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CREATIVE APOSTASY OR AESTHETIC AMNESIA?: OSOFISAN'S  
*BIRTHDAYS ARE NOT FOR DYING AND OTHER PLAYS*

Okwute J. Abah

Does it really matter what  
 Human matter  
 Must be wasted  
 For you to be a taster  
 Of the sweet wine of Power (?)

Fred Agbeyegbe, *The King Must Dance  
 Naked*

Both in terms of the quality of his plays and the influence he exerts on contemporary Nigerian theater, Femi Osofisan is the most significant Nigerian dramatist after Wole Soyinka. A poet, a novelist and essayist, he is currently a professor of theater at the University of Ibadan. *The Chattering and the Song* (1977), *Once Upon Four Robbers* (1980), *Morountodun and Other Plays* (1982), *Farewell to Cannibal Rage* (1986), and *Another Raft* (1989) are notable examples of his plays. In most of these plays he effectively marries elements of traditional theatrical expression with socio-political issues that make the plays unmistakably relevant to contemporary reality. There is a deliberate appeal to the popular audience, the urban fringe dwellers and the rural peasants, through the choice of subject and the incorporation of aspects of the people's entertainment modes—music, songs, dance, riddles, storytelling, etc. This has led Olu Obafemi to characterize his theater as "total theatre"<sup>1</sup>. Other critics have also commented on the revolutionary nature of his dramaturgy, emphasizing his "unmasking of myths as a preliminary to changing history,"<sup>2</sup> his "using of his dramatic talent for furthering the cause of the underling in a period of oppression"<sup>3</sup> all of "which [are] changing the orientation of modern Nigerian drama."<sup>4</sup>

This paper examines Osofisan's latest collection of plays, *Birthdays Are Not For Dying and Other Plays*, and argues that all the three plays in the collection revolve around a common theme: the seduction of power. Kunle Aremo, Alhaja Olowoseun, and Chief Ereniyi Eson, protagonists in *Birthdays*, *Fires Burn and Die Hard*, and *The Inspector and the Hero* respectively, are people driven by lust for power. In their pursuit of power, they engage in unethical conduct. Invariably, nemesis catches up with them and turns

their ambition into a chimera when they are so close to realizing their dreams. Thematically, the plays may be arguably said to be in accord with Osofisan's previous works. Dramaturgically, however, their drawing-room settings and near observance of the unities put them in a different structural mode from the previous ones. This aesthetic shift makes Osofisan's politics in these plays ambivalent and intriguing. Does this signal a new direction in his career wherein he has abandoned his concern for the problems of the underlings or is his aesthetic choice here part of his usual experimentation with forms? Is it creative apostasy or aesthetic amnesia?

The action of *Birthdays* takes place in Kunle Aremo's bedroom, the size and furnishing of which testifies to his opulence. The son of a deceased magnate, Kunle turns thirty the day the play opens. A grand celebration is planned to mark his birthday. But the play opens on a note of apprehension and foreboding, especially on the part of his mother, as Kunle is bent on effecting the terms of his father's will which is to take control of the company that his father had built. He had already met with the company lawyer to ascertain that he has the law firmly on his side and he has already taken the bold step, "I have already signed the papers sir. Since four o'clock this afternoon I have effectively become the President of the Company."<sup>5</sup> He has summoned a Board meeting during which he would formally inform the members of his ascendance and the steps he has taken to "reconstitute this Board" (p. 34). He has carefully studied the records and discovered that his father's partners are mostly sponges whose financial impropriety has brought the company to the brink of bankruptcy. To save the company, Kunle is determined to fire the fraudulent but formidable barons and start on a *tabula rasa*. Can Kunle's youthful zeal in all its innocence stand the storm of the fury of the powerful, ruthless and seasoned schemers whose only doctrine seems to be the survival of the fittest, where they have acquired the art, through experience, of always being the fittest? His mother thinks it cannot and that is the source of her apprehension.

In the play, Osofisan leads us into the seamy side of the corporate world, the dog-eat-dog style that characterizes relationships among the upper crust of the ruling class in our society. Except Councillor Lekan Bamgbade, each Board member is actively involved in siphoning into his personal account huge sums of company money without the others knowing it. Honourable Fakunle fleeces the company of five thousand naira every week through Odedare Enterprises. Chief Siminiy set up Ireti Stores five years ago for Feyisope, his mistress, probably with company funds. The company is paying the bills for the lady's treatment in an expensive hospital in Switzerland where the lover has sent her following a fire accident in the store. Even the Councillor who

seems clean may, in this climate of corruption, be benefitting from the thievery of the others. With his knowledge of their activities, he holds a trump card which the others may have to buy to ensure his silence.

