ADAPTATION AS A CREATIVE RESPONSE TO SOCIETAL CHANGE: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF SOME ADAPTED WORKS IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA.

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been prepared by me and that it is a record of my own research work. It has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree. All questions are indicated and the sources of information are duly acknowledge by means of references.



Muhammad Rabi'u Isah

Signature

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled 'Adaptation as a Creative Response to Societal Changes: A Critical Appraisal of Some Adapted Works in Ahmadu Bello Univerity Zaria' by Muhammad Rabi'u Isah meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Arts Drama of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

Chairman, Supervisory Committee — Date

Member, Supervisory Committee — Date

Head of Department — Date

Dean, Postgraduate School — 27/3/98 Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to love manifested in my wife. AISHA MOHAMMED RABI'U ISAH, my daughter, NADALATU M.R. ISAH and the Unborn child: and also Friendship manifested in Lt. ALI ABUBAKAR ABDUL (SOJA): and finally, commitment , manifested in those committed ASUU members, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

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ABSTRACT

The experimental alternative theatre practice of the Drama Village, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria could be said to have achieve a definite and established results. This is evident in the area of entertainment and instruction. This achievement is recorded against the challenges faced by the experiments. One, the already established Drama Practice of the Ibadan School which extended from the Elizabethan and classical tradition of theatre practice of the West, and two, the rapid dynamism of the Nigerian Society. This experimental alternative theatre is called by some people as Popular theatre. This Popular theatre manifest in the famours community theatre of the Drama Village and also in the style of presentation of the formal theatre conventions. One of the method of its presentation of the conventional drama is by way of adapting plays through collective improvisation.

Adaptation which is the alteration of the context of an existing drama or story to create a new one is done either to up date the issues in the original version, or to radically change the issue to a new context. In the drama Village's case issues raised in original version of plays were radically altered to address critical societal issues.

Some selected plays of this nature are hereby chosen for analyses in this thesis. These plays are The Five Kobo Opera, Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness and Na So E Be. To enhance our understanding of the works at Drama Village three

plays adapted by notable Nigerian Dramatists are also discussed. The plays are The Gods' Are Not To Blame by Ola Rehmi, Another Raft by Femi Osofisan and Opera Wongosi by Wole Soyinka.

The discourse in this thesis is an attempt to provoke serious minded scholarship to critically consider seriously the aspect of dramatic adaptation which is in the Nigerian Drama history. Also it attempts to by way of documentation preserved a serious and important aspect of dramatic practice within the Nigerian and to some extent African dramatic practice.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The essence of art is to communicate and it does this through various media, Sculpture, Painting, Music, Dance, Song, Cinema, Carving, Drama and related means. To communicate art draws on the interest of its audience. The interest is realized through audience's involvement by the thematic and contextual relevance as well as entertainment and cultural significance.

However, audience's involvement or appreciation of art is not uniform. To the visual arts each person makes a mental note of one thing or the other while admiring the art piece and comes up with his own idea about it. On the other hand, the audience's involvement in drama includes reading: hearing the lines and visualizing action on stage to arrive at an interpretation, or watching a live performance where lines and actions are spoken and performed by actors. Thus, in a performance the audience mentally and physically derives in meaning as well as easily recognize itself being reliving on stage.

The importance of any drama is to communicate through entertainment. Thus, music, song, dance are integrated either as relief from the words and action as in The Gods Are Not To Blame by Ola Rotimi, or as a means which the liveliness of the play is enriched as in Mid-night Hotel by Femi Osofisan. This

makes drama the most social of all the art forms.

Drama is an art of telling a story through a series of progressive actions. Its survival is sustained by certain artistic means. Drama is written purposely to be performed. Once it is performed for a particular audience, certain reactions may arise form its performance. The purposes for which a play may be performed includes among other reasons an ideological propaganda or for enlightenment or educational purposes or even a Historical recast.

Drama could be brought about on stage either by means of dialogue. mime or as a dance-drama. The dialogue presentation of a drama is that the characters in the story as presented by the actors on stage speak to one another in addition to gestures as well as music and dance where necessary. The mime presentation is where actors (characters in the story) on stage use gestures to convey their story to the audience. In a dance-drama, the presentation incorporates dance-music, mime song (dialogue is minimized or not even used at all). This is possible by creative means.

The creative means by which drama is realized is through adaptation. Adaptation has been there in the history of drama practice world-wide. It was vividly there in the dramatic works of classicists like Seneca of the Roman empire who adapted Sophocles's King Oedipus to a play of the same title. Modern dramatists like Bertolt Brecht also used adaptation. His play The Three Penny Opera is an adaptation of The Beggars

Opera by John Gay, Galieo, is an adaptation of the story of the Scientist Galileo Gale. In Nigeria, playwrights have also employed adaptation in their works. Wole Soyinka's The Bacchae of Euripides is an adaptation of The Bacchae by Euripides; so also is Opera Wonyosi that of Brecht's The Three Penny Opera Ola Rotimi's The God's Are Not To Blame is an adaptation of King Oedipus by Sophocles a Greek Playwright. In Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, adaptation has been extensively used in the drama curriculum. Plays or novels adapted or transposed include, The Good Woman of Setzuan by Brecht to Man Pickin. The Three Penny Opera to The Five Kobo Opera (and later to Ten Kobo Opera). The Caucasian Chalk Circle to the Chalk Circle. Novels like The River Between and Devil On The Cross by Ngugi, Mongo Beti's Perpetua And The Habit of Unhappiness and Ama Ata Aidoo's For Whom Things Did Not Change are among the famous adaptations in the Drama Village.

Adaptation is a means of relocating the context of an already existing story, drama or a communal performance to a different setting or period. It is done either to update the existing materials or to radically change its ideological purpose.

Adaptation could be done for different purposes in several different ways. It could be done for cultural or historical relevance. Osofisan's Another Raft is an example. He adapts The Raft by J.P. Clark which discusses the political drift of the Nigerian society towards doom. The adapted play

goes beyond its immediate post-independence Nigeria as it is in the original version, to a Nigeria that is witnessing a lot of political crisis. So also is The Five Kobo Opera of Ahmadu Bello University's Drama Village an adaptation of Brecht's The Three Penny Opera, a play which satirizes the social and political happening of the society. Also adaptation could be done purposely to invigorate some ideological position. This is exemplified in Osofisan's adaptation of Clark's The Raft to Another Raft.

Adaptation is realizable by either tampering with the original play's characterization as effectively done in Rotimi's The God's Are Not To Blame, where Adewale replaces Creon of the original version; the relationship of the character Creon to Oedipus in the original is that of an in-law relationship but in The God's Are Not to Blame it is made closer to the family as Adewale being the younger brother to King Odewale and thus a most appropriate heir to the throne of the land of Kutuje. Adaptation could be realised where the plot is restructured. An instance is the case in the A.B.U.'s adaptation of Brecht's Three Penny Opera to Five Kobo Opera. Also it may be adding or subtracting a portion of the original play as in the adaptation of King Oedipus by Rotimi where he adds a prologue scene that is not there in the earlier play, and also in the Five Kobo Opera where the true characters in the original play were reduced to the fantasies of Rocker and the Barman. This is supported by Etherton when he asserts:

> Adapting or transposing a play..... may be limited to superficial changes of detail to a radical recasting or rewriting... an original play influenced by or alluding to an earlier work[1].

Adaptation has been strong in the curriculum for drama in A.B.U Zaria, specifically with its experiment with the alternative theater. The Drama Village, A.B.U., Zaria has gone a long way, in this aspect, in influencing art, in this case drama, as a medium of change in the society. This is evident especially in the adaptation of some plays and novels like Five kobo Opera from Brecht's Three Penny Opera and Perpetua and the Habit of Unhappiness a novel by Mongo Beti to a play of the same title and so on. In both plays issues that concern and affect the society are raised and are concretized through the drama on stage and the audience being familiar with the issues in the drama on stage and the audience being familiar with the issues raised in the original versions of the adapted plays and which has effect on contemporary reality include unemployment, armed robbery, exploitation of the poor by the rich, government's insensitivity to the problems of its citizens, lack of social amenities. social injustices, political manipulation, detention without trials and other similar vices. The dramatic experiments of the Drama Village at A.B.U., Zaria vehemently dissociates itself from the proponents of arts for arts sake philosophy and that is why it stands unique in the schools of thought on drama in Nigeria.

The nature of drama as an entertainment medium makes it more social than other art forms. But which communicates ideas

to its audience, hence the audience's awareness of its environment is enhanced especially of the expectant happenings. This has been the central focus of drama in A.B.U. Zaria's experiment in dramatic adaptation.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

As it is now, dramatists are continuously opting for adaptation as a means of responding to issues raised in other works. It is also a strong aspect in the teaching of drama in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, adaptation is a predominant feature in both practical classes as well as the theory courses that are taught. In fact, it is a pillar of the alternative drama tradition of the University.

In spite of this enthusiasm in dramatic adaptations, it is a puzzle that there is lack of coherent and systematic write-up and documentations on the practice in the Nigerian Drama. At the Drama Village Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, it is unfortunate not to find any coherent documentation of the experiments on adaptations done there. The Drama Unit lacks any comprehensive documentation of its own experiments on dramatic adaptations. The only works readily available to the researcher are The Five Kobo Opera. Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness and Na so E Be. Whatever excuse is given for this reveals a bitter oversight.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this work is to make a comprehensive appraisal of some works adapted and performed in the Drama Village Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. It will also examine works done outside the tradition of Drama Village by some notable Nigerian playwrights. This will be done critically. This is to specifically help in placing the A.B.U.'s experimental work in critical and proper perspective.

Adaptation is a skill which many a dramatist can employ in creativity. It takes the imaginative process of play creation. This is because "old works have their own subtleties, their own scale of beauties, their own truths. Our job is to find these out"[2]. Thus a drama practitioner will ultimately find himself intensively engaged in critically creating appraising, appreciating and analyzing.

The objective of the study will be to add to the few literature available on adaptation. This will be done by discussing some selected works of adaptation. It will also point out how adaptation is realized. This will be done after by examining the relevant changes affected in the adapted version of the plays in study. It will bring to focus the achievement of the adapting dramatists. the technicalities used, especially by the Ahmadu Bello University experiments. The study seeks to provoke critics and scholars to add unto their agenda of dramatic criticism the polemics of the techniques in adaptation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Regrettably, literatures on adaptation are few. Mostly, literatures relating to dramatic adaptation are to be located in play analysis. The emphasis of such analysis are found to be concentrated on other matters of the play than adaptation. Adaptation is therefore neglected.

Enekwe and Ihekweazu in an article "Opera Wonyosi and the demand of satire: Soyinka's adaptation of Gay and Brecht" discusses Soyinka's adaptation as a satiric pessimism and also attempt to show the inadequacies inherent in the work in handling issues raised by Brecht in The Three Penny Opera. In their opinion Gay's The Beggar's Opera main theme "is the satire of the English aristocracy[3] while in Brecht's. The three Penny Opera, the theme is transformed to reflect the early stage of the capitalist society[4]. By Soyinka on the other hand "dramatized the anarchy of the Nigerian oil boom society of the seventies"[5]

To bring out the changes effected by Soyinka a consideration is made of the specific aspects of the main themes of the three plays. Gay portrayed the theme of greed, in Peachum and macheath. Peachum symbolise 'ruthless' and 'calculating' avarice while matcheath is an epitome of excess But Brecht shift, emphasis to the exposition of viciousness of the immobility of an established system and pointing out its deficiencies. Soyinka on the other hand restrict himself only to indictment of a corrupt society.

The thesis of the article is to point out the changes Soyinka affected in adapting The Three Penny Opera to Opera Wonyosi drawing on the original source for Brecht's own adaptation which is The Beggar's Opera by John Gay. This is why they pointed out that

> Soyinka is attracted to Brecht because of "his complete freedom with the medium of theater" It is possible that Soyinka was drawn to the coronation motif in Gay and Brecht, and later discovered so many useful parallels to his own intentions"[6].

The submission of the article is that Soyinka is closer to Gay than Brecht and that Opera Wonyosi register an absence of any consistent analysis. The demerit of this article inclusive of how Soyinka achieve his adaptation is the glaring absence of any analysis in Opera Wonyosi as is obtained in the original version The Three Penny Opera.

This article however is not interested in the realisation of an adaptation work but rather a criticism of Soyinka's inability to achieve what Brecht did in The Three Penny Opera.

Asgill in an article "African Adaptations of Greek Tragedies" looks at the work of Ola Rotimi, Efua Sutherland and Wole Soyinka. The central concern of their works is a reflection of the impact of colonial education and an interesting concern for cultural transfer from Greece to Africa. He asserted thus

> Whilst these preoccupation may reflect .... The depth of classical learning .... in the syllabuses of colonial education there are.... more interesting reasons for this concern with Greek plays: the potentials certainly exist for an easy cultural transfer from Greece to West Africa especially[7]

The plays discussed in the article are The Gods Are Not To Blame by Rotimi from Sophocles's King Oedipus, Edufa, by Sutherland from Euripides's Alcestis and Soyinka's The Bacchae of Euripides from Euripide's The Bacchae.

Asgill opines that Sutherland in her adaptation replaced the motif which indemnifies Admetors with "a selfish greed for continued wealth and longevity entirely for its own sake.[8] The conflict in the play is shifted from that between father and Son to an internalized problem for Edufa which manifest between the intense love for his spouse and the inviolable esteem he has in his society. This has been the necessity for the restructuring of characters and their role. This brings out the distant between Edufa and Alcestic. Thus Sutherland' adaptation becomes a new reaction.

For Ola Rotimi, the narrative techniques altered produces in addition the dramatic action. There is a sub-total change of characterization and the introduction of a prologue. The sphinx in Oedipus Rex is replaced by War in The Gods Are Not To Blame. The motif for the quarrel shifts from right of passage to that of right over land. However, the strength of

Rotimi's adaptation is found "Mainly in the power of production techniques imposed (action, suspense, colour and sound) than with any actual treatment of the original theme or thesis"[9]. In conclusion of his treatise on Rotimi's work Asgil view it as 'African nation' of Sophocle's work but certainly not an adaptation.

By way of saying what adaptation should be like he sum up with an argument which places Sutherland's and Rotimi's work as lacking in the area of adaptation. This is where he asserts that:

> Soyinka's adaptation of The Bacuhae demonstrates a renewable difference from both Rotimi and Sutherland... Soyinka's particular concern, it seems is to re-invest Euripides Bacchae with greater dimensions and complexity[10]"

Asgill's emotional concern for Soyinka's work as a better adapted work is struck where he says

> The Bacchae exhibits interesting adaptability to African literary traditional forms[11].

He concluded his argument by saying that Rotimi has only 'redecorated Oedipus Rex, and Sutherland considerably altered the structural foundations of Alcestis, Soyinka "only extended the structures and applied new furnishings"[12].

One could say that E.J. Asgill failed to point out what make s each of the works of adaptation strongly or otherwise different from their original version. He simply succeeded in

coronating Soyinka's work as a better way of adapting plays.

Teresa U. Ujoku's contribution on the work of adaptation takes a look at the "Influence of Sophocle's Oedepus Rex on Rotimi's The Gods Are Not To Blame". Her argument seems to be a respond to accusation made by critics that Rotimi transplanted Oedipus Rex to Africa as "The Gods". She pointed out that Zulu Sofola has gone to an extent of saying Rotimi merely give Greek characters and towns Yoruba names with a Greek soul. She seems to be on the contrary with the critics. She based her opinion on what Ulrich Wistein said where she quotes "Originality here applies to creative innovations in form or content as well as reinterpretations and combinations of ingredients borrowed from diversed models"[13]. She however submitted that Rotimi's intention is not clear when she lecture,

> It is difficult to accept in the light of what we know about the play, his single critical assessment of his contemporary intentions for the play[14].

Teresa's problem seems to be her anger over 'few critics-blame' on how Rotimi handle (or mishandle) Sophocles' play. The absent of why Rotimi shift Sophocles's for Africa render her analysis ineffective.

In a review article of the performance of They Shall Be Chastised, and adaptation of Ngugi Wa Thiongo's novel Devil on the Cross, by Egwugwu Illah, he observed that adaptation is tending to become a dominant curriculum for drama at Ahmadu

Bello University, Zaria. He sees adaptation of the novel to play as an opportunity for those caught in the "limited" wall of the prose (novel) to see the action alive[15]. Adaptation, in this sense, is hereby seen as a widening of the novelists thematic intentions. Illah here introduces us to the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria's alternative and experimental theater practice.

However, limitations arise from Illah's article. There is no comprehensive content analysis of the adapted play as well as the original source, that is the novel. The attention is only narrowed to the performance alone. Also there is no analysis even at the level of the performance for us to understand and appreciate the Zaria alternative theater experiments.

Michael Etherton goes beyond Illah's review. In his book, The Development of African Drama, he discusses the way African drama is emerging in African societies. Adaptation happens to be a key subject of discussion in Chapter Three of the book. He points out that he is not concerned with influence of Western culture on Africa, but "the quite deliberate concern of African play-wrights to rework plays of other cultures to suit their own societies[16]. He observes that adaptation is endemic in European drama and it is a means by which play-texts survive the process of history. He identifies certain changes which are made for the relevance of Playwright's own society. These changes include names of people, titles and

places, periods and settings, frame work or context; changes in the story and theme. He explained that adaptation could be reduced to some few changes of detail or it can be a more fundamental rewriting. He further stresses that adapting a play is not different from the writer of the original play. He illustrates his arguments by citing some adapted plays in Nigeria such as the two Yoruba versions of Every Man, Every Man and Eda. He also analyses The Gods Are Not To Blame, from King Oedipus, The Island, from Antigone, The Bacchae of Euripides from The Bacchae all Greek plays written by Sophocles and Euripides and adapted by Rotimi, Fugard and Soyinka respectively.

Etherton does not provide his reader with sufficient information as to why adaptation gained a strong place in Africa and in particular in the Nigerian theater practice. He reduces the analysis to only a particular tradition which consider adaptation as a means by which play-texts survived the process of history and changes that are in adapting plays.

Ahmed Yerima is so enthusiastic about adaptation that he even provided set rules and regulations to be followed in adapting plays. His article which he called "The contemporary Nigerian playwright" attempts to look at adaptation as a particular convention that should be followed by playwrights who want to adapt plays. He defines adaptation:

> as some playwright making suitable plays already written for greater appeal and wider audience

acceptance[17].

