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CULTURAL REJUVENATION THEATRE MANAGEMENT & PERFORMANCE AESTHETICS

A Festschrift In Honour of Muiyiwa Awodiya



Edited By
Chris Ugolo
Okey Okwechime
Nicholas Akpore

Cultural Rejuvenation, Theatre Management and Performance Aesthetics

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Clement Chukwura Idegun Ph.D.
2/7/18.

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Headmark Publishers

16, Stadium Road, Benin City, Nigeria.

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FOREWORD

I am very honoured and privileged to write this foreword to Prof. Muiyiwa Peter Awodiya's *Festschrift*. Primarily, it is dedicated to the occasion of his **Seventieth Birthday**, on the eve of his retirement from the services of the University of Benin after a glorious and meritorious service to mankind. In spite of the Biblical injunction that there is a time for everything and "what will be will be", I must confess that we all in the Department of Theatre Arts and Mass Communication, University of Benin, were not prepared for this: It's like a "bolt from the blue". Personally, I am sincerely pained that Prof. M. P. Awodiya's time has come to move on from the University of Benin, where he has spent a greater part of his life. However, the consolation is that "Papa Awo" as I fondly call him, has paid his dues and his contributions to the growth and development of the Department of Theatre Arts and Mass Communication, are unquestionable and history will always remember him positively.

Therefore, the present collection of essays and tributes from students, friends and professional colleagues (from across the country) in this book are great testimonies to Prof. Awodiya's contributions to theatre practice and research. They also reflect the way he is perceived, loved and accepted by his professional colleagues, scholars and students. In all his time at the University of Benin, Prof. Awodiya literarily engaged himself with scholastic research and teaching, especially in the subject area of Theatre Management and Arts administration. He also took time off in his career, specifically from 1992 to 1999 to manage MUSON, a Musical and Civic Centre in Lagos. These experiences, both academic and administrative have imparted greatly on Professor Awodiya's students and colleagues. It is in this light that his recent book, *Perspectives on Theatre Management, Arts Administration and Entrepreneurship* is a worthwhile and befitting parting gift to both his former and present students and colleagues. It will also advance the national conversation on the role of the creative industry in national development and how the moribund and decaying cultural centres across the country could be revitalized and repositioned for economic viability and educational purposes. Professor Awodiya's book would no doubt advance the debate and contribute new vistas to the way forward.

As a mark of honour, appreciation and commendation for Prof. Awodiya's contributions and services to the theatre discipline and the Arts community in general, twenty-one scholarly essays and nine emotive and thought provoking tributes are published in this *Festschrift*. From Austin Asagba's "Understanding Africa through Film: Thoughts and reflections on Nollywood" to Peter Omoko's "Treachery and the Tragedy of the self", in Zulu Sofola's *The Wizard of Law*, the essays explore different aspects of contemporary Nigerian Film, Theatre, Culture and Performance. Stanley Oherhen's essay, "Professionalism, Principle, Passion and the Man Muiyiwa Awodiya and the MUSON Centre Antecedents", particularly stands out and will make interesting reading to readers who are interested in Professor Awodiya's ideas and experimentations in new forms of art management practice and techniques. In all, the essays are topical, incisive and thought provoking. The tributes are apt, revealing and capture in perspective the impact and legacies of Prof. M. P. Awodiya on staff, friends and students in the last forty or more years. The tributes too provoke and evoke memories and nostalgia - from Marcel Okhakhu's candid and eloquent write up to the celebrative tributes by former and present students, the contributions depict Prof. M. P. Awodiya as a well celebrated and loved academic, teacher, arts

administrator and professional colleague. As he prepares to leave the University of Benin where he has worked and lived for more than four decades, we wish him well and may the good Lord continue to nourish and protect him.

