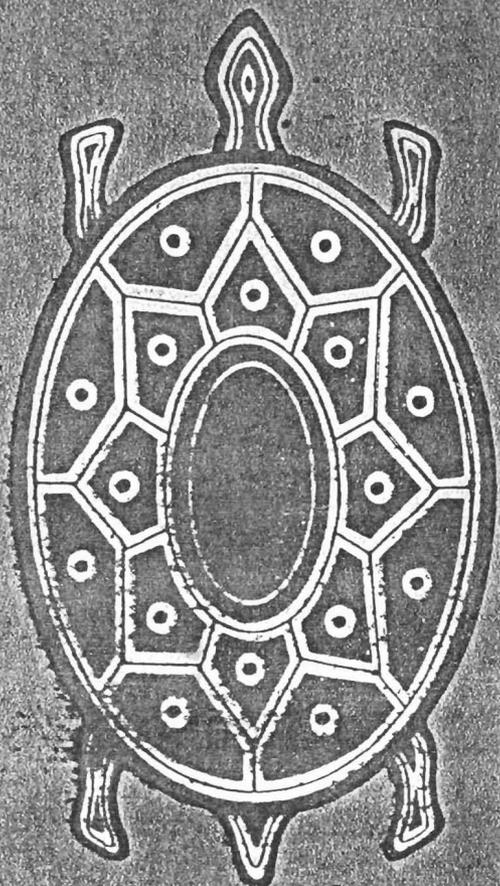


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Editorial Comment

ISALA – Ife Studies in Literature and the Arts is a publication of the Department of English, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. ISALA is being revived with renewed vigour and hope that the journal will be sustainable in future. The publication of ISALA has suffered from a long period of disruption caused by the prevailing socio-economic problems that characterized many African nations in the last decades of the last millennium. With a new millennium motivation and inspiration, the editors of ISALA are happy to put the journal back on the shelves. We are confident that ISALA will carve its niche in the on-going debates on African literary productions and culture. To our readers we say, "*E ku afojuba*" (Greetings as you welcome the re-birth of ISALA).

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SATIRE IN MODERN NIGERIAN THEATRE: A HISTORICAL EXPLORATION

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Prefatory Remarks

It should be stated at the outset that the impulse to subject human foibles and excesses to condemnation in order to attain redress through ridicule and exaggeration is basic to man. In a bid to ensure harmonious co-existence, men develop regulatory reins of human conduct like law, convention and statute, usually administered by established social institutions from one society to the other. However, alongside formal legal means of social restriction is satire.

Satire is a literary mode usually taken as a brand of comedy. But like Proteus, the ever-changing Greek sea-god, it has flexibly assumed various artistic shapes and forms and has found expression outside the territories of literature, in sculpture, painting, cartoon, cinema and music. Thus, it has earned a separate identity worthy of scholarly attention.

Both in ancient and modern culture, satire through its weapon of sarcasm, irony, caricature and invective among others, censures violations of prescribed ethical codes by individuals and institutions. Through humour and contempt, the victim of satire, regardless of his social standing is "whipped" back into the line of conformity in order to restore and/or maintain social equipoise. Says Gilbert Highet: "Satire wounds and destroys individuals and groups in order to benefit society as a whole."¹

The origin of satire especially in Western literature is usually traced to the classical period with 'satyr'/'satyr-play' of Greece and 'saturae' of Rome taken as its etymological foundation.² However, a Greco-Roman origin of satire, it needs be noted, can only be meaningful within the context of Western literary epistemology, and consequently not universal. Arguably, in different indigenous Nigerian (African) societies, there exist vigorous traditions of satire separate from and quite independent of any classical Greco-Roman heritage or its neo-classical Augustan derivative. Contrary to Adrian Roscoe's view that "satire... has not enjoyed a long history in Africa"³, researchers have confirmed its existence in the artistic-cum-ritual performances of traditional societies in Africa. This becomes incontrovertible

when one considers the various age-grades' satiric composition among the Igbo, the Okumkpa masquerade drama of Afikpo, Udje' satiric poetry of the Urhobo, 'Etiyeri' and Gelede' performances among the Yoruba, the Tiv's Kwagh-hir puppet entertainment and so on. All these subject to ridicule such defects that people may harbour, with a view to correcting them. Therefore, unless Roscoe is insisting that whatever is called satire must be in written form, the satiric mode is by no means a recent phenomenon in Africa. It is old as the oral tradition of different communities.