He illustrates with dramatic texts like The Gods Are Not To Blame; The Bacchae of Euripides; Haba Director; That Scoundrel Suberu; and Who is Afraid of Tai Solarin? He outlines three factors which are the basis for a successful adaptation. The factors include "respect for the older playwright", "feeling for the meaning and understanding of the works" and" closeness to aesthetic values". To him.

> It is when these three factors, respect for the older playwright, feeling for the older playwrights meaning, understanding of the works, for no one can make suitable what he does not understand, and thirdly closeness to aesthetic values, that initial choice of a work of art for adaptation can be achieved[18].

He further stresses that principles of adaptation serve as organic pulls for an intending adapting playwright. They are instruments which must be used to 'impose' a sense of vision both personal and imaginative when adapting play. The principles include, maintaining original theme, character and plot, choosing audience, solidifying language and idea, and creating a conducive atmosphere. He concludes by saying that adaptation is as difficult an art as creating a new play and must be approached carefully.

The danger with Yerima's position is that setting rules for intending playwrights is limiting the scope of the

innovation which the adapting dramatist may employ in his own creative process. This is besides the option available for playwrights in selecting which subject to address either in agreement or as contrary to the existing subject.

Fraz H. Links has singled out adaptation as the translation of an idea from one art madium to another. This is undertaken systematically in an article titled "Translation, Adaptation and Interpretation of Dramatic texts". The analysis as the puts it is "undertaken... to demonstrate the complexity of drama and theater"[19]. His idea of adaptation is that of change in the original intention of a work of drama's social function. Links takes into consideration the author's mind, the theater, the stage, the setting, costumes and even acting.

By the author's mind, he means that a particular place or the performance of the drama must have been visualized in the author's mind while he is writing his play. He must also have in mind the convention of staging the play. The possibility of realizing the play on stage could have been implied by the text. The theater where the play is to be staged may have a relationship with everyday life. For instance, the Greek theater is also the place of worship. The place for medieval mystery plays was the market place or the street. Based on this, Links has seen that to perform a play in a different place from its original "place disengages the dramatic text from at least parts of its intended social functions and thereby misinterprets part of its original meaning"[20]. He

further stresses that:

> production in a theater for which the play was not written does not only lose its original atmosphere ambience, it looses, at least in part, its social relevance or may distort it to an ideological superstructure distracting its audience from the problems of its own reality[21].

The stage for Links is of equal importance also. The choice of theater for performance ideally should include choice of particular stage as well. A stage may be described in the dramatic text. A play like Shakespeare's Hamlet describe a level raised for the battlement of a castle. The setting for any play assisting in the interpretation of the text.

Therefore, the stage and setting of a play results in adaptation if the play is done elsewhere from the original stage and setting. Likewise, costuming and even the acting style. The costuming of a particular play is determined by the time of production. Acting which involves speaking of the text in addition to facial expression and gestures is similar to setting and costuming. This is because juxtaposed "to setting and costuming acting may imitate life realistically, it may expose itself as fictive, it may be ritualized, or it may be realized in many different ways.[22] Links concluded by providing a contribution to understanding adaptation as he says:

> The adaptation of a dramatic text then becomes a translation of an idea from the medium of one art to that of another[23]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The central focus of this study is to undertake a critical appraisal of some works adapted and performed in the Drama Village, A.B.U, Zaria.

The methods used in the collection of the data includes sampling relevant materials from the study of available literature and the extracting of specific portions that relate to the research being conducted.

The analysis from the data gathered specifically provided that (it is only) the Drama Village of A.B.U., Zaria makes a serious and sustained use of adaptation in its curriculum for teaching drama. This is in both theory as well as practical classes. What comes of the literature study is a point which this research discovers that there is a need for more serious and critical attention to be given to adaptation.

It is based on these findings that this research is developed.

CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

Chapter One: General Introduction

This chapter introduces the study. It starts with a brief discussion of the position of drama as a communicative art form. It follows with a brief discussion of what is adaptation, how it is done and why it is done. Specifically, mention is made of its place historically in drama and particularly, in Nigerian drama., especially, the Drama village, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

This is followed by establishing the aims and objectives of the study. Then followed by literature review of relevant works on adaptation. Then a review of the methodology is provided.

Chapter Two: Adaptation and Social Consciousness

In this chapter, a comparative analysis is made of two plays. They are The Gods Are Not To Blame by Ola Rotimi from Sophocle's King Oedipus, and J.P. Clark's The Raft.

The two plays differ in concept. Rotimi romances with the Aristotelian concept of tragedy and theater in general, while Osofisan idolizes Bertolt Brecht's epic theater technique. While Rotimi (though apologetic), draws parallels between the Greek culture with the Yoruba, Osofisan categorically analyses Nigeria's political miasma. By the end of the analysis. points of difference between the two plays are established.

Chapter Three: Brecht. The Drama Village and Wole Soyinka: In discussion of social Issues

The alternative experimental traditio of the Drama village of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria is the focus here compared to the style of another adaptation of the same play by Wole Soyinka, the same year outside Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. A short history that leads to the emergence of the alternative tradition in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria is provided. This is followed by a comparative analysis of an adaptation of The Three Penny Opera by Bertolt Brecht, called Opera Wonyonsi by Wole Soyinka and The Five Kobo Opera in Drama Village.

The epic theater technique has virtually influenced the experiments in the Drama Village and even some other playwrights in Nigeria. But the Drama Village transcends where the theory ends, that is practicalising Brecht's basic intention of his theory, this is evident in the dialectic of The Five Kobo Opera. That is the dialogue between evil and good.

It is in the analysis of the play The Five Opera in comparison to Soyinka's Opera Wonyonsi that clarity is made of how the Drama Village actually transcends Brecht's theory of the theartre.

Chapter Four: From Prose to Play

The Drama Village has made a break-through in the tradition of dramatic adaptation. This is pointed out here by discussing two plays adapted from prose. The plays are Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness from a novel of the same

title by Mongo Beti and Na So E Be from a short story For Whom Things Did Not Change by Ama Ata Aidoo.

The differences between prose and play is established here as well as a comparison of the narrative and the dramatic.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This concluding chapter summarizes the arguments presented in the discussion with a final critique and a way out.

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CHAPTER TWO

ADAPTATION AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

INTRODUCTION

> There is one special attribute of the production of a play which is part of the magic - and the mystery - of the theater; because... of the director and designer, involved, it becomes necessarily, a version of the play. So in a good production an audience is vitally alert,... knowing that each moment can only be retained in the memory: there is no going back,... for the action will never be repeated in the same way - ever in the whole time[1].

There is sufficient information about the ephemeral nature of play production in the above epigraph. This is to say that from the moment the playwright completes putting his ideas together, a material exist for the producer to do what he likes with it. In the mind of the playwright, exist the function his play is supposed to perform. But the dynamism of nature itself, which is a continuous process, the actual function as envisaged by the playwright may not fully be realized. So even from this point, a version of the original idea is already in the process of formation. Suffice it to say then an idea created is liable to change in accordance with what it is intended to be used for. It could then be said that adaptation in drama is an imaginative process of creation and it is a skill in creativity.

Adaptation then is that alternation which occurred when a playwright used an existing play to create a new play. The alteration could be done either to update the subject matter of the original play or change the subject matter, or radically change its ideological purpose or just to discourse for a sociopolitical relevance as the case is with Bertolt Brecht's adaptation of John Gay's The Beggar's Opera to The Three Penny Opera.

The different ways in which adaptations is realised is by the manner in which issues raised in the original plays are challenged or re-affirmed in the new plays. Therefore, the main focus for me is the issue of alignment of arguments and how the new arguments fits into a new relation.

Ola Rotimi and Femi Osofisan, for example, choose the tragic form. They employ myth from different angles as a means of realizing the tragic form. Rotimi uses Yoruba myth of the philosophy of life to adapt Sophocles's play while Osofisan uses Yoruba religious myth to adapt the tragic play or J.P. Clark.

The dynamism of society affects the meaning of all arts, for instance the subject matter of tragedy in the Greek society changes in the Roman society, so also the subject matter of tragedy in Elizabethan theater differ with modern subject of tragedy. The changes which the subject matter of tragedy passes through establish the basis for adaptation. Then what is tragedy? Aristotle defines it as:

Tragedy then is an imitation of an action that is serious., complete, and of a certain magnitude;in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in form of action, not of narrative, through pity and fear effecting the proper or purgation of these emotions[2].

Tragedy as a form of drama has essentially remained the same in meaning over time. What has changed significantly is the subject of tragic plays. For example, Arthur Miller's Death Of A Sales Man is a tragedy of an ordinary citizen not of a noble family like that of Sophocles's play King Oedipus.

In ancient Greece, one of the plays that won prizes at the Dionysian festival was Sophocles's play King Oedipus. Many people of different cultures have used his play to create their own plays. The play King Oedipus was used for illustration by Aristotle the theorists of Greek tragedy to demonstrate what qualities a tragic play should have. In addition to its aesthetic quality as a drama, King Oedipus's attractive qualities include its being a source of history of theater at least in the western sense that drama originates from the Greeks. Dramatists have found King Oedious containing similar issues and problems of their own societies. What they did is to alter the subject matter.

The agenda here, therefore is to explore why some Nigerian playwrights decided to alter other people's plays Within the Nigerian context some notable playwrights have for

some time now pre-occupied themselves with re-alignments of arguments just as the Drama village been doing. For purpose of seeing in clearer perspective what is done in Zaria, It will be right for me to consider some works on adaptation to enhance the argument in the thesis. An attempt is to be made to compare the works of Ola Rotimi and Femi Osofisan. These are The Gods Are Not To Blame and Another Raft

The Gods Are Not to Blame by Ola Rotimi is a play similar in structure to King Oedipus by sophocles. It explores the inadequacies of man and his inability to control his emotions. In another dimension the playwright has said it is a comment on the Nigerian civil war. Another Raft by Femi Osofisan on the other hand is built upon The Raft by J.P Clark, a play that explores the hopelessness of man. However man as is seen in Another Raft is responsible for shaping his destiny, all he needs is to co-operate with his fellow man to overthrow the existing structure that breeds hopelessness.

The discussion in this chapter will therefore focus on analyzing the old plays and their significance in the societies of their setting and also analyzing the new plays and their significance in the society of their present setting.

KING OEDIPUS BY SOPHOCLES

The play King Oedipus is about a Theban King called Oedipus. It is a dramatized version of a legend. The legend is the sad story of Oedipus. In the story, Oedipus has been destined from birth to kill his father and marry his mother from it.

> Cadmus begat Polydorus and Polydorus begar Labadacus, and labadacus begat Laius, and his wife Jocasta, a son was born. Before even a name had been given to this infant - indeed, by some accounts, before he was born, his life was clouded with the presage of disaster: for Apollo's oracle had nothing but ill to foretell of him: he was destined one day to kill his father and to become his own mother's husband[3].

The play begins with Oedipus the King of Thebes placating the citizens that have come to him complaining and lamenting.

> ...I would willingly do anything to help you: Indeed I shall be heartless, were I to stop my ears to a general petition such as this[4].

Thebes is actually experiencing a plague that is threatening them with extermination. They have therefore come to Oedipus for salvation. The Priest as the spokesman for the people says:

We know that experience of trials past gives strength to present counsel. Therefore O greatest of men, restore our city

to life. Have a care for your fame. Your diligence saved us once; let it not be said that under your rule we were raised up only to fall. Sve, save our city and keep her for ever[5]

Oedipus responds by telling the people that he is not idle. He has concern for the problem and is at the moment expecting the return of Creon from the "Pythian House of Apollo" where he sent him to find out what he (Oedipus) can do to save the people from the calamity of the plague.

Creon is now back. The only hope out of the present calamity according to Apollo, is to banish or kill a man. This man shed someone's blood. It is the blood of the former King, Laius. Quickly, Oedipus moves into actio and begins to make enquiries. How did the former King die? Who were with him? Creon answers that only one person remains from Laius entourage. The story of the man is that robbers attacked and killed Laius and his entourage.

At this juncture, Oedipus becomes suspicious. He assumes that it is a planned assassination paid to be carried out.

> Robbers would hardly commit such a daring outrage unless they were paid to do it by someone here.[6]

Creon says that was suggested, but the trouble they were having with the sphinx with her riddles turned away their attention. He proposed that Tieresias, the blind Priest be invited on the matter. However, Oedipus proceeds with his action. He promises to find the killer. He dismisses the people who have come to the palace with their complaints. He

asks the messenger to summon all the people of Cadmus to his palace.

By the time the Priest is brought in, tension is mounting. It grow to a crescendo when the Priest Tieresias accuses Oedipus of the crime of killing Laius. Oedipus turn to Creon. He assumes Creon is plotting against him and might have bribed the Priest who accuses him (Oedipus) of the murder. He sees the possibility that Creon is interested in the throne of Thebes. Jocasta, the Queen, wife to Oedipus and sister to Creon intervenes.

Jocasta's reasoning becomes a turning point in the progress of the play. Up to this point, the rising tension is assumed to be controlled by the desire to find a solutio to the plague. The quarrel of Oedipus and the Priest, and Oedipus with Creon is further complicated by Jocasta's seeming truce to clear Creon plotting against Oedipus and also to clear Oedipus of Tieresias's accusation that he is Laius's killer. Jocasta declares to Oedipus that Laius, her late husband was fated to die at the hands of his son. The son was left to die with pierced ankles on the empty mountain side. Also, it turned out to be robbers that killed Laius at a place where three roads meet. Listen to her:

> Laius, it is common knowledge, was killed by outland robbers at a place where three roads meet. As for the child, it was not yet three days old when he cast it out (by other hands, not his) with

rivetted ankles to perish on the empty mountain side.

Oedipus is now more disturbed. He thus send Jocasta for the servant, the only survivor of the late King Laius entourage. In the meantime, he narrates to Jocasta how he met a herald and how he killed them all. This happened while he was running away from the strange prophecy that said, he, Oedipus was destined to kill his father and marry his mother. This revelation heightens the suspense in the play. Oedipus's only hope of being absolved of the crime of killing Laius will be the shepherd's confirmation that robbers killed Laius. Jocasta assures him that everybody in town knows this story:

> Oh but I assure you that was what he said; He cannot go back on it now - the whole town heard it. Not only I.[8]

In the meantime, a messenger has come from Corinth with news. This news temporarily eases the tension. The King of Corrinth is dead and Oedipus is now relieved of his fear of the prophecy which says he will kill his father and marry his mother.

> Well, well.... so, wife, what of the Pythian fire, the oracles, the prophesying birds, that scream above us? I was to kill my father; Now he lies in his grave, and here am I who never touched a weapon...[9]

Oedipus's hope is soon dashed as the messenger reveals

the hidden knowledge:

Messenger No, Polybus is no kin of yours.

Oedipus: No kin? Polybus not my father?

Messenger: No more than I.

Oedipus: Come Sir, no more than you? explain yourself.

Messenger: I am not your father, neither is Polybus

Oedipus: How come it then that I was called his son?

Messenger: I will tell you. You were given to him by me.....

Oedipus: O Gods Was this my father's or my mother's doing?

Messenger: I cannot say. Ask him who gave it to me.

Oedipus: Gave me? Did you not find me then yourself?

Messenger: Another shepherd entrusted you to my care.

Oedipus: And who was he? Can you tell us who he was?

Messenger: I think he was said to be one of Laius'men.

Oedipus: My wife, you know the man who we have sent for, is that the man he means?

Jocasta: (white with terror). What does it matter what he means? It makes no difference now[10] ....

However, Oedipus is still not satisfied. He insists on seeing the shepherd, because the shepherd will tell him who the murderer is, and also whose son Oedipus is. Oedipus remains adamant.

Nonsense, I must pursue this trail to the end, till I have unravelled the mystery of my birth[11].

Jocasta is quick to caution him to stop his quest.

If you want to live, this quest must not go on[12].

But Oedipus misunderstood. He thinks Jocasta is ashamed of being married to someone of low birth.

> There is nothing to fear; Though I be proved slave-born to the third generation, your honour is not impugned.[13].

Oedipus has been damned by the gods from his birth, thus his ignorance of his identity. Jocasta looks at him with pity and declares,

> O lost and damned. This is my last and only word to you for ever[14]

Oedipus' action brings him to knowledge. The shepherd is brought in and is interrogated. The shepherd reveals the truth that he did give the child (now Oedipus) to the messenger from Corinth., since he, the shepherd have no heart to destroy the child as he was instructed by Jocasta. The shepherd declares to Oedipus:

> ....If you are the man, O then you life is lost[15]

This declaration of the messenger corroborates the fact that Oedipus is the man the gods asked to be banished since he is the killer of Laius, and the prophecy has been fulfilled.

The play King Oedipus is completed by the suicide of Jocsta and Oedipus subsequent removal of his eyes. carrying out the orders of the gods.

Since tragedy, according to Aristotle:

> Is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action,....; through pity and fear affecting the proper purgation of these emotions.[16]

The subject matter of tragedy in King Oedipus then is to show how man is not in control of his actions. Within the Greek society, the gods are the ultimates that man look up to for solutions to his problems. However, the hierarchical structure of the society subjects the ordinary citizen to consider the rulers as the only means through which they can reach the gods. The rulers are therefore the next after the gods with the priests as their protectors as well as the interpreters of what the gods says. In this line, man's achievements in life are tied to the interpretation of whatever happens to the rulers as depicted in King Oedipus.

Oedipus's sad story is a direct result of the actions of the gods. He is being punished for a crime that is said to have been committed by his ancestors. The very idea that the calamity which befalls Thebes is as a result of King Oedipus's fault, that is, killing his father and marrying his mother unknowingly and all by circumstances not designed by him, points to that fact that man's destiny is shaped and controlled by only the gods in the Greek Society. Therefore,

it is correct to say the gods are responsible for whatever happened to him in that society. Rotimi find this unacceptable. To him man is responsible for his action. What ever happened to him is as a result of his inability to control his emotions. Thus, he came up with his own play, The Gods Are Not To Blame.

THE GODS ARE NOT TO BLAME BY OLA ROTIMI

The play is about King Odewale, who faced with the challenged of redeeming his people from a calamity, discovers he is personally the source of their present predicament.

In the prologue, the narrator informs us of a birth of a child in Kutuje land to King Adetusa and Ojuola, his wife. When they bring the child for blessing to the shrine of Ogun, god of Iron, war and doctor of all male children, the Ifa priest, Baba Fakunle divines the future of the child and informs them:

> This boy, he will kill his own father and mary his mother.[17]

The only thing to do to prevent this prophecy from materialising is to kill the child as a sacrifice to the gods. The child is then given to Gbonka, a trusted servant of the King to take to the evil grove.

