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This volume of the *University of Delta Journal of Arts and Humanities (UDJAH)* is the maiden edition of the publication by the Faculty of Arts, University of Delta, Agbor. The journal is birthed after a thorough work by the members of the Editorial Board. The aim of UDJAH is to provide a platform for the promotion of current ideas, thoughts and opinions in the Arts and Arts-related disciplines. It establishes an avenue for scholars and researchers to publish their papers and research findings, working in strict compliance with its mission and vision statements in the Editorial Policy.

UDJAH publishes articles on a variety of topics, contexts and analytical tools that focus on emergent and challenging issues in human relationships and the environment. The articles published in this journal have been adjudged publishable after careful scrutiny and evaluation by professional and seasoned assessors. We are grateful to the assessors and to all who have made out time to contribute to the successful production of this journal.

All the views, conclusions or recommendations expressed in the articles are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff, the Faculty of Arts or the University of Delta, Agbor.

Professor Bibian ANYANWU
Editor-in-Chief

Editorial Policy

University of Delta Journal of Arts and Humanities (UDJAH) is an open-access peer-reviewed indexed journal published annually by the Faculty of Arts, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria. The journal receives well-researched and thoroughly written articles in English or in French by scholars and academics from different parts of the world. It promotes the distinction of current paradigms and topical issues in the Arts, Humanities and related disciplines, favouring intellectual and inter-disciplinary discourses among scholars. Manuscripts are subjected to blind peer review by seasoned and well-experienced persons in the academia. The journal does not accept papers that are already published or are under review elsewhere.

Guidelines for Contributors

UDJAH is an open-access blind peer-reviewed journal designed for the publication of artistic and academic research materials written in English or French. *UDJAH* is published once a year. The objectives are to break fallow grounds in learning and research, reinforce the fabric of our intellectual epistemological foundation and promote the merit and distinction of emerging paradigms in the entire orbit of Arts and other related disciplines. It will also be open to the creative, theoretical and pedagogical responses from the academia and cultural institutions. Articles for publication must adhere strictly to the following guidelines:

- a. The paper should not exceed 15 pages (including tables, illustrations and references).
- b. It must be on A4 paper, double line spaced, MS word, Times New Roman font 12, typed on one side only.
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- d. The page alignment should be justified, and paragraphing should be in the form of indentation of 0.5 inches.
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Trends in Nigerian Literary Drama: A Critical Survey

Augustine O. Eziechine (Ph.D)

Department of Languages

University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State

Email: eziechinaugust@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper is an overview of the trends in Nigerian literary drama since its inception in the early 1950s. The study is basically a survey of the various phases in the development of literary drama in Nigeria. The first phase witnessed the birth of written dramatic tradition found among Onitsha market pamphlets. This was followed by the publication of James Ene Henshaw's flagship drama, *This is Our Chance*. The second phase witnessed the emergence of the first-generation playwrights usually referred to as the conservative generation. They include Wole Soyinka, J.P Clark, Ola Rotimi and Zulu Sofola. The third phase witnessed another group of playwrights, sometimes referred to as the second-generation playwrights. Prominent among these groups of dramatists are Femi Osofisan, Bode Sowande, Olu Obafemi, Tess Onwueme, Tunde Fatunde, etc. Their ideological leaning is skewed towards a socialist cause. The last category of dramatists, which would be referred to in this paper as the third or new generation playwrights include such dramatists as Emeka Nwabueze, Ahmed Yerima, Irene Salami-Agunloye, Toni Duruaku, Sam Ukala, Stella Oyedepo, etc. A critical survey of the works of selected playwrights across the ideological generations under review shows that their works portray the stark realities of their time. The paper observes that the artistic temperament of the new generation of playwrights tilt towards the praxis of radical alternatives advocated by their predecessors, though they deploy sober,

subtle, and scathing satirical approaches as a means of combating social problems.

Keywords: Literary drama, playwrights, tradition, conservative generation, social problems.

Introduction

The dramatic literature of any given period at any stage of development is a reflection and a criticism of the societal values prevalent at the time. Nigerian literary drama from its inception in the 1905s has passed through several stages of development as reflected in the works of different generations of playwrights. The earliest written dramatic tradition in Nigeria was found among Onitsha Market Literature pamphlets. These include novelettes, play-lets, inspirational materials, and other publications written by people with moderate education and sold at the Onitsha market in Nigeria in the 50s and 60s. The books were highly patronized, especially by youths.