Prof. A. O. Asagba

*Department of Theatre Arts and Mass Communication,
University of Benin.*

INTRODUCTION

Cultural Rejuvenation, Theatre Management and Performance Aesthetics "is a festschrift in honour of Nigeria's foremost Theatre Management guru, Professor Muyiwa Peter Awodiya who is retiring (though certainly not tired) from the services of the University of Benin, Department of Theatre Arts. The essays here have been carefully put together to reflect the many aspects of this man whose contributions to theatre scholarship and development in Nigeria is as varied as the theatre discipline itself. Apart from Theatre Management, where Awodiya is a pioneer Professor and has made great contributions with his landmark books: *Managing Arts Institutions in Nigeria* and *Perspectives in Theatre Management, Arts Administration and Entrepreneurship in Nigeria*" Muiyiwa has contributed greatly to Nigerian Arts and Culture industry. He is also a prolific theatre Director and great critic focusing on the plays and performance aesthetics of Femi Osofisan.

The articles in this book have been divided into four sections. In section one, we have essays on Arts and Culture, an area where Professor Awodiya wrote his inaugural lecture. This section contains eight articles that include (Dr.) (Mrs.) Josephine Abbe's paper on "Our Culture, Our Pride, Our Heritage"; Owens Eromosele's paper on "Promoting Cultural Identity Through Costume and Make-up"; Dr. Nwabuzor and Akpore's article on "Nollywood Films: A Catalyst for Cultural Development and Nation Building"; Phillander Okhaifo's "Arts and Culture as Paradigm for Youth Empowerment and Curbing Restiveness"; Dr. Peter Aibevba's "The role of Arts in resolving the schizophrenic cultural Dilemma of the African identity", Jamny Guanah's "Potentials, Problems and Prognosis of Culture and Tourism in Nigeria's Economy", Chuks Omesah and Odigwe's paper on "Culture at Risk: the Role of the Artist" and Ekevere Francis and Ikoro's paper 'Our Shrinking Shrines and expanding Alters: A Critical study of Contemporary Trends in Religious Practice in Nigeria which concludes the section.

Section two contains essays on Awodiya and Arts Management in Nigeria. The articles here include Dr. Stanley Ohenhen and Oluwafemi Jacob's "Managing Africa's Performing Arts and Cultural Heritage for the Continent's Socio-Economic Developmental: Interrogating Production Management Prospects in Contemporary Nigerian Theatre, Bolanle Austen Peter's *Wakaa The Musical as Case study*" by Maureen Okwulugo and Siler Ojieson, John Bardi's, "The Relevance of Total Quality Management (TQM) Practice in Revival and Establishment of Professional Theatre Troupe in Nigeria, and Stanley Ohenhen's "Professionalism, Principle, Passion and the Man Muiyiwa Awodiya and the Muson Centre antecedents".

Section three contains nine essays on media, performance and theater aesthetics. They include Prof. Austin Asagba's thought provoking paper on "Understanding Africa through film: Thoughts and Reflections on Nollywood"; Stephen Okpanah's "Urhobowood: Towards a Popular Film Culture in Urhoboland", "Digital Technology in Theatrical Productions: Uniben Theatre as Case Study" by Akpughe Mudiaga and Emmanuel, Chinweke, Solomon Ekeke's "Ola Rotimi's Directorial style"; Communication in Modern Theatre Directing: Two Faces on the Nigerian Stage" by Akpore Nicholas, Joseph Idogho Agosure's "Demystifying Arts and Theatre Criticism in the Academe: Awodiya's Perspectives on Femi Osofisan's creative works as Paradigm"; Dr. Clement Idegwu's paper on "Man, an

AmputeeTimed for Long Distant Walk: A Critical Perspective on Ahmed Yerimah's "The Bishop and The Soul"; Clement Idegwu and Kennedy Edegbe's "Stella 'Dia Oyedepo and the inevitable complementarities of man and woman: A critical perspective on the Rebellion of the Bumpy-Chested (A feminist manifesto), and finally, Peter Omoko's essay "Treachery and Tragedy of the Self in Zulu Sofola's the Wizard of law".