It must be granted, however, that in contemporary Nigerian literature, not too many writers have sought emendation to the myriads of improprieties in the country within the reformatory paradigms of satire. This paper intends to pursue in the pages that follow, a historical survey of the manifestations of satire in Nigerian theatre. While the primary focus is the contemporary theatre, it tries to negotiate the seminal juncture of the indigenous and the foreign, the old and the modern in the notion of Nigerian theatre.

Satire in Nigerian Theatre

A legion of literary scholars, critics and historians have persuasively argued for and validated the existence of drama and dramatic traditions in Africa long before the intrusions of Arabian Jihadists, European missionaries and colonialists—the putative harbingers of civilization. Wole Soyinka, who has devoted a great deal of thought to the arts of the theatre cogently argues that "it is into the heart of many African festivals that we should look for the most stirring expression of man's instinct and need for drama at its most comprehensive and community involving"⁴. John Pepper Clark observes with particular clarity that modern Nigeria drama owes its ancestry to festivals, ritualistic observances and entertainment performances of various ethnic groups that make up the country. This is equally true of many other parts of Africa.⁵ Casting aside his patronizing disposition, Roscoe's remark that "Africa presents a fascinating scene in which drama can be seen, uniquely, flourishing in all those stages which scholars have usually supposed European drama to have passed through"⁶, is equally worthy of note.

A corollary of J.P. Clark's hypothesis is the classification of Nigerian drama into two broad categories: (i) the traditional and (ii) the modern. Though there have been several other classifications⁷, none of them is a direct contradiction of the recognised features in Clark's taxonomy. According to him, the 'traditional' group includes "sacred" and "secular" performances while the 'modern' group with which we are primarily concerned here

embraces the travelling theatre tradition popular among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria, and the literary drama. To these we can add the television drama, film and home video drama series. It should, perhaps, be observed that the antecedent manifestations of the phenomenon of colonialism. But one crucial epistemological constraint noticeable at this juncture and which must be handled cautiously, is the palpable homogeneity implied in the term 'Nigerian theatre'. This belies the characteristic ethno-cultural diversities of the Nigerian state inscribed into its arts.

The Traditional Phase

As we have remarked elsewhere⁸, satire is a socially sanctioned medium of expressing the communal purgative will. This literary mode broadly uses wit and humour, contempt and ridicule. The communal purgative will feature in the agenda of some traditional festivals. Thus, amidst drumming, singing, dancing, feasting, procession, praise-singing and other elements of festivals, errant individuals who over-step ethical barriers erected by the society are 'rapped' in the nose with satire.

In the pre-colonial Yoruba society for instance, satire was articulated in the form of song, dance, mime poetry and story-telling among other salient contours of traditional drama and theatre. Some annual festivals like 'Oke-badan, Edi' of Ile-Ife and 'Oro' of Ijebu-Igbo were outstanding for invective, vitriolic abuses, banter, derision and lampoon, aimed at denouncing departure from norms and social values, in the preceding year. The roving masque entertainers, variously called 'Agbegijo', 'Alarinjo' or 'Eegun Alare' were renowned for their repertory which include social criticism. Satire in this vein used to take the form of travesty⁹, caricature representation and ridiculous rendering of social ethos. 'Iwi', the poetic genre associated with the ancestral cult (Egungun), 'Ijala' (hunters' chant and an artistic legacy of Ogun the god of iron) and 'Rara' (balled) were all channels of satire.

