

## **TOWARDS THE PEDAGOGY OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: THE ROLE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (DHAN)**

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### **Abstract**

Many American, European and Asian universities have embraced the Digital Humanities, popularly referred to as DH, as evolving trends in Arts and Humanities in the 21st century world. It has enabled the hybridism of qualitative and quantitative methodologies for humanities researches where computer-based tools are deployed for the analysis of humanistic data. However, the DH scholarship, which is an interface among science, technology and the humanities studies, has little scholarly awareness in sub-Saharan African universities, and Nigerian universities in particular. This paper, which adopts historical approach and critical distant reading as research methodologies, provides an overview of the digital humanities scholarship, its applicability in all fields of humanities, its adaptability to curation, archiving, analysis, visualisation, and its various computer-mediated tools. I went further to buttress some impediments to DH scholarship in Nigeria and to propose how Digital Humanities Association of Nigeria (DHAN), which has been recently launched with its temporary headquarters at the University of Lagos, could be used to provide public and scholarly enlightenment on digital humanities discourses, promote the pedagogy of Digital Humanities in Nigerian universities and offer some technical support for Digital Humanities Summer School. I have used Computer-Assisted Literary Analysis (CALA) to demonstrate how computer software could be used in the postcolonial analysis of African literary texts. By my critical literary analysis, Kourouma's anthroponyms and toponyms are revealed to be *postcolonially* charged; the frequency of historical names demonstrated the level of culpability of all political figures implicated in the Ivorian crisis by the author in his war narrative.

**Keywords:** Digital Humanities, DHAN, CALA, AntConc, AhmadouKourouma

### **Introduction**

Multiliteracies is a term introduced by the New London Group (1996) which has become an international pedagogic agenda for the redesign of the educational and social landscapes and imbibing the multimodal discourse (Kress & Leeuwen's 2001) that attends to meaning as it is made through the situated configuration across image, gesture, gaze, body posture, sound, writing, music, speech, and so on (See Jewitt, 2008, p.245). The

development of the concept is premised on our rapidly-changing world that has become a global village and the technological tools it has come to imbibe and embrace for its information age. Multiliteracies, therefore, has to do with the deployment of information technologies, thereby making digital literacy an inescapable and unavoidable experience. What are digital literacies? According to Knobel and Lankshear (2008), it quite simply involves “the use of digital technologies for encoding and accessing texts by which we generate, communicate and negotiate meanings in socially recognizable ways” (p.258) and its framework includes four dimensions of competence: multimedia, collaborative communication, agentive participation, and multitasking, as cited in Guikema and Williams (2014)’s *Digital Literacies in Foreign and Second Language Education*. Digital literacies incorporate what Blyth (2014, p.205) calls digital social reading which “is the act of sharing one’s thoughts about a text with the help of tools such as social media networks and collaborative annotations. By annotation, it means that e-reading devices and virtual libraries permit the reader to annotate a text and to share those annotations with others (Ibid, p.201, with emphasis). Lotherington and Ronda (2014, p.17) explain that:

digital media enabled interactive multimediality, multimodality and multidimensionality cut across physical and geographical borders to bring rich content and connect people in different parts of the globe. Digital multimediality captures and augments all senses; through moving and still images, sound, and movement, augmented and responsive environments are created, where humans and machines become one. Beyond the extended capabilities to manipulate information and objects digitally, the substance of what we can do has changed. Multimediality has changed the patterns of human interactions to an unprecedented extent: collaborative possibilities through and with digital media are virtually endless.

Multimediality of pedagogical digital technologies entails the application of human senses in a semiotic environment through the mediation of interaction and participation. The 1982 Time Magazine’s “Man of the Year” went ironically to the computer, which was voted as “the Machine of the Year” (van Den Boomen, 2009). The event was a forecast of the future of man and does explain the power of technology in today’s world. Digital literacies have received increasing attention in education scholarship in recent years in the western countries and recent studies have demonstrated the integration of new social tools such as wikis, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter in the classroom (Guikema& Menke, 2014; Oskos & Elola, 2014). It has equally inspired the advent of digital humanities methodologies and researches which, though in vogue in western nations of the world, have not fully been embraced by the developing countries of Africa, in general, and Nigeria, in particular. It shows already that the training of humanities-related undergraduates in African and Nigerian universities appears to be defective without the

pedagogy of digital literacies and digital humanities which is the focus of my present study.

