

## OIL PIPE LINE VANDALIZATION

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**ABSTRACT:** *Oil pipe line vandalization is illegal activity of some fellows in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria crudely obtaining, petroleum products for self-aggrandizement or for some form of protest irrespective of the consequences on themselves or others or even the environment. This has caused serious damages on lives in some agitators like the illustrious son of Niger Delta, Ken Saro Wiwa and on the land and seas of the Niger delta that the economic activities changed. What actually is the business of sculpture in oil pipe vandalization or what the relationship between oil pipe line vandals is and sculpture. Postulations and projections are that after some years when the crude oil activity would have ended how would humanity remember this devastating activity as they remembered Holodomor in hunger genocide in Russia. One cannot over emphasize the importance of visual documentation of contemporary history for posterity as we saw in the Nok sculptures. . Anchoring on the theories of bio mimicry popularized by Janine Benyus and questioned by Marshall and Lozena, this study attempts to sculpturally document the activities of these pipe line vandals in a naturalistic rendition of a large sized fibre glass and artistically removing some areas after the fashion of Bruno Catalano. Qualitative mode of research coupled with major studio practices of modelling casting and finishing were employed in this study. The issue of oil pipe line vandalization in the Niger Delta region is devastating enough that it is presently one of the front burner problem within the region that in the years to come when oil would have gone extinct visual records of sculpture would be the only reminder of this era.*

**KEYWORDS:** vandalization, bio mimicry, sculpture, pipe line, Niger Delta.

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## INTRODUCTION

Oil pipe vandalization is illegal activity of some fellows in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, crudely obtaining crude oil or petroleum products irrespective of the consequences on themselves or others or even the environment. This has caused serious damages on life in some agitators like the illustrious son of Niger Delta, Ken Saro Wiwa, the land, and the oceans of the Niger delta that the economic activities changed. And economic architecture. Postulations and projections are that after some years when the crude oil activity would have ended, how humanity would remember this devastating activity as they remembered Holodomor in hunger genocide in Russia. In Nigeria Niger Delta region is blessed with oil and gas hydrocarbons (oil and gas) in commercial quantities. Over the years the youth of Niger Delta region comprising of Rivers State, Balyelsa,

Delta, Edo, Cross Rivers and Akwa Ibom moved from their fathers verbal complain against major oil and gas producers and federal government about the negative impact of oil exploration and exploitation on the environment and resorted to militant activism.

Petroleum was first discovered in commercial quantities in the year 1956 at Oloibiri oil field in the present day Bayelsa state and has been a pivot of the Nigerian economy, right from the deviation from agriculture. The Niger Delta region has being the major source or key behind the national power in the oil and gas sector. It has been observed that over the years, the states and community in the region have suffered environmental degradation, air pollution, low yield from fishing and farming (it has reduced good harvest or production harvest) etc. It has also caused decline in both political and socio- economic wellbeing of the citizens because of the environmental degradation caused by the abuse of oil and gas exploration and exploitation.

This change of the economic architecture of the region due to oil pollution perhaps led the youth to criminal activities because they find illegal stealing as lucrative and more rewarding than any other endeavor, promote formation of gangs (cult groups) that fight each other on war .The youth due to unbridled militant activism, they no longer respect their elders and sometimes fight security agents in other to continue with nefarious activities to steal crude oil products. Illegal bunkering which become the number one issue in the country and Niger Delta due to joblessness leading to high rise in criminality, population displacement which has turned negative effect on the communities in the region conveying crude oil from the act of vandalization of pipeline has also turned out negative effect on the economy and development of Nigeria.

Niger Delta is richly blessed with lots of natural resources such as rain forests, water bodies, mangroves, fertile soil, crude oil that flows beneath soil, socio cultural heritage What actually led to the pipeline vandalization and economic implications was due to the increase rate in joblessness, negligence from the oil companies and federal government of Nigerian, agitation for economic political power, resource control etc. The Niger Delta region is the major contributor of the Nigerian oil and gas sector yet the development processes of infrastructure is neglected. The aim of this research is to proffer recommendation for the solution and the resolution of conflicts and how to stop the case of vandalism in Niger Delta region using sculpture (a three dimensional art), which will be of great benefit and create impact on people than audio or literal impression which can be easily forgotten. This study will be of immense benefit to the people of the Niger Delta region, the oil companies, the state and the federal government. It will table out the major causes of vandalization, educate on the danger behind the criminal act.