Thirty two years after, King Adetusa is killed. The people of Ikolu, taking advantage of the death of a King in Kutuje, invades them. Odewale, a wanderer seeking peace, hears

the rumor about Kutuje and Ikolu. He comes to see for himself and is subsequently moved. He encourages the people of Kutuje:

> ...not to do something is to be crippled fast. Up, up, all of you, to lie down resigned, is to face madness. Up up, struggle; the world is struggle.[18]

With this encouragement, he leads them to fight the people at IKolu and defeats them. As a reward:

> They broke tradition and made me unasked King of Kutuje.[19]

In accordance with tradition, he marries the Queen, wife to former King Adetusa. They have four children. Suddenly, the Heavens let loose, catastrophe strikes, an epidemic is killing the people. Odewale's peace is no more as he rightly said in the prologue.

> Joy has broken and scattered. Peace too is no more.[20]

King Odewale is now facing a crisis. His citizens come to him for solution. To reduce their agony., Odewale pacifies them with encouraging words indicting himself:

> If you need help, search for it first among yourselves, Do not open your noses at me, I cannot help. Why? Because I Odewale, son of Ogundele, I am only a person, human, like you, and you and... you.[21]

In addition, Aderopo has been sent to Ile-Ife, the land of Orunmila to find the source of the calamity in Kutuje.

Aderopo returns with news from the oracle. The news is that there is a curse on the land and it should be purged for the suffering to ease. The curse is on a man who killed the late King Adetusa. He should be found and punished, then the suffering will stop.

As no name is given of the killer, Odewale sends for the Ifa Priest, Baba Fakunle. The Priest initially refuses to speak, but when pressed by Odewale's instance and accusation, saying that:

> When the elders we esteem so highly can
> sell their honour for devil's money, then
> let pigs eat shame and men eat dung.[22]

Baba Fakunle angrily responds:

> You called me pig!
> You are the murderer![23]

The tension is becoming intense and the action is now galvanizing. Odewale suspects the Priest as a plotter in the former King's death. The Priest accuses King Odewale of the murder of the late King. To add to the confusion, Baba Fakunle, multiplies his accusation by calling the King a 'bedsharer: Odewale interprets the 'bedsharer' as Aderopo's plan to remove him.

> That blind bat who calls himself seer
> says I am a 'bedsharer'. What does that
> mean? Sharing a bed with whom? Ojuola,
> Aderopo' mother I don't belong in that bed,...
> I have no right to be King.[24]

The confrontation between Aderopo and Odewale only intensifies the suspense of the play. Odewale resolves to send

Aderopo out of the land. Odewale fail to reason, he swears by the sword,

> May my eyes not see Aderopo
> again till I die.[25]

The story takes a dramatic twist by the coming of Alaka, Odewale's boyhood friend. Alaka informs Odewale about the death of his father. Ojuola reveals to Odewale, in an attempt to settle the quarrel between him and Aderopo, that the same Baba Fakunle made her kill her son to avoid the ill-luck he portended. It is the same Priest who claimed her former husband was killed by his own blood and not a group of robbers as it was reported. The ensuring discussion on the matter engenders another twist. Odewale is now made to understand that King Adetusa was killed near Ede at the place where three foot-paths meet. Ede is the place where he, Odewale killed a man in anger as he narrates to Alaka before he reached Kutuje fifteen years ago.

Consequently, Odewale sends for Gbonka, the late King's bodyguard so that he may clarify the circumstances of King Adetusa's death. Meanwhile, Alaka's news of the death of Odewale's father is received with joy. Odewale celebrates the news by mocking the sooth-sayers, oracle and gods, declaring that they are not to be trusted. He narrates to his wife and chiefs how the oracle of Ifa had warned him of the curse on him. That he would kill his father and marry his mother. Now his father is dead not by him naturally. Alaka's interjection,

They are not your father and
mother anyway.[26]

returns the play to an ironic as well as shattering climax.

Alaka thus breaks the ice on Odewale by informing him that he actually picked him up in the bush in Ipetu Village. A man brought him to the bush while he (Alaka) was hunting with his master, Ogundele, "wrapped up in a white clothe like a sacrifice to the gods".[27]

Ojuola and the Ogun Priest quickly realize what has happened. The gods have fulfilled their prophecy. Odewale has killed his father and married his mother. All the circumstances and evidence at hand prove that. But Odewale is yet to comprehend the gravity of his calamity.

Gbonka, the ex-bodyguard to the late King Adetusa is finally brought. The sight of Odewale brings back memories of the incident at Ede and Gbonka stops short and looks away. After interrogation, Gbonka proclaims a man did kill King Adetusa and not robbers.

The fact that pressure may not compel Gbonka to talk, Alaka diplomatically persuades him. Subsequently, Gbonka confesses that the gave a child to Alaka. Odewale is thus identified as that child. Realizing the enormity of what has occurred, Gbonka pounces on Alaka. The chiefs separate them and Gbonka attempts to escape. Bodyguards push him back to Odewale who raises his matchets as if to strike Gbonka. Gbonka pleads for mercy and says he was only carrying out orders. In

the final analysis, the Ogun Priest is the one who reveals the secret when Odewale asks:

> I said who gave me b-i-r-t-h
>
> Ogun priest: She, the woman who has just gone into the bedroom. Bearer of your four children. She too is your ...mother.[28]

The story of Odewale and the prophecy is concluded by Ojuola committing suicide and Odewale removing his eyes with a knife. Odewale has thus accomplished his oath of punishing the culprit and that he is never to set eyes on Aderopo.

The play The Gods Are Not To Blame is no doubt an adaptation of King Oedipus. The play argues that man is responsible for his actions unlike in the Greek play where the gods are shown to be responsible for man's actions. There is also an attempt to make cultural parallel between the Greek and the Yoruba cultures. This view is amplified by Ola Rotimi in an interview he granted Berth Lindfors where he says:

> Our religions appreciate the wisdom in personal submission - submission not only to the gods of the land, but also to the memory of departed ancestors. So ... there are these fundamental cultural parallels in the Greek and the Nigerian world views.[29]

In this play The Gods Are Not To Blame, man has been shown to have allowed his weakness to be used by the gods to

bring him down. Odewale, in this play, has been destined by the gods that he will kill his father and marry his mother. Yet, they have provided him with a way out, that he should not go anywhere to avoid the fulfillment of the prophecy when he consulted the oracle for an interpretation of the insult he received, that is, "a butterfly thinks himself a bird.[30] It is possible to think that his not staying in one place is the act of the gods. But, it should be noted that soothsayers and priests are the representatives as well as interpreters of the words of the gods. Therefore, it could be said then the gods have offered a solution to Odewale, but his attitude to life compelled him to disobey the advise. Consequently he is punished. The people within this society, that is the Yoruba, like their Greek counterparts, look up to their rulers for solutions to their problems. This is evident when the people approach King Odewale to help them find a way out. Odewale himself, informed the people that he is not capable of solving his own problems which are the same problems the people are having. Rather, he advises them to go into the bush and struggle to fine herbs that may likely help. In the meantime, he sends for interpretations of the meaning of the calamity from the oracles.

The crisis which the Kutuje society faces will have come to an end if not for the over-confidence of Odewale that he will not leave any stone un-turn until he unravels the genesis as well as the person responsible for the problems. In his

quest, he steps over his bounds by allowing his emotions to work against him. It is the same emotion that made him to kill an old man in the defence of a tribe he thought is his.

The central thrust of Rotimi is not just that the gods are not part of man's problems, but that man should always struggle to manipulate his actions. Ironically, Rotimi, like Sophocles, still subjects people's thoughts to the hegemony of their various societies. That the success or failure of their leaders should serve as a lesson to them.

Both plays aimed at similar purpose, which is to maintain the cultural status-quo of their different societies.That the consciousness of the people is determined by what happened to their rulers who are seen as representatives of the gods on earth as it is the case with King Oedipus's and King Odewale's stories respectively. While Sophocles rely on the legend of the origin of Greek, Rotimi's play goes about by it masterly in the art of playwrighting and directing, as and also the influence of Aristotle's theory of tragedy. However, the discourse will now proceed to look at the levels of changes Rotimi has effected in realizing his own version of King Oedipus.

In the original play, King Oedipus, we have the legend before the play begins and it is not stated whether it is part of the play or not. What Rotimi did is to replace it with a prologue and clearly made the prologue part of his play. The prologue serves both as a narrative and as a dramatic means of

telling us the history of what happened before the play begins. By this, Rotimi is forcing his African audience to imagine that what to the ancient Greek society was part of their source of history and strength of their civilization are similar to the Yoruba cultural history.

Between the narrator and Odewale, the audience is made to understand the source of the plague. The plague, even in King Oedipus, is the strong motive for the actions in the play. It is the desire to get rid of the plague that propels the excavation of what has happened in the past.

Rotimi's chronic romance with the Aristotelian theory of tragedy informs the characterization in his play. What he does in The Gods Are Not To Blame is to replace the Greek names with Yoruba names. Oedipus becomes Odewale, Jocasta is Ojuola, Tieresians is Baba Fakunle, the Priest is Priest of Ogun, Messenger is Gbonka while the Shepherd is Alaka. The chorus is reduced to the chiefs. Creon, the Queen's brother is now son to the Queen, Aderopo. The status of a Queen's brother in the ancient Greek society is here equated in power and influence to a Yoruba prince.

By the characterization Rotimi employs in the play, he draws parallel between the African and the Greek. He is saying that the people and their different roles in the Greek society are similar to that of Africa and especially to the Yoruba world view. This is true in the sense that the hierarchical structure of the Greek society is that of the gods on top

followed by the Kings and priests and at the bottom, other citizens. This is embedded in their religious belief and so also is that of the Yoruba religious belief.

The plot structure of the two plays are the same. The Gods Are Not To Blame is similar to that of King Oedipus. We have in the two plays reversal of the situations as well as the recognition scenes. The situation in the two plays is that of the central character's determination to find the culprit who is said to have killed the late King. The situation changes when Messenger and Alaka in the respective plays announces that Oedipus, now Odewale in The Gods Are Not To Blame is not the son of the King of Corinth now Ogundele the hunter.

In King Oedipus,

Messenger: No, Polybus is no kin of yours.

Oedipus: No kin? Polybus not my father?

Messenger: No more than I.[31]

And In The Gods Are Not To Blame:

Alaka: They are not your father and mother anyway.

Odewale: (Speaking at the same time). Kill your own father and share a bed with your own - WHAT DID YOU SAY?

Alaka: The hunter Ogundele and his wife Mobike - You think they gave you life? Anyway, let's not bring that up now.[32]

However, this cheerful news turns to be a bad thing. This

leads us to the recognition scene. Alaka's revelation demands Odewale's search for identity. In King Oedipus, it is the King at the point of the reversal in situation that promises to unravel the mystery of his birth, a similar situation in The Gods Are Not To Blame is:

Odewale: Whose child am I?

Ogun Priest: It is too late now, you must know the last if -

Odewale: (In a traumatic scream). I said who gave me b-i-r-t-h![33]

Finally, the recognition of the identity complete the structure of the plot as advocated by Aristotle which Ola Rotimi utilizes in The Gods Are Not To Blame.

Furthermore, Rotimi changes the verse language of the play King Oedipus by introducing proverbs in The Gods Are Not To Blame. Proverbs, as used by Ola Rotimi, aims at proving that within the African cultural set-up, proverbs are works of wisdom spoken only by elders in the society of highly intelligent personalities.This goes on to support Chinua Achebe's assertion in his novel Thins Fall Apart, that "proverbs are the palm-oil with which words eaten"[34]. The proverbs enrich the language of the play as well as contribute in the realization of the dramatic irony.

For instance, in Act One, Scene One, where Odewale is listening to the citizens' complaints:

> Second Citizens When the head of a house-hold dies, the house becomes an empty shell. But we have you as our head, and with you, our chiefs; yet, we do not know whether to thank the gods that you are with us, or to look elsewhere for hope.[35]

The irony here is that Odewale, whom the second citizens is appealing to, is actually the accused, his contemplating whether to thank God for Odewale's being their with them is the underlying irony.

Odewale himself displays the dramatic irony by using proverbs. This is where he says:

> You do me great wrong, therefore, to think that like a rock in the middle of a lake, forever cooled by flowing waters. I do not know and cannot know the sun's hotness that burns and dries the open land.[36]

Odewale, ironically here is the rock in the lake. Other instances where proverbs are used are plenty. Some few are: for instance, where in Scene Two Act One. Aderopo attempts to secretly inform Odewale the message of the oracle:

> It is said the secrets of a home should be known to the head of the home. (Goes to Odewale to whisper in his ear)
>
> Odewale: (Shoving him off). I refuse to listen alone. Speak openly, a cooking pot for the chameleon, is a cooking pot for the lizard.[37]

and also, where Odewale says:

> I look about me..... eyes, white, vacant, innocent, the stare back from faces of sorrow and pain. But the faces may as well be smiling. For who knows what is behind those eyes? When the frog in front falls in a pit, others behind take caution. It would be me next, Me an Ijekun man, a stranger in the midst of your tribes (stares at chiefs). When crocodiles eat their own eggs, what will they not

do to the flesh of a frog?[38]

and the last speech Odewale makes when the chiefs rush to stop him from going away with the children:

> let no one stop us and let no one come with us or I shall curse him...
> When the wood-insect gathers sticks on its own head, it carries them.[39]

It cannot be concluded that Rotimi by adapting King Oeudipus though he is experimenting his skills in playwrighting and directing which he learnt in the American University, is saying that,even though there is a cultural parallel between the Greeks and the Yoruba worlds view, the question of the gods in charge of man's destiny, is not tenable within the contemporary society. In the interview he granted Bernth Lindfors. It is clear that he spent six and a half years in the United States, where he obtained a Masters Degree in Play-writing and Directing. This informs his success in the adaptation of a Greek play King Oedipus to The Gods Are Not To Blame. Abah states that Rotimi's successful adaptation:

> is in the mastery of the elements of theatre and drama, and the effective manner in which this dramatist combines well as deploys them to achieve maximum effect on the audience.[40]

Things could be said to be alright until Rotimi blunders that his play The Gods Are Not To Blame:

> does not refer to the mythological gods or mystic deities of the African Pantheon. Rather, it alludes to natural, political powers such as America, Russia, France, England, etc. Countries that dictate the pace of world politics. The title implies that these political "gods" should not be blame or held responsible for our own national

> failings. It could be recalled that during the Nigerian Civil War, the Biafrans blamed Russia and Britain for aiding Nigerian Federalists in the attack against them.[41]

But nowhere in all the seventy-two pages of the script of The Gods Are Not To Blame, is reference made to the Nigerian Civil War. Rotimi, in the same interview, has already declared that he is paralleling the Yoruba world view with that of the ancient Greek society. One may conclude that Rotimi has thus abdicated is responsibility of proving the originality of his Yoruba culture. As such, he has killed the beauty of the adaptation.

However, it is worthy to note that the two plays are similar in the area of plot structure and story. Likewise, in the characterization and language, the patterns are the same. The points of difference among others include period and place of setting. King Oedipus is an ancient Greek play while The Gods Are Not To Blame is a 20th century Nigerian play. The characters differ as one is Greek while the other is African. In addition and also as a strong thrust, is the difference in the subject of tragedy. While Sophocles's motive is to perpetuate the existing consciounesss of the then Greek society (man's destiny is designed and controlled by the gods), Rotimi is saying that, though the gods control human destiny, man, by virtue of his reasoning, is capable of manipulating and controlling his destiny. It is only where he allows his emotions to replace his reasoning that the gods

take charge. But Rotimi has not gone further to define how man can control his destiny within the context of the Nigerian society.

As if it is a response to Ola Rotimi's inadequacies, Femi Osofisan chooses J.P. Clark's The Raft, which is written in the same fashion of Classical literature. Clark wrote his play to comment on the Nigerian situation just four years after independence. His work is not from any myth or legend, it is purely fictitious, but Osofisan adapts it using the myth of the goddess, Yemosa to address Nigeria's political miasma. He calls his Another Raft.

THE RAFT BY J.P. CLARK

The Raft is a play that dramatizes the helpless situation of four lumber men in the face of misfortune. They are bound on a business trip down the River Niger. Soon they are to discover they are cut loose from the moorings. However, they fail to initiate any action that could avert the impending catastrophe. Instead, they are carried away by their endless discussions on several different issues. They soon drift into the great whirl pool where they helplessly wait for the tide to rescue them. In the meantime, they improvise a sail with mats. The sail turns out to be useless since it would not be pulled by the storm. The raft subsequently breaks into two.

Their captain, Olotu, sails off on one end to the sea, while the other three drifts on. One of the three men, Ogro,

frantically jumps into the sea in a bid to swim to a passing ship. But the crew is hostile and refuses him to board the ship, they pass on. Ogro is consequently chopped into pieces by the ship's stern wheel. The other two, Kengide and Ibodo, drift endlessly until they are lost.

The play opens with the discovery that the raft is cut loose. Unfortunately, Olotu and Kengide are busy blaming Ogro for disturbing their sleep.

Kengide: Rise man, If you will and stop
harassing others in their sleep.

Olotu: Who is it?

Kengide: That blundering bullock again.

Olotu: Can't you leave the fellow along?
He must be having one of his nightmares.

Kengide: Most likely. And this time it might be
a whole crowd of bush cows are crashing
headlong after him among cassava plants,
and he unable to make away because he is
running on his head.
The bastard, I can't hear what he is
mumbling in his depths.

Olotu: Oh; you stop it yourself, will you?
It's you who'll not let anybody sleep now.[42]

Ibobo joins them and declares:

You are walking in you sleep again,
Ogro, You certainly will fall over
one day and get drowned.[43]

Ogro defend himself:

I 'm not asleep nor have done what
You say for a long time.[44]

But Ibobo goes on to remind Ogro that a market or two ago, when they missed the boat they wanted to board, he walked in his sleep Ogro declares:

Now, listen to me, I think we are adrift

Ibobo: How do you know?

Ogro: Why, look about you

(Ibobo does so, then goes down the raft and is back shortly)

Ibobo: Yes, You are right. The moorings up there are all loose. How's it, I didn't know? Let's see the others

Ogro: No use. I have inspected them all. None is intact.

Ibobo: Olotu, Kengide, are you asleep still? Wake up quick! We are adrift[45]

As the raft continues its drift, the next morning, they manage a meal and Kengide is telling them stories. Olotu, the captain in now more worried it seems, than the others. He has to remind them of their predicament.

Your stories may serve as wine to your spirits, but have you forgotten we are struck in a worst plight here?