. . . Councillor, I understand now, you're just no better than them. Your hands are clean, you don't steal money yourself, but you'll do nothing to stop those who dip their fingers in the wallet behind everybody's back. You're an accomplice, sir, as guilty as the rest. With people like you nothing will ever change (p. 47).

Even marriages are contracted as a strategy for financial advancement by the parents, as in the case of Kunle and Bosede Aremo. We witness the duplicity, the fickleness, the ostentation, and arrogance, all of which thinly veil the greed of this class. Greed is the impelling force in characterization within the play and greed here is closely associated with power, the power to manipulate and dominate others. Whatever the characters do or say, whatever alliances they enter into, is intended to advance their rapacity.

Kunle's frontal attack on the decadence and corruption of the Board members is commendable, but it is destined to failure as it happens at the end. His flaw is both constitutional and managerial. He suffers from an infirmity, complaining of headache and using his drugs several times within the short span of the play. He has no business expertise. His total lack of tact in dealing with the Board members demands that he has the physical strength and the managerial skill to do better than the pack of hounds. But he merely harangues their incompetence without having an alternative. The way he is, would he be any better for the company than the hounds have been? Kunle seems to have been driven by hatred, bitterness, and a sense of revenge than by a pragmatic, altruistic or disinterested business motive. While the latter set of values is positive and forward-looking, the former is negative and backward-gazing.

In her fear of what might happen to her son, Kunle's mother tries to dissuade him from going on with his plan to take over the company. Kunle argues that his father had a definite assignment for him. The mother seeks to know what it is. He replies, "That I should avenge him" (p. 11). Later when he talks to Bosede, his wife, he says, "I am going to have my revenge on you, my dear. I am going to hurt you back!" (p. 15). When Councillor Lekan Bamgbade chides him for his maltreatment of his colleagues, he justifies his action thus: "They are worse than murderers, Councillors! They killed my father! They deserve it all" (p. 46) His motive is more personal and selfish than the altruistic concern for the future of the company.

Kunle is a calculating, greedy and ambitious young man. For two years, he had full proof of the wife's infidelity which he tucked neatly into a drawer in his bedroom. He agonizes over it but he could not raise the issue for fear of displeasing his father. Apparently Kunle was aware of the text of the father's will, the fulfillment of which is contingent upon his marriage to Bosede. Kunle tells us:

He wanted to keep his words to an old friend. I was the sacrificial lamb. I obeyed him because he was my father. I swallowed my pride. But all that is over now! Today is for the burying of ghosts (p. 20).

But Bosede has a different understanding of the situation. She tells him, "You never could face up to men, but you were hungry for the possessions he would leave you" (p. 20). He endured the anguish of the knowledge of the wife's profligacy with his gaze fixed on the will, believing its fulfillment will be enough compensation.

Today, Kunle is thirty, and his father's will matures thrusting so much power upon him. There is no doubt that he is inebriated by the power and broader financial base which his ascendance to the helm of the company bestows upon him. When Bosede scorns him we are told he becomes "incensed," screaming: "I have power, stupid! Power!" (p. 20) The reason why he humiliates the old men the way he does is because he knows they would object to his ascendance. After announcing to the Board that he has succeeded his father as the President as his will states, Honourable Fakunle goes into a fit. Kunle has the occasion to demand from them the "important courtesies expected of a Board member to his Chairman" (p. 34). The members variously retort on his "impudence" (p. 35). Kunle replies, "I am very glad. My conscience is free now to take the decisions needed. (Takes file from table). I'll announce them--" (p. 35) and he proceeds to sack them one after the other. He cannot brook any obstacle on his way to the top. With his passionate greed and inordinate ambition Kunle could not be different from the people he seeks to supplant. He is a chip off the old block. For the first time in his life, he has the opportunity to act and he is intoxicated by his newly-acquired power:

See? The farce has got into your head, your fickle paper crown has turned real in your warped imagination, and see! see you galloping madly on your paper horse. You'll crash my friend. See? You will smash your skull soon or break your spine! For you think you have power and it has turned your head (p. 46).

