

Ajoda Notes on 31st March 2008 session

Began with a family tree for Theresa showing grandparents, parents, siblings, children and grandchildren. Where were they living, where are they now. Interesting story about 2 grandmothers: Christina (married to Ali) and Mary. Christina named after Christ, but was Mary named after Mary Magdalene? Definitely not... rather Mary mother of Christ, ie healthy competition about most godly of grandparents. Parents were Augusta and Ignatiu.

Looked at when Theresa and siblings came to England and when they went back. Theresa and Roch 1949 (both returning to Nigeria in 1952). Candida in 1960. Folarin in 1970. Antonia came in 1982, Theresa came back to UK in 1996. Theresa married to Tunji
Six children: Tunde, Etnabe, Yemi, Loki, Sade and Leke. First 2 live mostly in Nigeria, Yemi and Loki in UK, Sade in USA and Leke in USA & UK.

Pattern emerged with more and more of Theresa's children and grandchildren settling in UK (or other parts of Europe) or USA. Theresa has 18 grandchildren mostly living in England.

People think about grandmothers in response to a series of questions. They share answers in pairs. Then men tell about women's grandmothers and the women add to the story.

Madupe Kolki:

Grandmother a big business woman. She owned a permanent shop. Madupe loved her although she was very strict. Very religious, and followed almost Judaic customs. No smoke from the fire on Sundays as there was no cooking, only cold food.

Agnes:

Grandmother living in Lagos. Agnes went to church with her. She was very religious but "very Accommodating"???. Agnes loved her very much. She was very affectionate and told traditional stories. A good cook and Agnes longed for her grandmother's food. She was very hard-working, selling fabric and clothing at the market. Agnes would run errands for her when she was working there.

Theresa:

On the maternal side, the grandmother was rich, possibly royal ?? Very elegant and very religious. A strict woman but very loving with the children. Theresa went to market with her. She would give Theresa

money to buy things as a special treat. Children wore the coins round their necks.

Elizabeth:

She had a tattoo on her arm with her parents' name on as it was war time and it would stop her from being stolen. Grandmother did her hair elaborately once a week.

Group Improvisations on a visit to grandmother:

Group one: Nick and Tony (children), Theresa and James (grandparents)
Grandpa sitting down in shop/front room, looking out at passers-by and looking out for the grandchildren. Grandmother bustling and busy cooking.

Children arrive and Gran sings welcome song. Kneel for blessing. Give presents (Tony's seems to be a grasshopper!) They ask how the parents are doing in the city.

Grandpa talks to the children while Gran cooks. Tells story of new building progress and how he is watching it. Asks how they are doing at school.

Gran sends them for water to the stream with calabashes.

Gran brings food: Okhra soup and dough balls. Grandpa blesses it. Wash hands. Very whole-hearted eating with sauce and dipping. Grandpa says cover up your best clothes and don't spill. Everyone eating from same pot.

Children clear away.

Children ask if they can stay the weekend. Grandpa says he'll ask parents to bring them with for next festival.

Go outside where Gran and Grandpa help children to catch a chicken and a goat to take home. Waving goodbye.

Group 2: Agnes (grandmother) Elizabeth and ? (parents) Bart (child/grandfather)

Grandma is sitting in her home and a neighbour comes to announce that her family have arrived and are coming. The family arrive and greet Grandma. The women kneel and hug her and the men possibly prostrate themselves.

Once they have greeted each other they sit and catch up on news from home and here in the village. The grandchild asks where the grandfather is. He is at the farm and will return later to see them. The mother asks the grandmother how she is and the grandchild asks if she received the medicine that was sent.

The parents and Grandchild give gifts that they have brought. Yams and possibly money as well.

Grandmother then fetches Cola and the grandchild breaks it and offers blessings on his grandmother and the family.

Grandmother then goes to prepare dinner while the family sit. The mother goes to help bring out the food, water for washing hands and water for drinking.

They wash their hands and then eat. The food is laid out on a mat on the floor and they all eat from the same bowls using their hands. There is water to drink. While they eat they talk more about the grandmother and the village.

Grandfather returns with some palm-wine, which is shared between the adults and there then follows a discussion on whether the grandparents should still be working on their farm. The grandparents explain that they like to have the fresh food and that the farming is a kind of exercise that keeps them young and fit.