

## **CHILDREN’S LITERATURE AND NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CASE OF ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON**

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### **Abstract**

Studies on national consciousness in adults abound, but very little is seen on national consciousness in children. National consciousness is cultivated, not instinctive yet children who are the treasure and future of the nation, the leaders of tomorrow, are often neglected in the process of nation building. At childhood, the characteristics of adult world are sown; a variety of human identities are formed, and these include the national. Culture, landscape and history are very essential in the formation of national consciousness because the way in which the world is presented to children contributes to how children perceive the world. Now more than ever Anglophone Cameroonian children need to develop a strong sense of belonging, a national consciousness that will enable them to have an awareness of who they are, where they come from and their place in Cameroon. Children’s literature presents the realities of the child in the society. This literature ranges from folktales, songs, riddles to picture stories, novels, plays and poems. It is produced by elders and they select the values and norms to be transmitted and given the situation of the adult Anglophone Cameroonian today, it is necessary to examine the role the literature plays in helping children to develop a sense of identity and belonging and how it helps them know who they are and to accept and fulfil their roles as member of the Cameroonian nation. We used Literature because Literature consist of constructed pieces of the national culture and is essential in the process by which nation-states create themselves and distinguish themselves from other nations and is a powerful tool of forming national consciousness and identity. National consciousness is having a feeling of belonging to a nation as opposed to individual ethnicity. This research is based on the contention that the failure of Anglophone children’s literature to inculcate in the children the Anglophone cultural values has blurred their Anglophone national consciousness of who they are and has contributed to the strife and violence that is destroying Anglophone Cameroonians and causing them to emigrate from their home. New Historicism and functionalism are used to examine the extent to which the representation of culture, landscape and history in Anglophone Cameroon children’s literature creates a bond between children and the Anglophone nation, that is, how children’s literature functions as an ideological tool in nation formation and in ensuring the continuity of the Anglophone nation.

**Key terms:** Nation, Children, Anglophone, Consciousness.

Studies on national consciousness in adults abound but very little is seen on national consciousness in children, Children are the leaders of tomorrow, the treasure and future of any nation, yet are often neglected in the process of nation building. At childhood a variety of human identities are formed, the characteristics of adult world are sown and these include the national consciousness. Culture, landscape and history are very essential in the formation of national consciousness. The way in which the world is presented to children contributes to how they perceive the world. Children's literature as a genre of literature presents the realities of the child in the society. This literature consists of folktales, songs, riddles picture stories, novels, plays and poems. Since it is produced by elders who select the values and norms to be transmitted, it is necessary to examine the role the literature plays in helping children to develop a sense of identity and belonging and how it helps them know who they are, accept and fulfil their roles as member of the society. This work is motivated by the separatist struggle that has increased conflict and migration of Anglophones from the two Anglophone regions not only out of Cameroon but to other regions in Cameroon. Now more than ever Anglophone Cameroonian children need to develop a strong sense of belonging, a national consciousness that will enable them to have an awareness of who they are, where they are from and their place in Cameroon.

Benedict Anderson defines nation as 'an imagined community'. He maintains that the members of a nation may never know, meet or hear each other, yet they still hold in common an image of who they are as a community of individuals. Zsuzsa Mellei sees a nation as an established community to which people may relate with national pride, attachment or criticism. 'Nation' is accomplished through discursive and institutional practices, and relations between people, bodies, material and symbolic objects and the environment. (2) To Charles Bikoi cited by Nol Alembong, a nation 'can only exist and be strong if it is conscious of its individualities and can identify them, direct them and cement them' (123). This is done through national consciousness. Consciousness according to The Macmillan dictionary is awareness of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi explains that "Consciousness is that which is conscious of itself" (53) He says:

All speech, action and behaviour are fluctuations of consciousness. All life emerges from and is sustained in consciousness. The whole universe is the expression of consciousness. The reality of the universe is one unbounded ocean of consciousness in motion. Since consciousness is the most basic element of everyone's life, knowledge of consciousness is the most basic requirement for everyone to exist consciously and intelligently and enjoy full, unbounded creative potential of life, with maximum success in all fields of personal and professional life (67-68).

