set up their publishing company, Parrésia, in Lagos despite Ali's roots and experience in the North. To some degree, however, it might be argued that the relative paucity of representation from the North, though still a feature of Nigerian writing published in English, is less visible now than it was in the heydays of the AWS because there is not that same focus on representationalism that was vested in the series.

The appeal to authenticity and to simplicity *as* the authentic that was repeatedly resorted to by the publishers and echoed by the reviewers might also be regarded as having had a tendency to frustrate the literary ambitions of the AWS, although not necessarily consistently or throughout its history. As Olabode Ibironke notes, a change in editorial practice to what Currey refers to as "a triangular system of consultation between the publishing editors in Ibadan, Nairobi and London" (Currey 2008, p. 8) in around 1967 seems to have led to a shift in the series towards publishing more "experimental and highly stylized" work and towards a rejection of "Achebe-type simplicity" (Ibironke 2018, pp. 191, 196). But this did not mean, as can be seen in the archival material relating to *Amadu's Bundle*, that the equation of simplicity with the authentically African had been entirely dispensed with.

Heinemann's quest for authentic representation in regional and ethnic terms might also be regarded as playing its part in a context in which ethnoreligious identities became increasingly petrified as "pure" and "primordial" regardless of evidence that such identities were and are complex, impure and mobile. As Osaghae and Suberu point out, so-called "'primordial' identities [. . .] have gained wide currency and [. . .] political significance" in Nigeria and have been used to deny rights and citizenship to those who, by contrast, are consequently defined as "'non-indigenes' [or as] 'migrants'" (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, p. 8), and this has particular implications for the Mbororo-Fulani, as Francis B. Nyamnjoh and others have pointed out (Nyamnjoh 2013). Once again, Heinemann can hardly be accused of being the root cause, but perhaps it is fair to say that its investment in ideas of authentic ethno-regionality hardly worked to challenge the kind of essentialist thinking that would undergird the entrenchment of the iniquitous inter-ethnic relations that had been fostered by the colonial regime and perpetuated by post-independence administrations (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, p. 9).

Finally, though this is straying beyond the question of the impact of Heinemann's desire to produce a series that could be promoted as authentically representative of its

market, I would note that while Emma Shercliff, Kate Wallis and others (Shercliff 2015; Bakare-Yusuf et al. 2016; Wallis 2016) make good cases for a vibrant contemporary Nigerian publishing industry that has overcome the legacies of colonialism that shaped the ways British firms like Heinemann operated in Africa,[33] I would argue that Mũkoma Wa Ngũgĩ's criticism of Heinemann's failure "to develop a general readership because the goal was to have novels become exam set books" (Ngũgĩ 2018, p. 148) is still pertinent. The lasting impact of this failure can be seen in the "new generation" of indigenous generalist publishers, such as Cassava Republic Press, Kachifo Ltd and Parrésia Publishers Ltd, which still "rely heavily on adoptions of contemporary works of fiction in schools and universities" (Shercliff 2015, p. 55)[34] and are "dwarfed by major educational publishers" (Suhr-Sytsma 2018, p. 344). Moreover, given that Walter Bgoya and Mary Jay observed in 2013 that "only a minority of the original publishers [of the African Books Collective founded in 1985] are still actively publishing" (Bgoya and Jay 2013, p. 21), it is perhaps too early, in 2023, to be overly confident about the ongoing viability of Kachifo, Cassava Republic and Parrésia, which were founded in 2001, 2006 and 2011, respectively.[35]

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: I acknowledge Cyprian Ekwensi as the copyright holder of his unpublished correspondence with the publisher, Heinemann Educational Books and I acknowledge Watson, Little Ltd. as the licensing agents. I also acknowledge the University of Reading, Special Collections as the repository of the Heinemann Educational Books publishers' archives, including the archives of the African Writers Series. I would like to thank Neil Cocks and Sarah Spooner for their readerly assistance and Carmen McCain for the Neil Skinner reference. Finally, I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their time, care and thoughtful suggestions. Any errors that remain are my own.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

1 The emphasis is Mpe's, see Hill (1988, p. 123).

2 Gail Low makes this case persuasively (Low 2011) and James Currey, in his own account of the series' genesis and history, provides nothing to dispute it (Currey 2008). However, the series' literary ambitions have been argued to have been more fully realised after Currey had taken over the role of primary overseas editor (Ibironke 2018, pp. 192–93).

