

Political Configuration in the Dramaturgy of AbdulRasheed Adeoye

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Abstract: Colonial and postcolonial African dramaturgy was influenced by the politics of the society in which they were created. They reflected the political upheavals, corruption, socio-political decadence and laxity portrayed by political leaders. In fact, these dramas such as the works of the radical Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Bode Sowande, Sam Ukala, and Benedict Binebai amongst others were/are political constructs. However, one postmodern dramaturge who has fully explored the social and the political in his works in theory and praxis, is AbdulRasheed Adeoye. The authenticity of his theatre does not only stem from the political consciousness of his creative works, but also, his crystallization of a dramatic theory, he termed Neoalienation theory. How unique is this theory, and how relevant are the themes and content of his works to the political situation of present-day Nigeria? To this end, this study critically investigates the poetics of politics in the dramaturgy of AbdulRasheed Adeoye. It further examines Adeoye’s neoalienation theory, in consonance with Bertolt Brecht’s Epic Theatre, and the political configurations of Adeoye’s dramaturgy.

Key Words: Dramaturgy, Neo-alienation, Political Configuration, Aesthetics.

Introduction

The most political of all African dramatists are Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa Thiong’O. Perhaps, this is because of their romance with the four walls of the prison which is as a result of their radical approach to criticism of

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political injustice and oppression by colonialists, neo-colonialists and internal colonialism by the emergent political elements in Kenya, Nigeria and other postcolonial African states. Thus, they placed their art (Drama, prose and poetry) in the service of politics. The theatre of these two literary giants shows that “literature and writers cannot be exempted from the battlefield”². To this end, politics forms the core of their literary territory. The Fugardian experiments in apartheid South Africa are also paradigms of theatre in politics. With the creative import of John Kani and Winston Tshona, Athol Fugard was able to produce plays such as *The Islands* (Hodoshe), *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* and *Hello and Goodbye*. Most of these plays were products of improvisation.

Wa Thiong’O³ cites Chinua Achebe’s statement in 1969 which posits that “it is clear to me that an African creative writer who tries to avoid the big social and political issues of the contemporary Africa will end up being completely irrelevant-like that absurd man his house burning to pursue a rat fleeing from the flames”. Chinua Achebe implies that every creative writer is a politician. All ideological standpoints are political. In fact, “artistically, drama communicates ideologies to the people through appropriate socio-political, cultural, moral and economic themes, music, dance, song and dramatic action”⁴. In the same vein, Wa Thiong’O⁵ also notes that “literature and politics are about living men, actual men and women and women and children, breathing, eating, crying, laughing, crying, dying, growing, men in history of which they are its products and makers”. Plays such as Ngugi Wa Thiong’O’s *I Will Marry when I Want* and Ngugi Wa Thiong’O’ and Micere Mugo’s *The Trials of Dedan Kimathi*, Wole Soyinka’s *King Baabu*, *A Play of Giants*, *The Beatification of Area Boy* and *Kongi Harvest*, reflect the misnomer in the political situations in colonial and postcolonial societies. Ola Rotimi’s *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi*, Ahmed Yerima’s *The Trials of Oba Ovonramwen*, and *Break a Boil*, written by the cultural giant, Sam Ukala, are also testaments on politics.

2. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, *Writers in Politics* (London: Heinemann, 1981), 73.

3. Wa Thiong’o, 75.

4. Solomon Ejeke, “Drama and Political Emancipation in Africa,” in *Music Scholarship, Culture and Performance Challenges in 21st Century Africa: A Critical Resource Book in Honour of Emurobome Idolor*, ed. Emurobome Idolor et al. (Lagos: Bahiti and Balila Publishers, 2016), 469.

5. Wa Thiong’o, *Writers in Politics*, 72.

From the foregoing, it is pertinent to note that drama has always been in the service of humanity. "A writer's imaginative leap to grasp reality is aimed at helping in the community's struggle from a certain quality of life free from all parasitic exploitative relations"⁶. Nigerian drama thus exposes the frailties, the foibles and the flaws and weaknesses of the Nigerian political system. "Not merely has drama reflected and reinforced our attitude in values, it has also attempted to change them, to shape the culture in which it exists: it has been used to suggest alternatives to the present systems"⁷.