Ogre: What can we do?

Ibobo: We are at the hands of Osikoboro.

Kengide: Wait for the tide, I say.

Olotu: It's one o'clock, so it ought to be here now.[46]

But the tide never comes. Instead, there is a storm. And Ogro advises that the mat they sleep on should be turned into sails. Kengide lends his support and in fact, is quick to declare:

Indeed, man is better than goat. Why, with this wind fit to take any iroko by the hair and lift it clean off its feet. We should be out of here in a moment.[47]

Olotu, the captain gives orders and asserts that:

> there , take the lamp off that post; it will serve us for a mast! Strange I didn't think of it before. Now. we don't wait for the tide's coming. A mast! A mast boy![48]

Then catastrophe strike at precisely this point. The raft break into two and on the portion with the sail is Olotu alone and it pulls furiously away. The others shout at Olotu to jump, but he could not hear them. He is finally swept completely out of sight.

The raft drifts on. There is some hope for the remaining screw of the raft when a Niger Company boat is sailing by. Ogro, seeing that the ship will not stop, jumps into the river to swim to the ship. As Ibobo informs us, the crew in the ship will not let Ogro board their ship.

> Have they stopped stoning him with coals, beating off his hands with bars of iron?[49]

Kengide, as if to answer for Ibobo, informs us too that

Ogro:

> Has got caught in the mortal arms of that stern-wheeling engine.[50]

Now, only two members of the crew are left on the raft.

Ibobo and Kengide, as Ibobo says:

> Now, we are two. I said it is left us two whereas, only this morning we were four out of a happy-going that started out seven strong. I hope we make port safely.[57]

But they are never to make it to the port. The fog comes

over them and they can't see a thing.

Kengide: It's the fog: fog has come upon us.

Ibobo: Fog? I saw lights on a while ago in that direction. Now, I can't even see the mirror in my hand.[52]

Their predicament worsens as they realize that they are not making any progress. Ibobo frantically wants to jump into the sea, but Kengide quickly restrain him. Kengide is afraid to be left alone, so is Ibobo.Kengide suggests that they should shout.

Kengide: Shout, shout Ibobo, let's shout to the world - we woodsmen lost in the bush.

Ibobo: We 're drift, adrift and lost!
Ee - ee - ee!

Kengide: Shout, Ibobo, shout!

{Both together,hand in hand, one holding flickering lamp, the other cupping his mouth, shout together into the night, into the fog, over the waters, that long squeal as used when women go woods gathering together and by nightfall, have still not found their way home: Fe - ee - ee - ee !!! At the same time and above all is, the long hooting of horns and of men crying and calling out to one another in fear and in the distance and rush}.[53]

The play ends on a note of hopelessness and despair. J.P. Clark has provided a thesis of the human hopelessness under a force that is not humanly controlled. There is an inherent correlation between Clark's world view and that of the Greek society as exemplified by Sophocles' Play, King Oedipus, that is the idea of resigning to fate in the face of calamity.

The Raft is a play set within the first four years of

Nigeria's independence. The country was still then struggling to find its bearing. It was divided into four regions, the Eastern Region, the Northern Region, The Western Region and Mid-Western Region. The four lumber men and the raft in the play, symbolise the four regions. Their journey for business is parallel to the journey of the regions to nationhood. However, hardly has the journey began when confusion sets it. The four lumber men fail to carefully examine how their journey is going to be. They fail to consider the logistic involved on how the four of them could travel together. Likewise, the four Nigerian regions. By the time of independence, they are just too eager for the colonialists to go, without examining the how and the way they could survive as one. For instance, the way Olotu and Kengide blamed Ogro for disturbing their sleep and the way Ibobo later joined them in blaming Ogro, that was how the four regions in Nigeria were busy blaming one another for one problem or the other. No one was interested on how to solve the problem of an ailing brother. Because since Ogro always walk in his sleep and they know, they should have taken that into consideration and find a way out both for Ogro's problem as well as how to reach their destination safely. That was precisely the crisis of Nigeria as at 1964.

However, rather than proffer a way out, Clark only predicts the catastrophe that may befall the country like what happened to the crew on the raft. The implying position of one

region likely to break away becomes a reality in 1967 when the Eastern Region declared itself as an independent nation called Biafra. The crisis of Clark's play is that at the end he fail to provide a possible way of avoiding the impending crisis.

However, Femi Osofisan, a compatriot of Clark, believes that people's predicament is best resolved by an action initiated collectively and realizable by the people themselves. He thus adapts The Raft and called his, Another Raft.

ANOTHER RAFT BY FEMI OSOFISAN

Another Raft is a play that dramatizes a people's hopelessness and their attempt to get out of it. Disasters are unleashed on the community of Aiyedade: Femine, arson at markets and offices, yellow fever outbreaks and flood. The oracle declares that the catastrophes are the anger of the goddess, Yemoja. Yemoja has been neglected by the people for a long time. The only way out of this predicament is to appease the goddess. The ritual crew is assembled to carry out the mission. They comprise of three chiefs, Ekuroola, Chief Priest of rituals, Oroosi, chief Priest of Ifa, Lanusen, Prince and Local Council Chairman. Also there are Omitoogun Priest of Yemoja and his son Gbegbe. There is the best farmer of the year, Reore, the boat men;.Waje and Oge, and finally, Agunrin, the man to be sacrificed, who is a soldier hired by the ambitious prince Lanusen to kill Ekuroola, the Abore,

Chief Priest to satisfy his thirst and his ambition for power.

Agunrin deviates from his promise to the prince. Instead, he takes over the control of the raft and the people on it. Unknown to them,,he has already cut the raft adrift. In their effort to reach the shore, a storm hits the raft and most crew members perish. Only three people are saved by the sea goddess. These are Oroosi, Chief Priest of Ifa, Reore, the current best farmer of the year and Oge, the assistant boatman.

The essence of Osofisan's play is the image of a nation aimlessly placing their destiny on God's instead of in their hands.

Another Raft is no doubt an adapted version of The Raft. It is, however, realized purposely to update the events that once took the Nigerian nation to the brink of collapse, and they have occurred again, yet the nation is still one. Nothing has changed, the nation still has not done anything to get our of the situation. This view is echoed in the play:

> "In 1964... J.P Clark... The Raft which came to symbolize the troubled situation of our newly-independent country....., the decades drifted past, the storms have not ceased, more and more obvious, as the 80's role to a close, the need seems to have become truly desperate for ANOTHER RAFT.[54]

Now in Another Raft, we see a contrast in the conception of tragedy to what obtains in Clark's The Raft. Osofisan uses the epic theatre technique. In the epic theatre technique,

attempt is made to arouse the consciousness of the people as opposed to the Aristotelian concept that subjugate people's consciousness to an existing status quo as it operated in the ancient Greek society. The techniques of the epic, as propounded by Bertolt Brecht, prefers man to be in charge of his destiny than simply resigning to fate or to believe that a lone figure is capable of salvaging the people. Bertolt Brecht believed that a theatrical presentation which shows society correctly helps the working class, the peasants and even their allies to recognize their social reality.[55] Femi Osofisan accepts this. It is at this point that we may consider the areas in which Another Raft differs from The Raft.

The plot structure of Another RAft is only slightly different from the plot structure of The Raft. In The Raft the play begins by the discovery Ogro made that the raft is adrift. The action is completely centered on how to get out of the calamity that befalls the raft and the crew on it. In the process of getting themselves out of the crisis, the raft break into two and Olotu, the captain, is swept away on the other part. The action progress with the remaining three crew members hoping for a rescue. When a passing ship comes by, Ogro jump into the sea towards it only to be crushed by the stern-wheeling engine. The remaining crew members of the raft, Ibobo and Kengide are finally swept away into the sea to perish.

The difference that Another Raft has is embedded in the actions of the play. The action of the play is located in the conflict between the ruling class and their subordinates and the intra-conflict within the ruling class. The journey in this play is for cleansing while that of The Raft is a journey purposely for business. This business is nothing other than the search for survival.

The play Another Raft opens with a prologue. It is at this point that we are introduced to the reason why the journey is to be undertaken, that is a cleansing mission. As the journey begins, we confront the crew members discovering that they are adrift. Confusion sets in and Gbebe murder his father. At this juncture, Osofisan introduces human action as responsible for the drifting of the raft rather than Clark's natural accident. There is an interlude by the spirits who gives us a parable of the skull and the hunter. We return to the crew on the raft where tension and confusion begins uppermost. Attempt is being made to get the raft moving at the same time confrontation is going on. The raft lurch twice and in the end split into two carrying two people on it. The whole four perish in that single action. Of the remaining crew members, one voluntarily commits suicide by jumping into the sea. The three people left on the raft finally joined hands with the spirits to fight the wave and are finally saved.

Where Clark fails to advocate for a collective will, Osofisan radically calls for a collective will to action as a

solution to any human, social, economic or political crisis. In addition, Osofisan demystifies the mystery about gods and goddesses, as he clearly points out they exist not in reality, physically, but in people's imaginations.

As regards the number of characters, Osofisan increases it to twelve as opposed to four in the old version. Of the twelve character, three are goddesses, three are priests, one a prince one a soldier, and one a son to one of the priests. The characters in The Raft lack the strong will to act and so could not get our of their predicament. Osofisan's characters in Another Raft make attempt to save themselves. Those carried away by the tension and confusion in the play symbolizes what may eventually happen in the Nigerian nation if the system does not change for good.

In the area of language, Clark's use of the verse without any local flavor of the African language reduces his message of course only to those with the intellectual ability to interpret the meaning of his imageries and metaphors.

Osofisan's use of language is rather appealing. This is because he employs a medium of communication easily understood by the people. This is evidenced largely in the manner his characters speak to each other about their class difference is clear. To substitute the poetry of Clark, Osofisan uses the Yoruba folk style. This is for purposes of entertainment as well as drawing the interest of the audience. The audience is made to identify with the serious political issue being raised

in the play for necessary and eventual action.

Unlike Clark's portrayal of the down-trodden members of the society and their inability to change their fate, Osofisan in Another Raft points out that it is the collective strength of the people that leads to salvation; that could make the oppressed to affect a social change. Osofisan prefers the collective strength and will of the people as they only means of social change than Clark's suggestion of resigning to fate.

ROTIMI VERSUS OSOFISAN'S APPROACH

Rotimi and Osofisan are two prominent Nigerian dramatists. Rotimi's dramatic practice is informed by the Classical and Elizabethan tradition while Osofisan's drama practice is informed by Bertolt Brecht's theory of theatre. Thus, the differences in their approach to adaptation as a creative response to societal changes.

Rotimi adapts a Greek play. King Oedipus and calls it The Gods Are Not To Blame. BY the format of the play which is similar to the original version, Rotimi is thus championing the Aristotelian concept of tragedy. He occupies himself with updating an ancient Greek civilization paralleling it to the Yoruba cultural background. He uproots a Greek myth and fictionalizes it in a Yoruba society. He, apologetically in a later interview claims he is discussing the Nigerian civil war. He asserts that tribal bigotry, which to him serves as the tragic flaw in the play, is the cause of the Nigerian

civil war. This is where in the play The Gods Are Not To Blame, Odewale says:

> No, no! Do not blame the gods, Let no one blame the powers. My people, learn from my fall. The powers would failed if I did no let them use me. They knew my weakness, the weakness of a man easily moved to the defence of his tribe against others.[56]

The Aristotelian concept of tragedy advocates a total submission of the people's consciousness to that of looking up to the ruling class as representative of God on earth. So whatever the achievement or failure of the members of the ruling class is, it is what members of the society are expected to follow.

Although, Rotimi opts for the idea that the individual, and not God is responsible for his destiny as we see Odewale instigating his people to take actions on several issues, but, the individual here is of the noble house. This is what Rotimi is simply implying in his play The Gods Are Not To Blame. Therefore, his paralleling his Yoruba cultural modes of life to that of the Greek is simply saying to Nigerians your salvation is in the hands of those ruling and that is the way God plans it to be. No wonder, then his title of the play The Gods Are Not To Blame.

However, Rotimi's position, an unacceptable position to Nigerians has been challenged. Though, not directly made, Osofisan's adaptation of The Raft says it all.,Clark the author of The Raft is on the same line with Ola Rotimi, that is subscribing people's problem to the will of God. Also his

play (Clark) is written in the style of Classical Greek plays.

Osofisan calls his own play Another Raft. Unlike Rotimi, he uses the anti-Aristotelian tradition, the epic tradition of Bertolt Brecht. He occupies himself with upgrading the issues raised by The Raft to a national level. He re-interprets The Raft''s view of hopelessness to a hope manifesting in the people's collective will to action. Osofisan views the society critically by objecting to military intervention whenever there is a political crisis in the country. Rather than the military, as represented in the play by Agunrin who collaborates with civilian members of the ruling class as represented by Lanusen, the people as represented by Oge and Reore, specifically, should be the one to truly address the political as well as socio-economic reality of the nation. Waje in the play speaks the mind of Osofisan:

> I confess, I don't believe in your kind of retribution, Agunrin.[57]

The lesson Osofisan offers in the play Another Raft is a hard one as in this conversation.

Oroosi: It's a hard lesson, and I am the first to learn. I only hope it's not too late?

Yemosa One: Not as long as you're willing to struggle.[58]

The two adapted plays put together tell us of the upsurge in Nigerian dramatic practice to employ drama as a means of communicating happenings in the society to members of the society. The differences lie in the form which the different

dramatists employ.

CONCLUSION

The focus of the discussion in this Chapter has been to examine how two prominent playwrights realises their adaptations. Emphasis has been on the realignment of arguments in the adapted works of Rotimi's The Gods Are Not To Blame and Osofisan's Another Raft. Rotimi in his play shifts the subject matter of tragedy as expounded in the play by Sophocles King Oedipus. For Rotimi, the subject matter is not that of the role of the gods anymore in the affairs of man, but rather, the way in which man allow the gods determine his affairs. He achieved his argument first by shifting the play from ancient Greece to a contemporary Nigeria then there are changes in characterization as well as the introduction of songs, music, proverbs and mime. But then there is a problem with the idealogy of the play. The play advocates for people's reliance on the ruling class as propellers of the way the individual should live his life. This make Osofisan's play more relevant to the development of the people both individually as well as collectively. This has been the point of discussion in the second segment of the chapter. Osofisan challenges Clark's inability to prefer solution to the predicaments which afflict the Nigerian nation even before the civil war. Osofisan has offered in his own adaptation an alternative way which drama could be used to empower people's consciousness. In the play,

Osofisan suggests that people should come together, irrespective of their differences, to discuss their problems and at the end, overthrow the existing order which is exploitative, derivative and oppressive. He achieved his work by altering the story of The Raft, increasing the number of characters and introduces the story telling style for aesthetic purposes as well as experimenting the epic theatre theory which forms the background of his play.

Having seen the various trends which adaptation takes in the Nigerian Drama practice, an attempt will be made in the next chapter to show how adaptation has become part of the process of using alternative drama practice to address issues in Nigerian socio-political developments.

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CHAPTER THREE

BRECHT, THE DRAMA VILLAGE AND SOYINKA: IN THE DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL ISSUES

In the preceding Chapter of Adaptation and Social Consciousness emphasis is on adaptation done by two prominent Nigerian Playwrights, namely Ola Rotimi and Femi Osofisan.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to show Drama Village tradition of dramatic practice, specifically its style of adapting plays, as compared to styles employed elsewhere. It will therefore trace a brief history of the development of drama in Nigerian Universities up to the time Ahmadu Bello University started its own drama programme. A brief analysis of the influence of Bertolt Brecht's theory of dramatic practice, on the Nigerian drama and a critical appraisal of how this has influenced the Drama Village practices.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DRAMA IN NIGERIA

Colonial education was never designed to help in improving the quality of development in Africa. On the contrary it was designed to subjugate the African to perpetually look up to the West even after colonization for solutions to problems. This is evident in the way the syllabus for study was designed. There was also emphasis on administration and clerical studies. The area of science and technology was giving little attention. After Independence

Pacts were signed on defence and commerce. Even the political system is that of the ex-colonialists. In the area of theatre practice in Nigeria, the classical and the Elizabethan traditions which forms the basis of literary studies were deliberately made dominant. By the time Nigeria got its Independence, curriculum for teaching literature in both secondary and tertiary institutions did not change significantly from the classical tradition upon which it was established.

The literature of the West being studied in the schools did not provide a good atmosphere for a vigorous study of African literature. This is evidence in the works of the graduates of this system of education:J.P. Clark, Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi and several others. These writers talk about Africa in their poetry and plays using the European criteria which drew heavily upon classical and Elizabethan traditions, though Rotimi and Soyinka, slightly in some of their works, could be said to have shifted.

The literature emanating from the classical tradition of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations and subsequently European civilization found expression in Shakespeare, a major force of influence in the teaching of literature in African Schools. However, this literature lack relevance as its themes, images and context were alien to the students in Africa. So few students really understood them. Those who did were made to believe that Shakespeare and his like were the

hallmarks of literary creation. They were also caught in the elitists culture derived from the western education. As a result they became alienated both by the African tradition as well as the Western culture. Since they are not seen as being different from any other African by the West. Consequently they began to manipulate traditional material, unfortunately, using Western criteria. For example, J.P. Clark has recorded the 'Ozidi Saga' of the Ijaw people of River State in a film and later adapted it to a drama titled OZIDI. Soyinka, drawing on Greek ideology developed a theory for Yoruba tragedy. The theory forms the background against which most of his tragedies are developed. Similarly, Ola Rotimi exploits Yoruba social structure on to which he transposes a Greek play. This was the situation for theatre practice then.

The situation has to change fast as new traditions emerged. Because society itself is not static but dynamic. Arts too, and drama in particular, are involved in this change. Therefore new literary theories and movements were emerging. Brecht's Epic theatre theory is one of them. The most globally pronounced theory of theatre to date is Bertolt Brecht's epic or dialectic theatre. The epic theatre is that theatre which aim at engaging the audience in a dialogue by involving it in the play through direct "confrontation" or by the use of a narrator. The theatre of Brecht was developed as a direct response to the Aristotelian theatre tradition in the 1930's. Brecht theory has been quite an influence in

theatrical circles both in Europe, America and Africa. it is not surprising then that the Nigerian theatrical culture has witnessed the influence of the epic theatre practice. This could be due to the relationship between the traditional African folkloric performances and the style of the epic theatre. In terms of audience involvement as well as its dialectical nature. Therefore, in the history of drama in Nigeria the epic theatre is an integral part of the drama practice. The development of drama in Nigeria could be located largely in the four walls of the University. This is not to say it has not been existing outside the University system. In various parts of Nigeria, drama organizations could be found, particularly in Lagos, an early drama group known as **Players of the Dawn** was popular. In Kano, there was the **Maitama Sule Drama Group**. Also Groups like the **Hubert Ogunde Theatre Group**. **The Jagua** and several others existed.

