

ISSN 1595-0972

The Performer

**ILORIN JOURNAL OF
THE PERFORMING ARTS**



Vols. 19 (2017) and 20 (2018 SPECIAL EDITION)

The Performer

**ILORIN JOURNAL OF THE
PERFORMING ARTS**



Vol. 20 (2018: SPECIAL EDITION)

ISSN 1595-0972

**Published by the Department of the Performing Arts,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria**

THE PERFORMER (VOLUME 18, 2018: SPECIAL EDITION)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Performing Arts and Social Realities: The Nigerian Example - Ahmed Yerima.....	1
2. Poetics of Glocalisation and Societal Realities in the Artistic Direction of Three Worlds - AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye.....	11
3. Fela Anikulapo Kuti's "Original Suffer Head" Music as a Reflection of Social Realities in Contemporary Nigeria - Solomon O. Ikibe.....	25
4. Social Realities and the Nigerian Lackluster Political Culture in Felix Akinsipe's <i>Pregnant King</i> - Tayo S. Arinde.....	35
5. Politics, Power and Literary Imagination in Chris Iyimoga's <i>Son of a Chief</i> - Oludolapo Ojediran and Abraham Adebajo.....	44
6. Nollywood and the Burden of Postcolonial Heritage on Selected Nigeria Films - Joe Odedina.....	55
7. <i>God is Displeased</i> : Resisting Misrule and Leadership Impunity in Christian Religious Music in Nigeria - Godwin E. Ogli and Ayoade J. Ekunwale.....	66
8. Costume Art as Cultural Aesthetics in Udiroko Festival of Ado- Ekiti - Modupe Olaniyan and Toyin B. Bade-Afuye.....	80
9. Cultural Implication of Peaceful Religious Co-Existence in the Nigerian Pluralistic Society - Abiodun O. Adesina.....	87
10. Realities of the Nigerian Theatre within the Global Space - Rukayyat Adebisi.....	96
11. Representing Social Realities in Dance Theatre: A Study of Bayero University Kano Maiden Induction Performance - Hairat B. Yusuf.....	106
12. Juxtaposing The Nigerian Dream with Contemporary Social Realities: An Encounter with Bakare Ojo Rasaki's "The Voyage" in Performance - Abraham O. Iyanda and Kazeem O. Azeez.....	114

13.	Management Intricacies of Contemporary Gospel Choral Performance: A Reality Check	
-	Joel S. Adeleke.....	124
14.	Prospects and Challenges of Acting Industry in Nigeria	
-	Onyinye Aneke.....	134
15.	Social Realities in Radical and Neo-Radical Theatres in two Selected Plays of Esiaba Irobi and Ojo Rasaki Bakare	
-	Nwagbo P. Obi.....	143
16.	Satire in the Music Video of Falz's <i>This is Nigeria</i>	
-	Abiodun Akinsiku and Idris O. Bello.....	155
17.	Techno-scenery Research in the Creation of Theatre Scenery for Areas Affected by Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria	
-	Adebayo J. Badeji.....	165
18.	A Study of two Performances of Eda Theatre Company on Common Behavioural Patterns in Nigeria	
-	Adewale O. Ademuyiwa.....	177
19.	Music Creativity and Social Reality in Nigeria	
-	Omowumi D. Adelabu.....	184
20.	Femi Osofisan's Premise: An Approach to Literary Writing in Nigeria	
-	Michael T. Ogunbiyi.....	191
21.	Social Realities and Effectiveness of Television Drama in Kwara State: A Case Study of N.T.A. Ilorin	
-	Taiye J. Ogundiran.....	204
22.	The Effect of Terrorism and its Counter Measures in Ahmed Yerima's <i>Pari</i>	
-	Adenike D. Arinomo.....	216
23.	The Social Realities of Sam Ukala's Folkism in the Face of African Theatre and African Theory	
-	Ayobami Aponmade.....	225
24.	A Comparative Study of Historical Reconstruction in Emmy Idegu's <i>Ata Igala The Great</i> and Ahmed Yerima's <i>Ameh Oboni The Great</i>	
-	Sulaimon Y. Adebayo.....	234
25.	Societal Realities in Contemporary Nigerian Popular Music	
-	John O. Ibitoye.....	244
26.	A Synergistic Approach to the Interrogation of Corruption for the Development of Nigeria through Drama	
-	Adeniyi T. Olorunsomo and Zacchaeus J. Ojo.....	254