Kunle is evidently seduced by the glamour of power and he crashes as foretold.

*Fires Burn and Die Hard* is set in Alhaja Olowosuen's sitting room. She is the president of the Market Women's Association, a powerful organization whose membership numbers 10,000. Members have suffered so much hardship since losing everything to fire that gutted the former market. They have striven very hard to see to the completion of a modern market. The project is completed and is due to be commissioned the following day and everything is set for the commissioning ceremony by the Governor. Their dreams will finally materialize when, after the ceremony tomorrow, they begin to sell their wares which are already in place in their stalls:

The Governor and his entourage lead the way. We follow, with the drummers. Then the priests step forward with the rams. Ha! The blood spurts into the air, red and clean! And we rush forward catching it for luck. . . . You know I am not alone in my wild joy! All of us out there, that's why we've not sat down even for one second, since morning! Why we've spent the whole day running around like insane women, making sure the preparations are in place. The dream that will be taking shape tomorrow, and in our own generation too! (pp. 56-57).

But a last minute hitch develops. The *obas* and chiefs have consulted the oracle and Ifa says no to the commissioning. It reveals that the burning of the former market was the work of an arsonist. This arsonist is one of the members of the Market Women's Association, and like others she has already occupied a stall in the new market. Until this misanthropic individual is found out or confesses, and the appropriate rituals performed, she will soil the new market with the curses attending her abomination in the former market.

It is less than twelve hours to the scheduled moment of commissioning upon which the dreams of the market women hinge. Hell would be let loose should they assemble in their splendor in the morning and be told that the ceremony cannot take place because the *oba* has forbidden it. Yet it is impossible to summon them in such a short time to see if someone among them would own up to avert the communal disaster that the stalling of the ceremony could lead to.

The only alternative is for either the President, Alhaja Olowosuen, or the Treasurer, Temilola Alakin, to accept the role of a scapegoat and present herself for the atonement ritual, which involves getting stripped, dancing naked round the stalls, having her own stall and wares burnt, strewing the ashes all around the market, and, finally, staying away from the market for seven years.

In a moving speech, which turns out later to be the most ironic moment in the play, Temilola eulogizes Alhaja as the "mother of the

market" (p. 86) whose tirelessness and selflessness has been their inspiration.

. . . you are always there, guiding our progress, till we can stand by ourselves, on our own feet! Till we can send the children to school, buy a plot of land, erect a shelter over our suffering head! These are the dreams you have made possible by your tireless, selfless presence in the market, . . . till you have turned the market into a veritable home for us! Into a hive of comfort and companionship for all who were born female, in a land where men are raised to be tyrants. . . (p. 87).

She altruistically offers herself for the role of the scapegoat so that their collective dream and the work of their "mother" will not be aborted. Stunned by her magnanimity, Alhaja is forced to own up. She was the ogress who caused so much heart ache and pain, penury and misery to the community she leads. She tries to explain her motive but in the process she espouses a philosophy which alienates the audience through an excessive glorification, even deification, of money:

Money! What else matters in this world? What else is our husband and father rolled into one? What is our brother and sister and our friend all at the same time? Is it not money? That is why we go to the market! . . . To conquer money and make it dance to our errands! (pp. 90-1).

Such concentration of avarice in an individual naturally leads to egoism. Social ties and communal concerns become easy sacrifices on the altar of pecuniary advancement. Crimes of unimaginable proportions result from the need for constant self-projection and self-preservation. We are reminded of Armah's category of "ostentatious cripples" in *Two Thousand Seasons*, and of Akinlade and Ayinde in Bode Sowande's *Tornadoes Full of Dreams*, whose greed made the Atlantic slave trade such a flourishing enterprise, though it meant the decimation of Africa.

Alhaja's pursuit of money involves her in shady deals which scandalizes her son Leke. In her words, "Profit is a demanding creed. The morals of the market are quite rigid, but they are the same as the morals of the mosque or the church" (p. 91). Leke obviously does not subscribe to this. He runs off on the discovery of some "contrabands" in his mother's stall. For fear that the boy may squeal on her, she sets fire to her stall to destroy the evidence of her criminality in an impulse of self-preservation. The fire spreads engulfing the market. She has guarded her secret ever since, pretending to be ignorant of the cause of the fire like the others.