But the formalization of drama as an integral part of the society has not been seriously considered. In the secondary schools, drama was considered only as part of an activity to mark the end of year celebrations. Also the church, might have used drama in order to preach the Bible to its christian followers in the colonial period. Indeed, salient moral lessons in the Bible were dramatized. This has been restricted only to those who go to church. The development of drama could further be located in some of the dramatic activities in Lagos. For instance, the emergence of the quasi-drama groups

in Lagos is traceable to the arrival of immigrant-free slaves who were used to the western style of social life, and as such encourages dramatic performances as part of recreational activities. However, they were not involved in serious dramatic activities. Beside most of the play scripts they used were not plays about Nigerian society but about European societies.

The establishment of the University of Ibadan and the subsequent creation of the department of theatre arts began the formalization of drama as a professional development in Nigeria, especially the European styled drama of the classical and Elizabethan orientation. Gradually,the first generation playwrights like Wole Soyinka, J.P. Clark, Ola Rotimi, Dapo Adeluga to mention a few began to write plays about the Nigerian society. Drama then began to have meaning, and sense to the people, since it is about there reality. Unfortunately, most of the plays were written and produced for University audience.Issues of serious importance to the Nigerian society were, in this practice, only available for University audience and for academic discussions. The formalization of drama in the academic programmes therefore had its limitations. The large Nigerian society was alienated from enjoying drama produced by their fellow country men. There was the need then for a shift in the dispensation. This could be said to have been realized by the emergence in 1975, of a unique drama programme in the Department of English and Drama at Ahmadu

Bello University, Zaria. The drama activity in A.B.U. began by defining a completely different pattern away from the Ibadan System.This is evident in the use of drama in A.B.U. to address relevant social, economic as well as political issues and how that society could be influenced for purpose of change.

Drama is a product of people's creative process. It is a social phenomenon. The dramatist thus produces his drama in the type of particular relationship he has with his society. Dramatists in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Create their drama purposely to enhance societal development. This marks the principle that guides dramatic activities of the Drama Village in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Its point of emphasis is the community theatre. Community theatre practice in Ahmadu Bello University is geared towards raising the level of consciousness of the people living in surrounding communities (and beyond where possible) to use theatre as a means of discussing issues affecting them and strategising for action to solve problems[2] Beyond the community theatre, the curricular also include the critical study of scripted plays. However, in the practical realisation of the plays in performance a lot of the scripted plays were adapted to suit local situations.

The experiment started in 1977 when The Three Penny Opera by Bertolt Brecht was trans-located to Nigeria in its seventeenth year of Independence. At that time the political

system was a military regime.

The socio-economic condition was in decay, there was a general out cry for a change. Dramatists also were participating, through their dramas, in the clarion call for the abolition of moral and social decadence. At this point they share a common interest. Some of them ware writing original plays, while others use existing plays to write their own plays. Wole Soyinka and the drama village decided to adapt other people's plays. They independently transposed versions of The Three Penny Opera. While the Ahmadu Bello University version was called The Five Kobo Opera, Soyinka's was titled Opera Wonyonsi. We will now briefly look at Bertolt Brecht's Epic Tradition.

BRECHT'S EPIC TRADITION

The Epic Tradition of Bertolt Brecht is that of a theatre which utilizes folk stylistic forms to dramatize ideas or events on stage for purposes of getting the audience involved for the subsequent action to follow. He uses the narrator or projected titles and summaries of the content before individual scene. By this, the audience is treated to the full glare of scenes changes and stage directions. This negates the Aristotelian tradition that emphasizes illusion, where the audience is encouraged to experience the theatrical events as real. Brecht calls the technique "Verfremdungs efffekt or estrangement effects". According to Schoeps, Verfremdungs.

> Creates a distance between the events and characters on stage and the audience, So that the viewer can think about what he sees, and understand why a character in the play acts the way he does. This enables the viewer to see other possibilities and solutions to the problems presented on stage.[3]

There are many ways of creating the estrangement effect. It is employed in the structure and text: in the production (stage direction, set, costumes) and in the style of acting. Music is also employed. Some of the features of the estrangement effects includes: parables set in unusual places, montage - non linear progression of plot, prologues, epilogues, interludes.

Schoeps has pointed out that Brecht never considered his works as complete, or final products. Thus producers in different times and circumstances are at liberty to experiment with Brecht's works. However, it is necessary they understand Brecht's intentions to generate a socially aware and critical audience. In pursuit of the above, Brecht adapted not just plays but folkloric and oriental forms and styles. However, it would be necessary to see how he employs the folkloric forms in adapting existing plays. Though, Brecht has original works, quite a number of his plays are adaptations of existing ones. Some of his adapted plays include: The Three Penny Opera, The Chalk Circle, Galileo, The Good Woman of Setchzuan to mention a few.

This chapter will use The Three Penny Opera for the purposes of analysis of the epic theatre and how it is

effectively used by the drama village's alternative experiment compared to Soyinka's adaptation. This is because it is one play that has been used by two different people in Nigeria and contains the elements of Brecht's epic theatre theory.

THE THREE PENNY OPERA

The Three Penny Opera is a play which satirizes the middle class. It brings out in Peachum and Macheath, who are the central characters in the play, the existing good relationship between criminals and their mentors. Ironically, the conflict is between evil represented by the character of Peachum and also good represented by Macheath, in the wrong place. The positioning of the conflicting forces in wrong places is deliberate. It is intended to show how difficult it is for evil to be good and how good cannot function quite well in the evil position.

Peachum pretends to be a humanitarian. He belongs to the category of people who do good things only in order to gain materially and not for an ordinary appreciation of their action. Matheat is a criminal who opts for the criminal activities due to the social circumstances he finds himself. He is not of the privileged class. In order to survive the pinching of social deprivations he becomes a crook that goes after those who pretend to be of humanitarians.

Through the two characters, Peachum and Macheath, and the way they relate to each other in the play the nature of

society is depicted. The businessmen in the society maintain their relationship with people for the purpose of gain. That is precisely what Peachum represents in the play. You can hear him when he says:

> You see,,my business is trying to arouse human pity. So it happens, for instance, that a man who sees another man on the street corner with only a stump for an arm will be so shocked the first time he will give him sixpence..... We can fall back on the Bible again, but how often can that be done[5]

Peachum's seemingly passionate concern in helping beggars is because he knows that at the end of it, he will make money. He knows the psychology of the beggars and the people in general. He is conscious of the fact that shock will make people give alms to the beggars. He thus exploit the ordinary people as well as the larger society, by hiring beggars' costumes to young men to go and beg.

PEACHUM: Licenses are only granted to professionals (he points in a business like way to a large map of London), London is divided into fourteen districts. Everyone wishing to ply the begging -trade in any one of them has to have a license from Jonathan Jeremiah Peachum and Company. My God, anyone could come along - "prey to his own desires !"[6]

Macheath, the notorious criminal directly indulges in robbery.

This is pointed out in the prologue:

> When the shark has had his dinner
> There is blood upon his fins. But
> Macheath he has his gloves on: They
> say nothing o f his sins[7].

Macheath cuts the image of a gentleman by his dressing and composure. This gentlemanly image conflicts with his true image as a thief. Through Macheath therefore, Brecht shows that behind the facade of responsibility and gentlemanliness poised by middle class lies chronic ruthlessness.

The play, The Three Penny Opera was intended by Brecht. according to Schoeps:

> To hold a mirror to bourgeois/capitalist society to convince the successful that they are all thieves - that bankers and shareholders... are nothing but old - fashioned thieves in modern disguise[8]

It is important to note that there is something unique which makes Bertolt Brecht's plays famous. This is the art of adapting existing plays. He gives the play a new and unfamiliar twist. It is this practice of adapting plays that makes Brecht's plays unique. Brecht's adaptations are both artistic and socio-political. Brecht makes use of the dramatic literature of the past ages. He believes that the past dramatic literatures have their value and truth of their own realities and time. It is then up to their contemporaries to discover them as he did in The Three Penny Opera.

Perhaps in the light of this search for new meaning and relevance to contemporary society, Brecht's The Three Penny Opera, became an inspirational materials for the Drama Village and Wole Soyinka. It is therefore necessary at this juncture, to look at Soyinka's version and Drama Village's adaptation to show the points of departure and why.

SOYINKA OPERA WONYOSI

Opera Wonyonsi is a very highly topical play. It covers a very wide spectrum of the society.In the play, Soyinka is disgusted with the brutality of the military, seven years after the Nigerian Civil War. At the time Soyinka wrote the play there was no respect for the public, there were public beatings and public executions by the military. There was port congestion, especially that of the cement and the exploitation of the labourers which follows. The judiciary and law enforcement agencies were ineffective and in consent with the military infringing on people's rights. The play also discusses the tastes and habits of Nigerians. Nigeria was then and even now characterized by extreme ostentation and quest for material things. this is compounded by the extravagance of money "spraying" at social occasions.

Soyinka, like Brecht uses the narrative technique in the character of the D.J. The D.J.'s purpose is not only to inform the audience of past actions but to instruct. This is amply illustrated in scene one.

(The Orchestra plays 'Mack the knife"
in the background)

DEE-JAY: I'll just introduce myself. I am your M.C. D.J. Master of Ceremonies or Disk Jockey. Or simply Dee Jay. Take your choice. I am hosting this show. One time we called it the Beggars' Opera if you insist - that's what

the whole nation is doing - begging for a slice of action_____ And don't think it's the kind of begging you're used to. Here the beggars say "Give a slice of the action, or .....give me a slice off your throat..... I'm yet to decide whether such a way out-opera should be named after the Begars, the Army , the bandits, the Police, the Cash-madams, the students, the Trade Unionists, the Alhajis and Alhajas, the Aladura, the Academicians, the Holy Radicals, the Holy Patriarchs and Unholy Heresiarchs - I mean Man, in this way-out country every one acts way-out. Including the traffic. Maybe we should call it the Trafficking Opera, which just complicates things with trafficking in foreign exchange. Nice topical.[9]

Now the D. J, is not isolated from the plot. The plot properly is about Chief Anikura (Peachum) a man who can be seen to represent the politicians who escaped from Nigeria after the 1966 coup to settle as exiles in Bangui. The Chief runs a place called "Home from Home for the Homeless' in which he employs professional beggars. Chief Anikura's enterprise later in the play is to be accused of being a secret society. The whole set up of Anikura is intended to be satirical.

It is common knowledge that establishments like that of Anikura exists in Nigeria. For example, the 1980 Maitatsine

uprising in Kano reveals the attitude of people like Mohammadu Marwa Maitatsine (Anikura) who used religion wrongly. In fact, by the time the government of Nigeria sent the army there under Col. Y.Y. Kure, many wells full of human skeleton and blood were found. Later, those who were freed by government troops revealed to the public that, people kidnapped and taken to the Maitatsine house were slaughtered like animals and those alive were forced to drink human blood. Maitatsine's establishment was camouflage as school for teaching Koranic education. All the followers of the school beg, among other things, to survive. Maitatsine, in real sense was not a muslim. In fact, he rebelled against the teaching of Islamic religion by his activities. This is just one instance among several other similar cases of establishments being other thing than their public portfolios indicate.

Soyinka's approach to Anikura's establishment reveals the bid to make it rich quick in Nigeria during the period and even today. The popular name for the game now is the household '419'. This is where Nigerians will make business contact with expatriates at the end of which it normally turns out to be a fake business and Nigerians involve normally disappear into oblivion. But the likes of Anikura survive alongside of people like Macheath whose atrocities are not hidden. The notorious armed robber, Anini and the police officer, Iyamu's case in 1988 is an example.

This is common feature in Nigeria to date. The metaphor illustrate the excessive crave for wealth among Nigerians. They go to any length to get money, from prostitution to smuggling, from armed robbery to drug trafficking and even to the extent of counterfeiting.

Anikura employs the services of Colonel Moses and Inspector Brown to arrest Machheath. The Inspector attempts to protest, but is blackmailed to submission.

DE-MADAM: You can't be very good
copper if you don't know
where to find a notorious
public figure like Macheath.

BROWN: This is black-mail.[13]

The inspector and De-Madam set a trap for Macheath and he is arrested. The success of the arrest is attributed to a betrayal as the Dee-jay informs:

It's done. The great bandit
Macheath is in gaol, betrayed
by one love too many.[14]

Meanwhile, Polly bribes to get Macheath out of prison. Chief Anikura is not happy at all with the turn of events. He invites Colonel Moses so as to persuade him to put pressure for the re-arrest and execution of Macheath. He bares his mind to Colonel Moses.

Macheath is a leader of a group of thieves. he is successful, handsome and very attracted to young girls. In the play, he stands in the way of Anikura's business progress. This creates bitter rivalry between them. Anikura did not hide this when he says to Brown in a discussion:

BROWN: What do you want?

ANIKURA: Macheath; Arrested tonight,
Tried in the morning. Shot
by noon or else.[10]

Anikura tries to see that Macheath is killed and this becomes possible when he finds out that his daughter, Polly, is secretly married to Macheath. The Dee-Jay informs us:

> Deep in the Ridenville of bangui known as the Nigerian Quarter by the natives, but christened New Ikoyi by the Expertriates, the bandit, Mack the knife celebrates his marriage to Polly, daughter of Chief Jonathan, Anikura: friend of the poor, propriator of Home from Home for the Homeless.[11]

Anikura feels that should Macheath die, his daughter will inherit all Macheath's wealth. This will in turn come to him this proves that Anikura does not care for anything but wealth. His daughter's welfare is meaningless. If he will not make money out of it.

ANIKURA: I hope she aims no higher than
the lace merchant. But
will she?[12]

MOSES: What is it Chief? Tell me

ANIKURA: (Goes nearer, booting the beggars out of his way. They crawl back to their positions). Did you not follow the Appeal Session of the case of Macheath, We were denounced. An enemy of state, in prison for multiple murders, arson, forgery, fraud, bawdry, blasphemy, rape and seduction and other unmentionable acts, this social friend, deservedly condemned to public execution tomorrow got some traitors to swear to an affidavit denouncing my Home for the Homeless as a secret society - just to escape hot perforations.

MOSES: But Why? What has it to do with you?

ANIKURA: (Puffing his chest) We did it. He was convicted on our evidence. but the Appeal Court has now decided that evidence was worthless. Macheath's appeal was granted and he was set free to roam the streets an hour ago.[15]

Consequently, a mock trial of Colonel Moses follows. Moses resolve he will see to it Macheath is executed.

MOSES: (Suddenly resolved) Enough! (All eyes turn towards him). Macheath.....shall die. (He marches off as one who means business)[16]

If follows that Macheath is re-arrested, tried and sentenced to death. But at the last minute reprieve comes for macheath. The Emperor for life has granted a general amnesty to all common criminals to mark his coronation.

> We, Our Serene Highness, newly reincarnated, Crowned Emperor Charles Mugne Desiree Boky the first and Lion of Bangui, tiger of the Tropics, Elect of God, First among Kings and Emperors, the Pulsing Nugget of Life, and Radiating Sun of Africa hereby pronounce, in honor of our coronation on this day, a general Amnesty for all common criminals. Take heed however, that this great condescension shall not, repeat shall not extend to any one accused or convicted of crimes of a political nature. Long live the Emperor.[17]

SOYINKA'S POINTS OF DEPARTURE FROM BRECHT'S

One of the major points of departure from Breacht's Three Penny Opera in Soyinka's Opera Wonyonsi is the setting. Soyinka sets his own play in Africa. The actions within the play takes place in the central African Republic in the Nigerian quarters. This is in order to achieve the satirical stress of the play which presents an overview of a collage of situations both in nigeria and elsewhere in Africa.

Another area of departure is in the characterization. Almost all the characters are Nigerians. Their names are either Nigerian/African or typical names familiar to Nigeria or Africa. Thus we have Chief Anikura and De-madame, the Mr.

and Mrs Peachum of Three Penny Opera. Macheath's and Polly's names are maintained. Brown is now Inspector Brown. Few other names like Jake and Jenny remain unchanged. Additional characters also appear, like Professor Bamgbapo and Colonel Moses.

In re-structuring Brecht's play to his own tune, Soyinka reshapes the three acts into two parts. In Brecth's three acts, there are nine scenes with three scenes for each act. Soyinka's two parts have nine scenes also. But part one has five scenes while part two four scenes.

The prologue in Brecht's play' Market Day in Soho' becomes the Dee-Jay's introduction in Soyinka's play. Each scene in Brecht's play is marked with an epigraph. In Soyinka's play, the Dee-jay narrates the action scene of one to three in part one and scene seven in part two.

The play Opera Wonyonsi satirizes the Nigerian society. However, it failed to offer a solution to the crisis. The play woefully lacks consistent analyses Soyinka seems to be passionately concerned in the play with offering 'good theatre" only. This is a contradiction to Brecht's basic intention of the Epic theatre. According to Schoeps. Breacht's intentions are:

> to generate a socially aware and critical audience.[18]

Unlike Soyinka's the Drama Village version of the Three Penny Opera attempts to realize Brecht's basic intention with The Five Kobo Opera.

DRAMA VILLAGE: FIVE KOBO OPERA

The Ahmadu Bello University Studio Theatre is popularly known as Drama Village. The theatre reflects a typical African Village setting. This setting is where by actors perform among the audience making it easier to realises Brecht's epic theatre. Hence transpositions/adaptations of his works are highly successful here. In A.B.U., drama is purposely created in order to relate to society. This informs the community theatre practice which A.B.U is popularly know for. The Drama village asks the audience watching the performance to be part of the production, either by involving the audience or by performing within the audience., just as it is in traditional African performances. These form the background to the adaptation of Brech's Three penny Opera here titled The Five Kobo Opera.

The thrust of the play, The Five Kobo Opera is similar to that of Brecht's The Three penny Opera. One fundamental reason for the adaptation was to answer the question, what will Brecht's play look like to the Nigerian audience? How possible is it to achieve what he wants a theatre to be like?

The play revolves around an argument which takes place in a bar between Rocker, a sharp looking young man and the Barman. The barman chides Rocker for attempting to leave without paying for his drinks. Rocker's attempt to bluff the Barman that he is not what he, the barman, think he is.

BARMAN: (With anger and contempt).
OGA, you never pay for my drink
and the brown ken tumblers!