3 Though there is a lack of availability of figures for the sales of the AWS titles by country, James Currey has stated that "the AWS, more or less, in the first twenty years was selling about eighty percent of its copies in Africa and about ten percent in Britain and ten percent in the US" (Bejjit 2008a, p. 3). This, put together with the fact that "by 1976, the Nigerian company was the leading overseas firm in the HEB group, with a turnover of £2,382,000 (over £6 million by 1987 value) equally split between local publishing and imported books'" (Hill 1988, p. 222) means that it seems a reasonable conjecture.

4 While there are complex debates to be had over what constitutes realism, as is made clear by (Auerbach [1953] 2003) in his magisterial history, *Mimesis*, the range of aesthetic and political strategies associated with various forms of realism are largely beyond the scope of this article, though I would point the reader to Simon Gikandi's "Realism, Romance, and the Problem of African Literary History" for an account of the way that "the literary project of decolonization [in works such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*] was driven by [. . .] a double mimesis" (Gikandi 2012, pp. 309–10). In this article, however, I am departing from the fact that there is, as Justin Bisanswa has argued, "Une certaine tradition critique [qui] considère [...] le roman africain comme le miroir des réalités sociales du continent" ("a certain critical tradition that views the African novel as a mirror of the social realities of the continent", Bisanswa 2014, p. 155, my translation); and indeed it is my argument that Heinemann's AWS, especially in its early days, both followed and promulgated this tradition to some extent, though not necessarily consistently or indeed consciously.

5 Alan Hill credits himself with the "general idea" for the AWS, to which Van Milne "was able to give precision" (Hill 1988, p. 123).

6 It seems worth noting that *The African* 's author, William Conton, was actually from Sierra Leone, and the novel itself features an African student in England from the *fictional* nation of Songhai.

[7] It also seems worth noting, in line with my earlier observations about the tendency to treat African writing as realist in an ethnographic sense, that while the African writers for the AWS were claimed through the series title as "writers", writers writing in Arabic were granted the more consciously literary term of "author" for their series.

[8] Both Ziad Bentahar (Bentahar 2011) and Yomi Olusegun-Joseph (2012) point to a number of critical works on African writing published by Heinemann from 1973 onwards that established the canon of African literature as exclusive of North African writing. Olusegun-Joseph further contends that the establishment of two separate series further reinforced the conception of "North African writers as different from their sub-Saharan counterparts" (Olusegun-Joseph 2012, p. 225).

[9] As Diana Fuss writes in *Essentially Speaking*, "Essentialism is classically defined as a belief in true essence—that which is most irreducible, unchanging, and therefore constitutive of a given person or thing" (Fuss 1989, p. 2), so in this context, I am arguing that appeals to authenticity often rest implicitly on the notion that differences of "race", ethnicity, regionality and even culture are "essential" in this sense.

[10] "Half our Nigerian turnover is in Secondary Science books." (Hill 1968)

[11] Several of Aigboje Higo's reports on sales travelling in the West mention various officials, school principals and others to whom he is related.

[12] Higo's letter to Alan Hill of 12 May 1967 requests a "Travelling Representative based in the Eastern Region [...] who is: (a) Ibo or Ibo speaking; (b) Roman Catholic". Admitting that the reason for the latter may not be immediately apparent, he adds: "experience shows that the Catholic schools have tremendous influence on what books are used in Primary and Secondary Schools" (Higo 1967).

[13] "Significantly, half of the first twenty English language novels in the AWS were written by Ibos from Eastern Nigeria" (Hill 1988, p. 124).

[14] However, Noudin Bejjit is more sceptical about the extent of Achebe's influence (Bejjit 2019, p. 13) and Ibironke himself notes that the pedagogical focus became less pressing when James Currey took the helm as editor of the AWS (Ibironke 2018, p. 192).