Also to clarify it to the government, that there is need to fund social development to upgrade the condition of the Niger Delta citizens and re- enforcement of environmental laws. In achieving this, sculpture plays a vital role in form of record keeping and documentation of information that will last for ages in as much as it also aesthetically embellishes the environment...



Figure 1: Map showing the Area of Niger Delta Region in Nigeria, Courtesy: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CITED WORKS

**The theoretical framework rests squarely on the theory of biomimicry popularized by Janine Benyus.** It is the art of looking at nature and borrowing from nature to solve societal problems. In this case the human anatomy is copied from nature to represent the Vandal. Hence the work is naturalistic representation of the Vandal. Though this theory was questioned by Marshall and Lozena (2009) over some applications of this theory in some of the biological sciences but it aptly situated this study in looking at the real world of the vandals and copying naturalistically from nature.

Oilfield damage and pipeline vandalization in the Niger Delta region constitutes a serious man-made environment health hazard. Card, (2013); Tulchinsky and Varavikoco, (2009). Before now there has been peace and unity in the region and the major occupation of the citizens were farming, hunting, oil palm production, fishing, trading of timber etc. Until the discovering of the 'black gold' (crude oil). In 1956 at the Oloibiri oil field in Balyelsa state which has cost loss of life and property damages in the region of Niger Delta, economy and the country at large.

According to the United Nations Development Report (UNDP, 2006) observed that despite huge financial allocations to Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Development Commission Oil Mineral Producing Areas (OMPADEC), derivation fund, less is achieved in terms of development of the region due mainly to corruption, mismanagement, lack of justice and human right abuses. The expectations of achieving meaningful development through infrastructural provision, environmental protection are lacking due to poor governance. United States development report, (2006).

D'Agostino, Dunne, and Pieroni,( 2016) pointed out that despite having abundant resources that could have benefited African countries, it turn out to be a curse which fuels conflict primarily due to poor governance. This is also in line with the writer earlier assertion that since discovery rather than alleviating the suffering of the people in the region, it has rather on the contrary only brought pain and so much pain to the common man. Furthermore, Akpomera (2015) pointed out that weak government institutions may results in failure to protect the environment through strict environment laws which ultimately leads to environmental degradation as it gives room for host community leaders and influential people to support the youths to vandalize crude oil pipelines in the name of liberating the region from government neglect. Ultimately this becomes the source of livelihood of many youths and some community leaders in the region.

According to Etekpe et al (2004), there were high expectations by the communities from the Multinational corporations when crude oil was discovered at Oloibiri in the present Bayelsa State in 1956. They were expecting, among other amenities, regular electricity supply, good road networks, health care system, sustainable community development, and gainful employment, etc. These expectations fall in line with the multinationals corporation's corporate social responsibility obtainable in Europeans host communities, and expected same in the Niger Delta. This did not happen, and they protested, especially from 1990s, and later went underground to vandalize oil pipelines as a way of expressing their frustration over the long years of neglect and underdevelopment. This means that the frustration of the people in the region is fueled by the companies exploring in the Niger Delta in connivance with the federal government.

On Saturday, October 17, 1998, Jesse in Ethiope West LGA of Delta State was thrown into a state of emergency as a result of oil pipelines damaged by vandals (Akande, 2018).This action led to scarcity where many Nigerians had to source for fuel and kerosene at all cost, and oil pipelines vandalization became an easy avenue to source for fuel. Ironically, the black markets had these products and sold at exorbitant prices.

On the 17th of October 1998, oil pipelines at Atiwor Village, near Jesse town was vandalized. The villagers rushed in their numbers to have a part in the largesse, little did they know it was a Greek gift. In the process, the fuel exploded and caught fire and burnt to death over 1,000 persons were burnt to death when the fuel exploded with a large portion of the village burnt (Research Directorate, 1999). The implication of this on the town is that those orphans left behind by the death of their parents resulted into criminality of kidnapping, militancy, and cultism and pipeline vandalism.