If humanities graduates are to compete favourably in today's world with their counterparts from developed nations of the world, there is need for pedagogy developers, educationists, humanities scholars and university administrators to rethink humanities scholarship in Nigeria to avoid what G. C. Spivak refers to as the *Death of a discipline* (2003) or what V. D. Hanson calls "The Death of the Humanities" (2014). Admittedly, in his article entitled "The Humanities are Dead! Long Live the Humanities!" Andrews (2015) does not agree that the humanities are increasingly irrelevant today; he, however, opines the need for rethinking the humanities and this is exactly what I intend to achieve through the digital humanities.

### **Digital Humanities, its Typology and Humanities Scholarship**

Many American, European and Asian universities have embraced the digital humanities, popularly referred to as DH, and equally called "humanities computing" as evolving trends in Arts and Humanities in the twenty-first century world. It has enabled the hybridism of qualitative and quantitative methodologies for humanities researches where computer-based tools are deployed for the analysis of humanistic data. Digital humanities ensures that computational tools are used "to enhance literary and historical scholarship" (Burdick et al., 2012, p.40). Mayer (2017, p.2) admits that Roberto Busa was one of the first to use computer techniques for linguistic and literary analysis. Digital humanities promotes the use of quantitative approach to literary analysis of creative works or, rather, "the interplay of qualitative and quantitative methods in corpus stylistic analysis." (Mahlberg & McIntyre, 2011, p.205).

The DH, being a "generative enterprise or practice" (Burdick et al, 2012, p.10), relies on distant reading, not close reading for the analysis of literary texts. However, Burdick *et al* (2012) stated that "distant reading is not just a 'digitization' or 'quickener' of classic humanities methodologies; it is, rather, a new way of doing research wherein computational methods allow for novel sets of questions to be posed about the history of ideas, language use, cultural values and their dissemination, and the process by which culture is made" (p.39).

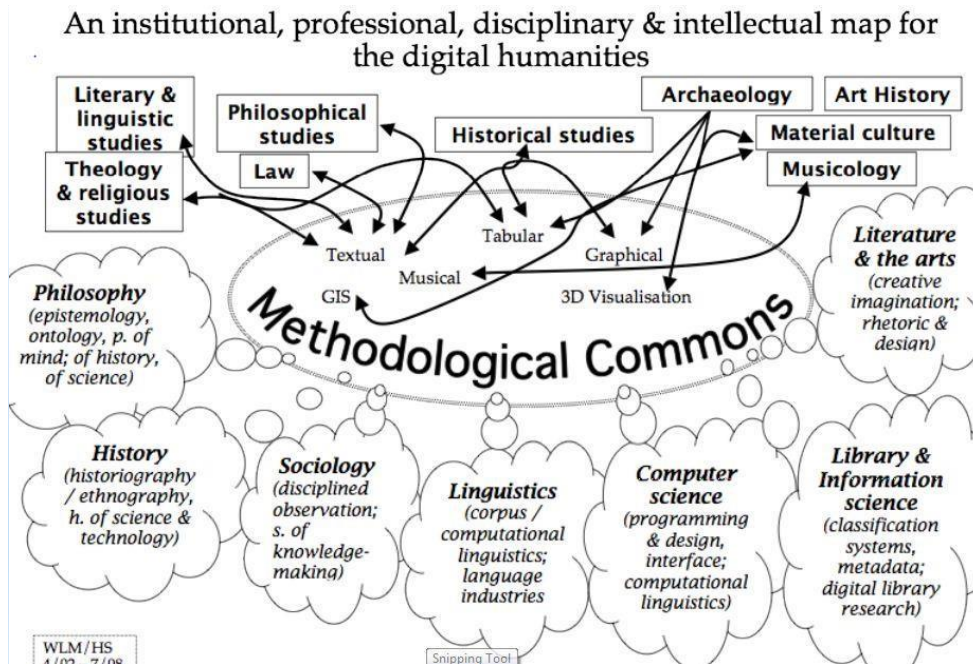
In their seminal work entitled: *Digital Humanities*, Burdick et al (2012) chronicled the beginnings of Digital Humanities and maps it into different waves, concerning how it has related/relates to other disciplines. From antiquity, human learning was not professionally categorized into domains and disciplines until the rise of what Burdick et al (2012) call "princely academics in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries" (p.6). Since the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries humanities studies of literature, philosophy and classics was divorced from natural,

