

**PRODUCTION PROCESS AND EFFICACY IN APPLIED
THEATRE PRACTICE OF AHMADU BELLO
UNIVERSITY AND NIGERIAN POPULAR THEATRE
ALLIANCE**

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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned Internal Examiners, hereby certify that Adegbamigbe, Abayomi Agboade (83/5293) has satisfactorily effected all necessary corrections pointed out to him during the oral examination of his thesis entitled “Production Process and Efficacy in Applied Theatre Practice of Ahmadu Bello University and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance” held on 7th November, 2017 and recommended that he be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Performing Arts.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God and the two most wonderful women in my life.

To God Almighty, the fountain of knowledge and wisdom
For His tender mercies, favour, love and protection
For the gifts of life and salvation.

To my ever-supportive Mother, Mrs. Eunice Waleade Adegbamigbe
For setting my feet on the path of knowledge
For her love, sacrifice and prayers.

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For her unwavering support and encouragement in my frail moments
For her sacrifice, and the joy she ushered into my life.

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Abstract

Applied Theatre, over time, has been deployed to confront social problems and the spate of scholarship on it has continued to grow steadily. However, production process control and efficacy, and the theories guiding the practice of Applied Theatre still require more scholarly attention. This research therefore investigated production process and efficacy in the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance's (NPTA) workshops in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi (1989) and the Ahmadu Bello University's (ABU) Samaru Project (2014). The objectives of the study were to: (i) identify who controls the process and means of production in Samaru Project and NPTA workshops; (ii) describe the attributes of production process control in NPTA and Samaru workshops; (iii) determine the nature and level of efficacy attained in our chosen examples; (iv) identify the theories which define and are applicable to the practice, and (v) propose a variant of applied theatre model that can attain efficacy whereby the oppressed people who are the direct beneficiaries control its process.

The study adopted qualitative method of analysis and data collection process was based on interviews with community chiefs, residents and scholars/practitioners, participant observation and library research. Relevant primary materials containing previous workshop procedures, reports, and testimonials of efficacy within our sample communities were sourced and analysed using Paulo Freire's Critical Consciousness and Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre.

The findings of this study were that:

- i. the students and a few academic staff control the production process in Samaru Project while the production process control in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi largely resides with the development agents/facilitators, and tangentially, with the residents;

- ii. the character and exercise of production process control in ABU and NPTA workshops are defined in provision of the means of production and consequently, in the theme and direction of the workshops;
- iii. efficacy was attained minimally, on the part of Samaru, Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi people, from the level of education, awareness, entertainment, artistry, and participation;
- iv. Freire's Critical Consciousness and Boal's Forum theatre have helped to define the production process and efficacy as crucial components of Applied Theatre practice and
- v. the study has evolved a liberation-driven model of applied theatre known as Radical Theatre for Radical Development (RATFORAD).

The study therefore concluded that sustained critical dialogue through theatrical machinery can engage the people's minds and keep them focused on the root cause of their problems until they agree on a course of action to attain their desired goal.

The study recommended that practitioners who are committed to the liberationist goal of Applied Theatre should be allegiant to Freirean and Boalian theories. It also underscored the need to revisit the core tenets of the theories to enhance efficacy. Communities should also be enlightened and encouraged to look inwards for support in order to control the process of production.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Background to the Study

Applied Theatre practice and scholarship in Nigeria, ever since its debut in 1975, in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, has grown and spread rapidly to different parts of the country. Today, academic departments in Nigerian universities offer a range of programmes covering cognate theatre courses. The practice of Applied Theatre itself, generally referred to as either Community Theatre or Theatre for Development, has been visible in many rural communities across the country through numerous workshops and development projects mounted by various academic departments of theatre arts and independent organisations like the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA), Performance Studio Workshop, UNICEF, MAMSER and many other development agencies.

Applied Theatre is a generic term that subsumes other terms like Theatre for Development, Popular Theatre, Community Theatre, Museum Theatre, Prison Theatre and a host of others. It denotes theatre for a specific purpose in a place that is not necessarily a regular theatre and performed by people who are not compulsorily trained performers. The genre is a “crossroads of theatre, knowledge and community development” (Adelugba, 2008, p. 14). The logic of this tripartite intersection manifests in the fact that theatre engenders knowledge which itself liberates, and in the process ushers in development.

It is noteworthy that many scholars are more inclined to use the term Theatre for Development than they are to Applied Theatre. It therefore becomes necessary to justify our choice of applied theatre over other variants.