One postmodern dramaturge who has fully captured the social and the political in his works in theory and praxis, is AbdulRasheed Adeoye. The authenticity of his theatre does not only stem from the political consciousness of his creative works, but also, his crystallization of a dramatic theory, he named Neoalienation theory. How unique is this theory, and how relevant are the themes and content of his works to the political situation of present-day Nigeria? To this end, this chapter critically investigates the poetics of politics in the dramaturgy of AbdulRasheed Adeoye. It further examines Adeoye's neoalienation theory, in consonance with Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre, vis-a-vis political configurations of Adeoye's dramaturgy.

Political Theatre in Nigeria

*All theatre is necessarily political because all the activities of man are political, and theatre is one of them. Those who try to separate theatre from politics try to lead a political attitude.*⁸

In the preface to their classic, titled *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, Wa Thiong'O and Mugo articulate that "we believe that good theatre is that which is on the side of the people; that which, without masking mistakes and weaknesses, gives people courage and urges them to higher resolve in their

6. Wa Thiong'o, 75.

7. Gordon Vallins, "Drama and Theatre in Education," in *Drama and the Theatre with Radio, Film and Television. An Outline for the Student* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), 167-78.

8. Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Opressed* (London: Pluto Press, 1979), iv.

struggle for total liberation"⁹. Political theatre is the theatre of critical consciousness as critical consciousness is political. Adeniyi¹⁰ elucidates the words of Omafume Onoge, of the first generation of Nigerian Marxist Critics that "politics is the soul of African literature". In a country such as Nigeria, politics is the major subject matter of art. Ejeke also observes that "the art of drama helps to forge a social vision for the people. It also indulges the people in the mainstream of contemporary political debate"¹¹.

The commitment of Nigerian theatre to politics could be traced back to the Nigerian theatre of the colonial era. The doyen of the Nigerian theatre, who was also the pioneer of the popular Yoruba travelling theatre, Hubert Ogunde placed his creative ability to play in this perspective. In fact, Adesina posits that "Ogunde wrote overtly political plays between 1945 and 1950. He used his theatre in the political arena"¹². Beyond his anti-colonial works such as *Strike and Bullet*, *Africa and God*, and *Worse than Crime*, Hubert Ogunde also explored themes of political upheavals in postcolonial Nigeria, thereby, using his dramaturgy to instill political consciousness in his audience. In his play, titled *Yoruba Ronu* (or Yoruba Think), he does a critique of the Awolowo versus Akintola political tussle of the first republic in Western Nigeria. This play was so critical of the incumbent premier of Western region, Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola, who was a member of the audience, that he left before the end of the play.

This was the impetus that led to banning his plays in the Western region of Nigeria. As a politically conscious dramatist, this did not deter him from his political commitment, as he performed another play, titled *Otito Koro* (truth is bitter), which is a political statement on his ban from performing his plays in Western Nigeria. Other political plays by Hubert Ogunde include "*Israel in Egypt*, *Nebuchanezzar's reign*, *Darkness and light*, *Worse than Crime*, *Strike*

9. Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo, *The Trials of Dedan Kimathi* (London: Heinemann, 1977), iv–v.

10. Tola Adeniyi, "Theatre and Politics in Nigeria," in *Theatre and Politics in Nigeria*, ed. Jide Malomo and Saint Gbilekaa (Ibadan: Caltop Publications, 1993), iv.

11. Ejeke, "Drama and Political Emancipation in Africa," 469.

12. Foluke Adesina, "Theatre and Media in Nigerian Politics," in *Theatre and Politics in Nigeria*, ed. Jide Malomo and Saint Gbilekaa (Ibadan: Caltop Publications, 1993), 117.

and *Hunger*, *Tiger's Empire*, *Towards Liberty*, *Bread and Bullet*, and *Herbert Macaulay*"¹³. Layeni, and Adunni Oluwole, other theatre artists, also placed their theatres in the service of politics. Adesina states further that "Layeni took his political themes from actual events that happened within the society. An example is his play titled *Enugu Miners* which told the story of the shooting of the miners by the police"¹⁴.