ROCKER: Commot! Abi na because I de
enter dis kind useless bar
(company response). Look,make
I tell you, di time wey, me
I day for Lagos eh? Look!

BARMAN: You foolish thing. Who take
you go Lagos?[19]

What follows in the ensuing argument is a series of enactments of various positions as advanced by the debating characters. Rocker and Barman. Rocker generally boasts of his achievements as a criminal and how he is able to outwit people. The barman challenges him. We can observe here, therefore, that role-playing has a significant part in the adaptation.

The play is set in a place where various types of lower class people mix freely. It is from this pool of people that certain roles and characters are drawn out to re-enact the story of Rocker and the barman. Rocker's justification for seeking the Barman's respect is first relayed in his wedding to Vero.

The mock-wedding explains the extent to which people can go into extravagance when there is a wedding. Like the weeding of Macheath and Polly in The Three Penny Opera, the desire to

show off and to be extravagant is commented on. The wedding song is a treatise of how impossible it could be for people in the lower class to maintain a wife. Needless to say poverty is prevalent in the society. Marriage means maintenance of the wife by the husband, feeding, clothing, accommodation, health and any other responsibility. The comment explores men's craze to satisfy their women and how they resort to dubious means. This is complimented in a song:

Rocker Buy one big Mercedes
Im com ask Vero for cash
Vero build one kind big house
Im come ask Rocker for cash
Say make e go tif money
Rocker come de blow in cash
Rocker dey carry harlot
Vero dey carry big man.[19]

The song goes further to demonstrate how marital values are no more complied with, husband's and wife's excessive lust for materials and desire to show off abandoned their wedding oath. Each one is to his or her whims and caprices. However, this is Rocker's story, an interesting story but the Barman don't think so. He respond immediately to Rocker's story:

BARMAN: Me I no gree am. You think say rich man
wey get money go sit down like dat look
you take im daughter to away?

ROCKER: Look!I say dat time di Police Boss for Lagos

na my personal friend and me I be tough
crook and my boysna tough guys. So wetin
big man fit do me?

BARMAN: Big man fit do anything in dis world as im
get money im fit do anything in dis world.[20]

The enactment which follows exposes the manner in which rich men who get involved in dubious activities are quick at providing protection for their own kind. They do not want any relationship between their children and their likes as in Rocker's marriage to Vero, Alhaji Baba's daughter. Alhaji Baba is quick to arrange to use Larai, one of Rocker's numerous girlfriends to help the Police to arrest him. Alhaji Baba (Barman) confessed to Mama Vero he is a crook too like Rocker.

A"a, so you think say me
I be small crook?[21]

A song of Alhaji Baba follows:

BARMAN: Me, I dey or import export/2x

THE COMPANY: Bring anything I go fit import am
bring sef eh, I go fit export you
Alhaji Baba, Alhaji Baba, Alhaji
Baba-o Import - Export.

ALHAJI BABA: Chuku-Chuku naim we dey.
Person wey no sabi na wa for am
make no yeye police come my way
(Refrain).[22]

Rocker outrightly rejects the Barman's argument. But the Barman insists if Rocker's story is true, his own story is also true. It is this counter balancing arguments, which produced the series of scenes throughout the play.

The play is hilarious. This is to do with the nature of relationship existing between the people in the bar. The bar is a place where people, mostly of the lower class, meet. They share common features; they are poor, lack access to adequate health facilities, education is by privilege, living condition is very low. It is this type of people you find in the 'Bar'. Some of them are there to release tension,others are there to sell their articles of sale. It is this type of people with a common characteristic that participates in the role play of the stories of Rocker and Barman. No wonder then that the language used in this play is pidgin. This is in order to identify the fact that the play is not meant for the elites alone.The audience can easily identify and grasp the meaning embedded in the play.

Role-playing is central to the style used in the A.B.U. adaptation of the Three Penny Opera. Role play in the play is the fantasies of Rocker and Barman. But the issues they play out are real issues. The audience are therefore not allowed to get carried away by any character. Instead, the audience is made to see and reflect on the serious issues in the society, which the play raises.

Role-play in the play is also used to achieve estrangement advocated by Brecht in his epic theatre. Rocker plays the role of the character in his fantasy while the others play roles other than their characters. The audience is not allowed to get carried away by illusions. Instead, illusion is used as a means of engaging the audience in a discussion through role-play. This is realised through the use of improvised props, for instance, the use of old tyre as a baby cot given as a present to Vero and Rocker on their wedding.

Songs as advocated by Brecht are also well used. Popular tunes are utilised. The songs also serve as a commentary on the action of each scene. For example. 'Money Song' show how money is used to make Larai betray Rocker. It also discusses the effects of money on society.

> Come to me, money come to me
> I need you please, money come to me now
> Man way no get money chop life de
> suffer.[23]

The key point is that those who do not have money are made to suffer by those who have. This then informs the craze to become rich through illegal means.

By the time Rocker gets the reprieve in the play, the Barman interrupts the jubilation which follows and challenges

Rocker.

Liar! Liar! If dem don
give you dat kind job, why you
here with us, a Mr. Nobody among
all of us nobody. Why?[24]
Rocker is unable to answer him immediately.
But only provides a final wishful thought.

ROCKER: Look, you said I am Mr Nobody eh?
But I tell you, someday, me I
will be somebody.

BARMAN: (Walking back to his bar triumphantly)
Someday all of us go be somebody. But
when Rocker, when?[25]

POINTS OF DEPARTURE: DRAMA VILLAGE FROM BRECHT

To begin with, the departure of the Five Kobo Opera from Three Penny Opera should first be located within what Martin Eslin says about plays of the Epic theatre. He says:

> The construction of the plays of the 'Epic theatre, which rejects the logically built and wall made play,is free from the needs of creating suspense, a loosely knit, and episode: instead of mounting a dynamic climax, the story unfolds in a number of separate situations, each rounded and complete in itself. The total effect of the play will be build up through the juxtaposition and 'montage' of contrasting episode.[26]

The story of The Five Kobo Opera unfolds within 'separate situation', unlike The Three Penny Opera The five kobo Opera which is within a single situation tells a story of a deprived section of the society whose dreams is to progress to a condition of life that is meaningful. In Brecht's play, the conflict between good and bad is what the story is woven around. Evidence is in the characters of Peachum and Macheat.

The Drama Village's play The Five Kobo Opera operates a dialogue between good and bad, and also between the lower and upper classes in the Nigerian society. This dialogue is in the argument of Rocker and the Barman in the play. This is a variation from Brecht's whose play leaves the audience to initiate the action all by itself. It only serves as a catalyst for the action.

Role-playing is another point of departure from Brecht.s play. The given conflict of the Good and Bad is realized via the fantasies of Rocker and the Barman. These two characters started an argument that leads to incorporating people that are just customers around the bar to take part in realizing the different point each of the arguing characters make.

The Drama Village, in addition, changes the characterization completely. Rather, we now have all the characters in The Three Penny Opera turn out to be only fantasies of Rocker and the Barman manifesting in the people at the Bar, that assumes the role.

We can see that as Martin Eslin pointed out, a 'montage' of contrasting episodes are juxtaposed in the Drama Village play. This is not as strictly shown as such in the Three Penny Opera. The play also is an attempt at experimenting with Brecht's ideas. This is what Drama Village sets out to do in adapting plays. Drama Village is also trying to find out what the Three Penny Opera will look like in Nigerian society. This is in order to see if the salient points raised in Three Penny Opera realised through The Five Kobo Opera. will make any impact on the Nigerian society.

SOYINKA VERSUS DRAMA VILLAGE

Soyinka, restructure the original play. He realized this by shifting the setting, characterizations, by increasing the number of characters in the play. He removed the prologue and the epigraph by substituting it with the Dee-Jay who is also a narrator. His language use is deliberate, it is meant for a selected audience, they are those invited for the convocation which sponsored the production of the play. Soyinka subverts Brecht's epic theatre by ending the play on the note of happily ever-after. Brecht's play ended with a call for combating injustice as taking no action to combating injustice may result in total extermination of justice.

On the other hand, the Drama Village version from the on-set departs completely in structure from Bertolt Brecht's The Three Penny Opera. There is no one story with its characters,

instead, there are series of scenes discussing different issues.

Besides, role-playing is a central aspect in realizing the play. The play is given 'an unfamiliar twists'. The audience is familiar with formal play presentation. But the play is not presented in the formal sense of play presentation. The audience is consequently estranged by the series of scenes in the play. Besides, the audience is fully aware of the situation being presented in the play. The language used in the play is a language easily understood by everybody. The play at the end, invites the audiences to engage themselves in a dialogue about what they see and to begin to think of the possible action to take so as to effect changes in the society.

The focus of the drama basically is to raise the level of people's consciousness for onward action against deprivation, injustice, lack of health and social amenities and above all, against poverty. In fact, the very use of the story telling format is deliberate. It is the style of folk African theatre presentation. The folkloric aspect of the Epic theatre informs the Drama Village's resistance to the classical and Elizabethan style of drama presentation.

Choice of issue encompassing all socio-political and economic woes, choice of language of mediation, use of Pidgin English and choice of the medium for dialogue of the fantasies of Rocker and Barman in their arguments are parts of the

strong points of difference with Soyinka who is a celebrated classical apologist.

The success of drama village's adaptation of Bertolt Brecht's play The Three Penny Opera to The Five Kobo Opera could best be said to be cogent. The argument pursued in this chapter is to show how the Drama Village A.B.U. Zaria's experimental and alternative theatre practice exploit adaptation as a means of analysing social issues as against the likes of Soyinka's method. Further more it is established that, the epic theatre theory of Bertolt Brecht has been very influential in the Nigerian Drama practice. In A.B.U Zaria the theory has been very resourceful to the alternative tradition practiced there. The success of its first experiment encourages it to continue experimenting with adaptation.

END NOTES

1. Refer to Chapter Two of this Thesis.
2. There are many literatures available on A.B.U. Community theatre e.g. Abah, O.S., "The Popular Theatre As A Strategy For Education And Development: The Example Of Some African Countries", Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation. University Of Leeds, 1987.

   b. "The Crises of Urban Theatre. The Samaru Example" In Saiwa. A Journal of Communication. Issue 2:, Department of English And Drama, A.B.U. Zaria.
3. KARL, H. SCHOEPS, BERTOLT BRECHT, (New York): Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. Inc, 1977) p.44.
4. SCHOEPS, Op cit p. 53.
5. Three German Plays," The Three Penny Opera: Penguin Books Ltd. 1963) pp 145-146.
6. 'Three German Plays" Op cit p. 145.
7. Op cit p.147.
8. Schoeps Op cit p. 143.
9. Wole Soyinka, OPERA WONYONSI, (London: Rex Collins, 1981) p.1.
10. Soyinka, Opcit p. 32.
11. Op cit p. 12.
12. Op cit p. 11.
13. Op cit p. 32.
14. Op cit p. 50.
15. Op cit p. 66.

16. Op cit p. 76.

17. Op cit p. 82.

18. Schoeps, Op cit p. 58.

19. A.B.U. STUDENTS, THE FIVE KOBO OPERA (Unpublished Ms 1977) p. 1.

20. A.B.U. Zaria, Op cit p. 6.

21. Op cit p. 6.

22. Op cit p. 6.

23. Op cit p. 8.

24. Op cit p. 13.

26. Martin Eslin Brecht: A Choice of Evils. London: Heinemann Educational books 1973) P.113

CHAPTER FOUR

PROSE TO PLAY

The preceding chapters discuss adaptation done based on plays. A distinction is already drawn on the different approaches to adaptation in drama practice. Furthermore, this Chapter on the other hand then intends to discuss two adaptations from prose to play. One of the prose works adapted to play is a novel called Perpetua and The Habit of Unhappiness

In this chapter, the difference between the prose and the dramatic will be established. Furthermore, it will be shown how A.B.U. Drama Village has been involved in the challenge of providing alternative means of doing drama both for curricular activities as well as for enlightening and influen

society.

The Prose Narrative and the Dramatic

A novel could be simply described as a prose narrative. It could be fictional, historical, biographical or adventurous. A prose piece is a descriptive narration of a story. It could be long or short. an ordinary writing without a structured rhyme. Whatever type it is, the story in a prose narrative is meant to be read and enjoyed by a lone audience or reader. Unless for a specific reason or in a special forum, its audience is always one, the reader. He is supposed to use his imagination to picture what is said in the story. This means the reader will have to create in his mind the faces of

the characters in the prose-story.

He also imaginatively visualizes in his mind, the place the story is set. Unless where the character's dress is described, the reader is left to implore his imagination to dress the character. This is also applicable to the discussion going on in the story. The audience must employ its imaginative sensitivities to verbalize in his mind the discussion in the story. The action in the story is left to the construction of imaginative power.

All that is mentioned above about the novel and its audience is in drama mediated by the stage. Though a written drama share close characteristic with the novel to the reading audience, in drama, the person who people the novel are taken over by real people on stage, the actors. They speak directly to the ears of the audience who hear them as well as see them. The mode of dressing of the characters is seen through costuming and the manner in which the actors wear them. Through the help of sets and props and also scenic designs, the setting of the story is aptly captured on stage. The audience thus reduce the amount of abstractness in his imagination since most things are now made concrete for him to see and hear on stage. In some instances, drama includes the audience in the performance. It is done either by actors going through the auditorium where the audience are seating or by engaging them in a discussion as prescribed by the particular performance mode.

Despite the differences in what prose narrative and a dramatic narrative are, they all meet at a point. They communicate a message. Both the novel and drama as literature and play are a means of expression whereby comments are made on man's activities. The human action involved in theses art forms has the potentials to engage and influence changes as well as transforming the society. In most cases, these art forms become tools to subvert human actions that are reactionary and retrogressive. This is not to say literature do not exist which may agree with retrogressive status quo.

In essence, whether the prose narrative or the dramatic work is for, or, against the existing status quo, its positive contribution is in their influencing the affairs of the society. As such, their interrelatedness is inevitable. Drama, in particular, helps the novel to reach the non-literate members of the society. Protest literature like Mungo Beti's novel Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness has been enlivened through dramatization. Adapted into a play of the same title, the story was physicallised for the audience.

MUNGO BETI: Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness

In this prose narrative, the story is of Essola, a pro-Rubenist who return from detention purposely to trace the reasons for his sister's (Perpetua) tragic death. He is most disturbed as to why his sister, who already have children should die in child birth. He realizes his family does not

want to face the consequent effect of having sold Perpetua as a wife to a supposedly rich and influential police officer, Edward.

Edward turns out to be living in a slum and is a tyrant. He uses Perpetua as a sexual commodity to get him promotion. He forces her to have sexual relationship with M'Barga Onana as a Senior Police Officer. Her affairs with Zeyang, the football star provides for her a true and honest love. She finally dies of unhappiness during child birth.

By the time Essola concludes his investigation and has established reasons and circumstances that lead to Perpetua's death, he pleads revenge. In ironical moves, he lures his brother, Martin into getting drunk. He ties him to a tree and leaves him there for the brown ants to sting him to death.

The story is a metaphor of the socio-political problems in post colonial Cameroon. The characterization and setting are of certain non-fictional realities of Cameroon. Perpetua's story is a personified picture of Cameroon. Whatever happens to perpetua is put side by side with Cameroon. So we are presented with two characters in one; Perpetua the human and Perpetua the country.

Essola, on the other hand, represents the Rubenists and what happens to them. He symbolizes the happenings which are a prominent feature of Ahidjo's Cameroon immediately after independence. The period was "characterized by arbitrary arrests,torture, imprisonment and assassination. The regime

made use of soldiers, the police and secret agents to carry out its activities"[1]. Abel Eyinga, in an essay, shows how Cameroon is actually a police state by the creation of "Intelligence" operations. He asserts that:

> The government services specializing in "intelligence" operations, secret accusations and torture come under two names, not well-known to Cameroonians. the SEDO (Service de-documentation) and the BMM (Brigades Mixes Mobiles). The SEDO is the Cameroonian extension of the French SDECE (Service de-documentation exterieure et de contre-espionage) established in the years 1959-1960 by two French agents seconded to the Ahidjo regime. The BMM were similarly outgrowths of the State of emergency declared during the period. Before the creation of BMM, torture had already been utilized in Cameroon against "suspects" (i.e. nationalists) but in a rather artisanal fashion.[2]

Essola, has just been released from detention, He was arrested and sent to labour camp because of his Pro-Rubenist activities.

The story is a satire on the despotic government of post-colonial Cameroon. the issues in the novel concerns the socio-political problems of Africa and in particular, those of the Cameroons. The author is dissatisfied with the social realities in Cameroon. Mungo Beti believes that the inherent

political problems of Cameroon are due to neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism is a subtle method employed by ex-colonial powers to continue oppressing and exploiting Africa. Indirectly, they subject their former colonies to political and socio-economic dependence. This is rightly put by Onyemelukwe, who asserts that:

> After independence, the ex-colonial powers do not interfere directly in the affairs of independent African states. They use more subtle methods to maintain their former colonies in subjugation[3]

However, Beti himself, in an essay, demonstrates the devastating, impact of the subtle method of neo-colonialism when he asserts that:

> ...beginning in 1960, the date of accession of Cameroon to full political sovereignty, the little Paul was no longer able to disguise himself. He had to endorse because of his lack of troops, the intensification of French military operations during which the guerrillas were pitilessly hounded, villages razed, and the people bombed with napalm.[4]

One of the other subtle methods of colonial presence is the use of French in Cameroon as an official language. The novel identifies how French language (and English in the anglophone region) plays a significant role in emasculating the linguistic and cultural development of Cameroon.

Mongo Beti, through Essola, frowns at the use of cultural aid to ensure French influence in Cameroon. The subjugation ad exploitation of Cameroonians by the despotic regime is through cultural isolation by the French language, a continuation of colonial legacy. Therefore, French tries to keep the Cameroonians down educationally. This could be attributed as asserted by Richard Joseph that:

> The University of Yaounde is a travesty of an educational institution. Teaching and examinations are carried on in a haphazard irresponsible manner by instructors who are, in the majority, unqualified to hold their positions, i.e., have not obtained their doctorates even at the 3rd level (and even those who have their doctorates were not properly supervised in France)... this should be attributed..... to the general tradition of Francophone academic institutions in Africa. France has used its economic influence in Africa to restrict expatriates hiring in the universities to its own nationals.

This is also supported by Onyemelukwe's assertion that:

> the aim of the neo-colonialist is to prevent the African from mastering the appropriate knowledge and technology indispensable for improving the African's battered economies[6]

Mongo Beti is not only in dispute with the status quo in Africa, but also in dispute with appropriateness of the true position of independence of African countries.