Applied Theatre is, therefore, a term that exemplifies the applicability of theatre as a direct intervention to solve human problems. A well-rounded definition of applied theatre practice is such that embraces a limitless range of performance content and contexts, and engenders a synergy between the audience and the performers in any available venue, usually outside the confines of a conventional theatre building. The content is emphasized in the intention of drama to address itself to a specific purpose within its community. What this underscores is the direct applicability of drama for social change. The venue of such activity is usually determined by any of the social, political and cultural contexts. And predictably too, the venue is often situated outside and/or far away from the precincts of a conventional theatre structure. The venue transcends the neatly arranged ranges of seats typical of a conventional theatre structure. The foregoing description of theatre suggests a departure from the conventional brand of theatre and its appurtenances. As opposed to the traditional practice of people going out to the theatre, it is essentially a theatre that goes all out to find, meet and interact with its audience. The notion of interacting with the audience is emphasized to the extent that the audience is saddled with the responsibility of actively participating in the creative process.

The commencement, in 1975, of applied theatre activities in Nigeria coincided with the arrival of Michael Etherton as the pioneer head of the newly created Drama Unit of English Department in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. Although Etherton

arrived in January 1975, the academic programme then known as Samaru Improvisations did not take off until 1979/1980 academic session. It was later to be rechristened Samaru Project when it had become more robust in its contents and thrust, and fully established as an academic programme.

The challenge of continuity, empowerment and undertaking a direct intervention on the part of ABU intellectuals who doubled as practitioners led to the emergence of Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA) which operated as an NGO. Scholars and practitioners like Steve Abah, Egwugwu Illah, Salihu Bappa, Ruth Sankey, Segun Oyekunle, Tunde Lakoju, and others, some of whom were pioneer students under Etherton's tutelage and who had been teaching Samaru Project year-in year-out observed the lapses in Samaru Project and saw the need for an NGO to correct such lapses. With the establishment of NPTA in 1989, these scholars and practitioners were able to embark on the first and only international workshop which took place in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi in Akpa District of Benue State. In that sense, Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA) are on the same historical continuum.

A close look at this type of theatre designed for specific purposes reveals that it has yielded itself to different nomenclatures (Nicholson, 2005, p. 2). Among all the variants, this study examines very closely Popular Theatre, Theatre for Development and Community Theatre under the umbrella of Applied Theatre because of their interrelatedness and interchangeability.

We have adopted Nicholson's position above whereby she acknowledges the aforementioned practices under the umbrella of Applied Theatre. It is exigent at this

preliminary stage, and considering the populist inclination of its practitioners, to note the fact that this specie of theatre ordinarily belongs or should be seen to belong to the underprivileged or disadvantaged class of people in the society by reason of the nomenclatures it comes under.

Most importantly, the research answers the question of who controls the production process and who claims efficacy or otherwise in Ahmadu Bello University's Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance's (NPTA) 1989 Workshop in Akpa District in Benue State. This is based on the conjecture that control has always been with the people and that practitioners have always attained efficacy. The problem however lies in the irreconcilable claim of production process control and efficacy on behalf of the people and the deplorable living conditions of the people in earnest.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

In spite of the plethora of Applied Theatre activities that have taken place in Nigeria over time and under the aegis of the various development agencies, there is a hint of what is most probably the true state of Theatre for Development in Nigeria. The numerous Nigerian experiences can only boast of circumstantial reports that are hardly backed up by evidence. Preliminary investigations and other documented evidences have pointed to instances of probable deficiency in the production process and consequently the attendant claim of efficacy. (Iorapuu, 2008, pp. 67-68)

Considering the status of Iorapuu as a scholar and a practitioner, it can be safely conjectured that his statement is coming from a well-informed angle of a concerned

insider. His submission above may therefore portend a grave future for Applied Theatre practice in Nigeria.

So, along that line of thought, this study explores the possibility of absence of evidence-based efficacy in quite a number of Applied Theatre examples in Nigeria. Consequently, one major problem of Applied Theatre scholarship is that of evolving a reliable barometer with solid theoretical grounding to evaluate efficacy. In other words, when can efficacy be deemed to have been attained? The challenge of evaluation in the study of efficacy can be inextricably linked with the issues of positive social change and development.

Again, the perennial lack of continuity in Applied Theatre projects constitutes a major problem and it is not uncommon to find in the reports of various practitioners the inability of projects to continue after a few years of being in existence. Sometimes they wait indefinitely for funding agencies to keep their projects running.