Section four contains tributes and Reminiscences on the man Muyiwa Awodiya. The book is indeed a rich collection that theatre scholars will find very useful for research in Theatre Management, Arts and Culture, and performance Aesthetics. In times like this your library will not be complete without a copy of this book.

Professor Chris E. Ugolo

Professor of African Dance & Choreography,

Dept of Theatre Arts, University of Benin, Benin City,

Nigeria.9th August, 2017

MAN, AN AMPUTEE TIMED FOR A LONG DISTANT WALK: A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AHMED YERIMA'S THE BISHOP AND THE SOUL

Clement Chukwuka IDEGWU, Ph.D

Abstract

Life poses a fundamental question to man for either through divine conspiracy? or man's deliberate pursuit of illusions and an attempt to run away from his shadow ends up not knowing whom he is, why he is where he is, where he ought to be and how to go about being whom he should be. Man consciously or unconsciously complicates his predicament as his choice of vocation or calling and his happiness quest make him very vulnerable to the uncanny attacks of the powers that contend for his being. His state is very pathetic judging from the fact that the battle for his being is very fierce. This article therefore, is an attempt to explicate that man is eternally damned whichever of these powers he aligns with. He is at a cross-road and either way he goes he is prisoner. Ahmed Yerima's The Bishop and the Soul will be used to screen this concept.

Key Words: Vulnerable, uncanny attacks eternally damned, at a cross-road, a prisoner

INTRODUCTION

Life is always a very difficult mission, more especially if one fails to understand, accept and manifest one's personal mission. Most people do not. A lot follow family traditions or religion rather than finding out what their missions are, and pursue same with the courage and vigour they deserve. Some may identify it but may not completely manifest it because of the issues of life. There are also some who do not have the foggiest notion of what their missions in life are. This set of people do not understand the why, how, where and who of life and even give birth to people who become more confused about the affairs of life than they were. And like their parents, they experience despair, sadness and are infuriated, which are confirmations that something vital may be lacking. When one neglects one's uniqueness for whatever reason or reasons, one has less of one's true self to draw upon for years, if not throughout life. It is very clear that when one concentrates one's energy pursuing a path not carved out for one, by life, despair sadness and anger becomes one's companion. These are undeniable indicators that there is a lack in one's life. To neglect one's true calling is to neglect one's peerlessness. This creates a vacuum for one has less of one's true self to draw upon for fulfillment in life, perhaps throughout life if nothing is done to be what and where one should be.

Pondering on why life could be most unfair, convinces one that the mind is the greatest battle field, and that more often than not the powers that be, that which man greatly lacks knowledge of, and what it takes to confront, shapes the affairs of man, and imprisons him eternally for whichever of the great divides one falls, is a form of incarceration. Hence, the state of Bishop in Ahmed Yerima's The Bishop and The Soul seems a form of prison; his helplessness, Bill W, in *Game to Believer the Spiritual adventure of A A*, as experienced by individual members, was acted as saying:

*You are not asking yourself, as all of us must : "who am I"...
"Where am I"... Whence do I Go?" The process of enlightenment is
usually slow, But in the end, our seeking always brings a finding.
These great mysteries are after all, enshrined in complete
simplicity (Letter 1955:53)*

Where the knowledge of the mysteries of life are not deciphered, or a wrong interpretation is given and applied, fulfillment is unattainable. It is made more complex when those saddled with the responsibility of birthing one into this callous world either for lack of knowledge or otherwise chose a path themselves and put the infant child on a canoe and without a companion and a compass the child into a stormy sea.

This article, therefore, is to explicate that Bishop in Ahmed Yerima's *The Bishop and The Soul* is indeed one who has been incapacitated from the mother's womb, boothless, or how else could one explain a situation where one has no say to the why, where and how one is "tumbled forth into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace" (1982:552) as Salman Rushdie posits in *Midnight's Children*. Rushdie in the above summation argues that one finds it difficult to live and die in peace. Clement Chukwuka Idegwu in his debut novel, *Broken Dreams* gives credence to our argument in this discourse that human life on earth is like a fly in a spiders web, an exercise in futility by stating in the last sentence of the novel: "God, another broken dream?" she asked in pain." (2000:113).

