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Inaugural Lectures Series 49

THE CRITIC AND SOCIETY:

Barthes, Leftocracy and

Other Mythologies

by Wole Soyinka

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THE CRITIC AND SOCIETY:
Barthes, Leftocracy and Other Mythologies

by

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**An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at the University of Ife
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Alain Robbe-Grillet is not a familiar name to academia or the general reader in these parts. He died a month ago. The usual obituary notices appeared in the literary columns of European journals, and he brought back to mind instantly, in total recall, the picture of a plump, untidy don at Leeds University where I was a student. As he lectured, his plain academic gown fell constantly off his shoulders from wild Gaelic gesticulations meant to propel forward certain ideas on fiction and reality. They were a drastic departure from our normal fare of fiction criticism. No, the figure was not that of the critic and novelist, doyen of the New Fiction—Robbe-Grillet himself—I never met him. The speaker was a visiting academic who had come to spread the gospel of the New Fiction from across the channel to conservative England. We were part bemused, part fascinated; here was the plain old novel being unnecessarily complicated, and words that were once simple words being turned into signs. A totally new language of reality was introduced by this visitation, and the theories of Sausure and Barthes which were seminal influences on the New Fiction entered—at least peripherally—and with resentment—our intellectual baggage of fact and fiction.

Browsing in Dillon's bookshop (University of London) some days after the event of Robbe-Grillet's death, I was drawn nostalgically towards his writings but found myself arrested *en route* by some new volume of essays by the major theorist of the movement, Ronald Barthes. They were essays I had not encountered until then, being belated translations—some of them as recent as 1977—of his commentaries on the development of new mythologies, linguistic-semiological shorthands of the old, which were created by the European (French) bourgeoisie. They were also, more importantly, a more socially directed investigation of the operations of myth on daily sensibilities of social man—and of a particular class—the bourgeoisie. Increasingly engaged, I parted reluctantly

with some precious pounds and took away the **paperbacks**. It did not take long for me to realize that I had stumbled on a perfect paradigm for the social reality of the radical shift in critical language in my own African community: and that is the genesis of the elaboration in the title of today's Inaugural lecture.

I recalled also as a student, providing my own private syntax for the semantic codes of the--not new, but the then newly introduced Sausurean linguistics--a very simple one in fact, created through my extremely rudimentary knowledge not even of the French language, but of a few French expressions. I shall occasionally draw on it for purposes of specifics. so I must explain it here. The specialist terms-- *langue*, *parole*, etc. will be very sparingly used; when they are, the context will be so clear as to require no elaboration. I propose to stick to familiar semantic units and clusters such as language, meaning, vocabulary, syntax etc. in their most ordinary usage. But the word language can hardly ever be used in any ordinary sense; indeed, it obviously shed all ordinary sense since its first paradoxical employment as a description of its own system--that is, as a system of socially agreed significations. For language does not operate simply as communication but as matrices of discrete activities including of course those of articulation and meaning. And when we talk about the language of literature or criticism we assume multiple levels of internal operations of basic cognitives and their triggering social agencies, a matrix of latent and activated meanings which add to our problems of apprehension by acting in a self-constitutive way. To differentiate this particular activity, the socially constituting activity, I recall that I found it useful to devise a simple phonetic pun on the French *langage*, that word being *l'engage*:¹ the operation of social cogs within the code of meanings; the engagement of gears within a cluster of codes, shifting the actual intent of language from one matrix and coupling it to another in social operation. The French *langage* will continue to stand for the totality of options in a system; *l'engage* indicates the selective operation within the *langue*, engaging the differential to

deliver a socially active meaning--this last is the context of our basic interest and will be what is signified, unless otherwise stated, when the plain "language" is used for convenience, in relation to what the critic or the creative artist actually does with the system. In short, *langage* is the cold topography before the linguist; *l'engage* or language is the actual course being mapped by you and me.

And now to the critics, pausing only to state from the onset that their understanding of this author's work--Wole Soyinka--will not be avoided in this lecture. After all, their preoccupations in recent times have tended to suggest that there are no other African authors left on the bookshelves or, if there are, that their study is incomplete with Mr. W.S. being roped in somewhere. This is not an egotistical claim but a statistical fact. From an objective sense of proportion, it is necessary that this inert material return the compliment, manifesting its own critical voice just once in a while. No occasion could be more appropriate than this.

Very little, to my knowledge, has been attempted in studies of the critic as a socially situated producer, and therefore as a creature of social conditioning, a conditioning which in fact offers no certitudes about the nature of his commitment to the subject which engages him, his motivations, indeed, about the very nature of his social existence. About the writer on the other hand we are traditionally over-informed, which is to say, ingenuously disinformed, since nothing but selective information, consored, even distorted to suit the critic's thesis, ever survives the pages in the direction of the reader. But at least, the reader has some measure of fact, fiction and speculation to engage his interest. But regarding the critic, none. And then, of course, what society? What is the critic's society? Is it for instance, a society which we may describe as International Academia? Or is it Ipetumodu? The distinction is crucial. There is a world of difference in the social situation of any critic - either as an exploiter of language for the weekly or twice-weekly seminars of the University of Nsukka, Ibadan or Maiduguri; or as a critic who is profoundly angry that the writer has never even recognized the existence of the social

anomalies within Ipetumodu, Abakaliki or Koton Karfi in his writings.

We are familiar, probably even excruciatingly bored with the question: For whom does the writer write? Very rarely however is the same degree of social *angst* encountered in the case of the critic, indeed the question is very rarely posed: For whom does the critic write? For Mr. Dele Bus-Stop of Idi-Oro? Or for the Appointments and Promotions Committee and the Learned Journals International Syndicate of Berne, Harvard, Nairobi, Oxford or Prague? For unquestionably there is an intellectual cop-out in the career of any critic who covers reams of paper with unceasing lament on the failure of this or that writer to write for the masses of the people, when he himself assiduously engages - with a remorseless exclusivity - only the incestuous productivity of his own academic, that is - bourgeois situated literature. It is a very convenient case of having one's cake and eating it, of feeding on, yet damning the output of producers of literatures in one's community - often in the most scabrous, dismissive language - over and over again, treading the same grooves, looking for something new to say and never finding it, pouncing on the latest product of the same pariah writer like a famished voyager, building up C.V.'s at the expense of the condemned productivity - the genuine productivity, not the parasitic kind which is the critic's - of the handful of literary workers in the same ossified community - indeed, teaching it at all. "Reactionary," "elitist," "privileged," "a splurge of romantic decadence," "articulator of the neo-colonial agent class", ... well then, what is the critic doing?

But this is of course a very one-sided, partial view. It is true that the critics with whom we are here concerned do venture from time to time into the field of popular literature, popular theatre, popular music in short the so-called proletarian art. But we must ask: in what *langage*, what *langue* is deployed in this great generous excursion into non-bourgeois art? When the "committed" critic unwraps the poetry of the "ewi" specialist Lanrewaju Adepoju,* the earthy Majority Music Club under Professor alias Majority,* the exotic Dan

*Popular Nigerian music artistes.

Maraya*: whose *langue* does the critic speak and therefore, to what society does he address himself? Is he speaking back to Dan Maraya or the "Waka Queen", Salawa? Can they penetrate the critic's *parole* to commence a genuine engagement with *language*? Is this proletarian Art returned to its producers or is it merely refurbished in the *langue* of the assessors of the Appointments and Promotions Committee or of the Learned Journals? In short, is the excursion into Onitsha Market Literature or alias Majority music ever different from opportunism, an appropriation of proletarian production by a member of the bourgeoisie for its small erudite coterie?

I experience in this, naturally, some embarrassment for, speaking of such a society I equally indict myself. An additional embarrassment, even inhibition stems from the fact that one of the favourite fodders for the "commitment machine" of these critics happens to be no other than the present speaker. However this is one debate which this lecture must inaugurate - the situation of the African critic in *what* society? The stridency of recent criticism makes it inevitable, for criticism has lately outstripped creativity in quantity - at least in this country. I intend to introduce the discourse with an extreme example of the resultant language of alienation, not, however, from papers of the Department of Literature, Drama, Department of Philosophy, African Languages and Literature, etc., but from a popular journal. Indeed, the subject will not even be about literature at all but about a simple social phenomenon - violence. I propose wherever possible to employ the methodology of oblique references, just to widen the area of discourse and provide analogies in related social concerns.

Let us begin with an obviously concerned social critic. He is *motivated* - shall we concede? - motivated by the phenomenon of violence in society. The journal in which the following passage appears is not even a Learned Journal - it is the *Sunday Times* (July 20, 1980).² The immediate cause of the

*Popular Nigerian music artistes

article is a reported student violence at the University of Ibadan. Now nothing can be more proletarian than violence; violence, we know, is one of the few universal commodities; unlike rice, it cannot be placed under license.* Even so, I wish to stress that violence has to be *produced*. When offered, it is a product which has involved both risk and labour, and a level of commitment. In a sense, this art of criticism comes automatically into the same system of appropriation which I am about to engage - I mean, what is my purpose? What is the end of attempting to prove that one critic has appropriated the violence of a group of students, and converted it to neutral ends? If I were writing in support of, or in criticism of the act of the students, I could claim that my motives were nobler - I would remain within the immediate, cause-and-consequence nexus of the originating event, possibly even initiate a movement towards redress. But here I am only concerned to buttress, by a slant of objectives, my contention that academic writers, when they move into the arena of proletarian production, adopt the conversion language of a particular class, the bourgeois intelligentsia. The commodity can be a piece of sculpture, a hunter's traditional chant, Ladi Kwale's pottery or Baba Sala's Comic Muse. a Workers' strike or student violence. And the language is indisputably the language of alienation, even deliberately so, as the following illustrates:

Some University of Ibadan students were some time reported as having physically affronted laboratory equipment. In the process the University and the entire Nigerian community lost invaluable science equipment. Predictably the reactions to the incident followed two lines. On the one hand, there were those who splotch (sic) the students as overfed, over-pampered and over-petted marginal adults who should be called to order ... On the other hand there were those who glorified and lionized the students....