Of equal relevance are 'Gelede/Efe' and 'Etiyeri'. While 'Efe', nurtured by the cult of witches featured light-hearted satirical songs, 'Etiyeri' was a form of social entertainment, well-disposed to satire. 'Etiyeri' derived its designation from the peculiarly outlandish mask with wide ears usually worn by the performer. Every conceivable aspect of daily experience furnished 'Etiyeri's criticism. Failure to adhere to moral codes, nonetheless, was the most consistent. In his strictures, he employed deliberate distortion, invective and irony.¹⁰

Among the Tiv communities, satire was part of the repertory of the Kwagh-hir puppet and masquerade theatre. Its ever expansive repertoire accommodated criticism and ridicule of contemporary frailties. According to Edith Enem, amidst the dominant atmosphere of story-telling, jesting, singing, dancing and the grotesqueness of the puppet, the performers upheld "the moral prejudices and sanctions of the community".¹¹

Satire was woven into the artistic substructure of "Wasan Gauta", a performance associated with members of the royal household (especially women) in the pre-colonial Hausa culture. It was sponsored by the "Sarkin" and his courtiers, whose official conduct or misconduct was usually not spared in its satire. Through the art of "Wasan Gauta" the Sarkin and other important personalities at the court, were constantly nudged awake to their imperfection. In this highly stratified society, the people depended on the Sarkin and his officials for direction, hence, the need to ensure that they themselves constantly uphold social ethos, of same would be required of ordinary citizens. Under the colonial administration, this dramatic form developed into "Wasan Gwamna" and retained its appeal to the ruling authorities. Colonial administrators encouraged its performance, perhaps, because of its social mobilizing and regulating potentials.¹²

It needs to be stated, that the distinction between the arts in traditional African Theatre is somewhat blurred. Poetry, music, story-telling, sculpture among other arts cohere and smoothly interact to achieve expressiveness. It is within this context of genre conflation that our affirmation of satire in the pre-colonial theatrical tradition of Nigerians can be properly appreciated. Because of the normative complexity and innate dynamism of satire, it was not difficult for the foregoing satiric forms to adapt to socio-historical changes during the colonial period. They became means of exposing incongruities and contradictions that usually resulted from the contact of African and Western values, especially in cases of obsession with the latter. Works of modern Nigerian satirist-dramatists have demonstrated in varying degrees, influences from these satiric heritage.

Satire in the Modern Theatre

Almost from its inception in religious rites and festivals of traditional societies, and in the mimetic impulse of Man, drama seems to have been well-disposed to satire. A careful general survey of the Nigerian theatre, especially from independence, shows that dramatists have recognized the potentials of satire in the realization of the cardinal goals of the theatre: recreation.

education, and as the case may be, correction. Consequently, writers like Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Olu Obafemi, Femi Osofisan, Esiaba Irobi and Stella Oyedepo have variously employed the methods of satire in their bid to address contemporary socio-political reality.

At Independence in 1960, governmental power was bequeathed to politicians whose disposition to and ultimate conception of power were in no significant way different from that of the colonial administrators. The inherited state structure became a perpetuation of colonial overlordship in a different garb. It did not take long for the euphoria of independence to recede for from sight. Sectarian pursuit, greed and intolerance became the hallmark of post-independence politics. These were later to culminate in the military coup of January 15, 1966. The alternation between brief civilian rule and prolonged military interventions since then has not produced much change in public office holders, desperation and greed exhibited in the pursuit of wealth and power made them ridiculous and absurd, hence, appropriate butts of satire. It is this foreground of gross official misconduct, power abuse and religious perversion that Nigerian satirist-dramatists elect as the target of their plays.

At this crucial juncture, let us examine how satire has manifested in popular theatrical traditions. In the Yoruba travelling theatre tradition, Hubert Ogunde and Moses Olaiya have actually enlisted satire in their repertoire out of several other dramatists. Ogunde was famous for his topical plays during the colonial period especially in the 40s and 50s. plays like 'Strike and Hunger' (1946) and 'Bread and Bullet' (1950) are provocative political plays in denunciation of the oppressive antics of the colonial administration.¹³ But of greater pertinence is his 'Yoruba Ronu' – Yoruba Think (1964) directed at the high level of corruption and gross violation of democratic principles during the regime of Samuel Ladoke Akintola in the Western Region. Ogunde's theater was banned throughout the region on account of this play. The play was to beget a sequel, equally satiric in motivation: "Otito Koro" – Truth is Bitter (1965).