27.	Restoring Morality in the Yoruba Society through <i>Oriki</i> Chanting Christopher O. Omotoso.....	260
28.	Postmodernism in the Narrative of Polygamy in Bunmi Oyeyemi Julius-Adeoye's <i>Ajarat</i> and Ahmed Yerima's <i>The Wives</i> Rantimi J. Julius-Adeoye and Patrick N. Adai.....	268
	Call for Papers.....	276

Social Realities and the Nigerian Lackluster Political Culture in Felix Akinsipe's *Pregnant King*

By

Tayo S. Arinde (Ph.D.)*

Abstract

This paper examines how Felix Akinsipe embodied the prevailing social realities in Nigeria politics in the metaphor of *Pregnant King*. The paper employs analytical and deductive methods of research. In which case, the selected play text is subjected to textual analysis while other methods of reasoning are also considered in presenting a lucid picture of what social realities are all about. The paper also espouses Emile Durkheim's theory of *Science of Social Facts* (1895) selected from his *Rules of Sociological methods* to interrogate the work. Findings in this paper reveal that in the Nigeria political activities are barrages of social realities orchestrated by political actors. The paper concludes that arising from man's daily interactions there is bound to be a soupcon of bruises, overtly or covertly, as we witness today in the Nigeria politics. It is only right that for the sake of development, our daily interaction should not result into chaos.

Keywords: Theatre, Social Realities, Political Culture, Sociology of the Theatre.

Introduction

Human interactions, because it manifest in physical and non-physical contact is bound to breed reactions and counter-reactions, especially that activities are involved. Combinations of individual opinions that are gathered from these activities are what we refer to as social realities. Attempting a deeper meaning of Social reality, describes 'social' as a concept that bothers on universality while reality can be considered as something that is real to oneself. Consequent upon this, the ubiquitous nature of social realities presents the concept as something that is really real, a product of ideas of many individual minds, an outcome of the

Tayo S. Arinde (Ph.D.) lectures at the Department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

collective opinions and on which a uniform judgement of a situation is adopted. Better still, social reality as something that actually exists, a product of the ideas of a collection of minds, an imagination that can be explained through logic and reason, a figment of your own imagination but shared among a bunch of your fellow mates, aiming at a certain goal towards the betterment of the society.

In attempting a historical overview of the Nigeria politics, one can describe Nigerian political history as a ding-dong affair. If you like call it a lacklustre political arrangement, a political dispensation that has been unstable, unpredictable and one that does not respect individual collective opinion. After the Nigeria independent in 1960, when the colonial masters handed over the reign of powers to the civilian Nigeria heaved a sigh of relieve. The regime proudly adopted the parliamentary system of government that it fashioned along its master's, the British system of government. Unfortunately, the dispensation short-lived as the military took over in 1966. It took Nigeria seventeen years after, precisely in 1983 before it could experience what can be described as the first true democratic process as arepublic. Alas, three months after the first four years of the first republic, the military struck again and did not hand over power until 2009.

Discussing politics in theatre study, to novices, may sound odd, but we make bold to submit here that politics and art (Theatre arts) are entwined. The two discipline deal with day to day human interaction. So, like Siamese twins, they co-exist. While one (politics) is a practical interaction, the other (Arts) by extension theatre, enacts the action. The entwined nature of the two concepts enumerated above leads us to another discipline; sociology, which is relevant to our discourse in this paper. By extension, we shall illuminate on socialisation and social realities which is the core of this paper.

The Nexus of Sociology, Socialisation and Social Realities

Because theatre deals with the society and the interactions therein, therefore, understanding sociology and its relevance to the society as contained in the above definition has further educated us on the aptness of the concept as the carrier of the hallmark of our existence and responsibility. Having been educated on what sociology means, it is also germane to understand the concept socialisation.