[15] Such "*sabon gari*" were not reserved to Northern cities alone, they were also created in Southern cities like Ibadan and Lagos to corral Northern migrants who were mostly Muslim (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, p. 16).

[16] Richard Ali is the author of *City of Memories* (2012), which, as Olumide Ogundipe argues, can be read as countering "narratives that have portrayed Muslim-dominated Northern Nigeria as the assailant of the Igbo ethnic group, whose attempt to secede from the federation led to" the Nigerian-Biafran civil war (Ogundipe 2016, p. 175). Ali is also the co-founder of Parrésia Publishing, established in 2011.

[17] Given that present-day Nigeria was a colonial construct and not based on "any geophysical or social significance to the indigenous peoples of the region" (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 17) and that "British colonial policy fostered the uneven socioeconomic and political development [. . .] of the various Nigerian peoples", which has persisting effects to this day (Osaghae and Suberu 2005, p. 16) and encouraged Nigerian identities "defined more by exclusion than by what was shared [which in turn] no doubt influenced the politicization of religious and ethnic identity today" (McCain 2022, p. 750), the terms under which Nigeria was founded can be said to have led ultimately to the question of whether it can in fact maintain sufficient national unity and integration to sustain itself as a nation state. The most obvious efflorescence of the "National Question", as it has come to be known, found its expression in the Nigeria–Biafra war of 1967–70, but the conclusion of that war did not provide a definitive answer to the question, which remains in play in the present.

[18] Though predominantly Hausa and Fulani, it is home to many other ethnicities, including Igbo people.

[19] Indeed, the war had this kind of impact on people all over Nigeria.

[20] One sense in which the language of *Burning Grass* may be regarded as being not especially representative of the North, despite Emenyonu's claim that Ekwensi was "proficient" in Hausa as well as Igbo and Yoruba (Emenyonu 1974, p. 5), is in being in English rather than Hausa, given that, as I have already observed, Hausa is the lingua franca of the North and "the most popular language for literary purposes" (Sani et al. [1997] 2022, p. 4).

[21] For further details about the Transcription Centre and its influence see the work of Diana Speed (Speed 1965) Gerald Moore (Moore 2002) and Jordanna Bailkin (Bailkin 2014).

[22] In 1957, Balewa had become the first prime minister of Nigeria, and as vice-president of the Northern People's Congress at the time, he was viewed as representing Northern interests while also being able to bring the three main political parties in Nigeria together to form a national government because "he was a London-educated former secondary school principal [which] appealed to all elements of the nationalist community [and not] a member of the Fulani aristocracy, as so many NPC leaders were, [. . . nor . . .] a member of the Hausa ethnic group that formed the majority of the northern population" (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 154). Balewa was nevertheless targeted by the Igbo organisers of the first coup in 1966 (January 15) and was abducted by them and then assassinated.

[23] On 10 September 1962, Ekwensi sent Van Milne a postcard from Lagos. Though sent from Lagos, it depicted "a horseman from Northern Nigeria" in traditional attire and thus again seemed to be aimed at reinforcing to Van Milne the idea of Ekwensi's novel as authentically representing that version of the North appealed to in the photographic image (Ekwensi 1962b). One might note, in relation to this, Richard Ali's claim that indeed "perhaps the most dominant mental image [. . .] conjured by the phrase

'Northern Nigeria' is that of the Durbar, that traditional panorama of homage to Emirs, a fleeting movie of men ceremonially robed on splendid horses charging down a field and drawing rein before their suzerain amidst the dust" (Ali 2009).

[24] According to the biographical material on Kell archived with the rest of the correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle*, she actually died in London in 1967.

[25] Neil Skinner addresses this issue in his discussion of Ekwensi's *An African Night's Entertainment* (Skinner 1973, p. 161) and it is also explained in Gulla Kell's "The Twelve Cows", which is the second of two chapters apparently meant by Kell as a sort of ethnographic preface to the stories collected as *Amadu's Bundle* (Kell n.d.b, p. 9).

[26] The copyright to the volume is nevertheless credited to Gulla Kell and Ronald Moody 1972.