Consciousness is used in this paper as man's awareness of his existence and environmental awareness). National consciousness is having a feeling of belonging to a nation. It is cultivated, not instinctive. One of the challenging issues for Anglophone Cameroonians is that of identity. Discussing the Anglophone problem of identity. George Nyamndi in *Whether Losing Whether Winning* rightly states:

A Francophone in Cameroon grows up in a system that is essentially his. No adjustments are required of him, no sacrifices. There is no rupture in his cultural growth. He does not suffer any traumatic changes of system and codes. ... His President has always spoken to him in French. Everything is done to give full meaning to his citizenship...The ethnic Francophone is at home in his country, the ethnic Anglophone on the other hand has a grave problem coming to terms with the complexity of his

status. His life is a permanent quest for an identity. Who is he? Where is he from? What is his real place in this whole tangle called Cameroon? Can he stand up and be counted? If so, by whom? (13)

The disregard for Anglophone culture which has caused the crisis in Contemporary Cameroon, is as Anthony Ndi says blamed totally on the failure of the state to acknowledge the historical past and to the fact that the nation is ‘a co-equal, bilingual and bicultural state’, not a unique identity (6). Molem C. Sama on his part says the government’s exploitation of the two English regions, the government continuous attempts at ‘Frenchification, that is, giving pre-eminent to French as a special language and to inherited French institutions and bureaucratic practices in all aspects of state administration and public life’(210) and the absence of nationalist ideology ( 213) are responsible for the conflict, Jua and Koning rightly assert that. there is general tendency among Anglophones to blame the francophone elite for the entire Anglophone problem but it cannot be denied that Anglophone political leaders bear an importance share of the responsibility of Anglophone predicament’ (5). The essence of this paper is to discuss examine the extent to which literary artist have like the political leaders contributed to the Anglophone problem. William Bausch rightly maintains that ‘every people, nation, and community has stories and myths that preserve and prolong the traditions that give them their identity. When a nation is in trouble, it often returns to its traditional stories to look for direction and healing, to regain a sense of what made it great in the past and what will nurture it into the future...a country without its story has ceased to exist. “Humanity without its story has lost its soul’ (26-33). TS Eliot also states that ‘a people who ceases to care for its heritage becomes barbaric, ceases to move in thought and sensibility’ (14).

In 1961 there was an Anglophone nation and the citizens had national consciousness. Anthony Ndi describes this period as the golden age of Southern Cameroon. He portrays the period as ‘an age with politician who were exclusively Christians in an era catheterized by freedom of speech, social security harmony, peace and justice; with a future full of hope, with free, fair, transparent elections and peaceful handover of power, a largely corruption free civil service and a police force, and a promising self-sufficient aggro-industrial based economy (3-4). Then Anglophone Cameroonians could easily answer questions such as; Who am I? Where do I belong and what are the accepted norms of behavior for me? If the Anglophone can no longer answer such questions today, it more because the Anglophone has failed to live and transmit their national consciousness to the present generation.

Since Literature as Sarah Lorse cited by Varsha Singh in ‘Nation, Identity and Children’s Literature in India’, rightly maintains, consists of constructed pieces of the national culture and is essential in the process by which nation-states create themselves and distinguish themselves from other nations and is a powerful tool of forming national consciousness and identity, we are concerned with the extent to which Anglophone children’s literature inculcate in the children the values of the Anglophone nation; those values which the Anglophones had in 1961; values that enabled the children to develop a strong sense of belonging, to see Cameroon as home and a safe haven that must be protected from outsiders. To be able to do this they must have a sense of who they are and a sense of who they are can be taught through their literature because Varsha Singh in ‘Nation, Identity and Children’s Literature in India’ States that ‘A nation’s literature is traditionally seen as a reflection of the values, tensions, myths and psychology that identify a national character (67).

This study answers questions that relate to the extent to which the literary texts for children foster the development and dissemination of Anglophone Cameroon national culture. That is,

How the texts make the readers conscious of themselves as anglophone Cameroonians and the extent to which the literature functions as an ideological tool in nation formation and in ensuring the continuity of the Anglophone nation? It examines how Anglophone children's literature is used to create a positive outlook, to instill in the readers accepted ideologies that enhance their identity, encourage socialization, friendship, compassion, sincerity, honesty, retrain environmental awareness, social justice, civic responsibility, create a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the society, teach the children that they are inescapably bound to and are an indelible part of their past, and make them committed to the betterment of their society.