**The Guardian News Papers reported that** barely two years after the Jesse incidence, another tragedy took place in Adeje town in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State. Interestingly, Adeje town is about 25 kilometers only from Jesse town the (theGuardian, 2000). The tragedy was also caused by pipelines rupture by vandals, who under-estimated the effects of their own action. This time, the rupture was detected and reported on December 20, 1999, to the Pipelines Product Marketing Company (PPMC), a Federal Government Agency responsible for pipelines

maintenance, but it did not undertake immediate repairs. The people of Adeje and its environs, out of ignorance, then thought the failure to repair was a blessing, and went out en masse to scoop the fuel from the pipelines for sale to motorists on the Benin-Warri Expressway. The leakage continued up to April 2000 when there was another period of fuel scarcity in Nigeria. Adeje, therefore, seemed to have provided temporary relief for motorists and those who had private generators. While this was going on, several environmental rights organizations, especially Environmental Rights Action (ERA), criticized the Federal Government for neglecting the repairs; and the oil pipelines eventually exploded on Monday, June 10, 2000 and burnt over 5 kilometers of farmlands. It also burnt to death 300 persons. The then Governor of the State, Chief James Onanefe Ibori visited the scene and expressed concern and shock, but did nothing to alleviate the pains and sufferings of the victims.

**In Warri North and Warri South-West local government areas in delta state, in 2003, the pipe line vandalization incidence affected about 50 communities these communities included Eketie, Ekporo, Ogbegbe-Eghoruoke and Orere-Yeregbo. These communities were put in a precarious situation as the people could no longer drink the water from the creeks and rivers polluted by the spill. It also affected their livelihood, and made the people live in penury and hunger. Unfortunately, Chevron-Texaco Company, owners of the pipelines, claimed no responsibility over the incidence (Njoku, 2016). There are some works in this region that has also sculpturally documented this activity and one of them is done by Kologba though his work is in waste metal plates as can be seen in figure2 bellow:.**



Figure2: Kologo, Oil Pipeline Vandalization, Metal, 12ft x, 2015, courtesy Case Study of Okordio Kingdom unpublished project report submitted to the department of Fine Arts and Design, University of Port Harcourt.

This is rendered in pure realistic sculpture with his two hands holding a sledge hammer showcasing the action of vandalizing oil pipe.



Figure 3: Bruno Catalano, Traveler, Fiber Glass, 2009, Courtesy: Ravagnan gallery

This is a stylized realism showing a man holding a travelling bag embarking on a journey. It is a realistic sculpture but given a style that exhibit incomplete anatomy.

This displays a man with a huge chopped off body which has completely been left out, remaining his head, leg and bag depending on each other.



Figure 4: Nwachukwu: Oil Vandal: Photography Year: 2015

The above plate depicts or shows a man carrying a refined oil from a local refinery. It is where the biomimicry started, this photograph has accurately recorded this vandalization but after some years the photograph will tear but the sculpture representation in fibre glass can withstand rain, fire and other ecological degradation for more than five hundred years.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodological design is a qualitative mode utilizing observation, visual representation that is practice based. This project is a visual representation of vandal in three dimensional larger than life sized, stylized sculpture done in fiber, the project is studio based research. The sculptural piece was produced with clay, which is the major modeling media for sculpture, cast in cement and finally finished with fiber glass. The reason for this method is for the sake of durability.

### **Materials and Equipment**

#### **Materials and their brief descriptions**

**Cement:** this is a grey powder made from lime stone. It sets hard when it comes in contact or after mixing with water in required aggregate. It is used in the picking of negative mold.

**Sharp sand:** this is a sandy soil which can be used in supporting the cement in the picking of mold.

**Clay:** this is the material used in modeling of the sculptural piece.

**Resin:** this is a liquid chemical substance and one of the major material used in achieving a fiberglass sculptural piece

**Calcium:** this is a white powdered chemical substance which is mixed with the resin (known as gel coat) for the production of fiber glass work.

**Catalyst and accelerator:** these two chemicals works hand in hand, it quickens the fast setting of the resin chemical.