[27] This also appears in Gulla Kell's unpublished essay, "The Meeting" (Kell n.d.a, p. 8).

[28] Despite my earlier arguments about the reasons for the North being much less embedded in the British-influenced education system than the South, Kell's explanation that Amadu "never attended a mission school for he was very conscious and proud of being a Fulani and Moslem and not even the lure of becoming a well-paid clerk in an administrator's office could tempt him to learn English" (Kell n.d.b, pp. 10–11), makes clear that mission schools were by no means completely absent from the North. See also E. A. Ayandele's (1966) "The Missionary Factor in Northern Nigeria, 1870–1918" for an elaboration of the extent to which Christian missions were active in the North and supported or impeded by British colonial officialdom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[29] Responding to the charge that his novel was plagiarised from the Hausa tale *Jiki Magayi* (1934) written by Rupert East and Malam J. Tafida Zaria, Ekwensi retorted: "It is a folk tale. It is a story which if you live long enough in Northern Nigeria as I did you are bound to hear one day. Everybody who grows up hears it; it is like the Igbo stories of the tortoise" (Emenyonu 1974, p. 62). Ekwensi continued his defence by arguing that the problem with the charge of plagiarism is that it does not engage with the intrinsically shared nature of traditional tales. This argument might be regarded as being complicated by issues of ethnicity, language and nationality; as an Igbo Nigerian born and raised in the North, Ekwensi had nevertheless published an English version of a Hausa tale.

[30] This bears comparison to Skinner's criticism of Ekwensi's *An African Night's Entertainment*: that it weakens the tale by omitting "elements of *k'addara* 'pre-destination,' which were part of the essentially Muslim background of" the published Hausa version of the tale, *Jiki Magayi* (Skinner 1973, p. 163).

[31] As Bentahar notes, "The African works that Heinemann published were [. . .] predominantly written in English originally [. . .] and came from the same former British colonies where Heinemann hoped to sell its books" (Bentahar 2011, p. 7). Moreover, not many of the texts in the AWS were translations from local African languages. It is notable, for example, that though Daniel Fagunwa was employed by Heinemann as their first representative in Nigeria, his first novel (written in Yoruba and first published in 1938) does not seem to ever have been considered for translation into English for the AWS.

[32] Alongside McCain 2014, see also (Shercliff 2015; Sani et al. [1997] 2022).

[33] For further analysis of the way British publishers in Africa were both influenced by the colonial past and engaged, in the postcolonial period, in an ongoing cultural imperialism, see Caroline Ritter's *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire* (Ritter 2021, pp. 133–58).

[34] Richard Ali notes that "The universities have been a critical market for us, so much so that we shifted our strategy and now have student editions of most of our books [. . . and. . .] professors in Nigeria [. . .] are critical to booksellers as access points to a considerable market" (Mwesigire 2015) and Kate Wallis observes that while Kachifo has sought to generate revenue by "creating a successful new social studies school textbook", Cassava Republic "has not only invested in visiting university lecturers across Nigeria to make them aware of their publications and share sample copies, they have also developed a system of employing student representatives to sell copies directly to other students" (Wallis 2016, pp. 43–44).

[35] Indeed, Wallis noted in 2016 that "Farafina Books [an imprint of Kachifo] remains commercially unviable" and that alongside their educational publishing, Kachifo, like Parrésia, had had to develop a "pay-to-publish service" in order to support their generalist literary fiction imprint (Wallis 2016, p. 43).

References

Archival Sources

Barnes, Malcolm. 1959. AURR 4/5/471959. 1959. Reader's Report by Malcolm Barnes on African by William Conton. (AURR 4/5/471959 from file AUC 844/2; Accession no. MS 3282). File AURR 4/5: Allen & Unwin Reader's Reports sub-series AURR 4; Records of George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Fonds AU 1884–1983. University Museums and Special Collections Service. Univer-sity of Reading, UK.