physical and social sciences. Digital humanities is preoccupied with the “reunion” of humanities studies and natural and social sciences. DH adopts a different view: it envisages the present era as one of the exceptional promises for the renewal of humanistic scholarship and sets out to demonstrate the contributions of contemporary humanities scholarship to new modes of knowledge formation enabled by networked, digital environments (Burdick, 2012, p.8).

The first wave of the humanities’ engagements with networks and computation started in the 1940s, a work that inspired the archival projects at Oxford in the 1970s and its acceleration was harnessed by the invention of the Web in the early 1990s (p.9). The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been marked by remarkable changes in digital humanities pedagogies and projects, multiplication of centers for digital humanities and professional association for digital humanities scholars.

Digital humanities is a melting pot of all interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary collaborations, assembling different shades of scholars from humanities, computer sciences, social sciences, library science, technology and engineering. It involves computational and processing activities that enable the possibilities of curation, analysis, editing and modeling of designs and data. In essence, the typology of digital humanities has not been theoretically and epistemologically delineated. I will, however, attempt to buttress the possible branches of digital humanities as it concerns the humanities studies with the image below (See Figure 1):

Figure 1:



Original: Willard McCarty & Harold Short. As presented  
by Short: <http://www.clarin.nl/sites/default/files/utrecht-1010.pdf>

From the diagram above, it is pertinent to state that every part of the humanistic studies benefits from the intersections with computer science, technology and digital literacies. Corpus linguistics has been studied and facilitated with different computer tools, giving birth to different unconventional subgenres. The new technologies have enhanced the incorporation of what Siemens (2002, p.259) chooses to call Computer-Assisted Literary Criticism, a concept which was inspired by John Smith's "Computer Criticism" and what I would rather call Computer-Assisted Literary Analysis (CALA). Digital tools are applied to e-literature or cyber literature such as digital poetry, e-novels, etc. SATOR-L has been developed for literary studies as it can be used for the analysis of narrative texts and FRANTEXT or ARTFL has been created to provide big database of corpora for projects in French studies. Other types of software such as Voyant, AntConc, and Python have been developed. They have tools for collocations, concordancer, Key Words in Context (KWIC) that facilitate computer-assisted textual analysis. It demands the digital literacies skills such as Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) that enables texts to be encoded into readable formats.

Another is CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning). It has been developed to assist the acquisition of foreign languages, yet Wood (2014, pp.30-31) claims CALL is a “money saver” and learners can make use of computer applications to complete a specific task such as looking up an unknown word in an electronic dictionary. They can consult Wikipedia, Google Scholar, online journals, and other open access materials on the Internet, while having the possibility for self and tutor assessment through pedagogical software like the InGenio, E-readers such as Tolino, Kobo, Kindle, etc. Different aspects of the humanities studies have emerged in recent times, showing the persistent interaction between humanities and other disciplines in social, natural sciences and technology.

Spatial humanities, environmental humanities and medical humanities are such new trends in the humanistic studies. Spatial humanities, for example, is part of geoliterature that employs the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) as a tool because it believes that “all spaces contain embedded stories based on what has happened there”, in the words of Bodenhamer (2010, p.46) who goes to affirm that historical GIS is still a subdiscipline, defined as having “the elements of géohistoire, historical geography and spatial and digital history” (p54). Another aspect of spatial humanities is literary cartography which has inspired the practice of literary mapping. Franco Moretti’s *Atlas of European Novel* is a product of digital mapping in literary texts, showing where “maps become truly tools of interpretation, allowing to see something which hasn’t been evident before” (Piatti et al, 2009, p.182).

Other subgenres are digital musicology, electronic scholarly editing, digital archiving, data curation, digital cultural mapping, crowdsourcing in the arts and humanities, visualizations and spatial humanities, among others. These digital skills and tools are applied to different aspects of humanities studies such as philosophy, history, linguistics, literature and the arts, music and their interactions with social sciences and computer science. All of these studies benefit from digital humanities’ methodological commons, ranging from textual, musical, graphical, tabular, GIS and 3D visualizations as presented in the chart.