* A reference to a government decision to place the importation of rice under licence - rice being in short supply in the country at the time. The decision was of course only another ploy for the enrichment of middlemen.

Beyond the queer semantic cluster "physically affronted laboratory equipment" we are not yet irretrievably in the terrain of alienation. The field appears to be declared open, however clumsily - any intelligent member of society must know that there would be those two camps, so why tell us? - however, there is a promise here of something akin to motivation. Whatever the writer has done, he has succeeded in engaging us, within the matrix of contending forces, in the prospects of his own position, and the options are three: for, against, or an arbitrating neutral between the two positions. Alas, and this is where we come to the crunch: there is a *fourth* position. What is *signified* turns out to be a confidence trick; the writer has no interest whatsoever in that physical confrontation, nor in its consequences on the rest of society. His sociology would help us, but we have no facts, only a name below the article, but the sign is beginning to come out strongly, barely three paragraphs later. We realize then that we are being moved from the field of "physically affronted laboratory equipment" to the operational field of seminars at the University of Lagos or Maiduguri, into the structure of the seminars paper where the subject only serves the linguistic ritual. Let us spend a little more time probing this intellectual tumour through all its tissues - I believe that the exercise is long overdue and may prove salutary.

There are two equally tenable and plausible positions on one and the same issue. And philosophy, as a professional discipline, begins where two extreme but equally plausible propositions are asserted on one and the same event, topic or concept. This is true whether the concept in question, say "violence" in this instance, is obviously philosophical or not. But things are made easy in this context because the term "violence" happens to be a moral concept.

Questions asking for explications and elucidations of the causes of violence and questions about the role of violence in a nation's consciousness and culture are legitimate and will be treated as cognates of the distinctively philosophical question. "What is violence?"

There are three ways by which it is possible to gain an insight into this question. The first is etymological, the second is definitional, and the third is distinctional. Concerning the etymology of the word "violence"...

Need one go on? This is language which has not even arrived at the edges of social topography, much less *l'engage* of social signification. The contemporaneous *langue* is this: heads are now being "physically affronted," arrests were being made; detentions in police cells for students and workers... This is the indicative of the language-in-making of any projected resolution. And the obscured *langue*: that of police slaughter of unarmed students - in Zaria, if you recall - the insolently corrupt findings of judicial enquiries, the police seige of campuses, loss of employment for staff, rustification of students, prohibition of unions, round-the-clock surveillance of suspected activists, seizure of passports, etc., etc. This was the total language of violence out of which was carved the burning down of laboratory equipment in Ibadan as sign. But the essayist of the *Sunday Times* would have us believe that this event is best apprehended through the definitions of violence and opinions held by Professor Gaiver; Professor Robert Audi, "whose article on violence earned him a award of the American Council for Philosophical Studies;" Heraclitus; Hegel; Machiavelli; Rousseau; Engels; Lenin - at least, their followers; Adolf Hitler; Henry Von Treckschke "himself a brilliant Nazi theoretician" ... I believe that exhausts the list. And so, a particular purposeful act - damn it or laud it - with its own finite, unambiguous, risk-committed clarity has been converted to the seminarist language with its infinite discursiveness, submerging, distorting and finally appropriating the original commodity in its quotational garrulity. The annotations are bewildering. We understand why it is that this essayist needs to confer upon us the honor of listening to the opinions of Professor Robert Audi - thus the C.V. extract: "whose article on violence earned him an award of the American Council for Philosophical Studies." Reader, the author thus informs you and me, you are in the presence of a man who knows what the subject is about! But by contrast,

does it matter in the least at what point of Greek philosophy - or indeed any school of philosophy Heraclitus emerged in this context? "Heraclitus," introduces Dr. Momoh, "a pre-Socratic philosopher...." Does it matter in the slightest if Heraclitus was a neo-Stoic sybarite or an Aeolian rhapsodist? The signification of that "pre-Socratic" bunting is of course only an academic symbol, an iconic sign, a la Barthes. The matrix of Greek philosophy, history, the patina of antiquarian scrolls have all been gratuitously introduced in order to distance the event of - at least - a contemporary gesture, act at best, a signification of urgent social import. To summarize: the author here is not speaking to the specific issue of one act of violence, not even to violence in general, he is not speaking to the issue of violence in his society, he is not even condescending to speak to his society, but is primarily, secondarily and ultimately engaged in the act of appropriating a harsh reality to a *langue* of "scholarship" - and one, incidentally, of the superficial catalogue variety. I have already stated that it is an extreme case. Nevertheless, anyone who believes that it is singularly atypical is recommended to make a sample study of seminar, conference, and Learned Journal sociological papers on any one social problem from violence to pacific alcoholism.³

That task over, such a sceptic is perhaps more readily prepared to understand the mechanics of appropriation of direct products of intellectual labour - such as the artistic and literary. Just as we insist: even violence is a value produced towards the attainment of a concrete expectation, a settlement to be concluded in social terms, so is a work of art - in whatever language - a value of labour, one which, curiously, without any self-criticism, the critic appropriates to ends other than the ends for which the work is produced and marketed. A mystique is created by the appropriator about the "availability" of art, one which grants it special victim status and cannot question, in its turn, the status of the appropriator in the value scale of (1) the readership for whom the work is intended, and (2) the production intent and delimited goals of the commodity. No, the appropriator assumes and asserts

ends, failure to attain which constitutes a crime against *his* calling.

Now Ronald Bathes is a rare breed of academic worker who has tried to explore, in very concrete terms, the social situation of the critic/teacher in relation to the practice of his profession. I have described him as an academic worker because this is the very image which he appears to strive towards. It is part of the engaging honesty of Monsieur Barthes that he admits that in the first and final analysis, he is not, and cannot become a *worker* in the historical sense of the word. Ronald Barthes is I repeat, a rare exegetist in the world of the intellect because he does not merely debate; he acts out, almost by perverse example, the best and the worst of the paradox of the leftist scholar, a would-be academic populariser who however does not employ a "popular" *langue*. Indeed, it is not so much what Mr. Barthes says, but his *l'engage*, the social tension of his discourse which makes him an obvious example for the radical, socially committed critic of today's African intelligentisia.

Barthes is no friend of the bourgeoisie, and we can usefully begin by examining how this detestation manifests itself in the attempt to purge language of bourgeois accretions, to expose the bourgeois mythology that lies beneath, sustains, and is indeed the very foundation of linguistic and imagic signifiers which society takes so much for granted. Like the group of academics who, we have suggested, occasionally attempt to enter proletarian art and relations, Barthes proves himself an obsessive leveller. What really lies beneath the *geste*? Within what code does a seemingly straightforward signifier transmit or trigger into public consciousness the real message, the signified, converting it into a neo-mythology, a semiograph if you prefer, establishing an autonomy of bourgeois values? To this end, Monsieur Barthes focussed his attention on what he appropriately labels the so-called mass-culture: professional wrestling, cinema stereo-types, the detective story, tourist guides, advertisements, soap powders and detergents, Charlie Chaplin, steak and chips, Greta Garbo, ornamental cookery, French toys, plastic technology,

etc. Barthes, in his preface to the 1970 edition of *Mythologies*,⁴ reminds his society that the "essential enemy" is still the bourgeois norm and recalls that part of his hopes with the collection of essays is that, by treating "collective representations as sign-systems, one might hope to go further than the pious show of unmasking them and account *in detail* for the mystification which transforms petitbourgeois culture into a universal culture". I suggest that special attention be paid to that last quote - the problem of the "mystification which transforms petit-bourgeois culture into universal culture." Along the way we may have cause to suspect that the indiscriminating African critic has been trapped into transposing the petit-bourgeois signs and iconography of his mentor culture into a universal culture.

Barthes himself provides the very simple answer, one which we have already dealt with above - the phenomenon of class appropriation. Petit-bourgeois criticism, even when it is very much of the Left as it gropingly is these days in sections of our own academia, simply appropriates the object of criticism into the *langue* of its own class. Every essay in Barthes' collection, *Mythologies*, is an ironic repetition of the process, an unconscious act of linguistic vengefulness: even as language takes off the mask of petit-bourgeois mythology of objects and activities, it clothes them anew in the garb of bourgeois intellectualism. Ronald Barthes, we have already stated, is an honest intellectual, he is compelled to concede this much in *Image-Music-Text*,⁵ in the final essay in that collection, titled "Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers", a must, I seriously suggest, for every single Leftocrat still left over if ever a genuine proletarian revolution is to overtake our universities. This overt act of grace does not, however, come remotely close in self-revelation to Monsieur Barthes' direct appropriation, in the sociolinguistic context, of the mass-culture, on behalf of the minority class to which he, Ronald Barthes' belongs.

Fortunately television has been with us awhile and *Wrestling from Chicago* is, I believe, still staple diet to many addicts and even non-addicts of television in this country. It would be most instructive to find what such consumers make of the

following passage from Mr. Barthes' semiological analysis of these sweat-and-groan artists of muscular repulsion:

"In other words, wrestling is a sum of spectacles of which no single one is a function: each moment imposes the total knowledge of a passion which rises erect and alone, without ever extending to the crowning moment of a result." (p.16)

Or try this one:

"Each moment in wrestling is therefore like an algebra which instantly unveils the relationship between a cause and its represented effect." (p.19)

Just one final, irresistible quote:

"Armund Mazaud, a wrestler of an arrogant and ridiculous character (as one says that Harpagon is a character), always delights the audience by the mathematical rigour of his transcriptions, carrying the form of his gestures to the furthest reaches of their meaning, and giving to his manner of fighting the kind of vehemence and precision found in a great scholastic disputation, in which what is at stake is at once the triumph of pride and the formal concern with truth."