Currey, James. 1970. Memo to Aig Higo. 17 September 1970. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the pub-lication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Currey, James. 1971a. Letter to Ronald Moody. 15 April 1971. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Currey, James. 1971b. Letter to Martin Okeyere Owusu. 22 December 1971. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Currey, James. 1972a. Letter to Ronald Moody. 8 May 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the pub-lication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Currey, James. 1972b. Letter to Ronald Moody. 17 May 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

David, Nicholas. 1971. Letter to James Currey. 23 August 1971. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Ar-chive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1961. Letter to Van Milne. 21 August 1961. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1962a. Letter to Van Milne. 3 September 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1962b. Postcard to Van Milne. 10 September 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Spe-cial Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1963. Letter to Keith Sambrook. 24 July 1963. HEB 10/05 (MS 3221). 1962–1970. Correspondence relating to the publication of *People of the City* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Spe-cial Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1976. Letter to Elizabeth Lederman. 24 January 1976. HEB 17/05 (MS 3221). 1975–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Survive the Peace by Cyprian* Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Higo, Aig. 1967. Letter to Alan Hill. 12 May 1967. HEB MS 37 (uncatalogued). Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Higo, Aig. 1968. Report to Alan Hill. 8 July 1968. HEB MS 159 (uncatalogued). Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Higo, Aig. 1970. Memo to James Currey. 26 October 1970. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publi-cation of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Hill, Alan. 1968. Letter to Aigboje Higo. 8 August 1968. HEB MS 159 (uncatalogued). Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Hope, Leresche and Steele. 1972a. Letter to James Currey from the agents for Ronald Moody. 12 May 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Hope, Leresche and Steele. 1972b. Letter to James Currey from the agents for Ronald Moody. 22 May 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Kell, Gulla. n.d.a. The Meeting, pp. 1–8. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Kell, Gulla. n.d.b. The Twelve Cows, pp. 9–23. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Kell, Gulla. n.d.c. Ilam Tufago, pp. 75–84. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Lederman, Elizabeth. 1975. Letter to Cyprian Ekwensi. 30 December 1975. HEB 17/05 (MS 3221). 1975–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Survive the Peace* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

MacGibbon, Hamish. 1962. Letter to Cyril Webber. 6 April 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Milne, Van. n.d.. Memo regarding *Burning Grass*. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Milne, Van. 1962a. Letter to Cyprian Ekwensi. 15 January 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Milne, Van. 1962b. Letter to Cyprian Ekwensi. 23 March 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Moody, Ronald. 1970. Letter to James Curry [sic]. 31 July 1970. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Moody, Ronald. 1972a. Letter to James Currey. 20 January 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Moody, Ronald. 1972b. Letter to Ann Scorgie. 2 February 1972. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Owusu, Martin Okeyere. 1971. Letter to James Currey. 13 December 1971. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Production Proposal. 1971. Production proposal for *Amadu's Bundle*. 22 December 1971. HEB 20/07 (MS 3221). 1970–1973. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Amadu's Bundle* collected by Gulla Kell and translated by Ronald Moody. Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Sambrook, Keith. 1967. Report to Alan Hill. 1 January 1967. HEB MS 37 (uncatalogued). Heinemann Educational Books Archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
TLS. 1962. Durrant's Press Cuttings service: *The Times Literary Supplement*, "A Sense of Place": review of Cyprian Ekwensi, *Burning Grass*. 7 September 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Webber, Cyril. 1962a. Letter to Hamish MacGibbon. 11 April 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.
Webber, Cyril. 1962b. Letter to Hamish MacGibbon. 18 June 1962. HEB 04/08 (MS 3221). 1961–1976. Correspondence relating to the publication of *Burning Grass* by Cyprian Ekwensi. Heinemann Educational Books archive. University Museums and Special Collections Service. University of Reading, UK.