It is also worth noting that some practitioners often steer clear of theoretical engagements. The act of shying away from theoretical engagements has some grave implications for the practice and its scholarship. By not theorising the practice, it becomes very difficult to place the works of some of these dramatists in a clear-cut category. The failure to theorise also casts a shadow on the intellectual depth of the arm of the practice in question. Once again, theorising offers an avenue to examine the problem of practicable techniques that are often applied in the practice. Chief among these problems of techniques is that of participation.

1.2 Research Questions

Research questions in this study are set to identify and confront the major challenges of the practice and scholarship of Applied Theatre in Nigeria. The questions are directed at issues of production process and efficacy in ABU's Samaru Project and NPTA workshop in Akpa district of Benue State. The research questions are listed below:

- i) Who controls the means and process of production in Samaru Project and NPTA workshops?
- ii) What are the attributes of production process control in our case studies?
- iii) What is the level of efficacy attained in our chosen examples?
- iv) What are the theories that define and are applicable to the variants of the practice?
- v) Is there a model of applied theatre variant that can attain efficacy whereby the oppressed people control its process and are the direct beneficiaries?

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study focuses on the nexus between theatre and the real world of the audience vis-a-vis the issues of production process and efficacy. Production process, with emphasis on the exercise of control over it, and social efficacy in the practice of Theatre for Development in selected examples in Nigeria are assessed. The study aimed at investigating the issues of production process control and efficacy in Ahmadu Bello University's (ABU) Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance's (NPTA) Workshops in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi. The objectives of this study were to:

- i) identify who controls the process and means of production in Samaru Project and NPTA workshops,

- ii) describe the attributes of production process control in the cases studied,
- iii) determine and describe the level of efficacy in the selected Applied Theatre practice,
- iv) identify the theories which define and are applicable to the practice and
- v) evolve a model of applied theatre variant that can attain efficacy whereby the oppressed people are the direct beneficiaries.

1.4 Justification of the Study

Scholarship in Applied Theatre may have glossed over the core issue of efficacy which is subsumed in its production process. The areas of study in Applied Theatre that have received a robust scholars' attention (Mike, et al, 1999, p. 61; Ewu, 1999, p. 87; Isah, 2008, p. 58; Okam, 2008, p. 133) are the participatory nature, reports on workshop form/techniques, methodology and historical development of the genre. Other scholarly works merely reported workshop proceedings or execution of community projects with a rather chequered insight into the core issues of efficacy and the production process leading to it. The issues of efficacy and production process are yet to receive a dedicated scholarly attention in Nigerian, hence the need for an extensive research of this nature and scale on production process and efficacy.

In so doing, it reawakens scholars and practitioners to the limitless persuasive and combative power of the theatre to effect positive social change. It also alerts practitioners to various motives that may vitalize or vitiate genuine commitment to the theories they claim inform their practice in Nigeria. Practitioners will appreciate the need to theorise their practice. The subsisting claim that the communities, and not the development agencies control the creative and production process is being interrogated.

The study exposes Applied Theatre as an unexplored potent weapon of emancipation for the oppressed. Again, the research stands to assist both the oppressor and the oppressed in vacating their dehumanized state to regain their humanity at the minimal cost through an independent process of critical reflection and revolution.

1.5 Scope of the Study

A close look at this type of theatre designed for specific purposes reveals that it has yielded itself to different nomenclatures some of which are popular theatre, theatre for development, community theatre, prison theatre, theatre in education, museum theatre, theatre for health education, heritage theatre and reminiscence theatre. Among all these variants, this study examines very closely popular theatre, theatre for development and community theatre under the umbrella of applied theatre because of their interrelatedness and interchangeability.

The study covers the issues of production process and efficacy in Samaru Project of ABU Zaria and selected workshops of Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance. While exploring these examples, the study shall draw inferences from experiences within Africa to observe the trends of Applied Theatre practice in the continent with the mind-set of tracing the pattern of operation and development. The study intends to evolve a model to help fine-tune the existing classificatory system.

1.6 Research Methodology

This study adopts qualitative research approach which prioritises working with a relatively small number of cases. The data collection process is based on interviews, participants' observation, library research and audio/video recordings. Records of the 1989

NPTA workshop in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi and that of the 2014 edition of Samaru Project are accessed and analysed within the theoretical frameworks of Problem-posing education and forum theatre.