The first publication in the series of Onitsha market literature includes *Ikolo the Wrestler* (1947) by Cyprian Ekwensi. However, our concern in this paper is with plays and the best in the series according to Gbilekaa, "are plays, particularly those written by Ogali A. Ogali and Iguh" (19). The most popular of the plays is Ogali's *Veronica my Daughter* (1956), which hit a record sale of 250,000 copies. These plays cover a wide range of themes and subjects, ranging from love themes to family feuds and marriage.

The publication of the first real full-fledged play, *This Is Our Chance* (1956), by the foremost University-based Nigerian playwright, James Ene Henshaw marked the real beginning of Nigerian literary drama. This position is corroborated by Gbilekaa, who states that "the first notable playwright in Nigeria to write in English is Ene Henshaw" (19). His plays project issues that border on the social, cultural and political life of the people. Henshaw's maiden play, *This is Our chance*, treats the problem of inter-tribal wars and village hostilities which slowed down the pace of development in Africa. His other plays include *Children of the Goddess and Other Plays* (1964), and *Enough is Enough* (1976).

Henshaw's plays and those of his contemporaries address social, cultural, and political issues in Nigeria.

The second phase of literary drama in Nigeria witnessed the emergence of the real pioneers of playwriting in Nigeria usually referred to as the first-generation playwrights. They include Wole Soyinka, J.P Clark, Ola Rotimi and Zulu Sofola. These playwrights present plays in which fate and supernatural forces play important roles in the affairs of men. The Nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka, is considered to be the most outstanding personality in this group. He produced and published many plays including *The Lion and the Jewel* (1959), *The Trials of Brother Jero* (1967), *Kongis Harvest* (1964), *A Dance of the Forest* (1960), *Madmen and Specialists* (1970), *Death and the King's Horsemen* (1975), *A Play of Giants* (1984), among others. In his early artistic career, Wole Soyinka established a theatre company known as "The 1960 Masks." The company provided jobs to many theatre practitioners in Lagos, Ibadan and Ife. Thematically, Soyinka's plays can be categorized into two types namely, political plays and social/metaphysical plays.

Lawan Mubarak observes that:

Soyinka's political plays castigate the primitive nature of governance in contemporary Africa, while his social/metaphysical plays explore issues such as the nature of sacrifices, the mysterious supernatural forces, which control the universe, passing from life to death prejudices, religious hypocrisy, and conflicts (273).

Death and the King's Horsemen, for instance, is concerned with the metaphysical realm. It deals with issues of death which is beyond the physical realm. *The Road* on the other round, x-rays the socio-political realities in Nigeria, a situation that precipitated the Nigerian civil war.

However, many critics of the Marxist persuasion have criticized Wole Soyinka's ideological leaning. The critics claim that "Soyinka's society looks for saviours that never come and that his purported saviour is usually conceived in the light of the traditional 'scape-goat' who is expected to carry away the sins of

the society through ritual death." (Aliu, p.8). *The Strong Breed*, for instance, narrates the story of Eman, who lives in a strange village and has to sacrifice his life in order to save the village, a tragedy that ends with an individual sacrifice for the sake of communal cleansing. Wole Soyinka is believed to be an ardent traditionalist, a culturist that emphasizes the heritage, and potency of African culture and tradition in his dramaturgy (Ogundiran, 74). It is pertinent to note, however, that Soyinka's later plays such as *Opera Wonyosi* (1981) and *A Play of Giants* (1984) tend toward socialist ideology. The plays are direct attacks on the institution of power which triumphs in tyranny.

Ola Rotimi is another important personality among the first generation of playwrights. He is undoubtedly one of Nigeria's leading playwrights. An accomplished theatre director and consummate aesthete, Rotimi gained prominence on the Nigerian theatrical stage after the civil war. His contribution to the development of literary theatrical form in Nigeria is immeasurable. Some of his published plays include *The God's Are Not to Blame* (1971), *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* (1977), *Kurunmi* (1971), *Ovonramwen Noghaisi* (1974), *Holden Talks* (1983), *If...* (1983), *Hopes of the Living Dead* (1988). The plays can be classified into historical and non-historical plays. Like Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi bestrides the two generations of Nigerian playwrights. His latter plays such as *If...A tragedy of the Ruled* (1983) and *Hopes of the Living Dead* (1988) elevates him to the same ideological class as Osofisan, Sowande, Omotoso, and Fatunde.