Adeniyi contends that from inception, Nigerian plays have been in the service of Nigerian politics. He notes that "the repertoire of veterans like James Ene Henshaw, Soyinka, Rotimi, Clark, Osofisan, Sunny Oti, Kole Omotosho, Akinwumi Isola, Zulu Sofola, Kola Ogunmola, Ekiye, Neville Ukoli and Rasheed Gbadosi will confirm this trend"¹⁵. Wole Soyinka's animist plays which were among the first among his repertoire, had political undertone. His pseudo political play, *A Dance of the Forest*, the fully political *Kongi's Harvest*, and his later plays, *King Baabu*, *The Beatification of Area Boy*, and *A Play of Giants*, shows his commitment to the Nigerian political landscape as Gbilekaa avers that:

This growing sense of political commitment manifested itself in Soyinka's satirical sketches and revues, J.P. Clark's *The Raft* is also regarded as a political metaphor of Nigeria adrift in those tumultuous time. Consequently, the theatre of this epoch was dominated by tyrant and megalomaniacs.¹⁶

The second generation of Nigerian dramatists made the subject of politics, their thematic preoccupation. Their works are revolutionary discourses. Rooted in Marxist ideology, they explore the polemic of class struggle between the rich and the poor or what Karl Marx appropriated as the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat. Their art "is one that is committed to the cause of the

13. Adesina, 118.

14. Adesina, 118.

15. Adeniyi, "Theatr. Polit. Niger.," v.

16. Saint Gbilekaa, "Theatre and Political Change in Nigeria since Independence," in *Theatre and Politics in Nigeria*¹, ed. Jide Malomo and Saint Gbilekaa (Ibadan: Caltop Publications, 1993), 5.

proletariat"¹⁷. "Femi Osofisan is unquestionably the most articulate in terms of ideological commitment and political aesthetics of the second generation of Nigerian writers ... Osofisan's creative works like those of others of his predecessors"¹⁸, navigates the corruption and ill characteristic of the socio-political system in Nigeria. Bode Sowande is also in this category of playwrights. One of the numerous disparities between the ideological import of these playwrights and the first-generation playwrights, is the subject of heroism. While the first-generation playwrights created individual heroes (scapegoats), the second-generation playwrights created collective heroes. In other words, they deconstruct and discard the Zifa of J. P. Clark and the Olunde and Eman of Wole Soyinka and create characters of collective and radical bent. Their theatres "push against elitist forces... their theatre, prioritizes cocreation of meaningful theatrical work for and with oppressed peoples—or the proletariat, as Marx might have said... to resist superfluous consumption in favor of liberation"¹⁹.

A Study on AbdulRasheed Adeoye's *Neoalienation* Theory

Adeoye's neo-alienation theory, can be located in western and traditional African theatre modes. In fact, AbdulRasheed Adeoye gives credit to Bertolt Brecht, a core exponent of the theatre of revolt, as a salient influence on his neo-alienation theory. He notes that "Brecht is, to us, a radical phenomenon and an unrepentant theatre revolutionary"²⁰. Thus, he (Adeoye) experiments on the theory of neo-alienation with his play, *The Smart Game*. This play, in style and technique, is a radical deviation from the conventional theatre. He provides twelve laws in neo-alienation theatrical performance. These poetics in Adeoye's dramaturgy are a codification of the twelve principles of his theatre (neo-alienation). They are:

17. Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1976), 37.

18. Olu Obafemi, *Public Mediation and Society: Cultural/Creative Industries, Literature, Theatre and the National Economy* (Lagos: Concept Publications Limited, 2017), 36.

19. Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah, "Theatre for Development as a Model for Transformative Change in Nigeria," *Teaching Artist Journal* 15, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15411796.2017.1297620>.

20. AbdulRashid Adeoye, *The Killers: A Social Drama* (Ilorin: Dept. of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, 2009), iv.

1. The Aesthetics of Theme Song of Audience/Players' Systemic Fraternization
2. Multiple Role-Playing Aesthetics
3. The Aesthetics of Artistic Deconstruction
4. The Aesthetics of Human Props and Demystification
5. The Multiple Narrators' Aesthetics
6. The Aesthetics of De-technicalization
7. On-the-Stage Make-up and Costuming Aesthetics
8. The Aesthetics of Complete Instrumentation on Stage
9. Photographic/Captions' Aesthetics
10. The Modern Operatic Aesthetics
11. Trado-Modern Dance Aesthetics
12. The Critical Recalling Curtain Call Aesthetics²¹.