While historical studies give rise to textual, tabular and graphical methodological commons, linguistics and literary studies like law, theology and religious studies, and philosophical studies, are only conditioned to textual methodology. It is, however, pertinent to emphasize that the chart does not take cognizance of some latest developments in the field, especially as it has to do with the presentation of results. In her words, Jones admits that “data visualization turns findings into charts, graphs and maps and exhibits all forms that make literary interpretation a visually expressed object or event rather than an abstract concept” (Jones, 2012, p.27). The acquisition of digital tools (Git, Command Line, Python, Databases, HTML and CSS, Twitter API, Stylometry, etc.) is a

*sine qua non* for the effective use of these methodological commons and it demands capacity building.

**Capacity Building, DH Pedagogy in Nigerian Universities, and Digital Humanities Association of Nigeria (DHAN)**

Capacity building in digital humanities scholarship is majorly offered in different annual international conferences, symposia, Digital Humanities Summer Schools, Institutes and Workshops in America, Europe and Asia. It has been supported by an association called the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organisations (ADHO), an umbrella body of all Digital Humanities Associations in different countries of the world. Digital Humanities Summer Institute gives students and scholars a chance to broaden their knowledge of the Digital Humanities within a feasible time-frame (O’Sullivan, 2018, p.1). A chronology of these schools is necessary. There is Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School (DHOxSS) which is an annual parallel workshop that runs a weeklong training for anyone interested in the Digital Humanities and its related disciplines. There are equally the University of Victoria Summer Institute, Canada, that offers certificate courses in Digital Humanities, the European Summer University in Digital Humanities, Germany; the Digital Humanities Research Institute (DHRI); City University of New York, among others. Most of these schools and institutes are members of the International Digital Humanities Training Network, a body that coordinates DH training in different parts of the world.

Research in Digital Humanities has been greatly financed by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) whose headquarters is located in Washington DC, USA. Many universities in America and Europe are now offering degree and graduate programs in the area of digital humanities. Digital humanities scholarship, unlike the traditional humanities studies, requires a lot of capacity and finance since it has to do with the development of big data and modern digital laboratories in some cases.

Digital humanities scholarship is relatively new in Africa. This is not to say that African linguistic scholars have not been involved in corpus linguistics and language documentation which has been part of the humanities computing. There have been synergies between the humanities studies and computer science in places like University of Uyo, Nigeria, where M. Ekpenyong’s thesis entitled “Pitch Synthesis for Tone Language System” (2013) brought linguistic scholars and computer scientists for engaged interdisciplinary discourse. In South Africa, DH scholarship appears to be more visible than in sub-Saharan Africa, where the Digital Humanities Association of South Africa (DHASA) has been formed few years ago. The DH-oriented project entitled “Library’s Role in UP’s Digital Humanities (DH) Endeavour of the University of Pretoria has commenced. The first DH Workshop was held in February 23-25, 2015, at North West University, Potchefstroom, and the Inaugural Conference of DHASA took place in

January 2017 at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. It is the Second DH Workshop in April 2016 that heralded the birth of DHASA at North West University, Potchefstroom. Though South African libraries are striving to develop their capacity in Digital Humanities, the needed pedagogy and infrastructure are still lacking, thereby being one of the major challenges in DH scholarship in Africa.

Digital Humanities scholarship in Nigeria does not enjoy the scholarly awareness of Nigerian humanities scholars. It is a puzzle word that keeps many academic colleagues confused on how humanities can be digitalized. Lack of awareness is premised on poor digital literacies among university lecturers in Nigeria. By that, I mean to say that many humanities scholars do not have the requisite skills and are aliens to digital cultures. In essence, investment in digital literacies becomes a condition for the development of DH scholarship in Nigerian universities. Digital culture is perceived as being favourable to youngsters, referred to as “digital natives” whose “parents and teachers are viewed as digital immigrants who were born and raised in a pre-digital age during which many of those new technologies were not available” (Williams, Abraham & Bostelmann, 2014, p.30).