I confess that I also have watched wrestling, both in the flesh and on the television screen. I have never seen more than two over-sized, consciously theatrical monstrosities earning fair wages in return for sending a matinee audience hysterical with vicarious sadism. Nothing that I saw at any time recalled any scholastic disputation or brought regrets to my failings in school career as an algebraic hope. Nevertheless, Monsieur Barthes' purpose is manifest: wrestling is a mere input into the structuralist-semiotic computer programme which then emits a Barthes-specific *langue*. If I were an addictive econo-Leftocrat, I would in accents of gravely committed proletariat empathy, accuse Monsieur Barthes of failure to relate the wrestling spectacle to the economic contradictions of his social situation and his performers' social situating. I would in fact

demand that his treatment of Wrestling should lead into a similar socio-political coda as he inserts in some of his other essays such as "Wine and Milk" where, after a totemistic exposition of wine in the life of the Frenchman he concludes:

"There are thus very engaging myths which are however not innocent. And the characteristic of our current alienation is precisely that wine cannot be an unalloyedly blissful substance, except if we wrongfully forget that it is also the product of an expropriation."

Thus is the radical conscience saved - by a double appropriation of the labour of the Algerian worker: first converting his labour into the language exchange of the intellectual class, then crediting his act with a basic political consciousness. What, in concrete terms, does either achieve for the expropriated Algerian worker? Nothing. The essay on *Wrestling* is, in the end, more intellectually humble, for it pretends to nothing but the attempted transmission of the ontology of the game - in the language of the intellectual.

There is however more serious matter in that essay. The summative passage reads suspiciously essentialist:

"In wrestling, nothing exists except in the absolute, there is no symbol, no allusion, everything is presented exhaustively. Leaving nothing in the shade, each action discards all parasitic meanings and ceremonially offers to the public a pure and full signification, rounded like Nature, the grandiloquence is nothing but the popular and age-old image of the perfect intelligibility of reality. What is portrayed by wrestling is therefore an ideal understanding of things: it is the euphoria of men raised for a while above the constitutive ambiguity of everyday situations and placed before the panoramic view of a univocal Nature, in which signs correspond to causes, without obstacle, without evasion without contradiction." (p.25)

And yet I cannot pretend not to understand Monsieur Barthes or pretend that I have not endorsed in personal

experience his re-creation of the physical moment in seemingly incongruous matrices - mathematical, musical, architectural, and of course linguistic. One need not go as far as Norman Mailer⁶ whose floridly purple passages, especially commissioned by Harper's magazine, celebrated the first advent of man into space, a linguistic extravaganza which, in a rather impoverished way, anticipated the time-out and spaced-out collaboration of the composer Richard Strauss, the philosopher Nietzsche and the cineast Stanley Kubrick in the unfinished space classic *2001, A Space Odyssey*. The film *Star Wars* and its follow-up *The Empire Strikes Back* are, in a comparative sense, the literal completion of the symbolic, mythological *2001, A Space Odyssey*. Constructed frankly on technological gadgetry and spectacle, these latter epics make no attempt at mystery and mythology and would therefore have provided, speculatively, more likely material for Ronald Barthes than *2001*. The speculation, based on Barthes' own "Wrestling" is: would the language of Barthes not have appropriated them into the "bourgeois" linguistic field of *2001*, into that timeless mythological symbiosis of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Austrian nineteenth century Romantic Music, and the entire Wagnerian mythopoeic construct of Kubrick's film? We have seen that the critic, even at his most consciously leftocratic cannot escape his bourgeois linguistic situation. Remote and mysterious though Space appears, the cult of Space has been a mass one, resulting in the popular mythographic language of *Space Trek*. When Mailer undertook his mission to play tourist guide to the millions who could not be present at Cape Canaveral he could have chosen the direct *language* of the gladiatorial fanfare, the popular fiestas. Instead his choice was, predictably perhaps, a '60s bourgeois-literati *langue*. Barthes similarly succeeds in appropriating the modern gladiatorial arena of wrestling into a *langue* not of wrestling, but of *letters*. The linguistic rocket that launched the first spaceman into the galaxy is structurally identical with the Barthian semiotic transfiguration of two sweat-and-groan artists into a mystic paradox of Essence withdrawn and eternalised through unchanging Reality.

The writings of Ronald Barthes of course constitute a paradox, which is perhaps why he lends himself so readily to being conscripted into the role of critical paradigm of the new Left-leaning African, and especially the Nigerian critic. And a basic divergence of one from the other is that this academic is not only conscious of, but takes great pains to particularize his social situation. I have to insist that the majority of ours do not. The traps into which they fall arise very simply from this fact, and their extremisms arise from the failure to understand that the language of criticism is very socially situated. The Leftocracy would of course deny it, but here is a typical failure, conveniently located in the realm of language. Writing on *Opera Wonyosi*, Yemi Ogunbiyi makes the following statement:⁷

"In Soyinka's version of Macheath's opening piece, he refers to the Igbeti marble which led to the mysterious disappearance of enquiring citizens about the marble deposits. He, however, concludes in the cynically ironic tone which runs through the play that little can be done in the circumstances of Igbeti situation.

"For it takes more than the darkness
To protect one beast of prey
When there's interest joined to interest
All we can do is pray." (p. 5)

Translated back into the contextual language of the *dramatis personae*, that last, offending line would read, "Adura lo ku" or "gba". Any critic who succeeded in making that language leap, of situating himself and the action in the realistic environment of the parole, would recognize that this is a simple standard figure of speech, connoting by no stretch of the imagination, a decision to leave everything in the hands of God. Is it really necessary to particularise to this critic that fact that when human throats were being meticulously cut during the Northern pogrom of 1966 the pious liturgy which was monotonously recited over the prone victim was "Bismillahi" (with the name of God)? The question he should

ask, in order to penetrate this specific *parole* is: Do the characters in the play *act* pious resignation? When, to a standard greeting of "How are things"? an acquaintance responds "Anbe'lorun" (we are pleading with God) do you really clude that he is just getting up from his knees? Ogunbiyi's reading of this line, as of so many other lines is a wholly alienated reading. Revolutionary aspirations, and the wish to see such aspirations clothed in a language of action cannot eliminate the fact of the existence of tension within used, seemingly inert syntax.⁸

My experience in this country alone, to go no further, is that in times of social confrontation, language is often used as a holding device, a massed coil before the release of the spring. But then the worker in language grasps both the sound of meaning and the meaning of sound within the mere gesture of articulation. What is even more strange is the fact that there are clues to this understanding to be followed by the willing critic. Ogunbiyi recognises them but chooses to corral them into an alternative which is merely convenient for an *a priori* thesis: the thesis of ambiguity in Soyinka which is much favoured by Leftocratic criticism. Take the message of Anikura's song which follows almost immediately after:

But look, one day you will find
That pus-covered mask hides a mind
And then - boom! Oga sah*
What's that blur - oga sa? **
With a red flame fanning his behind.

Ogunbiyi's footnote 12, commenting on the two verses quoted above reads:

"The kind of ambiguity I refer to here relates to that statement or statements so fundamentally contradictory that they reveal a basic division or even contradiction in the author's mind."

*Yes massa.

**Massa turn tail!

Our critic resolves, in that last quoted section, that the author of the play - to again use his own words, "concludes that... little can be done in the circumstances of Igbe'ti situation." This is a very large claim to the state of mind of the playwright, and one which is founded on a deliberate linguistic fragmentation. It removes the employment of a particular typology of langue from a real milieu and turns it *parole-wise* literal, leaving us with a *signified* which has been plucked from a lingual matrix whose sole claim to compatibility is simplistically grammarian.

Ambiguity, levelled at the writer is very often a cover for the critic's own social evasion. Ogunbiyi again finds that a problem of ambiguity has been raised because the playwright has satirised the buffoon figure of Emperor Bokassa, preening himself as a Marxist. He quotes from the play's monologue (Ogunbiyi: p. 9):

"Now a revolutionary dance must possess what we Marxists call social reality. So we are going to adapt this dance to the social reality of our progressive Centrafrique Social Experiment."

The socially situated responsibility which Ogunbiyi evades here is that of information. He fails to inform his readers that the opportunistic ploy - which is the subject of satire here - the opportunistic ploy notoriously adopted on this continent by nearly every reactionary dictator is this very one - adopting poses of radicalism, revolution, even Marxism. Idi Amin, Mobutu Sese Seko, Leopold Senghor, Bokassa, Macias Nguema etc. - each one, at one time or the other has presented himself on the podium of power as the heir of Marx and Lenin - with the significant, even deadly qualification. Ogunbiyi's stance towards the playwright therefore becomes charitable criticism - towards the fascist leaders, at the expense of the satirist.⁹ It could be of course that the critic here considers the audiences of *Opera Wonyosi* to be in mortal peril of mistaking the barb for reality - such criticism should thus be properly addressed to the sociology of the specific audience. Yet even that would require a thorough social situation of the critic,

which is precisely what we are here denying to this brand of criticism. There is yet further proof.