Beyond the embodiment of the aesthetics of Bertolt Brecht's theatre in the above tenets of neoalienation, it is worthy of note that Jerzy Grotowski's Theatre of the poor, also hold sway in the above codes of neoalienation theory. Like Jerzy Grotowski, the Polish theatre director, Adeoye deconstructs the use of elaborate costumes on stage. He further advocates that the actor could wear his costumes on stage, in the full glare of the spectators. In his play titled, *The Killers*, 'Narrator Two' brings two bags of costumes on stage and give them to 'Emeka', to play the role of Major General, 'Lanwa', to play the role of an Executive Messenger, and 'Ahmed' to play the role of Director, and the 'two drummers' to play the roles of Deputy Director and General Manager respectively. 'Narrator Two' give the costumes to them in the presence of the audience.

Adeoye incorporates the use of subtitles or subheadings such as *Those who have ears*, *Unionism as gangsterism*, and so on, to delineate the various episodes inherent in *The Killers*. Furthermore, in the light of Brecht's Epic theatre, Adeoye uses Songs to pass his message across to the audience. In Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children*, Brecht uses the song of *The Great Capitulation*. In *The Killers*, Adeoye uses the song of *We Match on* in the prologue. The Song goes thus:

21. Adeoye, vii.

*With the fullness of joy
And the wonderful gift of nature,
We march on in unity
Not minding our tribulations
To building a giant nation...²².*

Audience inclusivity is also a major feature of Adeoye's neoalienation theatre. Like Femi Osofisan's Fabulous theatre which is rooted in the tradition of the actor-performer rapport and Sam Ukala's Folkism and Neo-Folkism (Neo-Folkism as appropriated by this researcher), neoalienation calls for a communion between the performers and the spectators. This is one of the basic features and thrust of Bertolt Brecht's Epic theatre. This inclusivity is what Adeoye termed Audience and actor fraternization. The audience's "responses are maximized by strategic participation throughout the process—marking this particular theatre as wholly dialogic with songs, dances, and other aesthetic and/or cultural elements" (Okpadah, 2017, p.6). The foregoing gives credence to Uka's (2000, p.53) assertion that "we are in a postmodernist period of theatre practice. Postmodernist principles reject modernism's emphasis on high art and take cognizance of deconstruction and popular culture, here, we emphasize a plurality of forms and genres a pluralizing aesthetic criterion where forms and genres are not static and separate". By deconstruction, Kalu Uka means a deviation from Aristotlean and Western theatre conventions, traditions and configurations.

Political Configuration in Adeoye's Dramaturgy

My theatre is first and foremost political because the major problems in Africa are political. I would like to revitalise black culture in order to assure its permanence, so that it can assure its permanence, so that it can become a culture which will contribute to the establishment of a new order, a revolutionary would be able to develop its full potentials.²³

22. Adeoye, 1.

23. Bakary Traoré, *The Black African Theatre and Its Social Functions* (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1972), 123.

AbdulRasheed Adeoye's plays are a reflection of the society. They are not only social constructs, they are also politically configured, as they reflect the political situation in postcolonial societies, especially Nigeria. His two plays, *The Killers* and *The Smart Game*, are socio-political constructs. His theatre is rooted in the social and the political situations of his time. They are set in the same tradition of politics as Wole Soyinka's *King Baabu* and *A Play of Giants*. Their construction is sympathetic of the subaltern and brings to the fore, the ideology of revolt. The subaltern is the downtrodden and the marginalized in the society. They are the female gender who are placed at the margin by a male structured society, the black race that have for long been decentered by the white colonial masters, smaller ethnic nationalities that are tagged by larger tribes as 'minorities', and the environment that have been subdued by anthropocentric man. Binebai notes that "the subaltern post-colonial theory responds to the question of subjugation and silencing of the oppressed and marginalized people in post-colonial societies"²⁴. The subaltern according to Antonio Gramsci, Benita Perry, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Boaventura De Sousa Sonta Chakrabarty, Dipesh and Guha are those whose voices have been suppressed by certain hegemonic forces. The subaltern earn their voice in *The Smart Game* and *The Killers*. In *The Killers*, the Student Union Government (S.U.G.), hijacks the leadership of Wazobia University.

S.U.G. President: *The time has come*
The moment is today
We have to decide today
Change our destiny today and
Continue to live happily today
*Everything must be done today*²⁵.