**Fiber mat:** this serves as re-enforcement to the chemical

#### **Equipment/Tools**

The equipment and tools used in achieving this project are listed as follows: Welding machine, Angle grinder, Hand saw, Binding wire, Plier, Rods, Spatulas, Hammer, Brushes, Trowel

#### **Procedural Practices**

These are the various stages involved in the development of the practical project and they are as follows:

## Sketches



Figure 5: Sketch



Figure 6: Sketch

Sketches were made to bring out the form and composition of the figure (vandal)

### **Marquette Stage**

The smaller model called Marquette is a study of a smaller version made to use to produce the actual size. This is the first procedure using clay. A Marquette is a prototype of the final piece

### **Construction of Amateur**

After the smaller model which the Marquette a full scale size of the work started with the skeletal form done with rods and pieces of wood and at times paper strong enough to carry the clay piling. This the stage that proper scaling to get the proportions right.





Figure 7: Construction of Amateur  
This is a very vital stage of this project after carefully construction of the amateur, pieces of wood were used to bind the various parts of the amateur to emphasize on the anatomical reference from the Marquette.



Figure 8: Clay piling stage  
Clay was piled all over the amateur in their respective proportion then the clay was kneaded to a workable consistency for the armature. The beating technique on the clay as it is piled on the armature helps the clay to assure proper compactness.

### **Modeling and Detailing**

After piling the clay, the researcher made a proper detailing of forms on the figure applying bio mimicry which is in this case you get a model and use the model which is from the natural environment , man to produce the prototype .



Figure 9: Detailing of Figure.

**Application of lubricant to the model**

Lubricants are applied to the entire work with palm oil so as to separate the clay from the cement.



Figure 10: The model after the application of lubricant for easy separation of the negative.



Figure 11: The model after the application of lubricant for easy separation of the negative.

### **Application of Cement and picking of Negative mold**

The researcher applied cement in order to get the negative mold out from the real figure.

### **Filing and Sanding and Installation**

These are finishing processes in sculpture practice which were done on the Pipe Line Vandal to give it a pleasant tactual feeling without which the work would have rough and unfinished



Figure12: Separating mold with palm oil



Figure 13: Coupling sanding and installation of the oil drums



Figure 14: Alfred Acheru, Finished Mounted Pipe Line Vandal, Fibre glass, 7ft, Photograph: Antonia Okogwu, 2020.

Immediately after the sanding process, we went on to fill each joint properly, and then we sand the whole fiber over to get a very smooth texture.

### **Mounting of Project**

Mounting is a stage in sculpture practice where the work is fixed permanently on a designated place on a Pedestal. The sculptural work was prominently mounted on a pedestal of about 3ftx4ftx4ft at Dept. of Fine Arts and Design, University of Port Harcourt

### **Partination**

The partination was done using coffee brown auto crystal enamel car paint, as the under coat and highlighted with orange auto crystal enamel car paint.

### **DISCUSSION**

The composition of the sculptural piece is rendered in realism and portraying a muscular man carrying big jerry can on his shoulder and hand. It has to be so for the work to really portray strength .It takes such a man to go oil bunkering. The sculpture piece is produced in clay and finished in fiber glass, a contemporary material that has tenacity to withstand hash weather

condition in the rain forest region. The figure raises his right hand up to support the jerry can filled with crude oil on his shoulder. At this point, he has already harvested the crude oil from pipeline and gets away with the oil in both cans. The art of removing the middle region of the sculpture is highly metaphoric and purposely done so as to portray a selfish man who went to collect food that he bought with his middle region. In other words it is like the Igbo proverbial adage of one that sold his buttocks to buy a chair, then what is he going to sit on the chair without the buttocks.

## CONCLUSION

The Niger Delta region has contributed its quota to the nation building and had suffered lots of great set back in matters of development and the availability of social amenities. Above all, the people who for too long lived in pollution resulting from the exploration of the national resources which is found in abundance in Niger Delta (Olawole adedeji Abiola, 2009). It at times becomes cumbersome to pass on a message theoretically with many words. This study has contributed immensely to visual direction of the vandals activities in Niger Delta area of Nigeria. This message is vividly passed on with the sculpture.

It has also added by enlarging the body of literature in the practice area of representation of human anatomy in realistic concept with some areas conceptually removed for aesthetic and iconographic purposes.

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