Essola, the protagonist, returns home after spending six years in political detention.He returns to find out how his sister, Perpetua, died. He starts his investigation from the village through the mission.

The process of the investigation, we are taken back in time to when Perpetua was alive. Perpetua at that time has been forced into a marriage which benefits every one except her. She is forced by her mother to abandon her education. The wedding could be anything, but to Perpetua it is unhappiness.

The investigation carry Essola to Zombo town of Oyolo. This is the point where he meet the Pro-Rubenist. This point is worth noting because it is reiteration of what Beti says in an Essay "The hidden Truth about Cameroon", that:

> The impoverishment of the popular classes in Cameroon is digging an unbridgeable gap, altogether new (in the Bantu South especially) between the privileged classes based essentially on the bureaucracy and the petit people of peasants, ... city dwellers, the unemployed and workers,as well as lower civil servants and employee.[7]

The pro-Rubenists are Zeyang, Jean D. Point; Anna-Maria, his wife, Caracalla, and their way of life as shown in the novels speaks of what Cameroon has been turned into after

independence.

This is the point at which the metaphor is at use. Perpetua is the country, Cameroon that has been butchered by the citizens, Edward, the husband in this sense,for selfish reasons, Richard Joseph succinctly analyses what Beti meant as he put it:

> In the case of Cameroon, we are dealing with a neo-colonial state in which what has been explicit from its inception only becomes apparent in other peripheral capitalist state, from the time of Constitutional independence, the Cameroon government has been notable for its counter-revolutionary as much as for its neon-colonial character. It can be argued that the nature of the dominant politico-economic system established in post-colonial Africa during the period of decolonization has rendered the only alternative to their functioning a revolutionary one and the states in question usually anticipate counter revolutionary apparatus.... for while the French were erecting the multiple pillars of their neo-colonial establishment, they , and their indigenous Cameroonian allies., were simultaneously involved in suppressing a rebellious nationalist movement that hurried by circumstances to become revolutionary[8]

The metaphor is further intensified by love-lust relationship between Cameroon and the Rubneist, Symbolized by the relationship between Perpetua and Zeyang. Beti here, concludes by the symbolic death of perpetua killing of Rubben-Zeyang.

Finally, in Chapter eight, Essola avenges the death of his sister back in the village where he lures his brother, Martin and get him drunk. He later ties him to a tree and leaves him to the ants to bite him to death.

THE PLAY: PERPETUA AND THE HABIT OF UNHAPPINESS

When one considers the novel and the play, it is obvious that they share similarities in theme and subject matter.

The play is based on Cameroon's post-colonial era. The era is characterized by political crisis. In the play, the fundamental right of the Pro-Ruben activities as up-shoot of the nationalist struggle for Cameroon is unaccepted. The French colonial government dislike the Rubenist, likewise, the Ahidjo's Regime. Anybody caught in anti-party activities is either detained or killed. Zeyang's death is an illustration of that fact. The victims are not just antiparty activists, but are remains of the pro-Rubenists nationalists struggle group. The play thus slide open the political repression of the country. Essola, the central character returns home after six years of political detention due to his Rubenist activities. Amugu is the one that lets us know this:

Essola, little brother, kai
dem say you commot from prison
six months ago. Where you bin
dey all this time?[9]

Essola's discussion with Amugu reveals to us what happens in detention camps.

Essola: I have come from hell.....
The rest of my life would not be
enough to tell you of it.
Those terrible camps.
This man... One night in the camp
- six months ago now - they came and
took me to what they call the
'sick bay'. Sick bay!... there was a
man lying on a board. He was still
quivering from being tortured.
Cheeks and lips, split. Bruises.
Open from the ox-hide whip. Pain was
written right across his body....[10]

Also the peasant, Amugu's reaction on the mention of Ruben show the magnitude of the government's repressive measures on Rubenists.

Amugu: Make you wait now.
I go tell you, make you listen.
If you call that name, "Ruben",

Police go rise up like this
(he gestures his hands). And
if you open you mouth to shout
"Remember Ruben", Police go commot
from their Office - catch you like
this, finish, prison start - without
trial, like you".

Furthermore the confrontation between Essola and his mother, Maria reveals the bitter repercussion of the Cameroonian political crisis. Families ties are destroyed. Essola demands of his mother to tell him the way his sister Perpetua died.

Essola could only get part of the story of how Pertetua died from Crescentina. Perpetua's life of turmoil began immediately he is sent to detention. The fatal day is that day Maria removed Perpetua away from the mission school.

The mission lets Perpetua go because. according to Ernestine, they do not want any trouble with government. This is because Perpetua's relative is in trouble with government. In fact, no one will marry Perpetua if they discover she is Essola's relative who is a Rubenists and now is in detention. Essola, however continue with his investigations.

He and Amugu meet Edward, Perpetua's husband. Edwards attitude towards them introduces to us the type of person he is:

Amugu: Surely you remember me,
Mr. Edward. Perpetua im
cousin. This na im brother,
Wendelin.

Edward: (Absolutely refusing to shake
their outstretched hands).
What? Perpetua's relatives again?
Please let my children go at once.
Are you kidnappers?
(Essola and Amugu, completely taken aback,
foolishly release the children they have
been fondling). At any rate, is this the
normal way with you people - to arrive
at my house, completely unannounced?[13]

Having been treated so badly by their in-law, they are however welcomed by friends of Perpetua who are also pro-Rubenists who live in a shanty town of Oyolo in Zombo town. The people have one single theme in their discussion always. The theme of Rubenist activities. Caracalla and Zeyang are strong evidence of this. For instance Zeyang inform Essola that:

Zeyang: Perpetua no for die if this
yeye country no bin dey
without medicine since Baba
Tura come into power. Dis
"Independence" dey make me

laugh! We get our own
President with in own villa for....
Cote dey Azur; Minister dem, with
belle and Mercedes Benze; Our own
army, with plenty Colonel and
gone... dey drive their Gwongoro;
our almighty police - God bless us;
dem jus full for everywhere.[14]

In addition to this information Essola further discovers that perpetua's intellectual capability is like a curse to her. Because Edward, her husband, cannot accept he is less intelligent.

Edward: All right, then. What do you
say the correct answer is?

Perpetua: Actually, I think your answer is
wrong, Edward. (Expressions of
surprise). The way I work it out
I think that the correct answer is
5 labourers with some spare labour
capacity.

Edward: But is she right? If you work
it out, I'm sure you 'll find
that my answer is the correct one.
She can't be right.

Edward: (Bitterly) If she burnt my food,

she will get a dirty slap[15]

Therefore to humiliates Perpetua he brings a prostitute to the house and send her to sleep on a mat. Scene five and six brought us to the tragic end of Perpetua. Edward forced Perpetua into a love affair with M'Barga Onana who is his Boss. This is suppose to earn Edward a promotion. He also lets his wife to flirt with other people like Zeyang, the football star. Later out of jealously he attempts to kill Zeyang. But Zeyang disgraces him. In reaction to the manner he is treated by Zeyang, he refuses to allow Perpetua to go to her mother as she is pregnant and sick. She later dies in labour in the room where he confines her. Essola hears that Martin, his brother has arrived in town and then was lavishly spending Perpetua's downry which he stole from Maria's hiding place. Martin has been in league with Edward in the bad treatment of Perpetua. They are both sadists and tyrannical.

Up to this moment, Rubenist are still hunted. Therefore Edward as government agent finally get Zayang. Edward is the police and the judge in the case of Zayang.

Edward: To the maximum Security Prison! O' ya! Move.

(Zayang is shoved to one side of the stage and tortured).

Edward: To Fort Negre for trial...

(Zyang is arraigned before Edward as Judge).

.. Um.. Most heinous crimes

Sedition... Plotting... 26th June...

...7th July... evidence is conclusive

... Guilty!!!

To the North for sentence!

(Zayang is hauled to another part of the stage and arraigned before Edward again).

You are sentenced to death by firing squad! In public O ya! To Oyo! for execution.

(He is lured to another part of the stage and tied to stake. Edward is now centre-stage as Executioner).

Zayang: (Crying out from convulsed lips).

Ruben! The only father we dis country get! People - Remember Ruben! Ruben!

Edward: Hurry up! What are you waiting for? Are you letting the traitor still shout out his lies? Shit!.. Now... Ready...Aim....

Zyang: People - Remember Ruben!!!

Edward: ..... Fire![15]

Essola is able to picture how terrible life is for the

Rubenist not put in detention. There is nothing outside but unhappiness. Life is hard, repression is the vogue. People are framed with all sorts of criminal charges just as Zayang, who is arraigned before Edward. He is charged with plotting and sedition and is publicly executed.

With this knowledge, Essola, return back to the village where he avenged the death of his brother, Perhaps, by killing his brother Martin.

The Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Drama Village Adapters), realized the play by using a number of techniques.

One of the most important dramatic technique used in the adaptation is the flash-back technique. It provides the audience with some historical background to the original story happening on stage. It incorporates the use of lighting technique which helps in the transition to the past and back to the present. The flash back in the play Perpetua and the Habit of Unhappiness, provides us with events that happened six years before the story in our play began. The six years precede the coming to power of the then Cameroonian President, Ahmadu Ahidjo. The five scenes of the flash back carry us into a journey through the life of Perpetua and in addition, expose the terrible condition in which people in both the village, mission and in Zombo town of Oyolo live. A narrator is provided for each scene of the flash back. Crescentina narrates the story of the mission in which we see the effect of disputing politically with Baba Tura. No one will marry

Perpetua since her brother is the enemy of the State. Even the mission is quick at releasing her. All this is for the fear of what Baba Tuta's agents might likely do. Amugu's story completes the story of Crescentina. He vividly provide us with the sad happening on Perpetua's wedding . Perpetua herself declares she is so unhappy.

Edward: I am sorry for you, Perpetua.

Perpetua: (in the darkness). I'm so unhappy![16]

In Oyolo, Caracalla and Zeyang leads us into the events which takes places at Oyolo. The events are actually leading actions that culminate in Perpetua's eventual death. The scene here illustrates the struggle for survival which Perpetua goes through. Things like emotional torture, physical torture by Edward and her condition of life. An instance like this

perpetua:..... Oh God! To have to go back
and sit in the hovel of Edward's...
... To sit wandering if he will
come home... and when.... and
expect food or not..[17]

Edward: I've put a mat down on
the floor in there, Perpetua, for
you to sleep on tonight..[18]

Added to the technique of flash-back and transition scene is the theme song for Perpetua. In addition to embellishing the entertaining quality of the production, the use of song and music advances the action as well as the plot of the play.

The song in Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness, add as well as an emotional involvement of the audience. It is expected of the audience to mentally picture itself in the circumstances of the play.

The subject matter of the play is the crisis of post-colonial Africa. In post-colonial Africa, especially the first decade of "independence", Africa witnessed the most unfortunate act of political betrayal of its citizens. In a country like Cameroon, the leaders took the mantle of leadership from the colonial regime not because they had any positive political programme. But it is because the colonialist have seen in them potential against that would serve their interests. In addition, these leaders were partners in repudiating nationalist struggles like one waged by Ruben in Cameroon. Ruben, Patrick Lumumba, Dedan Kimathi are examples of Africans who fought the colonial governments of their respective countries. Patrick Lumumba was of Congo, Dedan Kimathin of Kenya and Ruben of Cameroon.

In the play, Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness, the fundamental role of Ruben in the nationalist struggle of Cameroon is enunciated. The French colonial government disliked the Rubenists, this is continued by, Ahidjo's (Baba Tura) regime. Anybody caught in anti-party activities is either detained or killed. Zeyang's death is an illustration of that fact. The victims are not just anti-party activists, but are remains of the pro-Rubenist nationalist struggle

group.

Both play and novel are essentially communicative arts. They have different methods of achieving this. They communicate by drawing the interest of the audience. For the novel the audience's involvement is by the process of reading and making a mental note. Therefore it is only through reading that the audience is communicated to. Besides it is a narrative description of events. Play on the other hand involves the audience through reading, hearing the line and visualising the actions on stage and also the final performance of the play where the written lines are spoken by actors.

The character of the play is identified eventually in a performance. There the lines we read in Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness, we hear and see the speaker (actor) at performance. Costumes, make up, lighting set and stage designs mark the strong point of deference between a play and a novel. This is not to say that they do not share certain characteristic. Such as plot, characterization, language, setting and audience. Though for the novel the audience must be literate.

FOR WHOM THINGS DID NOT CHANGE

This short story, the socio-political situation in post-colonial Ghana is addressed. Man is rendered an alien in his society. He, thus, by circumstances becomes a fugitive in his fatherland. His activities are not determined by the inner conviction of their meanings, but out of a sheer need for survival.

Zirigu, the steward has come to believe that all the guests coming to the guest house want to behave like the white-man. Until he meets the young Doctor who does not drink, does not flirt around with women, and though tired, prefers to wake up early in the morning than laze on the bed. This strange master, as Zirigu later tells his wife, is different from the other masters who visit the guest house.

The manifestation of this 'strange' happenings is elucidated in the plot structure of the story. Zirigu tries to make up his guest early in the morning as requested. In the interlude, he discusses with his wife issues which disturb postcolonial Africa. These issues include the materialistic attitude of the people and the absence of morals. Setu, Zirigu's wife, points these things out as she laments why parents should choose to remain silent knowing quiet well what their daughters engage in. These young girls, enticed by the money and cars which the big men have, shamelessly engage in sexual relations with them. The society is thus brutalized by materialism and shameless acts. This results in government

officials negating their responsibilities of catering for the society. Development and progress therefore could not be realizable.

By the time Zirigu succeeds in waking up his master from sleep, he walks into a heap of surprise. The young Doctor will not take breakfast the white man style, he prefers fresh oranges. Zirigu can not believe this. It is something unheard of. Beside, for the fifteen years he has spent cooking white man's food for ministers, at parties and for big officers of the army an the police, he has forgotten how to cook his local food. He is terrified that he will be in trouble. The young Doctor's response to Zirigu's worry is his quarrel with the humiliating condition the black man is left with. In his native society, he is a man and does not cook. It is women who cook. But to the white man, he is a servant and must cook. He is treated like a woman.

Zirigu becomes elated with the decision of the young Doctor to eat what Setu, his wife will prepare locally. He begins to instruct Setu on what to buy, only to be reminded that it is a woman's job. Zirigu, a dejected man, is compelled to let his wife execute her natural African woman's responsibility.

Meanwhile, the young Doctor invites Zirigu to have a drink with him after meal. To Zirigu and his wife they could not believe what is happening.

By the time they are having a drink, Zirigu made it clear

to the Doctor how difficult it is for him not to refer to him as his master. Age means nothing to the white man. The black men that replaced them behave in the like manner. Zirigu has experienced the human thing in the white man during the war at Congo. After the war, there was no job. The only available job Zirigu could find is that of a steward. Everything he tried failed, things were just empty. As a steward, he is still not being treated well as was the case with his white masters. He hoped to get better things. An electric bulb, Zirigu assumes, is not too much to expect. Zirigu, carried away with the discussion, becomes absorbed that in anger, he wants to know the meaning of independence.

The short narrative dramatically explores the impact of alienation of the African. Both the downtrodden and the so called intellectual elite find themselves alienated. One from the culture and the other from his independence. Summarizing the manifestation of the intellectual elite in post-colonial Africa, Audee Tanimu concisely puts it thus.

> The alienation of the African intellectual elite could not manifest itself in a way quite different from one of his failure to identify with his own culture. The very overpowering desire to identify with everything African, as is the case with the young Doctor.... is one fact of this kind of alienation.[19]

The testimony to this is the young Doctor's demand to eat

the local food prepared by Setu, Zirigu's wife. This could have been the result of acculturation by the white man in his western education. The western education which (the colonial education) was designed by the colonialist to remove the African from his cultural background and yet put him afar with the western culture. He is treated as a black man and at home, his people look at him as a stranger. The elite is thus estranged.

For the down-trodden members of the society as manifested in Zirigu and wife, Setu, life has another meaning. Zirigu, an ex-service man, now a steward, has not yet been accepted to the world of independence. His former white master treats him as a black man and he is not worried because they belong to different cultural backgrounds. Meanwhile, his black-white masters do not consider him an appropriate member of their class.

Where age means something to the African, the independent African pursue the white man's concept of age. They see the Zirigu as mere servants. Their welfare is not a priority of their agenda. They (black white men) are more interested in what Zirigu does to them in terms of cleaning the bed-sheets they mutilated with their sexual urges with young girls of their daughter's age. They are most interested in his ability to prepare the white man's food. Zirigu, to a white man, is not different from the woman in the kitchen, it is the same way his African kinsman treat him, to him, things are the

same, they did not change as Audee puts it:

> The economically marginalized and continually exploited African people like Zirigu are those to whom the title (of the story) refers. It is true that independence has brought little or no significant changes for the majority of the African people. And by virtue of their belonging to the class of the underprivileged, this group of people finds themselves alienated from virtually all aspects of governmental activities.[20]

These category of people are treated as if they are and are made to look up to their masters for their survival. They have no means of protest. The only grumble against their exploitation becomes clearer in their attempt to make their living. As Setu reports, parents turn their eyes away when their daughters bring them presents which they cannot afford.

> People try to profit by their
> daughters by giving them to
> the big men.[21]

It is this troubling situation and its resultant effect that attract the attention of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Drama students to adapt the story into a play. This play is called Na So E Be.

Na So E Be

The play opens by introducing Akoko in the modest kitchen of the Guest House. The exposition here, by way of imagery brings to live the conflict between the African and white man's culture. In a traditional African society, Akoko, who is not small in age, will definitely be in his room in the morning waiting on his wife to bring him food. While the woman occupy herself in the kitchen and other domestic chores. But Akoko's condition as seen here is a resultant effect of colonialism.

Akoko's present job in particular is due to his former white-master's recommendation. He is a steward in he Guest House. Akoko is only lucky to continue his former job of a steward in the Guest House.

The hope of ever becoming an African once more has been snatched away by the Black-White masters. The black man who took over from the white man only continue awkwardly what the white man was doing in Africa. Akoko, thus finds himself neither in Africa nor in the Black-white man. He is economically and culturally alienated. He has to take whatever come to him in order to survive. He is joined in his alienation by the Doctor. The Doctor instructed him to wake him up early in the morning. But the doctor is too tired to actually wake up.

Akoko: (Moving to the door to a Guest bedroom and knocking). Master! Master!

Dr's Voice: (From within the room) Ehn---n

Akoko: (Continue to knock). Master! Master!