Constructed in episodic plot structure, in the play, in *The Killers*, the Niger Delta militants also take to arms. They kidnap oil expatriates in return for huge ransoms, vandalize pipelines and carry out other nefarious

24. Benedict Binebai, "Voice Construction in the Postcolonial Text: Spivakian Subaltern Theory in Nigerian Drama," *African Research Review* 9, no. 4 (October 27, 2015): 206, <https://doi.org/10.4314/afrev.v9i4.16>.

25. Adeoye, *The Killers: A Social Drama*, 7.

acts. Azomo, Omare, Alaibe, Ekpebide and Tarila who are major militants in the Niger Delta region, criticize the leadership of Wazobia nation and that of the Niger Delta.

Alaibe: (Shouting and screaming) *They have turned our plights into political rhetoric. All rulers now and then usually promise heaven on earth and when they ascend the throne, we easily forgotten like unripe paw-paw...*

Azome: (Sarcastic) They know that we are the third-class citizens in the Wazobian project, the natural owners of their main source of income...

Alaibe: ... We are the forgotten souls from the Niger Delta

Ekpebide: ... We only demanded for the control of our resources

Alaibe: After years of environmental degradation and...

Azome: Political suppression that has rubbished Machiavelli's expanse of deceptions in his monarchical splendor...²⁶

Azome: Everybody is crying out for peace, no one is crying out for justice. I don't want peace, I mind equal right and justice²⁷

The above dialogue attests to the multi dialectical ideology portrayed by the playwright. The first ideology is the import of revolution. "All great revolutions are...radical attempts to resolve class contradictions"²⁸. Revolutions are a response to the unfavorable human condition, and a quest for positive transformation. This change is sought for, "not among individuals, or between individuals and the community, but among social classes or forces"²⁹. In this regard, Karl Marx also sees revolutions as "the locomotives of history while Lenin saw them as popular true festivals"³⁰. Revolution is a process that leads to the liberation of the oppressed "who will not gain this liberation by chance but through the praxis of their quest of it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for it"³¹.

26. Adeoye, 9-10.

27. Adeoye, 11.

28. Adolfo Sánchez Vásquez, *Art and Society: Essays in Marxist Aesthetics* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), 121.

29. Sánchez Vásquez, 123.

30. Sánchez Vásquez, 121.

31. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1982), 29.

The Nigerian political structure places minor ethnic groups in the margin. They are neither allowed to express themselves, nor speak for themselves. They are voiceless and submerged under the dominance and influence of the three ethnic nationalities, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. The Egbira, the Kabba, the Urhobo, the Isoko, the Berom, the Igala, the Ikwerre, the Efik, the Ibibio, the Tiv, the Izon, the Itsekiri, the Nupe, the Esan, the Bini and other ethnic nationalities suffer from the politics of power asserted by the three other dominant ethnic groups. In fact, the concept of the 'minor' itself is suppression of some sort.

Thus, the playwright-theorist, Adeoye, though an indigene of one of the major ethnic nationalities in Nigeria, uses the play, titled *The Killers* as a manifesto in the call for the protection of minority right. In fact, in his toga of objectivity, he uses the theatrical element of Song to achieve this. Of course, of the fifty-seven years of Nigerian independence from British Colonial rule, perhaps, only two leaders are of minor ethnic group extract. Yakubu Gowon, who emerged Head of State after the countercoup in 1966, is from Berom ethnic nationality while Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of Izon extract managed to become president after the death of Umaru Musa Yaradua. The extreme fear of the minority and their struggle for political power hold sway in Adeoye's plays, especially *The Killers*. This play is a warning to Nigeria that if the Nigerian project is to succeed, then the politics of ethnicity must be discarded.