Parameters for evaluating the issues of production process and efficacy are determined from the tenets of the above-mentioned theories of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal and the principles of democratic participation. Towards this end, the researcher consults scholarly essays in academic journals, texts via electronic and print media. This research also accesses students and facilitators' post-performance reports in order to give balanced assessment and analyses of collected data.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

One major challenge of this study is the general lethargy towards documentation. Some old texts have simply gone out of print and consequently are off the shelf. Outside Steve Abah's official report on the Akpa district workshop which he documented comprehensively, other accounts are either merely reportorial or scant in nature. Coupled with the above challenge is the fact that there were no well-planned-out calendars of Applied Theatre workshops that researchers can religiously build their schedules around.

So, to forestall too much dependence on Abah's account, the researcher had to conduct series of interviews with principal figures in NPTA. This warranted the trip to Jos to interview Egwugwu Illah since he is also a major player in Samaru-NPTA history. To access Illah, the researcher had to meet Bala Canny of College of Education, Kafanchan/Gidanwaya axis. He was also a prominent figure in NPTA history. My proposed meeting with Jenkeri Okwori was truncated by his sudden death in an auto

crash along with Anyideme Kafewo whom I had just interviewed a month earlier. My other interview sessions were with Steve Daniel, Sarki of Samaru/Hayin-Dogo and his chiefs, elders and residents of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi, Esosa, leader of Gamji Cultural Troupe. I also had a telephone chat with Dr. (Mrs.) Ode of the department of Theatre Arts, Benue State University, after which she sent me a copy of her post NPTA workshop essay.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms and Concepts

The terms and concepts defined are those descriptive and nomenclatural words and phrases to be encountered within the operational framework of Applied Theatre practice and scholarship. The need to isolate relevant terms and concepts for operational definition cannot be overemphasized as these terms are in frequent use within Applied Theatre practice and scholarship. Defining them helps throw more light on the often misunderstood ones among them and it generally assists readers in navigating their various meanings more easily. For the purpose of this work, some of the terms and concepts are examined below.

Conventional Theatre

The entirety of this research on Applied Theatre assumes the prior existence of a theatre that has always been in operation based on subsisting norms and conventions. As a matter of fact, Applied Theatre derives its essence from a partial negation of the conventional form of theatre practice. Conventional theatre refers to a dramatic show in a regular performance hall with a proscenium or thrust stage and other theatre properties put in place to enhance performance. While Applied Theatre and conventional theatre

both entertain, and with limited exceptions, the latter lays emphasis on its entertainment prowess in order for it to earn commercial patronage. It needs mentioning however that not every conventional theatre is driven by profit motive as some have been found to be for educational and other purposes.

Applied Theatre

Applied Theatre, as referred to in this work, assumes a generic status thereby subsuming all other practices such as Theatre for Development, Community Theatre, Theatre in Health, Prison Theatre, Theatre in Education, Museum Theatre and Popular Theatre. In all these however, Applied Theatre does not in any way erode or neutralise the individual nomenclatural identity of the aforementioned variants.

Other scholars have expanded the definition of Applied Theatre to capture its mode of practice as that which are often “played in spaces ... not defined as theatre buildings...” (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, p. 6).

Theatre for Development (TfD)

This theatre emphasizes the intertwined concept of drama and social development which has produced other variants of Theatre for Development. It is a theatre designed for the ordinary people which addresses their own peculiar social problems. And because the content of the theatre is about the people’s development, the people are therefore to be found at the centre of the theatre. Theatre for Development is usually deployed for the purpose of social mobilization and public enlightenment.

Popular Theatre

The definition of popular theatre as an alternative theatre genre takes cognisance of the different ways in which the popular in Popular Theatre can be perceived since it stands, in semantic terms, as the operative word of the nominal phrase. In the first instance, it means being known by the generality of the people. It may also mean being generally known, appealing, accessible and acceptable to all and sundry. Popular theatre can also refer to “a theatre that uses popular medium” (Enna, 1990, p. 67). A very good example of this is the Yoruba Popular Travelling Theatre of the sixties and seventies in Nigeria which was strictly commercial in nature. From another perspective, it refers to that which identifies with the social concerns of the common man and which in like manner, the common man identifies with to the exclusion of the bourgeois and the elites. Given the scope and direction of this research, the latter, that is, the definition with populist leaning, best exemplifies the intent in this work.

Community Theatre

Community theatre has been variously defined by scholars (Nwamuo, 1990, p. 78; Okwori, 2004, p. 16). The former definition of community theatre by Nwamuo captures the central notion of what a community theatre should entail. However, it could also be deployed to achieve other communal or developmental goals. Community Theatre is a theatrical tradition belonging to a particular community for the purpose of

relaxation, entertainment and education. It places premium on participation, dialogue, indigenous art forms and social and cultural development.