Published Sources

Abdurrahman, Umar. 1988. Cyprian Ekwensi's *Burning Grass*: A Critical Assessment. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 16: 1–24. [CrossRef]
Achebe, Chinua. 1962. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann Educational Books. First published 1958.
Achebe, Chinua. 1975. The African Writer and the English Language. In *Morning Yet on Creation Day*. London and Ibadan: HEB, pp. 55–62.
Ali, Richard Ugbede. 2009. On Northern Nigerian Literature and Related Issues. *Daily Trust*. December 12. Available online: https://dailytrust.com/on-northern-nigerian-literature-and-related-issues/ (accessed on 25 May 2023).
Amadu, Malam. 1972. *Amadu's Bundle: Fulani Tales of Love and Djinns*. Collected by Gulla Kell. Translated by Ronald Moody. London, Ibadan and Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books.
Appignanesi, Richard, ed. 2011. *Beyond Cultural Diversity: The Case for Creativity—A Third Text Report*. Manchester: Arts Council England. Available online: http://thirdtext.org/case_for_diversity_in_britain (accessed on 8 August 2022).
Auerbach, Erich. 2003. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. First published 1953.
Ayandele, Emmanuel A. 1966. The Missionary Factor in Northern Nigeria, 1870–1918. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 3: 503–22.
Bailkin, Jordanna. 2014. The Sounds of Independence? Lessons from Africa and Beyond at the Transcription Centre Archive. *History Workshop Journal* 78: 229–45. [CrossRef]
Bakare-Yusuf, Bibi, Ntone Edjabe, Elieshi Lema, Hilda Twongyeirwe, Ann N. Athiyo, Eghosa Imasuen, Billy Kahora, Walter Bgoya, Colleen Higgs, Azafi Omoluabi-Ogosi, and et al. 2016. A Survey of fourteen African publishers. *Wasafiri* 31: 13–22. [CrossRef]
Barnett, Clive. 2005. Disseminating Africa: Burdens of Representation and the African Writers Series. *New Formations* 57: 74–94.