In the same vein, the play *The killers* is also a metaphor for corrupt leaders who suppress the growth and development of the state with their mode of leadership which is characterized with appropriation of public funds for their private use, injustice, corruption and other conspicuous consumption and life style at the expense of the nation's treasury. Furthermore, Adeoye's theatre is also critical of corrupt societies such as Nigeria. Every facet of Nigeria is characterized with politics of distrust. Major General requests a Diviner to give him a bullet proof charm. The Diviner gives him the charm. However, Major General tricks the giver of the charm by using the charm on him so as to validate its potency. Major General's action shows that as a military man who is illegally involved in politics, he trusts nobody. He knows that the political landscape of Wazobia is replete with backstabbing, betrayal, assassination, power play, distrust and so on. He does not want to take

chances of falling a victim of betrayal. In the Nigerian situation, Politicians seek selfish and personal satisfaction, even to the detriment of the masses. Politicians betray those who voted them into various political offices, and pit tent with the enemies, nay the elites, for their personal gains. They even go as far as decamping from the political parties they belong to, for that of their opponents, immediately they see the prospects of financial gains and profits for them. Major General warns Director that he must deposit specific sums of money into the coffers of the military of Wazobia.

As a socio-political construct, *The Killers* also deliberates on Ethnic Conflict, Conflict of resource control, religious conflict and so on. Although the play portrays revolution, its causes and attendant effects on humanity, it further advocates peace. The playwright proffers a change from the incessant conflicts in Nigeria which he mystifies with the name, Wazobia. The characters in the play such as the Narrator One and Two, feel the pain and agony of crises. This is typified in the statement below:

Narrator One: Why, why must you dance in the face of agonies and crises? Yet you are already!

Bleating like castrated animals. Why must you laugh and hiss when the nation is on fire? Are you people not aware that the avengers are on the loose?

Narrator Two: ... Let me sound a note of warning to the agents of violence.

Narrator One: What are you waiting for then? Talk to my people? Talk to my people about the evil called violence. Let them know that peace radiates progress and prosperity while violence is a noxious stench of destruction, the last call to death.³²

As a pacifist, Adeoye knows the potency of the theatre in development and political transformation. Boal (1979, p.28) in his seminal research titled *Theatre of the Oppressed*, articulates that “theatre is change and not simple presentation of what exists: It is becoming and not being”. Adeoye also uses the concept of Multiculturalism. By this, he portrays characters that

32. Adeoye, *The Killers: A Social Drama*, 4–5.

encompass various tribes in Nigeria, irrespective of their region. This is exemplified in the characters of Efik Lead Dancer, Nupe Lead Dancer and Edo Lead Dancer. They all agitate for minority right.

Efik Lead Dancer: (Mimicking) Yoruba...Igbo, Igbo...Yoruba. Hausa... Yoruba. Hausa...Igbo...Yoruba, this cultural conspiracy against the minority must stop (Dancing). Minority rights must be guaranteed.

Adeoye further captures the subject of unemployment which is a national crisis. Nigerian Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Educations, churn out thousands of graduates on annual basis, but unfortunately, up to ninety percent of these graduates are unemployed and restive. In present Nigerian society, to get employed, one needs to be politically connected. A university graduate who is not connected would search for a job he is qualified for, for fifteen years or more, without getting one. However, a less qualified but well-connected candidate who is in his final year in the university, has a job he is not qualified for, waiting for him. In *The Killers*, Director employs General Manager because of their close affinity in school many years ago, as the conversation below posit:

General Manager: Thank you my Director. Then I was the President, now, you are my Director how time changes!

Deputy Director: (Curious) You mean that you and the General Manager schooled together?

Director: Yes. That is to tell you why I exercised my discretion during the interview.³³

The implication of the above statement is that Director gave General Manager the job, not because, he was perhaps the most qualified candidate, but because, he (General Manager) was someone known to him (Director) before the interview. This is reflective of the socio-political system in Nigeria where parlance such as “Na man when know man dey get job, show me connection” are the slogan of the day.

33. Adeoye, 18.

Conclusion

The social and the political are the major thematic preoccupations in the dramaturgy of AbdulRasheed Adeoye. As a pacifist, he uses his plays to sensitize the populace on the need for unity, harmony and peaceful co-existence among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. However, Adeoye is not the last of the Mohicans as other postmodern playwrights such as Ben Binebai, Stephen Kekeghe among others continue the search for a more authentic Nigerian theatre. This study concludes that beyond the socio-political construction of Adeoye's dramas, his theatre is rooted in the search for a sane society and that Neo-alienation theory is appropriate for the Nigerian theatre in theory and praxis. To this end, this research advocates that for an elegant dramaturgy, Nigerian dramaturges should write plays that conform to neo-alienation theory as it sets the pace for a new postmodern and experimental theatre in Nigeria.

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