The terms “digital natives” and “digital immigrants” were introduced by Prensky as indicated in Benini and Murray (2014). It is obvious that Prensky’s concepts intend to describe the phenomenon of “technophobia” and “technophilia” of the old and new generation as it has to do with FL/SL education in the west. Prensky supports his argument by providing some facts and figures, such as students spending fewer than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games and 20,000 hours watching television. Prensky (2001a) coined the term “digital immigrants”. He claims that this large part of the population, which includes most teachers and lecturers, lack the technological fluency of digital natives and, consequently, find themselves unfamiliar with many of the technological skills possessed by students (See Benini and Murray, 2014, pp.72-73). Besides the lack of capacity building in the area of new pedagogical technologies and the phobia for them, it is believed that new modern technologies are capital intensive.

Capacity building in library science and its relationship with digital tools is pivotal for the development of the digital humanities scholarship in Nigerian universities. Workshops, conferences, and summer schools provide avenues for training in DH tools but very few of these have existed in Nigeria because of our inability to align with emerging trends in humanities studies in the world.

It is, unfortunate, that I had written proposals to different Vice Chancellors for capacity training of faculty staff on digital humanities in University of Oxford Summer School since 2014 and the need to reposition scholarship and research in the Faculty of Arts of

my university by establishing a centre for digital humanities, but their responses were not encouraging. It was only in July 2017 that the first DH Summer School (LSSDH 2017) in Nigeria was organised by the Digital Humanities Research Unit of University of Lagos in conjunction with Global Outlook: Digital Humanities (GO:DH) and Force 11 Future Commons Working Group based in Canada. The University of Lagos is championing the digital humanities scholarship in Nigeria by organising the first Digital Humanities International Conference tagged: EKO DH in November 2017, an event generously sponsored by Germany's Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. It was in this conference that the Digital Humanities Association of Nigeria (DHAN) was formed. The second edition of LSSDH 2018 took place from August 30 to September 6, 2018, with faculty and doctoral participants from Cameroon, Ghana, Togo and Nigeria. The School was sponsored by University of Lagos, in conjunction with VolkswagenStiftung and Universität zu Köln, Germany.

DHAN's temporary headquarters is at the University of Lagos and it is undergoing documentation and registration with the Alliance for Digital Humanities Organisation (ADHO). The young association has the mandate of galvanising digital humanities studies in Nigeria through inputs in the development of DH pedagogy in Nigerian universities, the creation of awareness on DH scholarship, the organisation of conferences and workshop for capacity building, its collaboration with other associations, among others. The enlargement of its aims is paramount to the development of DH in Nigeria; it can be inspired by DHASA's AIMS as provided and amended below:

- a) To foreground the national and international benefits of developing Digital Humanities scholarship as a priority in the humanities and social sciences.
- b) To promote the understanding and practice of digital approaches to humanities scholarship across Nigerian universities and research institutes and the Nigerian society.
- c) To hold an annual conference or workshop extending practical awareness of digitally-based scholarship in the humanities, arts and social sciences.
- d) To work towards a 'methodological commons' for the digital humanities in Nigeria, providing guidance in the development of standards and expertise to promote best practice in DH teaching and research.
- e) To extend awareness of DH research possibilities into new fields, such as indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), fine arts, performance studies, and sociology of science, for example.
- f) To provide advocacy for the scholarly recognition of unfamiliar DH research outputs in national systems of innovation and research fundings.
- g) To showcase exemplary Nigerian innovations in the DH field.
- h) To identify funding sources for scholarship and training in DH work.

- i) To maintain its scholarly journal as an outlet for the dissemination of DH researches.
- j) To champion the development of infrastructure for DH scholarship in Nigeria.

DHAN should ensure the creation of awareness towards the pedagogical development of DH scholarship in the faculties of humanities and arts of Nigerian universities. Inclusion of DH-oriented courses in our curriculum should be championed by individual universities and nationally by the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) which is saddled with the responsibility of providing curricula benchmark and minimum standard. It could simply be an Introduction to Digital Humanities as a general course for humanities students. Such a course will expose the students to the skills of digital literacies and DH tools relevant to their areas of study. The use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies will enable the students to develop the conceptual and empirical expertise needed for intellectual development. Exposure to digital tools is essential for DH practice, and these tools can be applied to different areas of the humanistic studies. For example, I demonstrated the postcolonial use of AntConc tools in the analysis of AhmadouKourouma's war narrative and showed how the author mapped a "culpability chart" unveiling the Ivorian political figures are implicated in the Ivorian crisis.