Community

Community refers to a group of people in a particular place that have common interests and consequently share similar destinies and also existing at two levels, rural and urban (Agaku, 1999, p. 112). Although the above definition of community by Agaku is far from being a comprehensive description of a community, it supplies a fair idea of the two most popular forms that the word community assumes. Certainly, the term community has attained a much bigger and complex stature than it is being accorded it in some quarters. Later in this work, a much more detailed attention will be given to the concept.

Continuity/Sustainability

These twin words are very crucial to this research, because they are indicative of the success or failure of any form of theatre project, be it the conventional type or the non-conventional type. When a Theatre for Development project has been able to evolve a system that can effectively run itself, then the word continuity can be applied to describe its self-running or independent status. This stance is corroborated further by Nwosu (2005, p. 176). The self-propelled in-built system required to drive the theatrical process has always been the bone of contention impairing the sustainability and continuity of theatre designed for development. What this in-built system usually refers to are a set of guiding rules put in place to ensure compliance at all times.

Participation/Participatory Theatre

Participation, in the applied theatre parlance suggests an active synergy between the audience and the performers. The difference between applied and conventional theatre can be found in former's robust audience participation. Participation has earned for itself a status of ubiquity by virtue of its presence in all arms of Applied Theatre practice. Reasons abound that make practitioners opt for the participatory method of applied theatre. One of such is advanced by Kafewo (2008, p. 250)

Development

Development can be apprehended from two perspectives, "The liberal capitalist perspective and the human development perspective" (Dandaura, 2005, pp. 2-3). The former views development from the purely economic angle while the latter approaches development as a social matrix that makes a demand on man to know himself and his environment. The primary interest of this research is in the direction of the latter which upholds an earlier position that takes cognisance of the human element (Nasiru, 1990, p. 48). It must also stress the need for democratisation of the process of development among the people desiring it. (Okwori, 1992, p. 37)

Control

Control, in the context of this study, means being in authority or possessing the ability and opportunity to direct or manage something successfully. Control bestows some sense of belonging and responsibility on the individual or group of individuals that exercises such authority. Such individuals, even if they were objects a priori, cease to

operate in such objective positions. But, they begin to function gradually as subjects or movers of action, determining their own destiny. The idea of control in this study is predicated upon theatre as the tool or weapon on which the control is to be exercised.

Efficacy

Originally a medical term, efficacy means the ability, especially of a medicine or a method of achieving something to produce the intended result. In other words, it also means effectiveness. Efficacy can be described tersely as the power of producing an effect. Broadly speaking, efficacy has a general meaning that denotes effectiveness and also a specialized meaning that refers to potency or the power of medicinal drug to achieve its desired result.

Efficacy in Applied Theatre is also a specialized word suggesting effectiveness which is akin to its meaning in the medical parlance. This is because there are ways in which the theatre is applied to the community with prescription and precision just like drugs. Efficacy is determined by the attainment of goals and it can be found in the properties of theatre embedded in its process of production. It is a latent power that manifests in the result it produces. Efficacy refers to the ability of theatre to make the performance influence the attitudes or behavioural pattern or the anticipated action of its immediate audience or the society where the audience is domiciled.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review covers the following major areas: Applied Theatre practice in Nigeria (specifically, Samaru Project and NPTA workshops), Applied Theatre variants, production process control, efficacy. And, because Freire and Boal's poetics provides the theoretical premise that necessitates the use of theatre as a tool of dialogue and enquiry by the oppressed, the theories are also reviewed in this chapter.

2.1 Applied Theatre Practice in Nigeria (Samaru Project and NPTA)

Beyond the formal reports of the organisers of Samaru Project and NPTA workshops, some scholars have expressed their keen interest in them. The early activities of Samaru Project as far back as 1977 were impressive enough to have caught the attention of scholars like Michael Etherton and Kees Epskamp. Etherton might have been the prime mover of Samaru Project, he still takes his time to express his critical

observation of the entire process. In a succinct historical overview of Samaru Project, this study notes how a group of drama teachers, students, adult educators, literacy officers and young peasant farmers converged to set the project rolling. It was the real task of building scenarios which is required to carry the thinking of the group forward. However, in the first project, performance was the real focus.