It is based on the contention that the annihilation of Anglophone Cameroon has been greatly enhanced by the inability of the intellectuals to live up to, and to transmit to the next generations the ideals/culture of the Anglophone nation. This failure has blurred the youths' national conscientiousness of who they are and has resulted to the strife and violence that is further destroying Anglophone Cameroonians.

A nation is an imagined community that is displayed in real life. Literature consists of constructed pieces of the national culture and is essential in the process by which nation-states create themselves and distinguish themselves from other nations and is a powerful tool of forming national consciousness and identity. National consciousness is having a feeling of belonging to a nation as opposed to individual ethnicity. National consciousness or feeling is cultivated, not instinctive. New Historicism and functionalism are used to examine the extent to which the representation of culture, landscape and history in Anglophone Cameroon children's literature creates a bond between children and the anglophone nation or identity, that is, how children's literature functions as an ideological tool in nation formation and in ensuring the continuity of the Anglophone in Cameroon.

Research that has been done in children's literature has been on its nature and existence, pedagogical value, compilation, history, Content and narrative Form and readability Pálsdóttir, A.H. in her thesis titled *History, landscape and national identity: A comparative study of Contemporary English and Icelandic Literature for Children*, analyses children's books from England and Iceland to determine the importance of children's literature in the composition and preservation of national identity. She evaluates the correlation between children's literature and the culture which produced them and the bond, or the assumed bond, between the child as a literary construct, the culture that nurtured it, the surrounding landscape, and the nation to which the child belongs. The key words in her evaluation are landscape, history, heritage and tradition – which contribute to the process of forming national identity (1)

Zohar Shavit in *Poetics of Children's literature* says little value or space has been given to children's literature in the various national histories of literature and culture in Encyclopedias and in the curricula of universities. In order to resolve this problem of lack of space, he says much research in children's literature has been on the compilation of national histories of children's literature and on pedagogical and educational value and not with its existence as a literary phenomenon (IX). His research is on poetics and semiotics because he believes it is time to extricate children's literature from the narrow boundaries of the past and place it in the foreground of literary scholarship (x).

Sunday N. Agwu in *Adolescent Literature in English in Nigeria: a study of Macmillan Publishers' Pacesetter Series* examines Macmillan Publishers' Pacesetter Series in terms of types of stories, dominant themes and adolescents' interest and the readability of the books. He states that 'recently, a lot of literature has been produced for adolescents or young adults... These series are aimed at encouraging new writers as well as increasing the reading habit of the



adolescents. The series have been conceptualized out of the belief that reading in general and the study of Literature in particular can be of inestimable value in the development of the educated person (209). He also comments on the overall suitability of the books as extensive reading material for adolescent (213) we are neither concerned with readability nor with type of books, but with the effects of the book on building national consciousness.

G.A. Gundu in 'Content and narrative Form in Nigerian Child Literature: The Case of the Tiv Child Written Literature' contend that folktales, fables, legends, myths and songs have always existed as children's literature but 'literature specifically designed and written for children is a fairly recent world development. It commenced in Europe in the closing years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and in Africa one of two centuries after. In the past half century as he reports, 'the world has witnessed a proliferation of children's literature but the Nigerian child's literature has not been given much attention of criticism and reviewing (220-221). he thus sets out to do a constructive analysis of Nigerian child's Literature by examining the shortcomings in the content and narrative forms.

Catherine O. Acholonu in 'Writing and Publishing for Children: Nigerian Children's Literature in English: A Critique' emphasized the absence of good and adequate literature for Nigerian children and lack of an organised and systematized list of reading books (233). After examining forty-four texts prescribed for children, she concludes that 'it is clear that Nigerian children's literature has not been given the attention it deserves from publishers and writers. It appears that books that find themselves in the primary literature list are book that were not originally planned for that level. She insists that it is pertinent to revise the list of children's literatures to reflect the level, class and age of readers and that most of the inadequate and poisonous books been read by children should be flushed out (243).

Eward Ako like the others in 'Children's literature in Cameroon: A review' states that children's literature is something of new phenomenon in Africa and even when a few texts do exist, they are generally ill suited for the African child and do not fulfil the role such literature is meant to fulfill( 310 ).