Socialisation is an act through which a group of individuals made up of the combination of various sub-groups, marked out by their norms, values, behaviours and attitudes shared common bond for the benefit of the group. In fact, Erinoshio (2005, p. 56) submits that "Socialisation is a continuous process, starting from birth till death. It takes place in the family, within groups and in the society at large" while Haralambos and

Holborn (2000, p. 4) define socialisation as: "the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society"

Drawing from the above, it is clear that any society that does not have social bond is as good as non-existence. This is because social interaction promotes peaceful co-existence for the achievement of common benefit. If socialisation is an act of sharing common bond for the benefit of the society at large, then, social reality, which is coming to a common decision of mutual benefits to all members of the community, makes socialisation and social reality interlaced concepts for the achievement of an egalitarian society. The failure on the part of Nigerian political actors (leaders and the lead) to respect the concept of socialisation and repealing collective social realities is responsible for why we found ourselves in the political dungeon we are enmeshed in. The choice of the play: *Pregnant kingis* to remind us of our political past and excite us to toll the right direction and embrace the right norms for the benefit of all.

Theatre and Sociology

Sociology has become a strong and veritable instrument of artistic creation and production. Of course dramatists, either as playwright or director don't just create out of vacuum rather; they draw their inspirations from human activities, which is the hallmark of sociology. Reflecting again on Faris's submission earlier quoted in this paper, which for emphasis is repeated here. He says sociology "studies human societies, their interactions, and the processes that preserve and change them." On the other hand, theatre, in exploring its parasitic trait, draws its creation from barrage of social milieus for the edutainment pleasure of the society. This is the reason why Obafemi (2008, p.29) describes theatre as: "a reflection/refraction of society's response and anticipation." This interlink therefore became the precursor for the marriage of convenience between theatre and sociology.

Theoretical Framework

In interrogating this work, Emile Durkheim theory of *Science of Social Facts* (1895) selected from his *Rules of Sociological methods* is used. In the theory, social facts were distinguished, which he refers to as "states of the collective mind. The theory conceived sociology as scientific study of realities and clearly defined groups of phenomena. Social facts according to Durkheim is categories of facts that present very special characteristics such as, manners of acting, thinking, and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him.

Examining features of the theory as it affects Nigeria politics, succinctly enumerates and reveals a perfect match of the scenario about some of the social realities in the political activities that are prevalent in the Nigeria society, which have been jettisoned. It is in this direction

that this paper opines that the theory looks appropriate to be used to interrogate this work.

Synopsis of the Play

Pregnant King, as Okwori (2008, p. v) describes it in his forward to the play, is "deeply political, ideologically profoundly confounding. The play's clarion call is "change", a call in which the vicissitudes of the Nigerian political experience is summoned to the analysis and understanding of Nigerians anachronistic present".

The play revolves around the political panorama in Anjuwon community, where the Emergency Ruling Council otherwise referred to as "the Hunters" wrestle political power from the Royal Dynasty. The promises that are made by the new government are unfulfilled. Hence there are protests embarked upon by all sectors within Anjuwon community, spearheaded by women who sees the new government as gender biased as a result of non-inclusion of any female in the government. The new government results to arresting and detaining some of the protesters who are all females. This made the women to withdraw their services to their men. However, a lady, Hajia who has been taking the women on various tactics, who is heavily pregnant, puts to bed on the day of the planned final onslaught. The birth of a baby boy marks the end of the political crises as the ruling party releases all those detained as well as abrogates all the obnoxious laws earlier promulgated.

Analyses of Social Realities in *Pregnant King*

The *Pregnant king* is awash with political activities and power summersault in Anjuwon community, which is a metaphorical representation of Nigeria political conduct. Their activities, which manifest in unfulfilled promises, gender inequality, misdirection of state funds, obnoxious rules; legislation against gathering procession, strikes, settlement, indiscriminate arrest and detention of citizens etc.

Anjuwon community under the Royal Dynasty like Nigeria is likened to the period when the nation was under the rule of tyranny by the military, when everyone was groaning under their wicked governance. In the prologue, which the playwright artistically called 'Month One', present Mama as the Military junta and the daughter, Hajia, the community. The community initially is caressed by the military rulers on their arrival as contained in the stage direction ...*Hajia is seen being caressed by her mother, Mama...* until she finds out she is pregnant. The pregnancy here is a metaphor; an indication that a nation still being nurtured is now of age and could now assume the status of a mother. Subsequently, the rulers decide to unleash terror on the citizens, deviating from the normal norms of governance, thereby making life unbearable for the citizens. Mama's dialogue in reaction to the daughter's pregnancy confirms this:

MAMA:- Yeh, you? At this hard period, you are pregnant?