J.P. Clark is another notable playwright of this era. His published plays include *Song of a Goat*, *The Masquerade*, *The Raji*, *Ozidi*, *The Boat*, *The Return Home*, *Full Circle* and *The Wives Revolt*. Clarks' plays are drawn from his native Ijaw environment. Apart from *Ozidi* which takes after the Shakespearean concept of tragedy, the rest of his plays are modeled after the Greek tradition.

Next on the list of the first generation playwrights is Zulu Sofola, who is widely acknowledged as the first Nigerian female playwright. Her published works include: *The Disturbed Peace of*

Christmas (1971), *Wedlock of the Gods* (1972), *King Emene* (1974), *The Wizard of the Law* (1975), *The Sweet Trap* (1977), *Old Wines are Tasy* (1981), and *Memories in the Moonlight* (1986). Her later plays include *The Showers*, *Queen Omu-Ako*, *Lost Drams*, and *The Ivory Tower*. Sofola emerged at the Nigerian literary scene when it was dominated by men. But despite the challenges which faced all female writers, she still made great impact in the literary domain, especially in the dramatic arena.

The next generation of writers usually called the second-generation playwrights are represented by radical dramatists such as Femi Osofisan, Bode Sowande, Olu Obafemi, Tess Onwueme, Tunde Fatunde, etc. These playwrights often express their dismay about the literary preoccupation of the first generation by proffering in their works a new vision of "the society. Their ideological leaning is skewed towards what Ogumba calls "the socialist alternative"(5). They advocate Marxist alternatives as a means of combating social problems. Their belief is that man's problems originate from the man himself and not from any metaphysical realm or god, and only man can, by himself find solutions to these problems. The dramatists in this group reckon on drama as a potent instrument of social mobilization. In other words, they deploy drama as a means of arousing the consciousness of the masses toward positive changes in society.

Olu Obafemi notes that "Femi Osofisan is the most articulate and most ambitious in his use of the subversive potentials of the theatre to shape the audience's perceptive awareness of the social revolution which they find inevitable in the country" (174). Osofisan's first work *kolera Kolej* (1975), is a novel. However, he is principally a dramatist. His plays include: *Oduduwa Don't Go*, *A Restless Run of Locust* (1975), *The Chattering and the Song* (1976), *Who Is Afraid Solaria* (1978), *Once Upon Four Robbers* (1980), *Morountodun* (1982), *No More the Wasted Breed* (1982), *Red is the Freedom Road* (1982), *Farewell to a Cannibal Rage* (1986) *Midnight Hotel* (1986), *Two one Act plays* (1986) among others.

According to Gbilekaa, "Osofisan's plays are about the first body of literary drama that devotes their themes to the problems of

the peasants and the working class" (74). Using drama as a medium of instruction, Osofisan has created a unique theatre where he seeks to rouse his audience into a critical awareness of the prevailing social decadence and thus move them into taking appropriate action. He achieves this by providing critical insight into the basic causes of societal malaise and at the same time proffering suggestions or solutions to the problems. His plays, therefore, in the words of Gbilekaa, "consistently attack all forms of corruption, oppression, injustice and tyranny" (74). *The Chattering and the Song* for instance, deals with a revolt led by a group of enlightened radical youths challenging the forces of rot, corruption, and dictatorship, ending in the offer of a model for a new society that will replace autocracy in all its forms. In *Once Upon Four Robbers*, Osofisan expresses his concern for man to recover his lost humanity in an unjust world. His belief is that dehumanization through a concrete historical fact is not a product of destiny; it is created by man. To Osofisan, the ultimate result of dehumanization is violence. Agho corroborates this position when he argues that "because dehumanization is a distortion of not being fully human, sooner or later, being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so" (73). This is the message conveyed in *Once Upon Four Robbers*, where violence comes in form of armed robbery. Osofisan sees the armed robbers as the product of an unjust society. In other words, when there is joblessness, poverty, and hunger, armed robbery will be inevitable.

Like Osofisan and other radical playwrights, Bode Sowande is concerned with the use of theatre as a weapon for the mass mobilization of the oppressed towards a mass revolution which he considers inevitable in society. He believes that capitalism which supports materialism is the main cause of social ills in the country. He, therefore, uses his plays such as *Farewell to Babylon*, *The Night Before*, and *Sanctus for Woman* among others, to attack the ills, insisting on revolutionary alternatives as a panacea for societal conflicts.