Thomas Tejoh-Okwen in his article titled 'Children's Literature in Cameroon: A Partnership Model for its Development and Promotion' is concerned with the nature of children's literature and how it can be used to solve the problem of poor reading skills in secondary and tertiary institutions. He proposes a partnership model for the development and promotion of children's literature which includes parents, teachers, writers, publisher/booksellers, and the Ministry of National Education and says this model is from a pedagogic standpoint, the most logical approach capable of providing in the long run, a solution to the rather bigger problem of a small readership in our Cameroonian institutions of higher learning` (304) . As concerns the content of children's literature, he rightly maintains that writers of Cameroon children's literature should have as top priority themes that overtly teach cultural values (morality, togetherness, family values, reward etc.) as well as those exciting adventures that have the potential of positively nurturing and enhancing the development of the young mind(306). Tejoh is concerned with how Cameroon Literature in general can be used to resolve the problem of readership among Cameroonian adults but I am concern with the extent to which Anglophone Cameroon children's literature can instill the feeling of national pride, restore Anglophone national consciousness and give Anglophones a sense of belonging in Cameroon.

Ellis, R and Tomlinson, B. cited by Sunday Agwu identify eight roles literature plays in the education of the adolescent in countries where English is the second language. Some of the roles are:

(1) It provides vicarious experiences of other culture, philosophies and attitudes and therefore helps the individual to become more informed and tolerant of the world outside his own environment. (2) It allows the individual to compare his own society with that of other people and encourages him to become more aware of both the virtues and limitations of his own inherited attitudes and values. (3) It can provide insights into the nature and potential of man and can make the individual more aware of his true self as a result of comparisons with characters he has read about. (4) It can stimulate constructive thought about important issues and ideas (209).

### **Thematic conceptions**

Steve Evans in ‘The Impact of Cultural Folklore on National Values: A Preliminary Study with a Focus on Bhutan,’ Opines that, ‘every individual asks questions about identity and values, questions such as; ‘Who am I? Where do I belong and what are the accepted norms of behavior for me?’. He submits that a people’s stories help answer these questions (18), so in this portion, we have examined the extent to which literary texts for Anglophone children foster the development and dissemination of Anglophone Cameroon cultural values like, honesty, integrity, hard work, justice, morality, togetherness, hope, reward, friendship, compassion, sincerity, honesty and retrain; and the extent to which the texts function as ideological tools to promote Anglophone culture, and make the readers conscious of themselves as Anglophones and ensure the continuity of the Anglophones in Cameroon. This is done under sub themes like Children’s Literature and Anglophone history, characterization, the setting, and cultural perspectives. The texts for this study are Njimele George’s *Madmen and Traitors* and Egbe Besong Elvis’ *Authentic Poetry Book2*.

In the foreword to *Madmen and Traitors*, Yosimbomm Hassan declares that, Njimele George has brought the history of slavery to the Cameroonian child’s doorstep, given them the opportunity to examine their society and themselves, and to know that deceitful and unpatriotic people like the Whites, Kanjo, Lyonga, and Chief Ako are madmen and traitors who must be sanitize. This is however, not what we see in the story. There are instances in the play where Njimele seem to say that outside our home we can learn only pride and foolishness as is the case with Lyonga (Madmen,25) but this view is not supported in the story. The story is told from the Eurocentric point of view, presenting African as naïve, greedy and irrational, and indicting African for the slave trade but not the cunning, malicious and wicked Whites. It dwells on the Eurocentric notion that the Gullibility, greediness and laziness of African made them sell their children into slavery; but this is not the reality of the slavery. Like Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, the text ends with no hope for Africans. Karibou the only patriot who respects tradition, condemns the arrogance of the Whites, and calls for united action against them, is banished. Karibou boldly tells Kanjo who advises him against being critical of Akoh the naïve chief that, ‘I am against him for the sake of this land ... Bako is not for sale and those who sell it will face serious disaster’ (Madmen36-37). However, the unpatriotic face no serious disaster and the playwright seems to advocate for an indecent, luxurious but short life than a long decent life. This conclusion is plausible because crimes are not punished.