Footnote 8 deals with the danger of the ingredients of theatrical pleasure - melodies, costuming, dance, witty dialogue etc - becoming counter-productive to the aims of a work of social criticism. He narrates the experience of the original production of *Threepenny Opera*¹⁰ - on which *Opera Wonyosi* is based. Lotte Lenya Weill, an actress in the original production narrates how:

"Berlin was gripped by a *Threepenny Opera* fever. Everywhere, even in the streets, the tunes were whistled - a Threepenny Bar was opened where no other music was played.....Once when I was walking down the Tiergarten I passed a blind beggar. He called after me: 'Fraulein Lenya, you only have time for blind beggars on the stage eh?' (p.6)

Now this of course is a very sobering piece of theatrical sociology, one which has always raised profound questions on the very activity of art, hankers back to what we have already described as the appropriation of the masses by the class of artists and intellectuals even down to their rags, their violence and misery. It is a subject which even radical ideologies evade, preferring to deal in platitudinous assertions such as indulged in the essay in question:

"To the extent that a committed work of art....must lay bare *unambiguously*, the causal historical and socio-economic network of society in such a way as to enable us to master reality and, in fact transform it...."

All of which is very laudable in the work of art that actually achieves this but, the exhortation does not resolve the fundamental question of the appropriation of any human reality - and especially a cruel one, extracted and presented for the edification of a micro-society. We are speaking here of the very morphology of intellectual base material; of the social evasion that accompanies, deep down, the process of having

"done your bit" for the downtrodden masses; for the unreal nature of any presentation of reality, the psychology of its consumers, the medium of transmission which is at once limited, distortive, an act of fabrication which draws the most committed consumer into a conspiracy of evasion. When the critic says, "enables us to master reality," we must demand: who are *us*? Precisely what class? What function? Could this "us" by any stretch of imagination be the proletariat?

And here is the clue: it is significant that in arriving at the alienation of the participants, the real, not theoretical alienation of the players from the played, we are privileged to know the workings of the mind of the Berlin beggar, but not of the ordinary member of the mixed working-class and bourgeois audiences who watched *Opera Wonyosi*. They, after all, are available. Instead, speculations abound, drawn from, then pushed back into the background network of an essentially bourgeoisified theory of theatrical responses. But in this tangible, contemporary instance we did learn what effects *Opera Wonyosi* actually had on the audience. We have the concrete information of its effects on a Military Governor comfortably seated at the opening - to start with, that is. We know of the reaction of the Professor's wife, an effect freely admitted by her afterwards. We know of the effects on the parks and gardens workers and of other low-income workers such as Security officers, who watched the show. We learnt of the reverberations in Dodan Barracks, in military circles, in the National Security Organization. *Opera Wonyosi*, all set to appear in Lagos at the National Theater, suffered a last-minute cancellation due to reasons which we also know. We, the critics, the producers, the commentators know of the effect on those who participated in the production, not so famous as Lotte Lenya-Weill perhaps, but probably more articulate than the beggar along Berlin's Tiergarten.

Any theory of what theatre should or can do, what it can achieve must be anchored in the sociology of what is actually written, done, and experienced. What we are offered in the article under consideration-which we merely use as an example of the increasingly typical - is a criticism rooted in

generalised theories of art, or more accurately, in a fragmentary ideology of art, for such an ideology must remain fragmentary unless it is amplified by the dialectics of equal partnership between accumulated theory and the concrete sociology of the artistic event itself. This is how the audience *ought* to feel - ambiguated - says the critic. We know our audiences did not. Well then, let the genuine dialectic begin!

"Causal historical and socio-economic network of society" sought in every work of art by this particular school of criticism is, let it be understood clearly, only a further attempt to protect the hegemony of appropriation by the intellectual critic class *especially*, and this is especially true when such criticism chooses to ignore the *received* function as manifested in effect. Liberation is one of the functions of theatre, and liberation involves strategies of reduction to the status and stature of the power-wielding class in public consciousness, exposing and de-mystifying its machinery of oppression. Representing Hitler - just to theorize - as an imbecile dripping mucus on his iconographic moustache may not be the social answer to a horrendous aberration; it is at least more honest and less presumptuous than wishing him away as a mere figment of the socio-economic imagination. The satirist operates with an implicit recognition of the social limitations of his art; his methodology is allied to the social strategy of preparation. The mastering of reality and its transformation requires the liberation of the mind from the superstition of Power which cripples the will, obscures self-apprehension and facilitates surrender to the alienating processes ranged against every form of human productivity. DEFLATING THE BOGEY - this also socially valid and progressive art: it becomes seriously flawed - a word carelessly employed by our critics - only when it attempts to pander to socio-historical causes thereby explaining away oppressors in rational (including economic) terms. Bourgeois intellectualism actually prefers the latter, because it wishes to leave the theatre having *understood*, and therefore remaining unchallenged by the need to destroy them. We know that such critical consumers will respond to this with yet more pages on how

such and such a "causated work clarifies and points the way to such destruction" but, we must insist on the sociological truth of our observation that, for the critic, either (i) the work is totally deficient in such combative insight - which excuses his lackadaisical withdrawal or (ii) it is filled with heavy insights, after which it serves only as a cause for intellectual satisfaction, settling neatly afterwards into the theoretical lumberyard of sociological inertia. Our Leftocracy have so far ignored the Bakalori massacres* but, the reason is simple: the playwright has not yet provided them historico-socio-economic insights into what needs to be done! Art which identifies the enemy in a language which is instantly grasped - the language of satire for instance, not available to yet another typewriter to be historically causated, pickled and hung up to dry may still *not* be proletarian art, it is at least graphic *l'engage* which escapes the bane of Leftocratic appropriation and addresses the proletariat *directly*.

MUSIC, ESSENCE AND CLASS

Consider now the following interjection by our guest scourge of bourgeois values; Ronald Barthes is castigating here the degradation of real human beings, real trees, tunnels, mountains, architecture to touristic *signs*, which are couched

The 2 a.m. massacre(1980) of peasants at Bakalori village in Sokoto State by the armed Mobile Police Unit. These peasants had earlier occupied the offices of a dam construction firm demanding compensation for their appropriated farms. A policeman was killed in the attempt to dislodge them. That night a unit of the Mobile Squad was sent in. They descended on the sleeping village firing into the thatched dwellings, indiscriminately, moving down farmers, their wives and children as they ran. A hundred and fifty were counted dead, by name. Till the time of this lecture, the President of Nigeria in whose home state this atrocity took place, has not even set up an enquiry. The intellectuals, Left and Right, are content to let it pass.

in the familiar trivialising language of the salesman as it appears in the French *Blue Guide*:

"We find again here this disease of thinking in essences, which is at the bottom of every bourgeois mythology of man...." (Mythologies, p. 75)

Here is another:

"We find here again this bourgeois promoting of mountains, this old Alpine myth (since it dates back to the nineteenth century) which Gide rightly associated with Helvetico-Protestant morality and which has always functioned as a hybrid compound of the cult of nature and of puritanism...." (p. 74)

As stated earlier, we must give Ronald Barthes credit for knowing, for discovering and unmasking his own social sensibilities in this direction. The question we now pose is as follows: does the African critic, on encountering such categorising claims take the trouble to find out the sensibility of the Kilimanjaro goatherd towards his mountains, or does he simply ingest these claims into the language of his own class myths? Now, some of us who constantly circle the globe - I am trying to avoid the prejudicial "globe-trotter" - we have had the opportunity of visiting these same Alpine natives - Italians, Bavarians, Yugoslavs, and encountered the peasant stock on its own territory, drunk and danced with them and occasionally wondered whether one had been magically transported among the gorges and ranges of Nigeria's own plateau region. With such a background, one begins to critique the language of those quotes. It says too much, claims too much. It is rooted in a specific history, a peculiar intellectual development where language has taken over reality as a reaction to another form of productive aberration - the tourist industry - by a specific class at a specific time and in certain specific forms. On the literary field, there is of course the aesthesiogenic genre of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*,¹ which would be an emetic even to a moderate hater of the bourgeoisie.

Such literary malappropriation of Nature however and a thousand like it - be these in music, dramatic or graphic forms - cannot contradict the truthful relations of those whose mountains were appropriated by an elite group for the edification of a mini-society. They cannot be permitted to inhibit our own uncorrupted responses and creative exploitation of the many facets of Nature. When the Gikuyu locate their ancestry within the hidden heart of their local mountain, we do not think of Thomas Mann; if we must pick a European affinity - which we are not compelled to do - our "soul-brother" would probably be the Russian composer Mussorgsky, one of the first composers to use folk-music as basis for the orchestral work, of which one of the best-known is *Night on the Bare Mountain*.

This is not to deny that any work or form of art does lend itself sooner or later to appropriation by a different class from that of the original production. When Rimsky-Korsakov returns to the same theme, collaborating with Mussorgsky for further refinement of the work, the new product is already responding to the sensibilities of a developing class and moves closer to the bourgeois sensibilities of *The Magic Mountain*. That of course is another progression (or retrogression) well worth detailed analysis but not here, for it belongs to the field of music criticism and sociology. It is relevant additionally here because Ronald Barthes is at his most *embarrassed* when he has to evolve a language of music criticism, one which evades the clichés and baroque legacies of his society's *langue* of music criticism. He evolves a new music value, the "grain", whose sumtotal of innovation appears to lie more in the transference of adjectives to this new value from the music itself. Mind you, he himself recognised the danger:

Are we condemned to the adjective? Are we reduced to the dilemma of either the predicable or the ineffable? To ascertain whether there are (verbal) means for talking about music without adjective. This much, however, can be said: it is not by struggling against the adjective (diverting the adjective you find on the tip of your tongue towards some substantive or verbal periphrasis) that one stands a chance

exorcising music commentary and liberating it from the fatality of predication...."