Bejjit, Nourdin. 2008a. AWS, Chinua Achebe, and all those Books: Interview with James Currey. *African Writing Online: Many Literatures, One Voice* 4: 1–4. Available online: https://www.african-writing.com/four/jamescurrey1.htm (accessed on 8 August 2022).
Bejjit, Nourdin. 2008b. AWS, Chinua Achebe, and all those Books II: Interview with James Currey. *African Writing Online: Many Literatures, One Voice* 5: 1–5. Available online: https://www.african-writing.com/five/jamescurrey2.htm (accessed on 8 August 2022).
Bejjit, Nourdin. 2009. The Publishing of African Literature: Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Heinemann African Writers Series 1962–1988. Ph.D. thesis, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.
Bejjit, Nourdin. 2017. Publishing African Writers Series: An interview with Keith Sambrook. *Wasafiri: International Contemporary Writing*. January 1, pp. 1–11. Available online: https://www.wasafiri.org/article/an-interview-with-keith-sambrook-by-nourdin-bejjit/ (accessed on 1 July 2019).
Bejjit, Nourdin. 2018. A Colonial Affair: Heinemann Educational Books and the African Market. *Publishing Research Quarterly* 34: 275–87. [CrossRef]
Bejjit, Nourdin. 2019. Heinemann African Writers Series: History, editorship, and markets. *Logos* 30: 12–27. [CrossRef]
Bentahar, Ziad. 2011. Continental Drift: The Disjunction of North and Sub-Saharan Africa. *Research in African Literatures* 42: 1–13. [CrossRef]
Bgoya, Walter, and Mary Jay. 2013. Publishing in Africa from Independence to the Present Day. *Research in African Literarures* 44: 17–34. [CrossRef]
Bisanswa, Justin. 2014. La fiction africaine de la modernité et ses problématiques. *Présence Africaine* 2: 155–79. [CrossRef]
Currey, James. 2008. *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series and the Launch of African Literature*. Oxford: James Currey Ltd.
Ekwensi, Cyprian. 1964. *Burning Grass: A Story of the Fulani of Northern Nigeria*. London and Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. First published 1962.
Emenyonu, Ernest. 1974. *Cyprian Ekwensi*. London and Ibadan: Evans Brothers Ltd.
Enwerem, Iheanyi M. 2013. *A Dangerous Awakening: The Politicization of Religion in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Institut Français de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA), Nigeria. First published 1995. [CrossRef]
Falola, Toyin, and Matthew Heaton. 2008. *A History of Nigeria*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
Fuss, Diana. 1989. *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference*. New York: Routledge.
Gikandi, Simon. 2012. Realism, Romance, and the Problem of African literary History. *Modern Language Quarterly* 73: 309–28. [CrossRef]
Hill, Alan. 1988. *In Pursuit of Publishing*. London: John Murray in Assoc. with Heinemann Educational Books.
Huggan, Graham. 2001. *The Post-Colonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. London and New York: Routledge.
Ibironke, Olabode. 2018. *Remapping African Literature*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. [CrossRef]
Low, Gail. 2011. "In Pursuit of Literary Gold": HEB and the African Writers Series 1962–1967. In *Publishing the Postcolonial: Anglophone West African and Caribbean Writing in the UK 1948–1968*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 58–92.
McCain, Carmen. 2014. The Politics of Exposure: Contested Cosmopolitanisms, Revelation of Secrets, and Intermedial Reflexivity in Hausa Popular Expression. Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, USA.
McCain, Carmen. 2022. Censorship, citizenship and cosmopolitan unity in Muslim and Christian creative responses to repression in northern Nigeria. *Africa* 92: 739–58. [CrossRef]
Moore, Gerald. 2002. The Transcription Centre in the Sixties: Navigating in Narrow Seas. *Research in African Literatures* 33: 167–81. [CrossRef]
Mpe, Phaswane. 1999. The role of the Heinemann African writers series in the development and promotion of African literature. *African Studies* 58: 105–22. [CrossRef]
Mwesigire, Bwesigye Bwa. 2015. Parrésia's Richard Ali: We Are Publishing African Powerful Literary Voices. *This is Africa*. March 16. Available online: https://thisisafrica.me/arts-and-culture/parresias-richard-ali-we-are-publishing-african-powerful-literary-voices/ (accessed on 30 May 2023).
Ngũgĩ, Mũkoma Wa. 2018. *The Rise of the African Novel: Politics of Language, Identity, and Ownership*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Nyamnjoh, Francis B. 2013. The Nimbleness of Being Fulani. *Africa Today* 59: 105–34. [CrossRef]
Ogundipe, Olumide. 2016. Contested Memories: An Interview with Richard Ali. *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 47: 175–87. [CrossRef]
Olusanya, Gabriel Olakunle. 1969. Review of *The British in Northern Nigeria* by Robert Heussler. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 5: 165–69.
Olusegun-Joseph, Yomi. 2012. Discourses and Disciplines: African Literary Criticism, North Africa and the Politics of Exclusion. *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies* 5: 218–31.
Osaghae, Eghosa E., and Rotimi T. Suberu. 2005. *A History of Identities, Violence, and Stability in Nigeria*. Crise Working Paper No. 6. Oxford: CRISE: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity: University of Oxford. Available online: https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/publications/history-identities-violence-and-stability-nigeria (accessed on 30 May 2023).
Price, Derrick. 2007. Dennis Duerden obituary. *The Guardian*. January 30. Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/news/2007/jan/30/obituaries.readersobituaries (accessed on 8 August 2022).
Ritter, Caroline. 2021. *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Sani, Abba Aliyu, Jibrin Ibrahim, and Emmanuel Babatunde Omobowale. 2022. *Creative Writing, Writers and Publishing in Northern Nigeria*. OpenEdition Books. Ibadan: IFRA-Nigerian. First published 1997. Available online: https://books.openedition.org/ifra/3400 (accessed on 28 January 2022).
Shercliff, Emma. 2015. Publishing in Nigeria. *Logos* 26: 51–60. [CrossRef]
Skinner, Neil. 1973. From Hausa to English: A Study in Paraphrase. *Research in African Literatures* 4: 154–64.
Speed, Diana. 1965. The Transcription Centre, London. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 3: 286–88. [CrossRef]
Suhr-Sytsma, Nathan. 2018. The extroverted African novel and literary publishing in the twenty-first century. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 30: 339–55. [CrossRef]
Wallis, Kate. 2016. How Books Matter. *Wasafiri* 31: 39–46. [CrossRef]

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.