Egbe Besong Elvis’ collection *Authentic Poetry BOOK 2* is among the three books prescribed for form two students of Anglophone colleges. The aim of the collection Besong says ‘is to rekindle and ignite in the readers, the lost fire that literature as a whole and poetry in particular is expected to give to the young mines under our care (V). He divides his collection

into six sections that reflect different social sphere (family and social life, economic life and occupation, health, education, environment and safety, citizenship/human rights, duties and gender). In module four titled citizenship/human rights, duties and gender, he asserts that: In the context of a decline in moral virtues, this module is timely in addressing issues like honesty, loyalty, good governance, good citizenship, love for homeland, gender equality, equity, integrity and self-discipline. Common questions of right and wrong, good and evil, retributive and reward come in to raise learners' awareness, rights and duties as citizens of a country (71). He succeeded in this collection to create awareness about contemporary issues like exploitation, immorality, corruption, birth celebration but these are not specific to Anglophone culture and nationalism. Also, the final messages in the text, do not awake, excite, provoke or persuade Anglophone children to live the anglophone legacy.

### **Children's Literature and Anglophone History/heritage**

A people's heritage and history as Anthony Ndi rightly maintains, 'forms the basis of loyalty, patriotism and nationalism' (xli). T.S. Eliot rightly emphasized that 'a people who ceases to care for its heritage becomes barbaric, ceases to move in thought and sensibility' (14). Anglophone children's literature is supposed to teach the children their history and heritage, to enable them know who they are and answer questions about their identity, values, and accepted norms of behavior for them but these texts neither acknowledge Anglophone Cameroon history nor do they teach anglophone values. National culture takes roots in childhood experience in family and school. Though some poems in *Authentic Poetry* teach the children morals and social values like the importance of diversity and living in social cohesion, the speakers in most of the poems, expressed feelings about contemporary issues that are too general and reflect value not specific to Anglophones and there are no poems that teach the children their history, their identity and what they need to like their forbears do, to ensure their continuous existence as Anglophones in Cameroon. In a poem like *Housemaid* we find a family in an immoral situation. In this poem we find a child speaker who sympathizes with a housemaid who is dehumanized by the wife and exploited physically and sexually by her husband and son. As the speaker states:

Our turning clock housemaid ...  
Knows no public holiday  
Sometimes big bros' and Papa's bedmate (Authentic 24)

In 'The Battle' we see a speaker who believes children have just two challenges (to through prayer, discipline and passion pass their exams and become the first, the best. the cream of their domain) (Authentic 34). With the realities in Cameroon, and in line with Anglophone ideals, a child's challenge goes beyond just being the best in his domain. Children are expected to become members of the common wealth, who in whatever they do, contribute to the growth of the community. This poem instills the spirit of individualism in the children which is contrary to Anglophone ideals. In 'Have you asked yourself why,' the persona in a series of questions about the contemporary society, wondered why there are multiple religions and why there is corruption and moral decadence. We are told that these ills announced the end time (Authentic (38). Given that these vices contravene Anglophone ideals, we expected answers that will guide the children to live as Anglophone lived in 1961. The answer to these questions is illusive and does not assist the children to acquire national consciousness. In 'Our Laws' (Authentic 73) the speaker describes the laws as cobweb and flexible. These laws are certainly, not Anglophone Cameroon laws of 1961 that Ndi says were impartial and sincere (130), but those of Contemporary Cameroon that are characterized by corruption. How will the children live their identity if they

are not taught even their laws? In ‘My duty to the flag’ we meet four speakers; a policeman, a business person, a teacher and a scientist. Each praise himself, claiming that without him/her there will be no nation. The speakers state thus:

I am the police officer...  
Peace and order are in my hands  
Without me, this blessed fatherland  
This beautiful Cameroon will be a jungle  
I am a businessman or trader...  
I am the engine of the nation...  
I am a teacher and a torch bearer.  
I am a scientist and life facilitator (Authentic,52)

From the poem, the children are made to know the contributions of these professionals to the grown of the nation but they are not taught the moral values that the Anglophones attach to these professions. In ‘Deforestation’ the children are encouraged to protect the forest because it is our home, food and medicine, purifies, controls and makes our environment better. (Authentic, 63.)