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan literary artist and prophet who is greatly committed to the struggle of the people sees literature as "a means of reflecting, exposing society's economic structure, class formation, conflict and contradictions, class power, political and cultural struggle arising from the antagonism between those that are dying and those that are pointing to the future". (1981:24).

A careful reflection of Ngugi's explication above, succinctly explains that literature reflects and exposes society's contentions and mismatch or inconsistencies which impair them from being whom they want to be no matter how much they strive to. The truth about this kind of literature is that it helps the people to see clearer than they have ever done. This ultimately helps them to comprehend the whys and hows of their lives to an appreciable level. Yerima justifying the relevance of this kind of arts posits that "the human relationship and the power politics which some writers strive to reflect in their work is invariably linked to the desire to achieve social change within the society" (1988:57) Olu Obafemi in his contribution to this testament opines that Literature "must therefore be such that it should help the ordinary people to push history forward through clarity, passion, identification with and intervention in the objective lives and living conditions of the majority of a given people". (1986:46).

This is what Ahmed Yerima sets out to do in *The Bishop and The Soul*, an exploration of the absolute helplessness of man before the powers that contend for the rulership of his being. Yerima expounds this state through the lives of Bishop and Sister Vero. The following dialogues helps in illuminating this concept.

- Vero: I am sorry sir. My name is Vero. I am a Church worker. I am also a Prayer Worrior. And sometimes the spirit of God manifests itself in me and I speak in tongues and see things.
- Bishop: Like you did just now.
- Vero: Yes Sir. Sorry... Your Grace.
- Bishop: Never mind what you call me at this time, just go on.
- Vero: I am a trained nurse but I have not been lucky getting a job. One day a voice told me that my salvation was in the Church. I went, and immediately, I was accepted as a Church worker. There was no money, but I was fulfilled. I gave my life to God's work, and yet the yearning gap in me was begging me to find happiness and joy in a man. Many Christian brothers had told me that the spirit had spoken to them, and I believed them, only to be used by such brothers. I even lived with one

- for a year, and when it was time for us to get married, he threw my things out. I became desolate, sad and a figure of pity. Until one day, I heard you preach. And as you placed the sacrament in my mouth, I looked up and there you were, my little voice told me you were the chosen one for me.
- Bishop: Ave Maria! Disillusionment! Blasphemy.
- Vero: I thanked my good Lord and proceeded to find opportunity to let you know the work God had for you. I had wanted to tell you four Sundays ago, but you were too busy. And you did not wait after the Mass, instead I saw you enter a car with a lady sitting at the back. You had your hand on her shoulder and she rested her head on your chest, I wept. Jesus why? (24-25).

Yerima's graphic expositions above will help us advance our argument that human beings are trapped in a spider's web – the conflicts and contradictions – which make them preys to the powers that contend for their being. Sister Vero's anguish of being used and dumped by brethren who claimed the spirit spoke to them, right before the officiating priest; her revelational knowledge that the Bishop is the chosen one for her and that a voice told her so, the Bishop sitting with a lady at the back of a car, his hand on her shoulder and her head resting on his chest, her honesty in her explanation of her predicaments in life and the church making a church worker post-haste are very relevant in our analysis of man's helplessness.

Gbemisola Adeoti in *An Exploratory study of Yerima's Drama in Muse and Mimes; Critical Perspective on Ahmed Yerima's Dream* comments on Sister Vero's love for the Bishop and her argument that the Bishop is the chosen one for her. According to Adeoti:

Sister Vero, an admirer, out of frustration from unrequited love or mere fantasy decides to eliminate the Bishop. According to her she saw a vision in which it was revealed to her that you (The Bishop) shall have a child and that I shall be your vessel for the child (23) If the vision is true, how can it be fulfilled in the face of the oath of celibacy of the Catholic Bishop? This is a mere personal wish masquerading as divine injunction. When seduction fails, she aims for destruction of the object of her unfulfilled desire. She stabs him (2007: 26)