Normally, pregnancy should be a thing of joy but in this case, reverse is the case. An indication that could be literally interpreted to mean that under a coercive leader, freedom of the led is limited. This became the situation until there is a take-over of the government. Obviously, the taken over of the government of terror came as a great relief to the citizens as shown in the dialogues below:

MAMA:- After a prolonged season, a new one must come. The tyrant cannot rule forever. So we now have a new king.(PK, 11)

WOMAN 1:- The change of Government came at the right time. Just before we begin to wither away like old banana leaves, so, I am delighted (PK, p.11)

WOMAN 2: That administration is more than worse. No food, no money and some are extraordinarily fat and comfortable. I whole-heartedly welcome this new government. (PK, p.12)

It is however interesting to note that the new Government did not live up to its promises as itrenege in all. Rather than bring relieve to the people of the community, it is unending hardship that manifest in: misdirection of state funds (PK, p.28), legislation against public gathering (PK, p.28),unfulfilled promises (PK, p.31), indiscriminate arrest of citizens (PK, p.34, 66), settlement (PK, p.34), imposition of fines and various act of wickedness. Government action is similar to action that Durkheim (1895) describes in his theory as "Manner of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control" These various acts put up by the government made the villagers, Market women, Teachers, Vendor, Lawyer, Journalist and Engineer to protest to the government. Unfortunately, their protest was not treated, as government failed to accede to the various requests put forward by the people. As Durkheim (1895) states in his theory rules of Sociological method, government: "Discard all preconceptions"

Consequently, the people of Anjuwon village, having noticed that the government's unwilling to accede to their demands, decide to concoct action that will make the government to do what is right. Arising from this, the women, who incidentally are all the characters that we enumerated above decide to withdraw their kitchen services, stating in addition that until the government, who are all males, meet their demands, conjugal relationships are put on hold.

The corruptible tendencies of government agents are brought to the fore by Akinsipe in play *Pregnant King*. Government sensing that the protesting women can only be subdued when they are intimidated sends

out their agents with to forcefully arrest the women as contained in the Chief for Education's suggests below:

CHIEF OF EDUCATION: I think once their Leaders are arrested they will call off their protest. They don't have heads to think big. (PK, p.61)

Social Realities in Nigeria Political Dispensation Personified in Akinsipe's *Pregnant King*

Nigeria, with six decades of political life-journey cannot be said to be a toddler in the political practice amongst nations in Africa. Consequently, series of political problems in the Village of Anjuwon, presents a microcosm of Nigeria quagmire, which requires that rules of sociological method as recommended in Durkheim are applied. Obviously, the government and the governed would always have scores to settle. In the same vein, a government that come into power, with votes of the electorate obviously would have what it intends to do for the citizens hence we regard them as a political team that is pregnant with ideas, which they sell to attract the electorate. Consequently too, the military, whenever they wrestle power, using force, for them to be acceptable, they x-ray the misdemeanour of the past administration and harp on it as the reason why they took over, obviously too to attract support of the citizens. Most unfortunately, neither of the two approaches provides the succour that the people look forward to. Arising from the renege, people then begin to conceive method to draw government attention to their political errors. For instance in *Pregnant King* there were such social manifestation, which are found in the manners of acting and thinking of the people groaning under coercive power. They manifested in form of Protests; women's' withdrawal of both kitchen and home services to their men in power as Hajia expresses it below:

HAJIA: Mothers, this is an action worth taking. To remain silent is to remain slaves forever. Our destinies lie in our hands. Unless we realise this, we will not do a thing to shape them well. (PK, p.56)

As a result of the protest embarked upon by women in Anjuwon, government have no option than to surrender and agree not only to soft pedal but to abrogate all obnoxious laws and actions as the Chief for internal Development submits:

CHIEF FOR INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT:-These people are too determined. Two wrongs cannot make one right. We have to come down a bit to pacify them.