Ronald Barthes's essay here is of course purely exploratory but the methodology is clear. We can see that he is struggling, against the territory of the ineffable, against a very stubborn product, one whose *langue* is highly arbitrary and less accessible to the authoritarian language of Leftocratic criticism. Honesty struggles against music's wilful *metalangue*.

"....but isn't the truth of the voice to be hallucinated?"

and compromises, dissolving into clearly embarrassed contortions. At the conclusion of his comparison of the singing of the German operatic singer Fischer-Diskau and the Russian Panzera, it would appear that all that Ronald Barthes had achieved in this laudable exercise has been already summed up in the American black vocabulary - one has *soul*,¹² the other does not.

Now *soul* is a language of one proletariat that we know, recognise, and identify as one of many regional proletariats in need of socio-economic liberation. It is a community that has a very distinct culture, very palpable, almost quantifiable in all its complex structures and their social correlations. We will not sentimentalise this society - it is at once violent and tender, at once cynical, acquisitive and millennial: we will content ourselves with asserting that it exists, that it is part of a much larger society whose capitalist philosophy it shares. This micro-society also has its own bourgeoisie which, to some extent also appropriates the language of the black proletariat; nevertheless, the *signified* of this *parole* - soul - is one which still firmly belongs within this proletariat not only within the large American continent but in much of the Caribbean, Jamaica especially. *Soul* has its own mythologies too, and it is highly marketable, nevertheless, it is a summation of music to this very specific socio-polity, and it resists outright appropriation, being woven tightly into the interstices of daily social interaction, in short, into a vocabulary of a socially replete existence.

When Ronald Barthes, in his own search for a winnowed value of music, settles on "grain," he is responding to an apprehension of experience which, he implores, must be rescued from the ineffable. This choice of words is significant, but more informative still is the very explosion, the "*cri-de coeur*" from the paradoxically unmelismatic throat of the social critic. (Picture Lenin's dilemma, asked to explain why he would sit hour after hour with his Inessa, requesting that she play the same composition over and over again). Would it really help if we built on Raymond Williams' ¹³ typology and described music as an analogue of subterranean structures of feeling?

"For structures of feeling can be defined as social experiences in solution, as distinct from other social semantic formations which have been *precipitated* and are more evidently and more immediately available. Not all art, by any means, relates to a contemporary structure of feeling. The effective formations of most actual art relate to already manifest social formations dominant or residual, and it is primarily to emergent formations (though often in the form of modification or disturbance in older forms) that the structure of feeling, as *solution* relates). (p. 133/4)

Let us go back again. An analogue? Or perhaps an ellipsis? An ellipsis of subterranean structures of feelings? Music is a clue in the direction of our real battleground; as a language of man's aesthetic strivings, but one which reinforces, yet resists the language of other forms of artistic production, it leads remorselessly to a value which "radical" theories of art attempt to deny and even deride. The dictionary meaning of ellipsis is "a figure of syntax by which a word or words are left out and implied" (Chambers). I favour this expression because the paradox of music is that it exploits the incompleteness of *langue* to transmit a language. It is truly a form "in solution," even at its most replete, even when the main theme and sub-themes and variations have been explored and brought

home with an overwhelming sense of release, the effect of music is that of a linguistic proposition which quarries its way towards total resolution - hence the failure of criticism to find an appropriate vocabulary, even for a narrative of the musical experience. The creative vocabulary describes this escapist value, capable only of evocation, as essence. Sometimes, reification is a tool for its expression. Poetry also attempts in its own frustrated way to capture the essence of material objects, phenomena, human relationships, and feelings. Music, however, since it remains incomplete within man's socially linguistic upbringing, paradoxically projects the existence of this replete, structural reality. Because the obsessed materialists are defeated by the complications of this self-constitutive art which does not pretend to express *Everything*, but insists that there is *Everything* to be expressed, comprehended, embraced and ravaged - Barthes employs the expression "jouissance" - there is left to them only the conceptual essentialisation of objective reality in other art forms to be revenged upon, these being - like the literary - linguistically "open." Commencing by habit with a specific social development which gave birth contemporaneously both to those art concepts and to a now reactionary class - the bourgeoisie, the conscious language of that class struggle is uncritically absorbed by critics in other societies where the *language* of essentialisation predated the birth of the bourgeoisie in these histories.

"Ori" among the Yoruba, is essential conceptualisation; so is "Ikenga" among the Ibo and "Nommo" among the Dogon. We must return to this subject, and in a different language.

For now, we must pause to ask: Is this a purely academic problem? Alas, no. It is a serious social productivity problem. When the critics gather themselves together at the Annual Leftocratic Convention¹⁴ in orgies of ideological puritanism, they seem unaware of a process of attrition in the actual productivity of a potential generation of authors. Well, perhaps *no* literature is better than certain kinds of literature - that is quite possible. We only ask that they understand the negative, sterilising effect which a misuse of critical notions, a mis-

placement of their own socio-critical situating now has both on the quality and actual quantity of output among students from their captive audiences in the lecture-room. For there is some mis-teaching involved in this also, one which fouls up the roots of the neophytes' resources and imprisons their imagination. It is my view that literary infanticide is being committed right now, and by a fanatic minority of Leftocracy.

It is one thing to plot the course of European bourgeois romantic or idealist literature and situate it in its socio-economic context; it is however a serious academic lapse to transfer the entirety of that language of criticism to any literature which, while undeniably cognisant of other world literatures, nevertheless consciously explores the world-view of its own societies. It is an irony that it is those very critics who decry the "undialectical" nature of much of today's African writing who resolutely refuse to accept the conceptual heritage or even material artifacts and their authentic significations (in history, origin and social intercourse, orature,) as valid dialectical quantities for any received theory. On the streets of Havana and other cities of Socialist Cuba, the haunting fusion of magic and revolutionary history by Garcia Marquez¹⁵ are hawked daily in their thousands. Throughout Latin America this unique evocation of timelessness even in the midst of revolutionary wars defies all calculations by remaining a favourite of the proletariat. In Nigeria the millipedes of a future literature are no sooner hatched than they are made to begin to count their feet. Naturally, they never walk.

THE FICTOGRAPH AS A "LANGUE" OF VACUUM

It is possible however to sympathise with the extremist position of some of the Leftocrats when confronted by non-African interpreters of African literature who, to prevent justly to some African terminology, "carry their offering beyond the door of the mosque," or "dye their cloth a deeper indigo than that of the bereaved."¹⁶ For while the problem of African critics, blinkered by partial dialectics appears to lie in areas

of interpretation, certain European critics proceed from the abyss of ignorance on which they must erect a platform. They appear - superficially at least - to be good structuralists - we shall call the basic unit of their *bricolage* the - FICTOGRAM. The critic Gerald Moore,¹⁷ late developer currently knocking at the portals of the Nigerian Leftocracy, for instance takes one look at the following lines:

I watch my dreams float vaguely through the streets,
lie at the bulls' feet.
Like the guides of my race on the banks of Gambia or
Saloum.....(p.28)

and, from it, constructs this FICTOGRAPH of an African World-view:

"Senghor, in any case, has expressed unforgettably the classical African view of the dead as the principal force controlling the living (emphasis mine) benevolent and watchful." (p.27)

Biodun Jeyifo efficiently strips away, in his *Soyinka Demythologised*,¹⁸ the excesses of these "enthusiasts" even while, needless to say, refusing to compromise on his own radical stance on Mr. Soyinka's writings. Indeed, Mr. Jeyifo does not stint on the mandatory declamations of "illusory, undialectical, bewitched, vaporous zone of self subsistence" etc. of Mr. Soyinka's myth-making. Mr. Soyinka wishes to announce that he intends to continue to re-create his own myths, unscrupulously, in images - consciously selective - of vapour and matter for his contemporary needs. But more on that theme in another place. Mr. Gerald Moore's new book, we began to say, continues very much the old game of foisting typologies onto the works of authors while evading, in one or two remarkable cases, the ideological grounding which he announces in his preface. Professor Moore agrees, he announces,

"also with the more basic Marxist proposition that a work of art is not and cannot ever be free from the

conditioning imposed by history, class and market conditions.... We shall judge him (the artist) by what he makes of the conditions of his time and place in the continuum of history, but we shall not ignore those conditions."

Only Gerald Moore can inform us where, in his chapter "Assimilation or Negritude" (p.12) which deals with the life and work of Leopold Senghor, he carries out this vibrant declaration of radical intent. Obviously presidents and statesmen are entitled to a different level of criticism from others. It is necessary to point out only two more of Professor Moore's *canards* to indicate just what level of illumination is to be obtained from his latest book. First, the *canard* against - who else? - Wole Soyinka of course.

"And yet Soyinka does not reject modern life in the manner of Yeats, Eliot or Pound. He believes that it can only recover its meaning and its soul by a full-hearted espousal of African values or civilisations; an espousal of which Olunde's death is meant to serve as an image. The political, social, religious and even economic arrangements of Yorubaland offer a system which only needs reinterpretation to act as the blueprint for tomorrow." (p.226)

Against this it is necessary only to refer to *Season of Anomy*,¹⁹ where a tiny atypical corner of Mooreland "Yoruba" is deliberately quarried out to serve as an active agent in an endeavour to mobilise the rest of the country, it being nowhere suggested that this corner become a model, only that it is historically equipped for its agent role. Moore's claim is equivalent to saying that a Basque Communist cell, seeking to revolutionise the entirety of Spain, is attempting to transform the Iberian peninsula in the image of the entire Basque province because that cell has the support of the Mayor of its host village and his council! This attempted cellular mobilisation of the country, whose main targets are Workers' Communities, is now transformed by Mr. Moore into the author's approval of the very structures it is trying to overthrow. Now what *sociology* - for

this is at the heart of our enquiry - what sociology of a critic could have led him to attempt such a brazen reversal of literary evidence? The answer is contained in our introduction of this critic to our lecture - the sociology of latecomer knocking at the portals of Nigerian Leftocracy, and clinging - as is evidenced in the body of much of his criticism, to the hem of the bush-jackets of Femi Osofisan, Jeyifo, Kole Omotosho etc., indeed, pushing them ahead in order to attribute any proven gaffes to their proven record in recent critical thinking. *Against the Titans*²⁰ can now be seen as Moore's presentation of credentials in this bandwagon exercise when read against his earlier *Seven African Authors*²¹, his first claim to African literary expertise.