Adeoti's view above is arguable. It is true that there are situations where ladies fall in love with Catholic Priests and try to seduce them, it is also true that it may be due to fantasy while they claim God speaks to them, but Sister Vero's case is free from these insinuations. Sister Vero's claim that she had a vision where it was revealed to her that the Bishop is her chosen one and that through her the Bishop will have a son who will be great is not something that could be pushed aside as a mere personal wish as Adeoti claims and wants us to believe. The truthfulness and fulfillment of such a vision is possible to a very great extent because the question is in whose ministry is the Bishop and where is he supposed to minister? Is he willed for Catholicism or for Esuism?

It is on record as stated by the playwright that the Bishop at birth was dedicated and consecrated to Esu. Etop Akwang an analyst of the Bishop's tribulations corroborates our argument by insisting that the Bishop's "present travails in the play seem to be rooted in the innocent childhood initiation into the cult of Esu" (39). So, the Bishop is covenanted whether the Bishop was conscious or unconscious during the dedication and consecration is not an issue. The contention is that a covenant has been established. By this covenant, can Esu not

be angry that his priest has abandoned his cause and mete out the desired punishment? Iyagana, Bishop's aunty explains Sister Vero's search for the Bishop and her attempt to stab him when the Priest fails to yield to the wills of the gods (Esu).

Bishop: Mama, you torment me

Iyagana: In shame shall I leave you then. The torment in your soul
has just started. What Esu cannot get he destroys. Esubiyi, disown you (55)

So, if Bishop fails to serve at the altar he was dedicated and consecrated to, there is the tendency for destruction to befall him. The researcher knows that it could be argued that the Bishop must have undergone deliverance during his period in the seminary, but the question remains who conducted the deliverance? This is because only the redeemed can redeem others. The Bishop himself may be aware of his predicament but decides to wave it aside. It is at the end of the play that there seems to be symbolic cleansing. Adeoti also affirms that "the play ends with a symbolic cleansing of the Bishop and the affirmation of his Christian essence. He emerges a new being, having shed the old garment. According to the stage direction, he takes on a 'clean' gown to cover the old life of weakness and emptiness", (28). However it is our position that even the so called symbolic cleansing carried out by Emmanuel with whom the Bishop contends is not better than what must have been done initially if any was carried out. Emmanuel urges the Bishop to "sleep father", (57) the same state of helplessness and emptiness when the actions of the play began.

So, if Sister Vero has been chosen for the Bishop by the gods, Esu, there is the tendency for her to suffer just as the Bishop, and from unrequited love occasioned by Esu until her roles as an instrument of Esu are accomplished: getting married to Bishop and having a successor for the Bishop, later in life. It is also necessary for us to examine Vero's statement that many of the Christian brothers had deceived her and had canal knowledge of her to the extent that she lived with one for a year only to be thrown out of the house when it was time for them to get married. These brothers are Catholics but not Christians. The Bishop could be a Catholic even a Catholic Priest but not a Christian. Perhaps one might say without fear of contradiction that David Yallop's postulation in his text, *In God's Name* where he explicates the murder of Pope John Paul I, Albino Luciani "only thirty three days after his election" is very relevant at this point of our discourse. According to him:

"it will be seen by some as an assault on the Roman Catholic faith in particular and on Christianity in general. It is neither of these. To a degree it is an indictment of specifically named men who were born Roman Catholics but who have never become Christians. As such this book is not an attack on 'The Faith' of the Church's devout millions who follow it. What they hold sacred is too important to be left in the hands of men who have conspired to drag the message of Christ into the muddy market place - a conspiracy that has met with frightening success (1984/2007: XVI - XVII).