Tess Onwueme is yet another important figure, who also belongs to the second generation of Nigerian dramatists. Like other dramatists in this group, Onwueme concerns herself with the plight

of the oppressed in society. Revolt resounds in almost all her plays. In some of the plays, the revolt is radical as we see in *The Reign of Wazobia*, and in others, the revolt takes the form of protest or firm rejection of authority. In *The Broken Calabash*, she presents a revolt against parental authority with its fatalistic consequences. She also presents a total revolution, an organized opposition to constituted authority in *The Desert Encroaches* where a group wrests power from leadership.

The Third or New Generation Playwrights

The last category of dramatists in Nigerian literary drama is the group that we refer to in this paper as the third or new-generation playwrights also referred to as the 21st century dramatists. In terms of periodization, the third generation (contemporary period) can be traced to the middle of the 1980s, spanning down to the present day. This period is characterized by a very high wave of corruption, political instability, and the economic holocaust. The Nigerian dramatists of this era attempted to address these myriads of issues. Among the new crop of emergent 21st century dramatists are Emeka Nwabueze, Ahmed Yerimo Irene Salami-Agunloye, Toni Duruaku, Sam Ukala, Stella Oyedepo, etc. For these new dramatists, there is a shifting trend from the hitherto militant approach of the second generation to a more humanistic, sober, subtle, and satirical approach. Although the dramatists align with the Marxist dramatic craving for a just socio-political order in the Nigerian system, they adopt a subtle radical temperament. Thus, they reflect the issues of leadership crisis, military misadventure, national unity, and political and ethnic rivalry in their works. In addition, they portray the stark realities of their time, projecting the gamut of societal ills in Nigeria such as corruption and poverty, inadequate health care, environmental problems, and other socio-economic issues. The ideology of the third-generation dramatists in the words of Adeboye, is an expression of individual survivalism, placing emphasis on the survival of the individual in a chaotic society (3).

Emeka Nwabueze

Emeka Nwabueze is one of the eloquent voices of the third-generation Nigerian drama. His creative prowess is made manifest in his highly appraised works such as *A Parliament of Vultures* (2000), *Echoes of Madness* (2001), *Fate of a Maiden* (2003), *The Dragons Funeral* (2014), *Lachrymose* (2014) and *Rain Storm in a Desert* (2018). His earlier plays include *Spokesman for the Oracle* (1986), *Guardian of the Cosmos* (1990), *A Dance of The Dead* (1991), and *When the Arrow Rebounds* (1992). However, we shall be examining *A Parliament of Vultures* in this study. Emeka's *A Parliament of Vultures* is a hilarious political satire against the corrupt performance of the legislature in Nigeria. The play also ridicules the poor political culture in Nigeria which allows illiterates and morally decadent individuals the liberty to hold important leadership positions in Government. In the words of Nagozi Anyachonkeya, *A Parliament of Vultures* is a scathing satire that "dramatically unveils the regrettable gamut of corruption and hypocrisy, that polarize the political atmosphere in post-colonial Africa (p.125).

Emeka Nwabueze in this play paints unapologetically a picture of the irresponsible and unpatriotic parliamentarians who pervade the political landscape in Nigeria. Nwabueze describes the unpatriotic parliamentarians as vultures. This is no doubt an apt description of the parliamentarians. Like vultures, they are greedy, voracious, and insatiable. They prey on the people, scavenging them to death. The masses are scavenged to death by the parliamentary vultures who also ensure that even the carcasses of the people are consumed as well.

A vulture is also a dirty and loathsome bird of prey. In most African communities, it is regarded as a bird of evil omen. It is taboo to kill or eat such a bird. It is in light of these, therefore, that the playwright uses the term vultures to symbolize all the evils associated with the parliamentarians in Nigeria. Examples of such parliamentarians who are neck-deep in socio-political evils are Madam Omeaku, Reverend Jossy, and Habamero. Madam Omeaku is an illiterate and uncultured street-side food and liquor seller, who became a parliamentarian through dubious and crooked

means. Nwabueze reveals how socio-political decadence has taken firm root in Nigerian politics to the extent that Omeaku's relevant experience and credentials are not considered determinants in making her suitable for the post she was seeking. Rather it was a matter of who outwits the other, by any means such as the ability to slander, blackmail, buy most voters and rig the election (Aniago, 69).

Madam Omeaku having been declared the winner in the rigged election attempts to introduce her daughter to her amorous lifestyle as a way of positioning her on the path to her kind of prosperity. She even goes on to goad the speaker into buying a brand new car for her daughter, Nkechi, a school leaver who is barely nineteen. But Jossy advises her when she begins the goading.

