

THE DRAMATURGY OF A THEATRE SOCIOLOGIST:

**FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF
AYÒ AKÍNWÁLÉ**

**EDITED BY
ABDULRASHEED ABÍÓDÚN ADÉOYÈ**



Professor Ayò Akínwálé

The Dramaturgy of a Theatre Sociologist:

Festschrift in Honour of Ayò Akínwálé

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Moses Ajítòní Akínwálé of blessed memories who gave birth to Ayò Akínwálé, a Professor of Performing Arts in the University of Ìlorin, Ìlorin, Kwara State. This dedication is also extended to the entire Máto's family of Òràńyàn, Ìbàdàn, Òyó State, Nigeria.

Acknowledgments

The strong desire for success, enshrined in the African philosophy of communalism, makes the accomplishment of any daunting task simple. Consequently, I want to first and foremost, acknowledge the entire academic staff of the Department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria for approving the proposal that I presented to the Departmental Board in year 2011 on the imperative of this book project. Your overwhelming support encouraged me, and I want us to continue to sustain the progressive tradition of supporting and promoting a worthy cause or venture. Thank you all.

My unflinching appreciation goes to my colleagues who have, in the spirit of celebrating a worthy individual, and promoting the culture of robust scholarship, contributed incisive essays to this book. Your patience in allowing your works to go through the academic rigours of peer-review assessment cannot go unnoticed. I am humbled by this show of camaraderie and by your sincere appreciation of the extenuating circumstances. To this end, I thank all the contributors for being the very pacesetters on Ayò Akínwálé's scholarship.

The current Dean of Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria Professor Charles Bódúndé, a poet of international repute deserves special recognition for providing enabling environment for scholarship to grow. You are appreciated for leading by example. His predecessor, Professor Z. I. Oseni, an Arabic dramatist, poet, scholar and exceptionally gifted individual also supported this book project while serving as the Dean of Arts. I am grateful to you, and to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Professor Is-haq O. Olóyèdé, a seasoned administrator.

For displaying rare courage and unquestionable support to everything that I lay my hand on, my wife; the vehicle behind my humble contribution to theatre scholarship, Mrs. Adéníke Adékémi Adéoyè (nee Ìbíkúnlé) deserves to be appreciated. This domestic warlord has also helped me to serve as guardian spirit to Fathiah, Faruq, Faridah and Fawaz, my "two-in-two" lovely children.

Finally, I want to thank the Majesty of all majesties, the Lord of the Universe, the ocean of undying creative ingenuity, the first indisputable Master Artist; God, the Almighty for supporting and protecting all of us as we search, navigate and paddle fruitfully here and there to locate the essence of quality scholarship for human development.

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Foreword

The Dramaturgy of a Theatre Sociologist: Festschrift in Honour of Ayò Akínwálé is a landmark publication in the Nigerian theatre for scholars, researchers, practitioners and students. Due to its centrality to theatre practice and scholarship, the functionality and competitiveness of book of this nature on dramaturgy and stagecraft is a welcome addition to the corpus of literature on the subject.

Ayò Akínwálé, in honour of whom the publication has been put together is an important figure in the Nigerian theatre. A theatre sociologist, director, actor, playwright and scholar, he can best be described as a *total theatre artist* with a midas torch. He has worked conscientiously on the Nollywood industry, radio, television, and the stage. The book is edited by another great scholar from the Unilorin stable, AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye, whose painstaking efforts have resulted in the publication of a great work.

This book is divided into three sections. Section one contains twelve essential chapters on Ayò Akínwálé's dramaturgy, section two parades relevant essays on current issues on the Nigerian contemporary theatre, while section three is a display of Ayò Akínwálé's memorable talking pictures that connect him from childhood to his present age of sixty.

The chapters interrogate transitional dialogue and offer humble assessment of Ayò Akínwálé in the face of postmodernism, globalisation, language, culture, directorial poetics and his other important interventions in the performing arts. Unlike some previous festschrifts that are written to hero-worship or praise individuals, this particular book, through section one, offers a valid critique on the essential Ayò Akínwálé, and on how he can further impact his theatre. The ambitious, illustrative and explorative chapters from the editor, Solomon Ikibe, F.D. Emoruwa, J.O. Friday-Otun and others offer important insights into the works of Ayò Akínwálé. These issues are also expressed within the expanding scope of religion, ritual, feminism, culture and others.

The publication has a good spread of contributors from the major theatre schools in Nigeria. These include gifted scholars and researchers such as Sunday Ododo, Emmanuel Dandaura, Alex Asigbo, Osita Ezenwanebe, Odiri Solomon Ejeke, Rotimi Omotoye, Austin Emielu, Okey Okwechime and

Kola Eke. Other new but promising entrants are on the list to distill, and once again, to re-invent the Nigerian theatre.

The book is highly recommended for scholars, researchers, practitioners and students in the departments of Theatre, Performing and Creative Arts and in the Humanities generally in universities and other tertiary institutions. It offers interesting and critical insights into the inner workings of a director, actor, sociologist, playwright and scholar, living up to his intimidating frame.

Professor Duro Oni

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