So, that one is a Catholic, a Bishop, a General overseer of a church does not necessarily mean being a Christian. Could the Bishop be a bishop without being a Christian? Certainly, Yes. When Sister Vero Sang:

I love the man of Galilee
For he has done so very much for me,
He has forgiven me all my sins and sent
my sweet Bishop to me,
I love that man of Galilee, (28)

All that the Bishop could say as he eats the banana given him by Vero is "(To her) your song touches my heart, and swells my spirit, and like the human flesh, you rob my ego, and I almost forget who I am" (28) the Bishop may not have forgotten whom he was, he only forgot whom he had pretended to be. This is because Vero tells him to "forget yourself for me my Bishop. Just this once and no harm will be done. Forget yourself for me today (she hugs him and takes him by the hand walking him to the bed) just this once your grace, grant me this peace, just this once" (28)

That sister Vero takes him to bed and lays him down," and "climbs the Bishop" says much of whom he is, where he is and where he should be. It could be said that the Bishop shout of "Father Emmanuel save me" (28) could be an afterthought and on sensing the footsteps of people for how comes that father Paul and Emmual came in at the same time.

Another instance that gives credence to this could be seen in Vero's complain about the Bishop in a car "sitting at the back" and his hand on a woman's shoulder while "she rested her head on your (Bishop's) chest." (25) The Bishop's reply: A rich lady ... oh ... Chief Mrs ... she is a young widow ... we were going to make arrangement for her husband's funeral" (25) is disturbing. So, what funeral arrangement could the priest be involved in for them to sit like that and without the family members of the widow in her prime or her deceased husband. Even, the Bishop's prayer in earlier scene of the play as "he pulls her to the feet" telling her "get up woman you tickle my senses. I am too weak for all this..." and his prayers, "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Father we your children are gathered here today, to beg thee to come and give us the peace which we seek Oh Lord", (22) is very significant to our discourse.

The Bishop's prayer above all things, demonstrates the magnitude of his restlessness. There is no way the Bishop can find peace in the church; his search for calmness with his soul will remain elusive; and his quest for the whys, where's, what's, and who's of life will end in futility just as his very being, because either through ignorance or his late mother's deliberate tutelage he has abandoned his duty post.

Yerima's thematic construct in *The Bishop and The Soul* is a very serious issue that has caused pains and the act ongoing in the life of many in today's world. The playwright has gone beyond mirroring the society. He has done what Wole Soyinka in his prefatory note to his Opera *Wonyosi* tries to explicate. To him "art should expose, reflect indeed, magnify the decadent, rotted underbelly of a society that has lost its direction" (1988:298). Soyinka's indisputable opinion above is like J.W.Kariruhe's argument. Kariruhe's explicitly states that:

"What is required of every work of art - and has always been required - is that it's parts are synthesised and harmonised to form a sublime whole that is more than simply the sum of the parts. The words of arts should always be in a state of perfect equilibrium providing us an image and a model rather than a mirror - image of the society (1983:13)

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bishop: | Mama (Calmly) I beg you. In the name of Jesus. In the name of whatever you believe in, leave Dele alone |
| Iyagana: | Dele? Who spoke about Dele? The family have met and we decided that you should succeed papa Orimade as the next Chief Priest of Esu (kneels) Awo mio. |
| Bishop: | Iyagana, do you know who I am? |
| Iyagana: | Yes. You are Esubiyi, the son of Esugbayi and I am Iyagana the junior sister to your late mother. |
| Bishop: | I know who you are, but you do not know who I am. I am the servant of the Almighty God, the creator of |

or otherwise only to be converted to another religion which she sees as being of higher power or value? Did she understand the implications? If she did why not ensure that the initial covenant is broken and the relationship totally severed rather than allow his son to become football in the hands of the powers that be for a test of their supremacy. This is why Bishop's mother thinking her spirit can rescue his son is an exercise in futility.

Bishop: My eyes are open but I see Iyabiya she calls out to me at the threshold. What am I to do Mama?

Iyagana: Iyabiya ke? Lalu o.
Lalu, my sister mariya approaches to save her son, quick Lalu. A Mother's have worries me quick Lalu. Lalu quick

The Bishop: the pattern of her tender feet.