Gerald Moore is of course too clever to ignore *Season of Anomy*. However, instead of positing his criticism on the arguable nature and strategy of the revolution which the novel places in action, Moore diverts his readers' sights towards a concentration of the earlier fiction:

"Soyinka manages to create the impression that there is something deeply and intrinsically Yoruba about the community's arrangements."

The purpose here is to reinforce the earlier *canard*, one in which the novelist is conspiring to restore Yoruba Mooreland feudalistic structure to contemporary Nigeria. For a literary critic to ignore the deliberate distancing of a familiar physical terrain in which action is situated, through his utilisation of a myth from as remote a culture as Asia - which Moore does recognise - is to damn himself as either a singularly inept practitioner of his trade or as a critic with a hidden, quite unliterary motivation. The creation of a different *language* - an alien myth - interworking with the personages of the action on local grounds is such an instant literary signification that only an expert would dare miss it. Perhaps Mr. Moore would prefer that the action be located in the "neutral" Iboyoru of Mphahlele's *The Wanderers*²². No reference is made here to other points of criticism in Mr. Moore's essay - these could be sustainable, errors of judgment, or simply matters of opinion.

The deliberate introduction of Yoruba acculturation - and specifically its negative baggage - feudalism, capitalist economic arrangements etc. - is a malicious invention of a Leftocratic achiever for which he fails to provide evidence, naturally, as there is none. Both the preface and essays in Soyinka's *Myth, Literature and the African World*²³ should have cured Mr. Moore of the extravagant delusion that this author believes in "...a full-hearted espousal of African values," but it is doubtful if Mr. Moore understands any longer the difference between a contestation of "world-views" and a blanket endorsement of them. Moore's mendacity is only equalled - and to some extent surpassed - by that of Mr. Bernth Lindfors,²⁴ Hagiographer Extraordinary, who "recreates" the juvenalia of this author, in the old University College of Ibadan, every page of which contains at least one inaccuracy of time and place and a series of absurd attributions. The lucrative business of juvenile hagiography of everything that moves on two feet from pop stars to syndicated criminals is of course very much the life-style of American letters. It is to be hoped that it never becomes a way of life here.

Others with more leisure and stomach for the task will of course catalogue the list of factual misrepresentations of the nature of the society with which Gerald Moore on his part attempts to deal. We will refer here finally, to just a typical sweeping generalisation which again takes its root in the sociology of this critic - an egotistical emphasis which makes him compulsively imply greater knowledge of African societies than the knowledgeable African:

"This Africa of vast segregated modern cities, mine-dumps, skyscrapers and jazz clubs was as alien and remote to the Nigerian or Senegalese reader of that time as Dallas or Harlem might have been." (p.41)

"That time" refers to the time of publication of Ezekiel Mphahlele's *Down Second Avenue*²⁵ and "that Africa" to South Africa. I can only speak for the average Nigerian reader of "that time" and indeed of at least ten, fifteen years

before that time. Such a reader was weaned on DRUM magazine, a South African black journal whose monthly, racy contents portrayed Ezekiel Mphahlele's country in just these images of Gerald Moore's description. But this is only another shutter on black Mooreland, where reality has yielded place to a fictographic memory.

POWER, ESSENCE, IDEAL

We must take into account but reject the burden of bourgeois development of other societies, reject the framework of their bourgeois values and conceptualisations but in the process, ensure that concepts which are termed bourgeois in societies of their origination, correspond also to the values of bourgeois development of our own societies. For this, we do not even need to prove first the existence of a bourgeoisie or coerce social groups into identical class structures of other societies. Efforts in this direction, that is, attempts at direct correlations with classic European models, with their specific history have been regularly controverted. The existence of classes however, is a universal reality: what remains permanently contestable is the *universality* of concepts and values attaching to each group. There is more than matter for suspicion when our Leftocracy for instance take on the mantle of abuse from European Leftist criticism as it automatically attaches to the sheerest idealist suggestiveness in any form of literature. My theory is that it is a guilty reflex, a defense mechanism. The Leftocracy feels it is on trial when it detects any trace of Idealism in the arts and literature precisely because the hard evidence of revolutionary history is that while the motive force of social transformation does exist within the realm of socio-economics, power, that manifestation of Idealist craving has proved a durable partner and uncertain quantity within such transformations. A most embarrassing language, one which belongs to the "mushy world" of psychology, an upsetting factor even within the internal history of revolutionised societies.

Power is of course akin to Music - and these constitute two of the least addressed products and strivings of the human kind by radical criticism. Like music, power lacks completion, cannot be quantified or reduced to the language of Historicism: it stands outside History. It reaches out constantly towards a new repletion, towards indeed an essentiality, a concept of the Ideal. This element of the idealist is therefore present in the fanatic radical critic, for he becomes a surrogate of Authoritarianism for a System which is challenged by the one value that knows itself, like music, as incomplete. What is manifested here, to situate it bluntly but succinctly is a conflict of interests that straddles both the metaphysical and the political. Marxism has created for our Leftocracy a system that declares itself complete, controlled and controlling; an Immanent reflection of every facet of human history, conduct and striving, and end known in advance and only delayed by the explicable motions of economic production and development.

E.M. Barth identifies the system of thought to which Marxism belongs:

"The absence of systematic constraints gets its full importance in combination with another feature of the systems of thought we are concerned with here - perhaps with the exception of the works of Nietzsche. This is the claim to systematic definitive completeness in principle in the matters dealt with, i.e. completeness as to what is a fundamental importance in (the structure of) a philosophy of human life and affairs. With the exception of Nietzsche, the authors of these systems are understood by friend and foe to make at least this claim (and are frequently understood to make even wider claims, concerning the inorganic sciences as well). They certainly do not refer to other thinkers for fundamental principles which they themselves do not formulate, except in order to refute them.

This claim to definitive completeness leaves no room for serious revision of any one principle and it leaves no room for the addition of one or more new basic principles. These systems are, as one often says, dogmatically closed."²⁶

Adherents of the rigid pose of Marxism, dare not, repeat dare not believe the evidence of their eyes when - for example - the "mushy" essentially of Power is made manifest - as was the case of Stalin, contemporaneously - such is the irony of History - with that of an observe ideology - Nazism. The embrace of convenience of these two Colossi - Stalin and Hitler - was more than symbolic. It could not last however, and it did not. The twists and turns of the interpreters of this monstrosity of a wedding do not concern us here, they need be balanced only by the opportunism of the reactionary world which sought, in this very complex aberration, to ring the death-knell of socialist revolution. For my part, as a writer, myth-maker and critic, I invoke such reminders on a metaphoric level, to reinforce the unresolved question mark which hangs over the dialectics of Power with any form of ideology - progressive or reactionary.

When radical criticism claims that Idealism reinforces a static, historical, irremediable, world-view, I recognise immediately that we have a problem of language. Music, whose nature lends itself to largely idealist striving is not static; on the contrary, the interiority of its language provokes a constant dialectic with the world of reality - which is action, development, motion. The functioning of music in the language of art is parallel with the functioning of Power in the realm of politics and economics - the latter is often vital and deadly but that is no reason for evasion; certainly neither art nor literature evades it. Indeed literature attempts to contain it, and it is the very methodology of containment which arouses radical criticism to ire - why, it demands, have you ignored my language? One response is this: if the revolutionary socio-economist will at least share the burden of containing and controlling the forces of distribution of production, on behalf of the masses, Art will try to contain and control Power,

metaphorically, again on behalf of the masses. Whether as King Ubu (Alfred Jarry); Rasputin; Richard III (William Shakespeare); allegories of terrorising monsters and captive communities; Chief Nanga (Achebe: A Man of the People); the Colonial Factor (Sembene); Dr. Bero (Soyinka: Madman and Specialists); or even mythical constructs such as Ogun, the writer structures into controllable entities, being careful in most cases to give no utopian answers, these faces of Ideality be they evasively disguised as State, Divinity, The Absolute or History. The challenger is representative Man, and this is the essence of a combative, even revolutionary humanism.

Of course the above examples have not only been carefully chosen to reflect the expression of this particular genre, they do also provide the consumer with other facets of reality, not excluding the socio-economic. The emphasis here is that even where the ruled are not corporately manifested, Power is not so abstract, so reified that it does not implicate, even the very act of naming it, the disadvantaged existence of the ruled. This point must be made for the benefit of yet again that brand of criticism which is so literal that whatever is not physically portrayed is presumed thereby to be denied, or not manifested. But let us take yet another example of "essentialist" relations.