Comedy and farces are Moses Olaniya's stock-in-trade. Nonetheless, some of his plays are satirical. For instance, "Aare Agbaje" a film produced in the wake of the 1983 presidential elections – is a satirical piece that is illustrative of the morbid desire for power and riches that characterized the politics of the era. "Igbe Mekunu" (1984) a stage play laments the economic hardship witnessed under the military regime of General Muhammadu Buhari.

However, satire as a creative mode was an additive rather than being the central artistic preference of the travelling theater movement. Instead, plays that celebrated the fecund mythical, historical, magical and supernatural

heritage of the people were preponderant. They were the preference of the theatres of Duro Ladipo (in plays like 'Obakoso', 'Oba Waja', 'Oba Moro' and 'Moremi') Lere Pamo ('Eda and 'Ogbori-Elemoso'); Jimoh Aliu ('Arelu', Sangba Fo and 'Yanpon-Yanrin'). Kola Ogunmola was more at home with biblical morality plays, as demonstrated by such works as 'Adam and Eve', 'Joseph and his brothers' and 'Love of Money'.

In the literary drama category, not too many dramatists have contributed to the canon of satire. Extending our scope to embrace the popular Onitsha Market Literature does not attenuate the strength of such a claim. Dramatic writings from Onitsha Market in 40s and 50s were created with no thought for satiric motif and little consideration for theatrical perfection. Bruce King describes the Onitsha literature as "that unclassifiable body of pamphlets and short stories"¹⁴ They were like amatory tracts in dialogue form with conventional 'act' and 'scene delineation.

The main goals of these dramatic writings were to document history and offer practical suggestions on how to win the opposite sex and sustain the relationship. Hardly were they satirical, both in intent and in execution. Although they sought to generate laughter through their characters' flair for victorian preciosity, blarney, solecism and verbosity, such laughter could only be the laughter of comedy or farce rather than satire. One may locate the reason for this gap within the context of the perceivable of movement itself. The writings could be described as the writings of semi-literate Nigerians for semi-literate audience – "a generation of school boys, taxi-drivers and minor journalists"¹⁵. Of utmost importance to the writers was the urge to satisfy the taste of their audiences with whom they shared the same social and cultural reality. The urge to publish, earn money and fame was more perceptible in their works than the urge to reform the society. James Ene Henshaw, the pioneer of Nigerian literary drama and the model of Onitsha market literature in terms of drama was also not famous for satire. We are of the view that it is to the dramaturgy of Soyinka, Rotimi, Osofisan, Saro-Wiwa, Irobi, Oyedepo among others that we can turn, to feel the texture of the satiric mode.

Ken Saro -Wiwa's radio play – *The Transistor Radio* (1971) feature the flux of modern urban life. Urbanity's displacement of traditional morality and value, its accentuation of materialism, corruption, unemployment and poverty push people to desperation. Through the trio of Basi, Alali and the Land lady, Saro-Wiwa lampoons the culture of desperation which urbanity has nurtured as a result of the above painted reality. Basi and Alali more especially, typify the desperadoes who want to stay afloat the ever turbulent current of urban centres like Lagos. The social criticism of *The Transistor Radio* later developed into

a vibrant weekly drama series between 1984 and 1992 on the National Television Authority (NTA) Stations, title – “Basi and Company”. The drama series retained the lampoon, caricature, wit, mistaken identity, coincidence along with other devices of satire already registered in *The Transistor Radio*.

Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again (1977) by Rotimi is unambiguous in its satirization of First Republic Politicking in Nigeria. The combustible Major Lejoka-Brown, though a caricature, is emblematic of politicians and their preposterous disposition. The hub of the play’s satire is its mordant criticism of political power-seekers who are distinguished by their foibles. The playwright is equally satirical in *Holding Talks* (1971), a professed contribution to the twentieth-century dramatic movement – theatre of the absurd. *Holding Talks* is lock, stock and barrel, a parody of the endless but futile talks organized by local and international institutions, when the most apposite thing is concrete action. Its treatment of harsh facts of life is both funny and biting. The facelessness of organisations like the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Organisation (UNO) in successfully mediating in the Nigeria’s Civil War (1967-1970) informed the satire. But the genocide in Rwanda and Burundi, the bloody wars in Algeria, Sudan, the Congos, Liberia and Sierra Leone among other theatres of violence in the 80s and 90s show the timelessness of the satire.