**Computer-Assisted Literary Analysis (CALA) of AhmadouKourouma's *Quand on refuse on dit non*: Designing Culpability Chart.**

Laurence Anthony's AntConc is one of the computer applications used in processing electronic data. The software can be freely downloaded from the internet. AntConc is classified as "third generation tools" of the 1990s which equally includes Wordsmith tools (Scott 1996-2012), MonoConc Pro (Barlow 2000), according to Anthony (2013, p.152). Thomas (2015) admits that AntConc "has powerful tools such as word frequency lists, a KWIC Concordancer and collocation generators ranked according to raw frequency, mutual information or T-score" (p.91). Aside its "powerful tools", it is simple to use, though it selects the type of text format it processes. It is "designed by the author for specific use in the classroom, that includes a power concordancer, word and keyword frequency generator, tools for cluster and lexical bundle analysis, and a word distribution plot" (Anthony, 2005, p.729). AntConc is here used to generate what Rockwell (2003, p.209) calls "monster text" or "hybrid text", subjected to postcolonial interpretation. It means that the tools are used as an ally for the collection of data for analysis as suggested by Betrand-Gastaldy and Marchand (1999, p.57) since "simply generating keywords does not constitute an analysis" (Mahlberg & McIntyre, 2011, p.206).

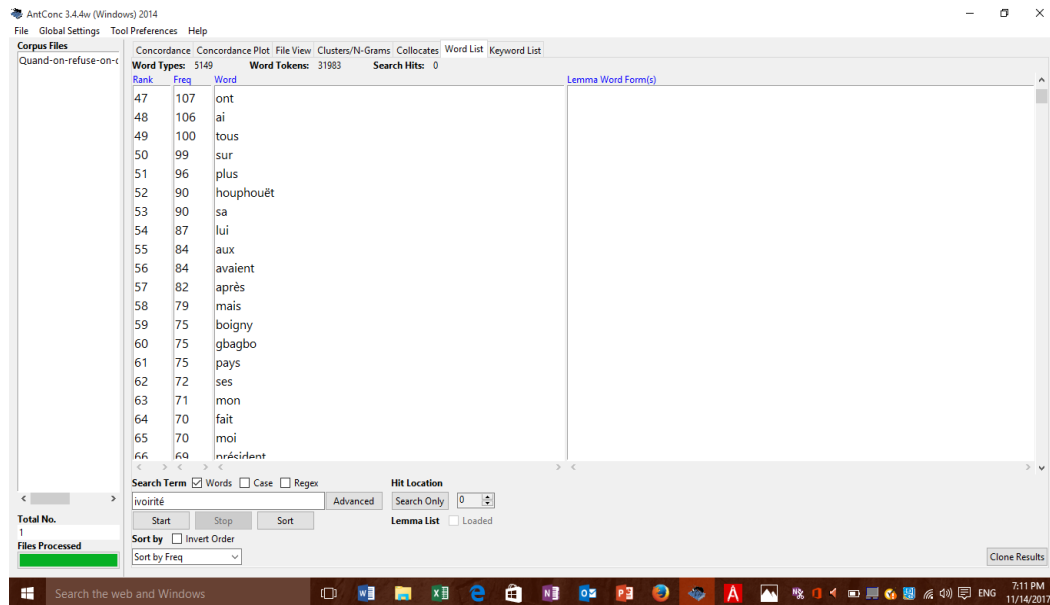
The use of postcolonial poetics to interpret corpus of AhmadouKourouma's *Quand on refuse on dit non* aligns to the plurality of approaches in Computer-Assisted Textual Analysis (CALA) advocated by Betrand-Gastaldy and Marchand (1999, p.62) whereby