Like Kunle, Alhaja is seduced by the glamour of power which money confers on the possessor. Like Kunle, she pursues the money with a single track devotion, but ironically loses all as nemesis catches up with her.

Chief and Mrs. Ereniyi Eson's sitting room is the setting for *The Inspector and the Hero*, the last play in the trilogy. It is early hours of the morning, and a party hosted by the couple has just ended. They have seen the last of their guests off and are congratulating one another for the success of the party. The party has been organized to celebrate Chief Ereniyi's winning his Party nomination for the Governorship elections soon to be held. The couple is aglow with the fantasy of what life will be like for them this time next year when they would already be in the State House. Inspector Akindele and his men barge into them "investigating a murder" and dragging out the skeleton from their cupboard.

Chief Ereniyi had been a Customs Officer who resigned to go into politics five months earlier. Aduke, his wife, was a school teacher who also resigned to help the husband on the campaign trail. While in office Ereniyi colluded with his wife to set up a racket which led to the death of several people. On April 10, Chief Ereniyi assumed office as the Chief Customs Officer for Zone "B." On May 11, Aduke opened an account in her maiden name at the Oyingbo branch of Elegant Bank. On November 11, one Mr. Latinwo paid N20,000 into that account. Two weeks later he was arrested for contraband. Before he could be charged in court, he dies in detention, having committed "suicide." On January 3, a Customs Officer whom Chief Ereniyi refers to as a "miserable third class officer" intercepts a large consignment of contraband during an "unusual blackout" at the boarder. On January 4, the same officer, whose death the Inspector and his men are investigating, is found dead near the Customs House. On January 5, Dr. B. Paterson pays into the account N10,000. On January 13, he pays in another N15,000. On February 24, Alhaji Gao pays in N41,00. On March 7, Dr. B. Paterson pays in N20,000. On March 9, both Alhaji Gao and Dr. Paterson are picked up in Kano for contraband activities. Enroute to Lagos by train for interrogation, they die of food poisoning. In April and May there were only withdrawals from the account, including a cheque to Mrs. Paterson. On June 17, a whooping deposit of 2 million and forty thousand naira was made into the account. Four days later, Mrs. Eson resigned her teaching appointment.

The Inspector uses these cold facts to introduce discord between the husband and wife. He plays on Chief Ereniyi's egoism. He provides the Chief an apparent cover by insisting the wife was the brain behind the scheme and the killings:



Madam, why not confess? You have been using your husband as a cover all these days. *Without his knowing*. You pressure on his men, using his name, and through that, you smuggled all kinds of things into the country. You were using your husband's name to carry out a most lucrative, illegal business. And when your accomplices were caught, you quickly paid to eliminate them (p. 121, emphasis mine).

The inspector paints a lurid picture of her infidelity and profligacy which the husband knows is false but makes no effort to counter. He is excited to know what the police thinks and he is not going to remove the red herring from their path, even if his wife is the victim of such misunderstanding, so long as it turns the search light away from him. He begins to accept the Inspector's fabrications concerning Aduke's affairs with his subordinates because it seemingly offers the only way out trouble for him.

. . . only it is your husband I pity. That's why I am here. He'll lose everything, unless he denounces you and washes his hands off it all. It is the only way he can save himself. Before it is too late. Because there is a witness, willing to talk and swear to all of this (p. 125).

By refusing to side with the wife, Chief Ereniyi reveals an uncanny ruthlessness in the pursuit of power. He is more concerned about his chances at the polls, a selfishness he glamorizes as "my responsibility to others especially the Party" (p. 126), than the welfare of his wife. In making this choice he falls for the Inspector's bait, for the horrified wife in a fit of hysteria denounces him and he slaps her to shut her up. The Inspector has succeeded in rattling them. Though Aduke realizes the ploy and tells the husband, it is too late. The Chief in a frenzy lashes out at them for trying to stop his dream. In the process he exposes the sordid secret of his heart. He had been traumatized by the poverty into which he was born. He remembers vividly the humiliation he and his mother have had to subject themselves to, especially with regard to his education which she wanted him to acquire at all costs. He tells us:

I survived it all, storing it up in my breast, swearing one day I would avenge it! Everything! That those people would fall on their faces one day and worship that same woman, they were humiliating! That's how I survived, by hiding and hoarding my dreams! I have dreamt of her placing her feet on the heads of those arrogant boys one day, of her pronouncing sentence and them begging and begging in their broken voices (p. 131).