In the play, a man goes to a barber for hair-cut. But the transaction is aborted as both are locked in a futile but prolonged disputation, trying to establish whether the barber’s hand shakes or not as he sets for the hair-cut. The barber is not ready to admit that his hand shakes while the client – man – is not ready to give up his claim that the barber’s hand shakes. The argument continues until the barber later collapses and dies. Even the barber’s apprentice, the Reporter, the Press Photographer and the Policewomen who are expected to respond promptly to the situation are equally caught in the web of futile arguments.

For Osofisan, the denunciation of official misconduct is more strident in *Who’s Afraid of Solarin?* (1978) *Midnight Hotel* (1982), *Esu and his Vagabond Minstrels* (1986) and *Aringindin and the Nightwatchman* (1989). These plays are ostensibly steeped in the repulsive absurdities of Nigerian governing elites (civilian and military) in post-independence politics. Indeed, the laughter and indignation the plays provoke in the audience are ever-fresh and relevant. For instance, in *Midnight Hotel* the play wright pillories the avarice and corruption of elected and unelected public officials. These are some of the factors that led to the premature termination of the second republic. Through a broad caricature of characters and situations as well as

the critical lyricism of this play (patterned after Georges Feydeau’s *L’hotel du Libre Echange*), Osofisan creates a curiously absurd polity clearly distanced from democratic ideals. Aworo the parliamentarian and Suuru the cleric epitomize the greed and corruption of this second attempt at civilian rule in post-independence Nigeria.

The military regimes that intervened to “salvage” the polity from further rot, however, demonstrated their unsuitability for governance as the theme and satiric techniques of *Aringindin and the Nightwatchmen* were later to show. The play targets the military’s involvement in politics in Africa. It exposes the duplicity of Aringindin and his band of night – watchmen (soldiers). Though they are accomplices in the wave of violent robbery ravaging an anonymous Nigerian town, they forced a messianic scheme on the people through which they emerge as nightguards. But the euphoria does not endure as the town is confronted with another round of robbery, masterminded by Aringindin, using his gang of “robber – Nightwatchmen”. From the play’s tissue of irony and sarcasm emerges one clear point: military governments are by their nature undemocratic and destabilizing, and therefore, should be resisted.

Soyinka, for play to play has adopted satire as a response to several “anomalies” of post independence Nigeria. Apart from being a prolific satirist, he has explored the mode with unflinching consistency. This is true, not only of his drama, but also of his verse fiction and essays. Soyinka’s theatrical activities during the First Republic (1960-1966) and the Second Republic (1979-1983) mark him as a consummate satirist. Through a hit-and-run guerilla theatre scheme, he responded with revues and sketches to the sycophancy, nepotism and sectarian loyalty of politicians. Dubbed “Before the Blackout” and “Before the Blowout” respectively,¹⁶ the operation featured agit-prop sketches usually performed in public places like markets, lorry parks and community centres. Events that followed the sketches showed that they were prophetic of the not-too distant collapse of the government in power.

In *The Trials of Brother Jero* (1964) and its sequel, *Jero’s Metamorphosis* (1974), Soyinka holds up to ridicule, materialism, deceit and unbridled craving for power in political and ecclesiastical circles. On different but related planes, the two plays subtly treat with disapproval, self-centredness and parochialism exhibited in governance by succeeding military and civilian administrations. His aberrant and abhorrent portrait of clerics completely shorn of awe and divine hue comes forth strongly in these works. *Requiem For a Futurologist* (1985) was later to pursue the subject further. The Military incursion into politics in Africa with the attendant imposition of an

authoritarian political culture on the continent has been the most regular pre-occupation of his satire. The caricature of a dictator who is all out to castrate dissidents like Mata Kharibu in *Dance of the Forests* (1960) and Kongi in *Kongi's Harvest* (1967) is very instructive.