I spoke earlier of a difficulty of language in confronting the materialist-essential bogey. It manifests itself in areas of seeming absurdity but such as can probably be resolved by strategies of redefinition. For instance, I have come across a materialist claim which states that even love, as an emotion, is a product of the socio-economic relations in human society. Now it happens that many Africans ridicule the concept love, so here at least, "African" values do appear to correspond to a non-bourgeoisified view of human relationships. Such an African viewpoint, which I have heard expressed both by the articulate worker and the "been-to" student - insists that "love" is a luxury of welfare societies such as we find in Europe, and this of course is quite possible. But is the African here utilising the same language as his European counterpart? For one thing, the African, a worker, was

actually speaking of "pairing", in short, by implication declining to forgo his polygamous privileges. The radical interlocutor from Europe is issuing, by contrast, a *critique* of the development of "possessions" and of course - in that particular context, a debunking of the notion of an unchanging essence in human relations. There are immediate complications on both sides, complications of a nature which cannot be resolved in class typologies. "Pairing" is still observed - among animals, and no evidence has yet been offered on the relation of this to the level or their means of production. So has polygamy among the animal species. Doves, peacocks, game, have elaborate systems of courtship and baboons have been known to fight to the death over any attempt to encroach on their harem. The expression which must apply to these forms of attachment must obviously transcend mere sexual terminology or the mere biological activities of hormones and the rounds of mating-seasons. The baboon's polygamous herd may be seen as capitalist accumulation to the satisfaction of some; as a rational observer it becomes necessary, on discovering similar conduct in human society, to accept the possibility of some other essence of the relationship of living forms which so demonstrably stands outside economic patterns. Since an analogue of this conduct or relationship exists ahistorically in the species which we have identified as peacock, dove, or ape, it is sheer perversity to deny that love, fondness of some other emotion resulting in human attachment (or revulsion, has existed ahistorically in man. If love, then hatred, meanness, generosity, perversity, strength, weakness - variants of - perhaps psychologically rooted instinctual conduct, undifferentiated by later class formations, including...the Power drive or instinct. The reification of such abstraction in the personae of deities is a device which serves purposes ranging from ethics to poetics. Such activity is of course open to social abuse, opportunism, social inertia born of superstition etc. But it also can, and has served society as a mechanism for combatting every one of these very anti-humanistic malformations, including the abnormal development of the last mentioned instinctual drive - the Power Lust in group or

individual - by endowing the mythical figure with the collective force, with the negative or positive attributes of the total community. Concerning this aspect of social mechanics which, let us emphasize again - is only *one* of the many functions to which Myth has been put, when it is objected that such a method is not scientific, the provoked answer is that the so-called scientific systems of society have yet to find a scientific counter to the abnormal and unpredictable development of the personality Cult around a strong leader with unsuspected power drive, one who becomes the embodiment of the Ideal, infallible, supreme, an Essence and apotheosis of the secret mythological yearnings of its unsuspecting victims.

For the ramifications of the Power drive throughout history, at all stages of socio-economic development, within and affecting the varied activities of man in public and private, in magic and technology, in the arts, education, civil service, across and within the class units of every form of society, any sentient being who refuses to accept the empirical deductions of his own environment may turn for a philosopher's view to Bertrand Russell's *Power*.²⁷ Russell is not of course a fashionable philosopher among African intellectuals; he has neither a German nor a Russian name; moreover his discourse is strangely lucid, easily comprehensible. And the work referred to here has hardly any footnotes. However, there are pitfalls in his exposition but, by ignoring his prescriptions which border on political naivete, Russell's pursuit of the operations of power through the various levels of society down the ages yields enough matter for a true dialectic with other claimants to the motive force of history. For we cannot rest upon any categories of ideas in which any observable patterns, within societies which have produced those ideas, have not been taken into full dialectical partnership - this would be to perpetuate the habit of excision which obscured the socio-economic reading of history in its time, enthroning the dictatorship of the mutant in the realm of human ideas. As a strategy of power seizure in a revolution or indeed outside a revolution, or - as has been historically demonstrated - for the purpose of preventing a revolution, this might be pragmati-

cally opportune; but of course, having begged the question in this way, the theory of Power as a contributory motive force of history would then be held to have made its point.

IN CONCLUSION

A sadist remains a sadist whether he is a fascist or a socialist. The former would quite capably rationalise his sadism under the arrangement of human beings into the superior, acceptable and inferior or non-beings, upon the last of which group any form of dehumanisation is permissible: obviously, you cannot dehumanise a non-human. You can only reduce him to what he is. His fellow sadist, whose view of society is progressive, even radical, takes the battle to opponents of his conduct very simply by sneering at their "bourgeois sentimentality."

Now, a reminder: we are not involved here with ethical judgment in either case. What we wish to recall is that words do not lose their meanings or shall we call it? - their *signified* because of any one or the other ideology. Even if we spoke entirely in the language of manual signs, every gesture, curve or slice of fingers, every conjunction of motions in wrists and palm still signifies a field of values, no matter the colouring through which the user *subjects* such a signifier at its moment of application. When we use the expression "sadist", therefore, we are not insisting on an irreducible condition of humanity even as we prove that such a quality cuts across class, ideology or history. Specific cases of sadism can be accounted for by an individual's history or his social conditioning, some economic privation in the midst of others' luxurious existence which warped his humanity? - every explanation merely confirms that there is a certain conduct that is observable in human beings which cannot be termed exactly kindness, consideration, humaneness etc. On the contrary, the expression codifies one simple observation: that some human beings actually enjoy inflicting pain. *Sadism* then is a linguistic convention which is used to signify that predilection of certain human

beings to infliction of horrid pains - mental, physical, economic, psychological etc. - on others.

A psychologist, a painter, musician, a historian, a linguist, teacher, social worker, a dramatist, novelist, poet or architect may therefore each in his individual way, become preoccupied by this isolable human condition which clearly occupies a category of its own - and not merely in a linguistic sense - since it does not belong exclusively to any of the other categories we know - social, ideological, class - even human. Animal psychologists - or even owners of domestic pets - recognise its existence in the animal kingdom. Like other values which are signified by expressions such as anguish, ecstasy, euphoria, violence, tenderness etc, sadism - or its correlative - suffering becomes a subject for exploration, one which, as we have seen, cannot be exclusively exposed within those other categories in which it was first observed.

Picasso's *Guernica* is one famous illustration of the *correspondance* - in this case - of graphic art to psychological values within human experience. Three-dimensional art - the sculpture as demonstrated in Rodin, African traditional masks, Vincent Kofi of Ghana, even some examples of Russian realist art - the works of the graphist and illustrator Vladimir Favosky for instance - effect the transmission of this essential value. It is an unpleasant fact for the ultra-Marxist critic but the fact is that realist sculpture and expressionist woodcuts at their finest, exhibit the paradox of this same *essentialist* correspondance.

But I deliberately introduced Picasso's *Guernica*. The kind of ultra-revolutionary critic who has engaged our attention would of course damn Picasso's *Guernica* the same as I damn his infamous daubing on the walls of the Unesco foyer - it is called Leisure and I consider it one of the most notorious contrivances of Art, an Emperor's Clothes delusion, no less. Where we part company with our imagined critic is (i) in his denial of the essential correspondance of *Guernica* to the ahistorical, independent categories of terror, courage, fear, anguish etc. and (ii) in what I am sure would be his rapid recourse to the example of revolutionary art such as rendered in the works of

the Mexican muralists, Diego Rivera, Orozco, etc., Russian and Chinese proletarian art etc. etc. The contestation in short is this: assuming - for it is difficult, he finds, to deny it altogether - assuming that these categories of experience have been successfully isolated and rendered concretely, transmitted if you like - on this canvas, it is the responsibility of the artist to point the way for the avoidance of, the resistance to, for the triumph of humanity over - the mutilating agents of history. Picasso's *Guernica* would then stand condemned for daring to stand outside of history or at least, for laying itself open to essentialist interpretation. It would not matter that the event is located even by its very title, in a geographical place and is an outcry against Fascism, against the sadism of a particular moment. Bourgeois art criticism has damned Picasso's *Guernica* by according it the title of masterpiece in universal *l'engage* which extends it beyond the class struggle, indeed; places it outside the class struggle and mounts it on the podium of universal application. And since it is, irreversibly, a permanent abstraction of human anguish, it becomes an embarrassing testament of a historically provoked essentiality.

It is hardly surprising that Barthes' chapter, *Diderot, Brecht and Eisenstein* (Image - Music - Text) is a marvel of analytical acrobatics. For how is Barthes to cope with the crafted essentialisation of emotions in the meticulous, frame-by-frame compositions of the Russian cinema realist, Eisenstein! Barthes' critical honesty cannot deny it; moreover he would simply render himself absurd to any reader acquainted with Eisenstein's expressionist techniques. Our critic's task is further complicated in that he has elected to place Bertolt Brecht in tandem, a playwright and dramatic theorist whose stark techniques of presentation and emotional distancing is the very opposite of Eisenstein's. But he has problems even with Brecht's formalism, wringing from him the unintended confession:

Thus.....it is pointless to criticize Eisenstein's art (as also that of Brecht) for being 'formalising'

or 'aesthetic': form, aesthetic, rhetoric can be socially responsible if they are handled with deliberation" (p.74)

The prize passage however, is to come. En route, Barthes concedes that the "tableau" (a favourite device of Brecht) - is "the presentation of an ideal meaning" (p.74) - a great problem for a materialist, yet, Brecht must not be damned. Nothing for it but to absorb the stubborn paradoxes of Brecht and Eisenstein through a jettisoning of rules, and provide the artists a formal absolution - one rule for Brecht, another for Eisenstein:

"Nevertheless, it is true that in Eisenstein,.....the actor does sometimes adopt expressions of the most pathetic quality, a pathos which can appear to be very little 'distanced'; but distancing is a properly Brechtian method, vital to Brecht because he represents a tableau for the spectator to criticise; in the other two, the actor does not have to distance: what he has to present is an ideal meaning...."