Like Kunle, the Chief's motive for seeking power is lyrically vindictive, and passionately egocentric. Like Kunle, he has had to think out a scheme which he carries out methodically towards the realization of his ambition. Today, he is very rich and with his wealth, he has "joined the ranks of the powerful," has arrived in victory" (p. 134) and nothing or nobody can stop him from becoming the Governor. Consistently, in all three plays, money and power are equated. Ereniyi tells the Inspector:

And see, the secret of Power is here, I've learnt it well! (he dips his hand in his pocket and brings out currency notes, which he flings disdainfully on the floor.) That's the shape of it! The beginning and the end of Power! Alpha and Omega! That's what I learnt from that abject beginning. From those hard school benches, from the mockery of my mates, I learnt slowly the truth of life (p. 133).

This statement is reminiscent of Alhaja Olowosuen's celebration of money above, while the arrogant confidence of the Chief harks back to the same attitude induced in Kunle by the maturity of the "possessions" left him by the father. These characters get progressively desperate in their methods. Kunle's actions are limited to an irreverent unmasking of the decadence of his father's erstwhile colleagues. He injures their pride but causes no material or physical harm to them. Alhaja Olowosuen's action involves serious material loss to the members of the association of which she is the leader. Chief Eson Ereniyi completes the cycle of evil by freely indulging in murder to promote his lust for power.

As in the previous cases, the Inspector's incorruptibility puts paid to the dreams of the Chief, rendering the seemingly unassailable confident exuberance that emanates from his financial base ironic. Money and power are desirable, but to seek to acquire them at all costs, violating all ethical codes of conduct and trampling over others to get it is not acceptable. Using a mask, Bojula tricks the Chief into confessing that he had personally killed Kuyinu. His ambition of becoming a Governor which seemed so real at the beginning of the play turns into a mirage.

The characters in the plays are arguably representatives of the ruling class. By projecting the Machiavellian streak in their minds, Osofisan seeks to lay bare the endemic egoism that characterizes the ruling class. Through that he warns the ordinary citizens against any form of hero-worship, a tradition quite pervasive in Nigeria. From a thematic point of view, therefore, the plays are in accordance with Osofisan's previous works, progressively ideological and decidedly on the side of the downtrodden. Dramaturgically, however, the plays are ambivalent if not outrightly reactionary.

Each of the three plays has a single line of action, a single setting, and their actions take place within twenty four hours. Each starts in *medias res* with the point of attack being a moment of crisis very near the resolution enabling a considerable past to be woven into the plot—like Sophocles' *Oedipus Res* of an Ibsen play. The plot of *Birthdays* begins barely two hours before Kunle's demise, though the story goes back to at least two years when Kunle and Bosede got married. Alhaja Olowosuen's calamity occurs within a short time after the play has opened, though the fire took place in an unspecified time in the past, while Chief Ereniyi's disaster comes soon after the point of attack, though the story goes as far back as his boyhood days to the first time he went to school. The plot-story ratio in each case is high making it necessary to include in the plot substantial materials from the past. Conversation is the major mode of activity within each play. They belong in the category of dramatic structure which Beckerman characterizes as "intensive mode."<sup>6</sup>

In the history of dramatic literature the prevalence of one structural mode over another among dramatists of different ages and countries correlate with differences in their aesthetic and philosophical assumptions about man and his place in the universe. The line of dramatists from the Greeks to the French in the 17th century down to Ibsen in the 19th century favored the "intensive mode," wherein the situation is highly contracted and the fate of the characters is sealed even before the plot begins. "The philosophical assumption behind this aesthetic choice is that man is without freedom, trapped, a victim of his past. It is an essentially fatalistic view and it is the Aristotelian ideal."<sup>7</sup> In contrast to this, there is what Beckerman calls the "extensive mode" or the Shakespearean model<sup>8</sup> which eschews such contradiction. The full story unfolds within the duration of the plot. The characters are not victims but makers of their destiny. Human beings are not trapped in the webs of their circumstances but pass through them. Man's life is a journey through circumstances and whether he wins or is overwhelmed by the situations depends on the choice he makes. Man is the master of his fate.