Iyagana: Mariya leave him alone, he is our own now.

You can't hide him this time. He is now ours

Truly, for how long can she hide him. Not even when she, herself is dead. Which power will she use? It is a known fact in African tradition that the dead has a way of passing information to the living to ensure their safety. Is she then a traditionalist in the real sense of the word, trying to save her son and at the same a catholic even in death though not a Christian as expressed by David Yallop *In God's Name*? This is why Bishop's proclamation that he is a Christian is ineffective for only the fervent prayer of the saints are heard and answered by the Christian God.

Man's perennial attempt to redefine his existence and participate in the formation and actualisation of his destiny appears to be consistently frustrated by a cast-iron determinism is two-faceted. On the one hand tragedy is imposed by motivelessly malign existential or supernatural agencies, but on the other hand, man's nature is partly responsible for misfortune. (Edjerem 2002:98).

Edjerem in the above statement tries to explain why man is handicapped in his attempt to make a meaning out of his earthly existence. The frustration is always there no matter how much he tries. Hence Clement Chukwuka Idegwu corroborates our argument by positing that "every attempt man makes to define his existence is like a downturn journey into the abyss – a fly, in a Spider's web, flaps its wing hoping to escape the icy hand of death, only to get more trapped. Death traps are attractively-structured so that man can walk into them thinking they will be blissful" (2010:167). Perhaps one can imagine one whose hands and leg are amputated and made to go to a distant farm to work.

This could be the reason the Bishop remains in a state of helplessness throughout the text. "At the beginning of the play, the Bishop is on the bed sleeping. He has a bandaged head. He lets out sharp yell" (9), an indication of pains. At the end of the play we see Father Emmanuel pour "some water in the kettle and washes the face, the head and feet of the Bishop. He pulls out a drawer and takes a clean gown. He helps the Bishop wear it and takes the Bishop to bed" (52), a sign of impotency. He further "holds the Bishop and stretches him on the bed. He covers him with a white sheet. All that the Bishop could mutter is "Father I am very weak help me... Help me. I feel empty, Father " (57). Indeed he has been empty from the genesis, the very moment the Bishop's mother decides to sabotage the decision of the gods.

We must not forget that Iyagana tries to make the Bishop comprehend the punishment for disobedience thus:

In shame shall I leave you then. The torment in your soul has just started. What Esu cannot have he destroys. Esubiya, I disown you... I shall return to you when your tribulations surpass you again and your mind begins to wave. Esu Lalu

never leaves his own. We shall take you away from this devilish place. We shall return you to your own. You shall be our baba Awo. Bishop, we shall take you yet, unless your Jesus can change your blood.” (55-56).

Iyagana's statement shows that she is aware that when two forces meet the weaker one submits to the higher authority. She is also conscious of the strength of the blood of Jesus and its victory in spiritual warfares as recorded in Colossians 2:14, hence she talks about Jesus changing the blood of the Bishop if the Bishop is to overcome. Colossians 2:14 states that “having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross” (1973/1974:1933).

At this juncture, it is very clear that the Bishop can never be fulfilled unless he returns to his root especially as his answering of the call of bishopric of Catholicism is a mere pretence. If he must accomplish his dream and destiny as a catholic, his blood must be changed by Jesus, the deliverance and breaking of the covenant made at birth which has not been done must be carried out. But if not done as it is at the end of the play and may not for the Bishop though catholic is not a Christian, then the status quo remains as it were at the beginning.

In conclusion, therefore, man is eternally trapped or incapacitated. He either chooses such by his actions and inactions due to his ignorance or otherwise, of the forces that compete for his souls or due to the fact that even when he makes a choice, his choice is already determined by the powers that wrestle for his soul. The Bishop is eternally trapped though not for good. The fact that he seems to shy away from his problems rather than being honest to himself and ask for deliverance makes it worse. The pulpit is crowded with his likes, men and women who daily drag the gospel of Jess Christ to the miry market place. This is our collective dilemma, our tragedy.

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