Hajia, the pregnant daughter of Mama, who is initially chased by the mother because she is pregnant (PK,p.9) in her eight month of her pregnancy leads the final onslaught against the ruling government, having

been installed as the new king who takes the women to the training ground. Her submission thus:

HAJIA: (*After a long pause.*) I told you they will try to bribe us. We won't take it. The solution to our problems is almost at hand, fellow women. We shall stop this ceremony and put a final touch to our defence strategy. To the training ground everybody!

This action brings to the fore Berger and Luckmann's (1966, p. 65) postulation which describes social reality as "Knowledge and peoples conception and beliefs that become embedded in the institutional fabric of the society".

In the ninth month, when the women were to advance their onslaught, Hajia, the women appointed king, falls into labour and could therefore not lead the women. Panic gripped the women when the matching steps of the hunters (ruling party) were approaching. However, Woman I rises to the occasion, by assuring the other women that:

WOMAN I: I know all the trainings, I can...(*The hunters are now in sight*) Please, I can manage with the command.

In spite of the fact that other women's resolute to be led by the pregnant king, time and tides wait for nobody as the hunter's advancement seems not to give room for delay. However, the women's calmness and inactivity even in the face of the hunters close march did the trick as the ensure dialogues confirm:

KING: What type of strategy can this be?

CHIEF FOR PUBLIC COMPLAINTS: I can't come to think of one.

IMPLIMENTATION TASK OFFICER: I am quite sure it is a trick.

The action taken by the women is what we can refer to as 'silent resolute action'. More often than not, silence concocted in resolute can be effective than violent protest. The tactics of these women confirms this. It was when the women remained unmoved that beneficial resolution came thus:

KING: This is a mature protest. It is looking like magic. How do we fight our people, more so when they will not fight back? Sisters, we have been made to realise that power does not belong to us. All closed institutions are opened with immediate effect. All the detained leaders, agitators and representative are released immediately... We shall hand over power to the Royal Dynasty as soon as possible A Royal Electoral Committee shall be set up immediately to see us through the transition period ...

This announcement is immediately greeted with the news that Hajia gave birth to a Bouncing baby boy. The birth of the child is an indication of a new dawn.

Giving the principle of social realities earlier quoted, which bothers on:

An idea of coming to a certain decision or law in a community, taking the opinions of all the members in the same but keeping in mind the primary goal of achieving the welfare of the common mass on an equal judgement.

It clear that it is when we foreground a common goal, keeping in mind the primary objective of achieving collectiveness on an equal judgement that we can be better off in our society. Durkheim reminds us about: categories of facts that present very special characteristics such as, manners of acting, thinking, and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him. When the act of coerciveness is allowed, social interaction will be injured.

Conclusion

So far, the play, *Pregnant King* has exposed us to some injuries to social realities that arise in our political parlance and the approach that can be adopted to ameliorate them. Drawing from this, it is recommended that more literary works should evolve to serve as ameliorative device to resolving some of the social problems confronting our society just as Durkheim states his theory that: "all investigations must begin by defining the specific group of phenomena with which it is concerned"

References

- Arendt, H. (1958) *The human condition*. Downloaded from <https://taxuna.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/what-is-politics.pdf> on 15/7/2020
- Akisipe, F. (2008). *Pregnant king*. Ilorin: Tomaprint.
- Berger, P. and Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge* downloaded from [perflensburg](https://www.perflensburg.com) on 12th December, 2018.
- Badiou A., (2003). *Fifteen theses on contemporary art*. Retrieved from <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/art-and-politics> on 12th December, 2018.
- Erinosh, O. A. (2005). *Sociology for medical, nursing and allied professions in Nigeria*. Ijebu –Ode: Bulwark Consult.
- Haralambos, M., Holborn, M and Heald, R. (2000). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives*. London: Harper Collins Publishers Limited
- Obafemi, O. (2008) *Politics and aesthetics: Essays in drama, theatre and performance*. Ilorin: Heytee Press and Publishing Co Ltd.
- Okwori, J. Z. (2008). *Forward in Akinsipe F. Pregnant king*. Ilorin: Tomaprint
- Valery, P. Quotes downloaded from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/81353-politics-is-the-art-of-preventing-people-from-busying-themselves> on 16 July, 2020.
- Social reality. Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/What-does-the-term-social-reality-mean>, downloaded on Monday, 10th December, 2018