There is no doubt that Osofisan is aware of the philosophical import of the two structural modes. Virtually all his previous plays, including the one acts such as *Red is the Freedom Road*, are cast in the "extensive mode" wherein he makes a conscious appeal to the popular audience by effectively combining elements of traditional theatrical expression—the people's entertainment forms—with socio-political issues which make the plays unmistakably relevant to their lives. In an interview with Jide Oshikomaya, he makes it unequivocally clear that his works are concerned with social change.<sup>9</sup> In one of his essays he writes, "... to talk of the place of theatre in the cultural development of

[Nigeria] is in fact to attempt to define its strategies for subverting the currently dominant values of our sick society."<sup>10</sup> These "strategies," as he has demonstrated in his critical writings and previous plays, are not merely thematic, but even more significantly, dramaturgical.

For a playwright with such a progressive reputation and influence, Osofisan's aesthetic choice in these new plays deserves more than casual notice. Is this the beginning of a new phase in his career whereby he seeks to abandon his previous concerns with the problems of the downtrodden, or is his political conviction still intact and the aesthetic difference here merely part of his ongoing experimentation with forms? Is this creative apostasy or aesthetic amnesia? His former technique has won him so much critical acclaim and makes his politics unambiguous and his theater such a refreshing experience.

According to Augusto Boal, the main objective of the poetics of the oppressed is "to change the people—'spectators,' passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon—into subjects, into actors, transformers of the dramatic action."<sup>11</sup> This cannot be achieved by a dramatic device that imposes passivity on them by forcing them to empathize with the heroes. He asserts that catharsis does not mean the purgation of pity and fear. Rather, it is "the purgation of all anti-social elements"<sup>12</sup> induced in the spectator by his vicarious identification with the hero. Through empathy the unconstitutional tendencies which cause reversal of fortune for the hero are stimulated and sustained in the spectator. He pities the hero and fears for himself for having the same tendencies. The hero passes through catastrophe which helps to remind the spectator of the consequences of that hamartia. After catastrophe comes anagnorisis or recognition which is then followed by catharsis in the Boal sense. The system is therefore "designed to bridle the individual, to adjust him to what pre-exists."<sup>13</sup> Precisely for this reason, this system cannot be used for a revolutionary purpose which we believe has always been Osofisan's aim.

All three plays in Osofisan's new collection, *Birthdays Are Not For Dying and Other Plays*, revolve around the theme of power which is interrelated with money. The central characters have a lust for power which they pursue with a maniacal zeal. When they seem most confident, their lives undergo a dramatic reversal: they end tragically. Thematically, the plays may be argued to be in the tradition of Osofisan's previous plays, ideologically progressive. Dramaturgically, however, the plays have structural affinity with Aristotelian tragedy which Boal has demonstrated to be a coercive system of political intimidation working in the interest of the bourgeoisie, the ruling class, and, therefore, anti-revolutionary.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Olu Obafemi, "Revolutionary Aesthetics in Recent Nigerian Drama," in *African Literature Today*, No. 12, 1982, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>Aderemi Bamikinle, "Myth and History in the Service of Literature: The Case of Osofisan's History Plays," in *Work in Progress* (Zaria, Nigeria), No. 6, 1988, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Modupe O. Olaogun, "Parables in the Theatre: A Brief Study of Femi Osofisan's Plays," in *Okike*, No. 27/28, March 1988, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Tess Akaeke Onwueme, "Femi Osofisan and the Techniques of Epic Theatre," in *The Literary Griot*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring 1991, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup>Femi Osofisan, *Birthdays Are Not For Dying and Other Plays* (Lagos: Malthouse, 1990), p. 23. Further references to these plays shall be indicated by parentheses within the body of the article.

<sup>6</sup>Bernard Beckerman, *Dynamics of Drama: Theory and Method of Analysis* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1970), p. 188.

<sup>7</sup>James Okwute Abah, "The Theatre of Wole Soyinka: A Study of a Selection of his Plays." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1986, p. 290.

<sup>8</sup>Beckerman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>9</sup>An interview with Jide Oshikomaya, *Daily Times* (Nigeria), December 8, 1979, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup>Femi Osofisan, "The Place of Theatre in the Cultural Development of Nigeria," in S. O. Unoh (ed.), *Cultural Development and Nation Building* (Spectrum, 1986), p. 48.

<sup>11</sup>Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Translated by A. Charles and Maria-Odilia Leal McBride (London: Pluto Press, 1974), p. 122.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 46

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 47.