JOSSY: Let's not rush into it. Let's give it a thought. Let her use a taxi for the moment... (Vultures, 31)

Madam: Why? She needs her own car.

HABAMERO: (To Nkechi). Take those papers. Give it to the director of the establishment... he will give you a brand new Honda Accord for your use (Vultures, 31). The Parliament's plan for a thanksgiving service is merely an opportunity to show off and squander the nation's hard-earned money as can be seen in the following discussions.

HABAMERO: let's discuss the thanksgiving vote, then.

BROWN: I suggest ten million naira.

Madam: For what? Are we teachers? This parliament cannot afford to be as miserly as teachers. Nonsense! (Vultures, 71). Habamero concludes the debate after a brief deliberation.

HABAMERO: You have seen; Honourable Otoibo, that ten million will not be enough to take care of this business. The bulk of the money will be disbursed through the payment of inconvenience allowances to members for attending the thanksgiving service... I, therefore, approve the sum of two billion naira for this purpose. Approved?

ALL: (except Parkers and Otoibo) Approved! (Vultures, 71).

All through the text, members continue to manifest unabated, the quest for wealth and material acquisition.

Sam Ukala

Another important figure in the 21st century dramatic arena is Professor Sam Ukala. He was an academic, versatile playwright and literary theorist who developed the aesthetic principle of folkism into an enduring dramatic form. Until his death in September 2021, he was a Professor of Theatre Arts at Delta State University, Abraka from where he retired before his death. Most of Ukala's plays dramatize a parable of an ailing society where there is a flagrant abuse of power by the leadership. Ukala deploys the use of folktales to depict the social, economic, and political ills in Nigeria. His plays highlight the issues of misrule, injustice, oppression, exploitation, conflicts, and power struggle which characterize the leadership experience in most African nations. In the words of Agho,

Ukala is decidedly partisan in his vision, he encourages the oppressed and exploited peoples of the earth to strive to unsettle their oppressors as a first step towards achieving for themselves freedom and respect. (9)

In his play, *The Placenta of Death*, Ukala transmutes a folktale on the theme of misrule, high-handedness, rivalry, and other such related human weakness into a powerful parable for characterizing the ill health of the Nigerian polity. The play unveils the dichotomized nature of

the relationship between the northern and the southern regions of Nigeria, where the nation's wealth in the words of Agho, "is piped from the South where it is generated to the arid north where it is enjoyed". (9)

The *Placenta of Death*, according to the author is dedicated to the exploited people of the earth. It is "a bold and powerful replay of the dilemma of our national life, showing the way forward to the enslaved and oppressed" (Agho, 10). The play is set in Owodoland, where Owodo III, the paramount Oba, oversees the affairs of his

people and those of the Dein tribe, an enslaved people whose enslavement dates from the time of owodo's forebears.

In a nutshell, *The Placenta of Death* x-rays the gamut of socio-political evils in Nigeria of Ukala's time, such as enslavement, misrule, exploitation, inequality, etc. and offers revolution as a way forward towards engendering the virtues of equity, justice, and respect for all irrespective of class, wealth or tribe.

In *Akpakaland*, Ukala has made a subtle call for the eradication of all bourgeoisie forms in our society and for the enthronement of an egalitarian society. The society depicted in *Akpakaland* is stratified into the province of the rich and that of the poor, and there are different laws for different classes of people. Akpaka, the depraved dictator marries the two provinces to give a false impression of equity and balanced disposition. The citizens particularly from the province of the poor have no freedom of speech. For instance, speaking the truth just as Aseki has done could land one in prison.

Akpaka is proud of his status and boasts of his dictatorial powers. He tells Prede, "... Fulama does not make decrees for Akpakaland . I do" (54) No man, irrespective of his status dares question Akpaka's opinion and his decision whether right or wrong. Although Aseki is a minister in his government, he does not hesitate to get him incarcerated for daring to voice out the following disturbing truths:

The president's wives are human beings in their own right...
When one carves the head of the gorilla, one rubs one's own
head. For, isn't the gorilla's head much like a man's?

As rightly observed by Onyemuche *et al*, "the imprisonment of Aseki is an attempt to muffle any dissenting voice; it is an expression of the privation of the right to expressing one's discontents in civilized society"(169). The imprisonment also sheds more light on the issue of inequality and discrimination in Akpakaland, whereas it was, people from the province of the poor cannot be given equal treatment with the people from the province of the rich, their status notwithstanding. Worse still, the poor and

the slaves are often reminded of their status and their ugly historical past. For instance, Akpaka tells Aseki bluntly, "we all know where you come from" (46).