However, this subject assumed a more gloomy picture in *Madmen and Specialists* (1971). The play is a response to the Nigerian Civil War. For a considerable part of this period, Soyinka was in solitary confinement. The play captures a pervasive feeling of dehumanization and agony consequent upon the war. Even after the war, people in the universe of the play (and also in reality) still have to contend with a conceited dictatorship personified in Dr. Bero-Physician turned-soldier.

The canvas of satire against authoritarian regimes was widened in *Opera Wonyosi*, *A Play of Giants* (1984) and *From Zia with Love* (1992) and *The Beatification of Area Boy* (1995). The perpetuation bid of a corrupt civilian president came under close scrutiny in *Requiem for a Futurologist*, first performed in 1983. Unfortunately, the soldiers that truncated this perpetuation dream slid into wanton abuse of human right and other shortcomings of the civilian regime which they displaced, as dramatized in *From Zia with Love*. Soyinka's central thesis in these plays is that dictatorship seems to be woven ineluctably into the reality of Africa's politics, and it needs to be combated with all means possible, including, satire. This assumption is the high point of his satire in *The Beatification of Area Boy* – a play which denounces the brazen tyranny of post-second Republic Military rule, especially that of late General Sani Abacha.

One may consider Kole Omotoso's *The Curse and Shadows in the Horizon* along with the foregoing works. Admittedly, the two plays have potentials of satire especially when one considers the elements of ridicule and criticism observation in their dialogue and characterisation. What vitiates them is the inadequacy of a craft of humour and wit. Omotoso comes out in them more as a "haranguer" than a satirist. What obtains is the climax of a vulgar slanging-match between two plays in *The Curse* and the tendentious combustion of private property in *Shadows in the Horizon*. The two plays appear more as a mere orchestration of rage. Be that as it may Olu Obafemi's *Naira Has no Gender* (1993) focuses the obsessive craving for material wealth which leads to perversion of social and political ethos. It is also with the collapse of the sanctity and values of the marriage institution through which a society regenerates itself. These aberrations are typified by Chief Awadana the politician and Abeke his wife. The younger generation represented by

Otunla/Aina and Dokun/Debby are created as the meliorative symbols for the failings of old order.

Nonetheless, beyond the generation of writers earlier mentioned, some of the emerging talents on the Nigerian state have also explored in varying measures, the art of satire in their work. To this group belong Esiaba Irobi and Stella Oyedepo whose *Gold*, *Frankincense* and *Myrrh* and *Worshippers* of the Naira respectively, deserve some attention.

Irobi in *Gold*, *Frankincense* and *Myrrh* takes a swipe at needless controversy generated among certain critics of African literature by the 1986 Nobel Prize for literature awarded to Soyinka. Wrapped within the hilarity and raucous laughter of the play is a critique of the African writer and his critic on the one hand, and the responsibilities of the writer and the critic to their audience (society) on the other. At the centre of this drama are the troika of self-styled "Bolekaja" critics – Izuwa, Chekwes and Maduiké. These are stage realizations of Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike whose *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature* has generated much debate among practitioners and theorists of African literature.

The Troika engage Prof. Ogunyemi Ogun (Soyinka) in an acrimonious public debate which is rightly dubbed "African Writers shouting". In this debate, Ogun is charged by the critics with "wilful and deliberate privatist obscurantism" among other alleged crimes "against our continental literature". The debate is moderated by E.M. Bones (Elders Jones). In attendance are other writers and critics like Achibiri (Chinua Achebe), Clerk (J.P. Clark), Baako (Ayi Kwei Armah) and Nwogu (Donatus Nwoga). In the pervasive admixture of fantasy with actuality, the playwright's satiric barb is unmistakable in the denunciation of the avoidable dissociation between the sensibilities of the African writer/critic and his society. The play can, therefore, be summed up as a call for self-revaluation by a writer toward a new flowering in the discipline. It is also a self scrutiny by drama, an artistic genre which is itself is an instrument of social scrutiny.