SATO software was used to analyze Saint-Denys Garneau's *Regards et jeux dans l'espace* subjected to socio-critical, psychoanalytical and intertextual interpretations. In this work, AntConc is deployed as a textual catalyst that facilitates postcolonial analysis of my chosen text. *Quand on refuse on dit non*, posthumously published in 2004, chronicles the Ivorian civil war of 2002. It tells a story of Ivorian intertribal conflicts, a continuation of Birahima's testimony of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean wars. As a child soldier who is an eye-witness of the intertribal wars, he narrates his bitter experiences of witnessing killings, rapes, looting and maiming which are common in wars. Kourouma's artistic ideology as a postcolonial writer is engraved in the characterization, setting, themes and linguistic strategies adopted in the novel which can easily be unveiled through corpus linguistics. The discourse of his trilogy is centered on the concepts of the *Other* and stereotypes that have defined the African postcoloniality and instituted the culture of inter-ethnic violence. The colonial system established what Pawlikova-Vilhanova (1998, p.165) calls the "philosophies of otherness and discourses" which are now inherent in African postcolonial societies. "Otherness and Stereotypes" are basic concepts of postcolonial theory that demonstrate the asymmetrical relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, the empire and its colonies and the centers and their margins.

#### **AntConc Analysis of *Quand on refuse on dit non*: Historical Figures and War**

Traditional linguistic study of Kourouma's writing (Kikukama, 2012, p.101; Kodah, 2013, p.74; Gehrmman, 2011, p.31) has demonstrated the writer's creativity in his literary language which is a blend of French, Malinké and neologisms. The author's linguistic particularism is a vehicle of his historical realism that is fed from the factographies of the Ivorian nation. This explains the possible establishment of anthroponymous and toponymous concordance that unveils names of known persons and places in Ivory Coast or Côte d'Ivoire, showing the "hardiesselangagière" [linguistic boldness] of AhmadouKourouma (Kukukama, 2012, p.104). A Word List search of AntConc reveals these possibilities as illustrated below:

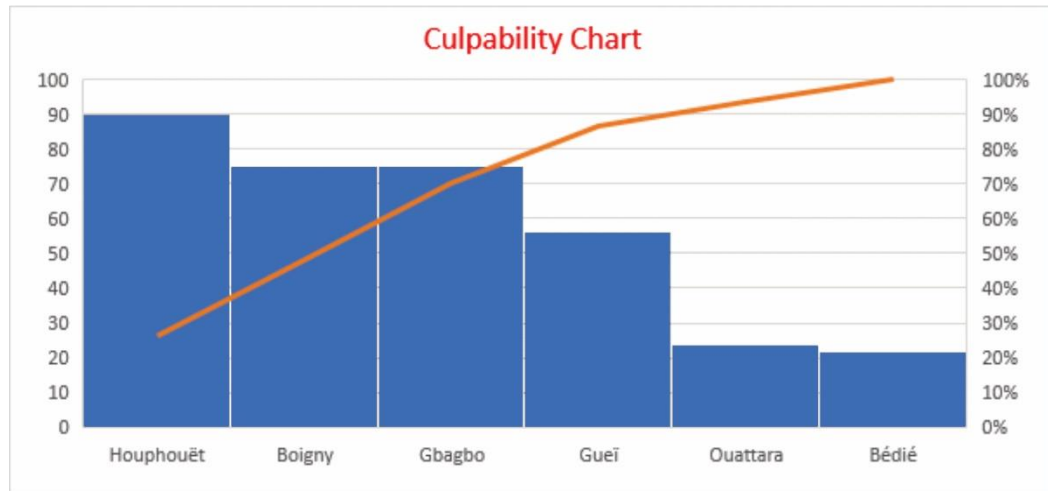
#### **Figure1: Word List of *Quand on refuse on dit non***



The Word Token of the corpus shows the total number of 31983 with 5149-word types and table of anthroponyms can be drawn from the word list, illustrating the Freq and Rank of each historical names. In Laurence Anthony’s words, “Word frequency is a linguistic phenomenon that many corpus researchers are interested in, whether it is to determine the complexity of a particular text in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) study, the bias of a particular writer in a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) study or any number of other linguistic interests” (Anthony, 2013, p.149). In my literary critical context, the frequencies of historical figures unveil Kourouma’s interest with postcolonial history, and it shows how this historical identity is the basis of the Ivorian civil war. I have separated historical names (Boigny, Gbagbo, etc.) from fictional names (Birahima, Fanta, etc.) in a quick search of Wordlist in order to have the table below:

**Figure 2: Culpability Ranking of Political Figures**

| S/N | NAMES OF HISTORICAL FIGURES | FREQ | RANK |
|-----|-----------------------------|------|------|
| 1   | Houphouët                   | 90   | 52   |
| 2   | Boigny                      | 75   | 59   |
| 3   | Gbagbo                      | 75   | 60   |
| 4   | Gueï                        | 56   | 76   |
| 5   | Ouattara                    | 24   | 161  |
| 6   | Bédié                       | 22   | 173  |



The five major historical names are political figures that Kourouma implicates in the Ivorian civil war. I said five instead of six because Houphouët-Boigny is entered as different family names. The table appears to be the author's appropriation of culpability. In essence, the frequencies of these names indicate the culpability ranking of historical figures implicated in the Ivorian crisis. The hegemony between the Dioulas and the Bétés, like that of the Tutsis and the Hutus in Rwanda during the genocide, fueled the escalation of the civil disturbances and war as narrated in the text.

President Félix Houphouët-Boigny's policies brought the Ivorian "miracle era" where the nation experienced economic stability. His government encouraged influx of foreigners of African origin, "welcoming migrants and promising them ownership of land that they cultivated but it never followed through with the provision of actual land titles" (Sany, 2010, p.4). He occupies a prominent position in Kourouma's culpability ranking because as Kirwin (2006, p.46) puts it "tensions between "étrangers" and "ivoirens" served as a backdrop to the way Houphouët-Boigny monopolized politics and economics at the exclusion of the vast majority of the Ivorian people". With a Freq of 90 and Rank of 52, Kourouma confirms the discursive monopoly of the anthroponym of Houphouët-Boigny in his narrative because the virus that destroyed the relative peace of Côte d'Ivoire originated from his government. He was the President "du pays pendant la guerre froide" (Kourouma, 2004, p.9) [of the country during the cold war] and that of his appointee, Henri Konan Bédié who became the President after his death in December 1993. Incidentally, it was Bédié who "introduced into the public discourse the concept of *Ivoirité*" (Sany, 2010, p.4), an identity policy that disqualified Alassane Ouattara from presidential elections and brought national division between the South and the North,

Christians and Muslims and the perceived ‘étrangers’ and ‘Ivoiriens’” during General Robert Gueï’s military government.

Laurent Gbagbo’s government came after the military coup and his second-position ranking in the Word List justifies the fact that he ratified the concept of *ivoirité* and used it as a political gain. In Kourouma’s views, the civil war came to be because of the politicization of identity based on national origin thereby creating a security dilemma, a “situation in which each party’s efforts to increase its own security reduces the security of the others” (Kirwin, 2006, p.43). Gbagbo as a Bété ensured the hegemony of his tribe over the Dioula. In *QOR*, Birahima as a Dioula narrates his experiences that illustrate the vengeance of the Bété on the Dioula, though it was not the beginning of ethnocentrism that culminated into the politics of *ivoirité* in Côte d’Ivoire.

### **Conclusion**

The emergence of Digital Humanities discourse has enlarged the taxonomic portfolio of the humanities studies in the world and the development of its scholarship in African universities is pivotal to the survival of traditional humanities. Since it relies on digital literacies, DH scholarship, if enshrined in the pedagogies of humanistic training, will initiate students into the digital culture of the global world, reposition them for better professional opportunities and give it more economically-driven context of university education because the arts provide “the emotional education of the citizen” and lay “emphasis on public pedagogy” (Martin & Aguado, 2017, p.4).

The burgeoning research opportunities and collaborations offered by the Digital Humanities scholarship have created much impact on humanities studies which is receiving increased attention from international donor agencies, scholarly foundations and organisations, academic institutions and nations. It is essential for African scholars to key into the sea of opportunities provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and contribute positively to the development of African societies. Aligning the humanistic studies to the technological world has become increasingly necessary as more institutional attention is now shifted to STEM subjects.

It is our collective responsibility as humanities scholars to champion the needed changes in the field as B. Winterhalter (2014) puts it: “It is the said duty of educators to ensure that our graduates have the skills they need to participate in tomorrow’s so-called “knowledge economy,” especially if the African states and societies are to be relevant in the comity of nations.

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