Ukala's revolutionary tendency begins to manifest at the scene of the great public farce, where Akpaka orders his wives to be denuded in public as a way of finding out who among his wives has a tail. Iyebi, who has been ordered to start the immoral show strongly resisted the order, poised for a fight. Iyebi's courageous act arouses the consciousness of the oppressed toward a revolution. The "strip naked show" culminates in the perversion of justice as Fulama's culpability is disclosed leading to the final revolution which claimed the lives of Fulama, Ogunpa, Iya Fulama, Umal, Seotu, Guards and Akpaka himself.

Irene Salami-Agunloye

Irene Salami-Agunloye is another notable third generation playwright whose profile is rising each day on the horizon of drama, especially feminist dramaturgy in Nigeria. Her plays include: *Emotan*, *The Queen Sisters*, *More Than Dancing*, *Sweet Revenge* and *Idia*. In these plays, Salami-Agunloye challenges the forces of oppression and all other forms of injustice perpetrated against women in particular and humanity in general. *Emotan* and *The Queen Sisters* are plays based on the history of the throne of Benin Kingdom.

More Than Dancing is the playwright's attempt to rekindle the revolutionary consciousness of Nigerian women to rise up to the challenges of our time. This is an obvious shift in the playwright's creative adventure from historical documentation to radical political activism. The playwright has made a political statement with the play, namely: that Nigerian women are capable of doing greater things than merely dancing at party rallies. The play opens with Madam Bisi, the leader of the women's wing of the United People's Liberation Party, protesting against the marginalization of women. When the women's dance troupe is invited to perform, she rebukes them thus:

Bisi: Stop drumming! Stop dancing! Stop immediately! Stop! Stop, I say!!! Enough of dancing! Enough! Enough! Year in and year out, primaries come and party elections go, all we do is dance. Is dancing all we can do? Is that all we are known for?.... Look at the high table (points at the top row where dignitaries are seated). How many women do you see up there? ... Look at us.... Dancing and collecting two bags of rice, one bag of salt, one carton of magi cubes and two wrappers to be shared among thirty-five women! Women, these are distractions. (p. 1)

She disperses the dancers and the party elders are angry with her. The women later meet to appraise the action of the previous day and most women support her and a few are skeptical about the radical nature of their action. They go ahead to select Professor Nona Odaro as their presidential candidate with a promise to support her in the election. Professor Nona goes home and critically considers the decision of her fellow women and suddenly falls into a trance and the past Nigerian heroines appear to her and encourage her to lead the women. Suddenly she wakes up and resolves to carry on the struggle. She declares:

Nona: I am ready! Here am I. I am ready to go all the way (p.29).

The action of women has caused some concern among men. They also meet to re-strategize. They begin to complain thus:

Balat: The women have carried out their threat. They have gone ahead to present their own presidential candidate to the chairman.

Sonsare: They say they are tired of dancing. They claim they have been marginalized (Pp. 30-31).

They also make fun of the women's demands. Hakeem advises them to allow the women a chance to rule since they have also come of age, but his advice is not taken seriously by the men.

At another meeting, the men announce that they have accepted to consider Nona for the position of Vice president, but the women still do not accept the offer. They insist that it is either:

Nona for president or nobody at all. The women go ahead to paste their candidate's posters all over the place. Finally, some men join professor Nona's campaign train. Voting takes place and Nona, the female presidential candidate, emerges as the winner with a very wide margin. In the words of Tse, "this is a clear indication that no matter how long it takes, no matter how rough the road is, Nigerian women will one day have cause to smile and as such should not give up"(118). The people voted for the right candidate, the candidate of their choice.

Conclusion

This paper has surveyed the trend of literary drama in Nigeria from the budding days of playwriting to the present. The survey has shown that the works of Nigerian dramatists of any given period at any stage of development are basically reflections and criticism of the societal values prevalent at the time. The first generation playwrights present plays in which fate and supernatural forces play important roles in the affairs of men. The second group of dramatists often express their dismay about the literary pre-occupation of the first generation by proffering in their works a new vision of the society-- a socialist vision. The third or the 21st generation playwrights also pursue the praxis of radical alternative in their artistic expedition. However, even though they advocate the Marxist trend in their works, they deploy sober, subtle and satirical approach towards solving Nigeria's problems.

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