Dr's voice: (Still from within). En---ah---a---a---ah

Akoko: Master, can you hear me? You said I should wake you up when it is eight o'clock. it's struck eight o'clock for a while now[22]

Akoko returns to the kitchen thinking that the doctor will now come out. When he checks again, the guest is not yet out. He tries to wake him up again, but in vain. He then retire to his quarters where he narrates to his wife, Hannatu, the strange happening of their strange guest.

AKoko: Yeh! Ah What one sees in a place like this! the master said I should wake him up as early as eight o'clock. I don't know what he finds in such a place that he wants to wake up this early. Most educated people stay in their beds in the mornings.[23].

When Hannatu, his wife accuses him of being childish about his comments, Akoko is adamant to let her understand his observation.

Akoko: Having worked in this Guest House for so long, I

should know how most of the masters who come here behave. And I am telling you, that this master is quite different from the others...

Hannatu: What is different about him?

Akoko: That is what you should have asked me, not to pick on me. He takes no alcohol at all.

Hannatu: Ehn?

Akoko: Yes!... he never asked me to buy him any alcohol.[24]

Hannatu has started getting interested in the point Akoko is making. She thinks or the doctor with reverence. She' too notices a peculiar thing about him.

Hannatu: Anyway, one thing I've noticed is that he is not the flirtatious type.25

The conversation then concentrates on the theme of promiscuity among the elite class. Hannatu wondered why she should not talk about the girls. She comments on the habit of young girls following Big men who are old enough to be their parents.

Hannatu: There is something wrong when you see very young girls who've seen their first menses barely three

months sleeping with big and successful men who are old enough to be their fathers. And some of these men are even old enough to be their grandfathers.[26]

Akoko pointed out that there is nothing different now from the period of the white man who did a similar thing. How, Professors, Ministers, Policemen, are all indulging in the same ritual.

Akoko: (Coming out of the room). I asked you if these days are any different from the old day... Even when the white were in our midst, did they not do similar things? They slept with these our young girls with breasts like head-lamps.[27]

Hannatu is annoyed at this attitude.She threatens:

Hannatu: Because if Allan had given me a girl, and I know that one day one of these big successful men will come and park their big cars... in front of my house... I won't talk much.... what I'have always had in mind and will do when such a thing happens to me is that I'll just take mysharp knife... and cut his penis off.[28]

But Hannatu is so happy, all her children are men. Akoko humorously thank God that not all mothers think dangerously like her, to cut of men's penises.

Akoko: If all mothers are like you,

then it means the blood of all
big and successful men will
flow in this land more than
the one that flowed in Babylon.[29]

Akoko later, return to the young doctor and confronts another surprise.

Doctor: I'll wash myself and then come
and take the coffee. I thought
I've asked you not to wait on me
hand and foot!

Akoko: (Shocked) Master!

Doctor: Oh God! Yes! I don't see why
you should. You are old enough
to be my father.

Akoko: Master! My white master!

Doctor: Good God! Do I look like
white man? Akoko, I'm not
a white man.

Akoko: (Lost for words, Stammers)
Ma..as..Master![30]

Akoko is shocked and dumbfounded. The young doctor will have no breakfast and will prefer fresh oranges to a bottled

one.

A narrator comes on to comment on the situation of independent Africa. Africans have administer to white men and women, and now they administer the educated elites!

Narrator: ..was it not enough than a whole
section of us were led to administer
to the needs of white men and women?
Can you imagine what would have happened
if those people are not doing what they
are not doing? Well at least, it solves
the unemployment problem or minimizes it.[31]

The young doctor is struggling to regain his African identity. As such, he is ready to eat the local food Hannatu will prepare. Instead of him looking at aged people with respect and obedience in the African way, he is being treated as a white man. The doctor's reaction is misunderstood by Akoko, who thinks his job is being threatened. The doctor confesses to Akoko he is not making any trouble for him.

Doctor: Of course you know your job.
As a man of this land and
as your wife's husband, you
are out, a man therefore you
do not cook. But as black man

facing a white man, you are a
servant, a black, not a man,
therefore, you cook.

Akoko: (Flabbergasted). Master, do you
call me woman? Those are serious
words you know. Do you think I
borrowed the four children I have?[37]

Naively, Akoko thinks the doctor is ridiculing his manhood. It hurts to be referred to as a woman because it means a man is sexually incompetent. The white man never cares about this honour of the African. It is in the same manner Akoko has been treated by his black masters. The common man is exploited and marginalized. Akoko is a strong example. Akoko still is humiliated by his wife when he attempts to instruct her on what to buy to prepare the doctor's food.

Akoko: ...You'll buy some fresh okra,
fresh vegetables, fresh....

Hannatu: Look, Papa Joe, we've been married
for more than twenty years and we've
never quarrelled. Don't make us quarrel
now you hear me? Have you ever have to
tell me what kind of okra to buy?....

whatever happens in the kitchen, is a
woman's business you hear me? No man
comes to my kitchen to disturb...

Akoko: Shurrrrup!!!

Hannatu: I am still saying it that it
is the woman who controls
the kitchen. So don't come
and disturb me in my kitchen
when I am working.[33]

Painfully, Akoko accepts his alienating condition. Akoko is bewildered. His young master invites him to eat with him, eating in the African way, with hands and no cutlery. Akoko has to sneak to his wife to invite her to see what is happening by herself.

Akoko: ... Did you see the way he is
swallowing the food?

Hannatu: Why didn't you give him spoon?

Akoko: He said he enjoys it as he
cuts it with his fingers and
dips it inside the ogbono soup.[34]

Later Akoko and the young doctor are having a drink of 'burukutu' (a locally bred wine). In their discussion, the doctor acknowledges Akoko's dream that his fellow black man should treat him as a brother. Akoko is so carried away that he pours out his anger. He criticizes the lack of respect for age as it has no meaning to the white man who makes the aged to wash the underwear of his woman as well as sending him about. For Akoko things have not changed. Presently, it is practiced by the black man on his fellow black man. Even for the job of the steward, he has to sit for an examination for it. He served two masters (white) before he joined the guest house ten years ago. He is still the same Akoko from the period of colonialism to the period of self-governance.

Akoko: It makes me boil so much I want to pack my belongings and my family and go far away from this place. And each time I go to the office in town to collect my salary, I feel like spitting on their faces, those book people. But then, Hannatu, my wife, spoke to me. She said to talk that way is childish. I should not forget the kind of people we are. Now, that feeling has died in me and I'm still

here as Akoko the cook-steward.
But my people, let me ask you one
question. What do you say this
independence mean?[35]

FROM PROSE TO DRAMA

The discussion in this chapter attempt to show the extent to which, the Drama Village experiment with adaptation as an alternative theatre is broaden beyond play from prose to drama. The crises confronting post-colonial Africa is also a major issue of concern to the A.B.U Alternative theatre practice. The Adaptation of prose to play is to show the experiences in Cemeroon, Ghana and Nigeria after independence.

In the prose many issues are trapped and only an individual have access to them. So individual views have to be brought out by the time the play is on stage. Therefore, reactions of the members of the audience at a performance enhanced the individual's perception of the issues raised in the prose version. The process of adapting the prose to play involves a particular group of challenging artist students. Although it is part of learning process. While Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness emanate from a class project of the students, Na So E Be, was a project for those specialising in acting.

In the play, Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness, things differ a little from the prose version. This is in

language use of the reenactment of the Cameroonian society. The description of the Cameroonian society is brought about by stage-craft.

Language use is another element of departure from the version. One, the introduction of pidgin serve in defining the roles of some characters, for example, Martin, Amugu and Zeyang. It also contribute in making the message of the play more accessible to the audience. Then there is the use of lighting which enhanced the flash-back technique. And finally, the introduction of a theme song and music which embellish as well enhanced the audience's emotional involvement to the play and particularly to the issues raise.

In Na So E Be, there is a complete alteration. The setting is now Kaduna, Nigeria and not Ghana as is in the prose version. The title of the play, Na So E Be differs from that of the prose version which is For Whom Things Did not Change. The names of the characters in the play are Nigerian names; Hannatu (Setu), Akoko (Zirigu) and Ikemefuna (The young Doctor). The items found within the play like that of "Tuwo", "Burukutu", etc., attempts to define the Nigerian environment. The language of the play is simple.

According to Jenkeri Okwori[36] who directed the play and acted role of Akoko, the play was adapted and performed in pidgin. According to Bonat[37] , who was specializing in Directing but was attached to the group that adapted the play, the use of Pidgin language in Na So E Be is purposely to make

the play accessible to the people. Now, it should be noted that language use in this play is not only used to differentiate the social class position of the characters but also to show the relationship between them. The difference in character is embedded in the manner they speak.

The contributing factors for the re-location of the prose, is in the interpretation of the stories from Cameroon, and Ghana to Nigeria. It is also in the analyses of issues raised to the Nigerian situation.

Another central component in he adaptation of prose to play as exemplified by the A.B.U. Drama Village's experiment is located in the plot structure. The plot is simply put as a scheme or plan upon which the story, either in prose or play, is told. It has its beginning, middle and end either in the formal sense or by employing the flash-back technique. But the structure of a dramatic plot is made up of components like exposition, complication, climax and denouement.

Exposition is that section which reveals, the facts, the circumstances and past events that link to the total story, for example, Scene One of Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness introduces the audience to a situation of the return of Essola, his confrontation with his mother on the cause of Perpetua's death. The atmosphere is a tensed one, this leads to the journey backward and forward in time.

Complication is the high tension of the conflict which sustains suspense and generates audience involvement and

interest. This is visible in Scene One of Perpetua and the Habit of Unhappiness, especially that moment that Essola accuses Maria, his mother of selling Perpetua and as such leading to eventual humiliating death.

Essola: (With passionate anger). Do you know, ever since I found out that Perpetua had been married off and had died, not a single night has passed that I have not lain on my bed, trying to find a reason for her death. Let me tell you now: I have always come back to the same simple reason, mother. When I was sentenced and detained, when I was in trouble, mother, you were happy. That wasn't right, mother. You shouldn't have been happy. God does not love a mother who is pleased when she sees her son enter trouble..... And the only way you can get this girl, this slave, was to sell your own daughter, the quite Perpetua.....(Maria has started running around the compound, shouting in rage and beating her forehead with her fists).

Maria: Jesus! Mary! See this my tormentor! O God! Witness this devil, no son of mine! Sweet Jesus, now you see him... (Amugu rushes out of his hut and stands between Essola and Maria).

Amugu: E do! You no fit get de truth like dis.

Essola: (Still shouting at his mother) Swear! Swear that you never got any money for Perpetua. Sear it by your dead husband if you dare![39]

The climax is that point in drama which takes a turn that finally leads to denoument which marks the end of the play. For example, the discussion between Dr. Ikemefuna and Akoko in Na So E Be

Akoko: ...Nothing ever change for me. I don't let it worry me however. I only pray to God to help me, so that I 'll live long and watch my children grow and mature enough to look after themselves. Who knows? May be they will grow to become messengers in office or even cook stewards in a Guest House, just like father like son.

Doctor: But you think your employers feel that you have not served here long enough to...

Akoko: (Getting up angrily). What do you mean not served here long ago?.... It hurts so much since then, something come out of me and that thing has never returned. It hurts me so much to the extent that even as old as I am, I began to drink. It makes me boil so much. I want to pack my belongings and my family and go far away from this place.... I should not forget the kind of people we are. Now, that feeling has died in me and I'm still here as Akoko the Cook-Steward. But my people, let me ask you one question. What does this Independence means?[40]

It should be observed that the inability of the dramatist to sustain bit of information of the prose version is possible due to the stage's inadequacy to contain a large set.

One can then conclude that the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Drama Village) has been up to the challenge of providing alternative means of doing drama for both curricular activities as well as enlightening and influencing the society. The students involved in these experiments thus were emerging with the dual knowledge of creativity of both prose as well as the dramatic.

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23. Op cit p. 2.
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25. Op cit p. 4.
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30. Op cit p. 17.
31. Op cit pp. 19-20.
32. Op cit p. 23.
33. Op cit p. 29.
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35. Op cit p. 41.
36. Jenkeri Okwori is currently (1995) Head of Drama Section, Department of English and Drama, A.B.U. Zaria. He directed and acted in Na So E Be. He played the role of Akoko.
37. Mr Bonat is currently with National Orientation Agency in Radio House, Abuja (1995). He was in the production of Na So E Be as a student specializing in directing.
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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This study has critically appraised some adapted works of A.B.U. Zaria. The five kobo Opera, Perpetua and The Habit Of Unhappiness and Na So E be and particular attention is given to how the works are a creative response to societal changes. This is done by illustrative comparison of the different theoretical approaches to drama and in particular the differences in the response to societal issues through adaptation.

Adaptation in drama is that alteration of the context of an existing play to another context. This manifest in the shift which occur in the new play away from the original version, the shift could be in the plot structure, characterization, language and setting. This is realised either by adding or subtracting of any portion of the play. The purpose of the alteration may be to up date the already existing play to a contemporary situation or to radically change the ideological tone.

In the argument presented in this discussion an attempt is made to show how the drama village, A.B.U. Zaria respond to the change continuously happening in the society and provide possible solution to the impending crisis eminent to the process of societal dynamics.

In the work of Ola Rotimi's The Gods are Not to Blame and Wole Soyinka's Opera Wonyosi there are evidence of their displeasure of the existing situation of the Nigerian society. The issue of resigning to fate for Ola Rotimi, in his adaptation of a Greek play King Oedipus by Sophocles, is that the gods are not to be held responsible for man's action. Rather man should not allow his emotion to lead him to the trap set by the gods. He achieved this by transporting the context of an ancient Greek play to a 20th century Nigerian situation. The major relationship between the old play and the new is the plot structure, the story and Aristotle theory of tragedy. The success of the skill in creativity which Rotimi displays however has not been properly put to use in providing the way out. Just like in the old play the people's consciousness is still reduced to salvation is in the hands of the rulers.

Wole Soyinka, on the other hand makes a break through from Rotimi's inability to challenge the status quo. Opera Wonyosi adapted from Breacht's Three Penny Opera, is a critical comment on the way the rulers and the ruled abandon their responsibilities thus giving way to corruption, bad government and social decadence. Soyinka's attack is further internationalized to include other African countries. This attack is on military dictatorship. Soyinka has achieved this by changing the setting and characterization and by restructuring of the story line. Although Soyinka has employed

certain elements of Bertolt Breacht's Epic theatre theory, he fails to accomplish what the Brechtian theory advocates. The theory advocates for a threatre where the audience at the end of the play is allowed to think and come up with a possible solution to his destiny in alliance with others to overthrow the existing order.

It is only in Femi Osofisan's adaptation of the Raft by J.P Clark to Another Raft the advocation of Breacht's theory. Osofisan considering the stalemate in the political crisis of Nigeria with no progression to its end and the inaction of the people who are plugging the Nation deeper into crisis provides a way out in his play. He adapts Clark's The Raft which discusses Nigeria's political problems four years after independence. Clark in his play condemns the in action of the Nigerian political leaders who spent valuable hours on senseless discussions. He advocates that the nation should resign itself to the hands of fate, until it is exterminated completely out of the face of the earth. Osofisan says No in his play. Rather than given up, the remaining sane members of the society should come together irrespective of their difference and dialogue on the possible way out. Osofisan

achieved his idea when he introduces the myth of the goddess Yemosa, changes the characterization and increase is the number of characters as well the introduction of the role of the military in the Nigerian politics. He realises Breacht's theory within the limited understanding he has for

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achieved his idea when he introduces the myth of the goddess Yemosa, changes the characterization and increase is the number of characters as well the introduction of the role of the military in the Nigerian politics. He realises Breacht's theory within the limited understanding he has for

the theory. However, it is the A.B.U. alternative and experimental theatre practice that goes beyond the theory of the epic theatre. It reduces the theory in its practice and the success is evident in the various adaptation done there. In the adaptation of Brecht's The Three Penny Opera, to The Five Kobo Opera the conception and realisation of the play, Breacht's position of theatre being dialectic is achieved. The argument between the two contending characters and their fantasies provide to audience an opportunity to see the inside and outside of the crisis of social decadence of the society. This now will make people to become opinionated and take a decisive action in order to address the coherent problem of deprivation, exploitation and neglect. The success of the experiment open up a chain of challenges and continuation of the experiment providing an alternative drama practice. Prose is adapted to play. The adaptation of Mongo Beti's novel Perpetua And The Habit Of Unhappiness to a play of the same title and Ama Ata Aidoo's short story For Whom Things Did Not Change to Na So E Be shows how the drama, village A.B.U. Zaria, seriously used drama to show its concern with issues that are detrimental to the development of Africa. The question of post colonial Africa, and particularly the meaning of independence are the major concerns in these adaptations. The shift from Beti's novel is not away from the subject matter but rather it is the updating of the issues of Cameroon's political repression to a Nigerian picture.

In Na So E Be the plight of the African elite as well as that of the ordinary citizen after independence is the point of concern. The educated African elite found himself an alien both in African as well as from the western culture which he acquires. Meanwhile the ordinary citizen who looks up to this educated elites is left without social amenities, and employment. Therefore there is moral decay. Government officials are in active, they are corrupt and uncaring. The situation in Ghana is slightly altered to the Nigerian context in character an setting but the issues remain the same.

Conclusively, the drama village, A.B.U. Zaria's alternative theatre tradition employ adaptation most appropriately to address issues of serious concern to Nigeria. While other dramatist in Nigerian could be said to have also addressed issues of serious concern in their work of adaptation, it is only in the case of few practitioners like Osofisan solution are suggested in the like of the drama village approach, on how to resolve the crisis in our society. Despite the achievements of the drama village, A.B.U. Zaria's alternative and experimental theatre it should be on record that they are carried away by success that documentation of the works has not been done adequately.

The limitation of this research is tied up to the near absence of literature on adapted works in Zaria. It is suggested that for purpose of a stronger future of the Zaria experiment a special project be organised to discuss on the

experiments and also research into the missing links.

The general limitation of this research is not only in non availability of documents on the Zaria Work but also lack of adequate financial resources for the research. There is also soci-political crisis in the country that affects the educational sector of the country. This has culminated in strikes by Nigerian Academicians on several occasions since 1992, which affected and distort the original focus and intention of the researcher. It is along this crisis that the A.B.U. Zaria experiment has not actually been properly documented. This is in the non-availability of structures, equipments and enough resources. It is this kind of crisis that A.B.U experiment is focussed on. This even informs the community theatre practice which is an extension of the alternative and experiment theatre.

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