A different but familiar subject draws the attention of Oyedepo in *Worshippers of the Naira*. She berates the pervasive influence and centrality of money in the affairs of man. Money to man in cartesian terms becomes "the measure of all things". Each of the play's twelve scenes is self-contained and illustrates certain paradoxical notions about money and its existential role. For instance, "where there is money, there is a way" (22). "money speaks louder than voice" (23). What strengthens the play's satiric object is its allegorical and symbolic characterization. It parades characters like Dreamer, Devotees of the Naira idol, Owolara, Abanische, Ori Olowo, Orekelewa, Muwa

and so on. Inherent in these characters' designations are greed, selfishness and obsession with money; ills incurably plaguing the modern Nigerian society.

Conclusion

The *raison d'être* of satire as this paper has affirmed is the exposition of inadequacies of persons and institutions. Drama in ancient and modern societies has proven to be more receptive to the cleansing and reformative essence of satire. The paper has demonstrated the manifestation of satire in modern Nigerian theatre and also in its traditional antecedents in the indigenous cultures. Here, all the arts, including music, dance and poetry intersect in an intricate holistic pattern to express the satiric concern of the performers. Although the scope of the paper makes an exhaustive discussion of all relevant plays a great task, it is hoped that its submissions will strengthen our grasp of the historical trajectory of satire as well as the dynamics of its manifestation in Nigerian drama and theatre.

Reference

1. Gilbert Highet. *Anatomy of Satire* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 26. For further discussion on satire, see also Edward Bloom and Lillian Bloom: *Satire's Persuasive Voice* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979.
2. 'Satyr' refers to those phallic revellers who disguised in ludicrous masks of various animals and birds, dancing about the city of Athens in drunken frenzy. These creatures used the anonymity afforded by their masks and the libertinism associated with Lenae is the 'satyr play'. Roman 'saturae' is a poetic mode popularized by Lucilius and Horace featuring contests of abuse, derision and scurrility directed at notable individuals in the society.
3. Adrian Roscoe (1971) *Mother is Gold: A Study in West African Literature* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 131.
4. Wole Soyinka, "Theatre in African Traditional Culture: Survival Patterns" in *Art, Dialogue and Outrage*. Ibadan: New Horn Press, 1988, p. 194.

5. J.P. Clark. "Aspects of Nigerian Drama" in Yemi Ogunbiyi (ed.) *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A Critical Sourcebook*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 1981, p. 58
6. Roscoe, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
7. For instance, Michael Etherton identifies three different groups: "The traditional", "the art theatre" (College based) "development-oriented theatre" (Community based). See *The Development of African Drama*. London: Hutchinson University Library, 1982.
8. Gbemisola Adeoti. "Nigerian Literary Drama and the Satiric Mode as Exemplified in Wole Soyinka's Works", an unpublished M.A. Thesis. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, 1994.
9. "The Eegun Alare" is the acknowledged precursor of the modern Yoruba popular travelling theatre. See Joel Adedeji, "Alarinjo: The Traditional Yoruba Travelling Theatre" in Oyin Ogunba and Abiola Irele (eds.) 1978 *Theatre in Africa*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, pp. 27-51. See also David Kerr 1995 *African Popular Theatre* London: James Currey, 9-15; Tola Adeniyi, 1997 *Theatre on Wheels: The Yoruba Travelling Theatre of Nigeria, Its Origin, Organisation and Structure*. Ontario: Impact Communication.
10. Though these practices are gradually succumbing to the corrosive forces of modernity, they still retain some elements of their vitality especially in many rural areas.
11. Edith Enem "The Kwagh-hir Theatre" in *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria*, p. 250.
12. Kofoworola, E.O. "Traditional Forms of Hausa Drama" in *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria* pp. 164-180.
13. Egun Clark, Hubert Ogunde (1979): *The Making of the Nigerian Theatre*. Oxford: O.U.P. See also Biodun Jeyifo. *The Yoruba Popular Travelling Theatre of Nigeria*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 1984.
14. Bruce King (ed.) (1971) *Introduction to Nigerian Literature*. Lagos: University of Lagos and Evans Brothers Ltd., p. 10.
15. For a more detailed discussion of Onisha Market Literature, see Roscoe, *op. cit.* pp 143-154.
16. The latter paraded titles like "Festac '77", "Green Revolution", "Abuja" and "Ethical Revolution", all ridiculing the absurdities of certain government policies and projects in the Second Republic.