### **Characterization and Anglo-Saxon Ideals**

The characters and personas seen in the text do not reflect the icons in Anglophone Cameroon or persons in the Anglophone milieu at unification. Instead of presenting leader who are statemen, whom Anthony Ndi describes as members of the commonwealth who know their rights and responsibilities, live a life of civility and worked for the common good, the text presents idiots and tribal men who are naïve, selfish suspicious and self-centered, and treat people with opposite views with intimidation and oppression. Chief Akoh, the naïve, self-centered, greedy leader with no foresight or integrity fails to listen to Karibou and queen Massaga, the patriots who warn him against the selling of their children and land to the Whites. (Madmen 36-37). Queen Massaga is ridiculed and her views ignored while Karibou is banished. (Madmen 36-37). We also meet Peter Lyonga, another idiot and tribalist who betrays his people, scorns and disrespects elders and derogatorily presents them as irrational people, who sometimes get worried and angry for no reason... many of them are career fighters who love gifts of food and drinks, people that can easily be bribed (Madmen 28-29). This presentation is contrary to the description of Anglophone Cameroonians by Anthony Ndi as Christians who lived in an era catheterized by freedom of speech, social security harmony, peace and justice... corruption free civil service and a police force, and a promising self-sufficient agro-industrial based economy (3-4). While the Africans are presented as irrational, aggressive and corrupt people, the whites are presented as observant and reasonable people who can see the beauty of the land. Talking about Bako, that is symbolic of Cameroon, Mr. Goodenough says, ‘It is a wonderful place, a blessed territory... the land is vast and rich with beautiful valleys, fresh forest, large trees and pretty birds that sing beautiful melodies’ (Madmen25-26).

### **Silencing women and disregard for tradition**

Silencing the woman and disregard for tradition also negates Anglophone ideals. Henry K. Kah, in his paper titled ‘Women’s Resistance in Cameroon’s Western Grassfields: The Power of Symbols, Organization, and Leadership,1957-1961’, ‘seeks to elevate the role of women from the footnotes of history to which they have been relegated in the official narratives and restore them to their rightful place in securing the reunification of British Southern Cameroons with the Republic of Cameroon’(67). He Rightly states:



The contribution of women to the struggle for liberation from colonial rule manifested itself in many diverse form... Women played a cutting-edge role in the liberation struggle in the continent. From north to south and east to west they held their own in many different ways against earlier and, eventually, colonial subjugation...The women of the western Grassfields of Cameroon during the last decade of the independence struggle were more militant in their demand for independence... The Bamenda western Grassfields of Cameroon has historically witnessed women's mobilization for diverse reasons. In the different fondoms there were/are still found women's societies of reverence, graciousness, and pre-eminence. (67-74).

As seen above, women have always and are till a force to reckon with in the Anglophone society. Massaga, the Queen mother, an icon, a humble woman with foresight Massaga, had a dream and a premonition and decided to tell the king but she is scorn and ignored.

**Massaga:** This land risks getting into real trouble. Since I got this news, I am sick at heart...Caution your people against coming danger. The men at our coast are not men of peace. **Ako:** You see bad luck but I am seeing good luck; so, whose point should be considered? Don't forget I am the chief. **Massaga:** I am not usurping your position. My interest is the safety of our land (Madmen 16-16)

The conclusion drawn from this study is that, the Anglophones in Cameroon have to a large extend failed to promote their Anglo-Saxon heritage through children's literature. It is recommended that children's literature should present the realities of their society to enable them coup with adult life. The content should be based on their history and social realities and not on political propaganda. The characters should be linked to the experiences of the Anglophone or should have lived the anglophone experience It should create emotional attachment to and a sense of belonging to anglophone culture and instill in the readers accepted ideologies that enhance their identity, encourage socialization and... friendship compassion sincerity, honesty, retrain environmental protection of political rights, justice, education and social justice. This is very necessary because as William Bausch (1999: 26-33) rightly maintains 'every people, nation, or community has stories and myths that preserve and prolong the traditions that give them their identity. When a nation is in trouble, it often returns to its traditional stories to look for direction and healing, to regain a sense of what made it great in the past and what will nurture it into the future...a country without its story has ceased to exist. What Anglophones need today is peace. Peace is a matter of the heart and as Brent Curtis and John Eldredge cited by Stevan Evans say:

The heart does not respond to principles and programs; it seeks not efficiency, but passion, Art, poetry, beauty, mystery, ecstasy: These are what rouse the heart. Indeed, they are the language that must be spoken if one wishes to communicate with the heart. Life is not a list of propositions; it is a series of dramatic scenes. Story is the language of the heart. Our souls speak not in the naked facts of mathematics or the abstract proportions of systematic theology; they speak the images and emotions of story (17-18).

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