Truth will out, it seems. The correlation of artistic forms and idioms with ideological precepts of any line is full of pitfalls which leave the agent or arbitrator dangerously exposed: the greater the intellectual faith of the agent, the worse, ironically. Despite all evasions, rationalisations, those penalties of willed adherence to compact systems of ideals, the language of art and creativity continues to pose problems beyond the merely linguistic or semiological. Why deny the following reality: that frame of the cinema picture, arrested in time, frozen, rendered ineffable, an extract from history, an emotion or statement that stands outside of the sequential *does return to reinforce the historic moment from which it is built with a force of that other level of truthfulness - recognition*. The viewer's own history completes the forms, the canvas, the sculpture, the ahistorical testimony of a poetic licence. The tableau is the myth - it may be progressive or reactionary - one thing it is not, and that is, a bourgeois

liberal-romantic convention. The actuality of the historical development of these *langues* of individual art forms span the whole of human history - including of course that of the development of the bourgeoisie. Expressionism may have been appropriated by a dissatisfied group of middle-class artists in Germany but its inspiration came from an ancient period in Africa whose carvers were not of the "bourgeoisie"! The task of those who continue to find the myth-tableau unacceptable must be to find a relevant language, perjorative still - no one expects them to change their allegiances, only to make *meaning*; on our part we shall endeavour to enshrine the essence of their negativity in appropriate mythologies.

They may however prefer to address an even more fundamental problem of their own situating, one which we have already engaged and which Ronald Barthes, our elected pointer courageously faces even as he pours intellectual scorn on the bourgeoisie of his society. So far the Nigerian (and indeed most of African) leftocracy have shirked this responsibility in self-criticism. They have failed to discriminate even within their ranks the self-seekers, opportunists, the radical chic and the starkly ideological illiterate for whom the company is all and for whom no social responsibility exists outside the social "identifying-with" at repetitious seminars and coffee-rooms, the staff clubs with their holiday resort facilities, beyond the public gesture of association with an equally unproductive left. It is time to ask the rigorous question: what really are you contributing to society while awaiting the revolution?

So - let our colleague from the ivory semiological towers of France have the last word. He is a teacher like us, one who has honestly critiqued his own situation, his relationship to his students, even down to the adoption of a physical stance of the lecturer among his students! Above all however, as a demolition agent of bourgeois mythologies, he has paused to examine whether he, Ronald Barthes, is not part of a new ideo-mythical *langue* which merely occludes the real possibility of an understanding and transmission of a proletarian culture:

Then begins, however, for these procurators of proletarian meaning, a real headache of a problem since their class situation is not that of the proletariat: they are not producers, a negative situation they share with (student) youth - an equally unproductive class with whom they usually form an alliance of language. It follows that the culture from which they have to disengage the proletarian meaning *brings them back round to themselves and not to the proletariat* (my italics). How is culture to be evaluated? According to its origin? Bourgeois. Its finality? Bourgeois again. According to dialectics? Although bourgeois, this does contain progressive elements; but what, at this level of discourse, distinguishes dialectics from compromise? And then again, with what instruments? Historicism, sociologism, positivism, formalism, psycho-analysis? Every one of them bourgeoisified. They are some who finally prefer to give up the problem, to dismiss all "culture" - a course which entails the destruction of all discourse.

It sounds a bleak picture but it need not be. The solution is clearly to begin by creating a new language.

NOTES

1. I am well aware that the French language purist will be greatly disturbed by this assault on French Grammar since the correct expression should be *l'engager*. However, I am attempting here only to convey certain conceptual aids, thought processes or mnemonic cues, and not even the *Académie Française* can legislate against ungrammatical thinking.
2. Dr. Momoh, See Ess: "The Two Faces of Violence"; *"Sunday Times,"* July 20, 1980, page 8.
3. As a contrasting, harmless example of this language of appropriation exchanges on Unife campus, see - arbitrarily selected - Vidal, T.: "Of Rhythm and Metre in Yoruba Songs," Seminar Paper, Department of Music, November 20, 1980.
4. Barthes, R.: *Mythologies*, Trans. Annette Lavers. Granada, 1970.
5. Barthes, R.: *Image-Music-Text*, Essays trans. Stephen Heath, Fontana, 1977.
6. Mailer, N. Harpers Magazine Oct. 1969.
7. Ogunbiyi, Y.: "Opera Wonyosi, A study of Soyinka's *Opera Wonyosi*"; *Nigeria Magazine*, Nos. 130/9 (Note: Opera Wonyosi was performed for the convocation ceremonies, University of Ife, in Dec. 1978. The text is now in press, Rex Collings London).
8. See University of Ife Seminar Paper "Sociology of Literature," uncredited (probably Department of Sociology or Modern Languages), pp. 8/10 for cautionary words to the critic on the subject.
9. At the other end of the ideological spectrum, see Ali Mazrui: "Chaka and Amin, The Warrior Tradition in

African History." One proposes a socio-economic understanding of an actively destroying social deformity, the other (Mazrui) blends it with myth-historic patterns. Both methods of distortion, unlike satire, plead a panacea of intellectual *understanding*, a soporific to the consumer, and a flattering of the type. Given the right socio-economic development and an eradication of the last vestiges of neo-colonialism, all forms of Aminism will vanish from the face of Africa. Empathy with those who experience the *actuality* is crude, unscientific response. I suggest that we ask the opinion of the vanishing breed of Ugandan intelligentsia, to see if they share this luxury of intellectual distancing!

10. Brecht, B.: *The Threepenny Opera* in Manheim, R. and Willett, J., (eds.): *Collected Plays* Vol. 2. Vintage, New York, 1977.
11. Mann, Thomas: *The Magic Mountain*. Penguin.
12. Soul: One of the earliest definitions of soul goes: "The heritage that is black - black authenticity, feeling for one's roots as demonstrated in black music and literature (Clarence Major: Dictionary of Afro-American slang 1980):

A very thin definition but one which serves as a reminder of the origination of "soul." For like all culture-originated metaphors, "soul" is now employed to capture the "ineffable" values of experiencing in other cultures, most significantly in music. Inevitably, categorisation tends to be subjective. Mine includes, among others the music of Amalia Roderiguez, [*Fado*, Portugal), Russian Folk Music, a somewhat smaller proportion of Irish music, Fatima (Senegal), Brahms' German Requiem (unlike Verdi, Faure), Edith Piaf (France), Manitas de Plata (Flamenco guitar, Spain) a vast number of Egba and Ekiti dirges, Nelly Uchendu (Nigeria) (when she is not singing pop) etc. etc. including the majority of the Blues Greats, of whom

Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith and Ella Fitzgerald remain without equal till today. For all these I would also employ, interchangeably with "soul," Barthes' most felicitous expression, "grain".

- 13 Williams, R.: *Marxism and Literature*. OUP, 1977 (See Chapter 7).
- 14 An Annual (Critics) Conference with "Radical Perspectives," usually held at the University of Ibadan and attended by academics from outside the country. Has been running for four or five years.
15. Marquez, G.: *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, trans. Gregory Rabasa. Avon, 1972.
16. They are not all foreigners however - by no means! When the Chairman of Oyo States Arts Council, in collaboration with the State's Broadcasting Organization decides to donate over ₦7,000 to alleviate the suffering of the recent Ogunpa Floods Disaster, the immediate reaction should be good, very good. Alas, this not negligible sum was shelled out, not to the victims, or to the Channelisation Scheme, or to any other remedial purpose but, to the "Elders" of the city specifically for incantations, prayers, sacrifices and other rites of appeasement to the river so it would leave the city of Ibadan alone in the future! The Chairman, it should be noted, is the Head of a Department of a University. This deplorable act of atavism which would serve no purpose whatever except to splash some extra drops of schnapps onto some ageing gums was presumably undertaken to emphasize the KOLSHO-fidelity of the Arts Council.
Yet fast in the wake of this trado-masochism (for surely, even the Arts Council could use ₦5,000 which was its own contribution to the largesse) also comes the recollection of similar rites - with donations, contributions, collection etc. - in the citadels of the world's two greatest superstitions - Christianity and Islam. Civil war, excess sunshine, rigged elections, missing

billions, armed robberies, cholera epidemics....some highly located voice immediately sounds the alert for a week of prayers in church and mosque. At least, Ogunpa River was seen actually doing something nasty! The only objection which can therefore be legitimately raised in this case is that no effort was made to see if the river god would not have preferred, in place of the hard-earned money of the public, the person of the Chairman of the ARTS Council himself. I know a deep spot just below Omitowoju....

- 17 Moore, G.: *Twelve African Authors*, Hutchison, 1980.
- 18 Jeyifo, B.: "Soyinka Demythologised: Notes on a Materialist Reading of *A Dance of the Forests*" etc. etc.; Monogram.
- 19 Soyinka, W.: *Season of Anomy*, Rex Collings, 1978.
- 20 Moore G.: *Against the Titans*, 1979.
- 21 Moore, G.: *Seven African Writers*. Penguin, 1962.
- 22 Mphahlele, E. *The Wanderers*. Macmillan New York, 1971.
- 23 Soyinka, Wole. *Myth. Literature and the African World*. O.U.P. 1976.
- 24 Lindfors, B.: "The Early Writings of Wole Soyinka" in *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, ed., James Gibbs. Three Continents Press, 1980.
- 25 Mphahlele, E. *Down Second Avenue*. Faber and Faber, 1971.
- 26 Barth, E.M.: *Perspectives on Analytic Philosophy*. North-Holland, 1979.
- 27 Russel, B.: *Power*. Unwin London, 64.