Etherton comments that, turning social problems into a critique of society through drama is a difficult process, both for the university students and adult literacy workers. He notes further that there was some criticism of the analysis which the plays offered. Generally, Etherton, along with Brian Crow, try to argue that the form of plays of the popular theatre is non-completion. Etherton (2012, p. 362) posits that, by developing thought through the dramatic processes, activists and their audiences can discover the key contradictions. He therefore concludes that “the process of turning a problem of social analysis into a play is achievable but complex ...” (Etherton, 2012, p. 367)

This represents a critical self-assessment of the founding patriarch of community theatre in Nigeria. By alluding to limited records of achievements, he reveals his premonitions against a possible case of not achieving the desired goals of the whole effort. Etherton’s position also suggests he is fully theoretically grounded enough to understand that the strength of community theatre is not only in its participatory process but also in the incomplete nature of the process which should ordinarily continue in perpetuity.

Epskamp however refers to the *Wasan Manoma* (Farmers’ Play) which was carried out in the Soba District. The goal of the drama team was to help find out how the

peasant farmers thought they could be helped by this campaign. He observes that workshop participants learnt how to use local theatrical forms of expression to produce and indigenise a performance. (Epskamp, 1989, p. 113). Epskamp notes further that improvisation techniques were used frequently to obtain storyline and to study character indepth. Rehearsals also served as analytical device to find solutions to social problems.

Epskamp (1989, p. 116) concludes to say that the Laedza Batanani approach in Botswana and the Zambian Chikwakwa experience have been of a great influence to Theatre for Development in African universities, especially, Nigeria.

The frequent reference being made to Zambia's Chikwakwa and Botswana's Laedza Batanani is borne out of the varied experience and exposure these scholars have had in applied theatre outside Nigeria and the theories driving it over the years. It should be noted that Etherton especially has always understood that the strength of community theatre resides in its process of production.

Yerima (1990, P. 85) did a study of the style and technique in Samaru Project which further confirms the observation of Epskamp that ABU's popular theatre deals with the problems of the people and attempts are made to use the people's artistic form of expressions.

The need to engage in community theatre has gone beyond making a topical issue out of the people's problem or drawing from the pool of their indigenous cultural resources to build up a play. It is also very imperative that while in the process of community play-making, the desired result should be held in view as a guide towards the attainment of efficacy. (Yerima, 2008, p. 130).

Some other works on the ABU Theatre for Development initiatives have been largely exploratory, dwelling more on historical evolution and the general structure of the practice. Zenenga, for instance, explores the experience and inspiration in Ahmadu Bello University and Zimbabwe. In doing this, he mentions that most TFD projects expire prematurely as they cannot stand the test of time, “because they come and go with the funding, personalities, and other expectations associated with them” (Zenenga, 2008, p. 35). His stance that “ABU is a living testimony to the undying spirit of a patriotic quest for African-centred knowledge, community development and theatre aesthetics” (Zenenga, 2008, p. 35) is antithetical to his earlier statement. This position is borne out of the fact that most projects launched in the seventies and eighties in many African countries no longer exist. So the crucial question at this point is whether Samaru Project would have stood the test of time without the institutional support of ABU. Another issue not addressed by Zenenga is how the amount of transformation ascribed to ABU’s Samaru Project can be measured in physically quantifiable terms.

Agaku believes that “the ABU community theatre project was transformatory” (2008, p. 55). Aside helping to stimulate and develop dramatic form among peasants for enlightenment and entertainment, he notes that the ABU experience also produced a pattern that became the generally accepted mode of operation for any Theatre for Development project in Nigeria. As it will be seen in most other works on the achievement of Samaru Project, what is being rehashed is the feat ABU has been able to perform in evolving and sustaining the tradition of community theatre for so long. The claim of transformation may not have countenanced the objective social reality of the residents of Samaru Village.

From another perspective, the treatment of case studies of community theatre practice provides a more critical review of Samaru Project. Kafewo's (2004, p. 60) essay investigates the methods of realising performances of any community theatre project. To achieve this, he highlights three experiments to illustrate these methods.

Our concern however is the assessment of the method adopted by one of the three case studies – the Samaru Project of 1986/1987. The particular issue considered in this edition of Samaru Project is that of health which was narrowed down to two government programmes – ORT and EPI. Although members of the community identified with the issues raised in the play, they disagreed on some contradictions in the play. In his conclusion, Kafewo considers the migrant method adopted by Samaru Project to be the weakest (2004, p. 60).

The above raises a pertinent question on the perspectives and depth of early essays and reviews on applied theatre practice in Nigeria. These early essays are largely descriptive and explorative documentations of the activities, techniques and process of production. Abah, although a key player in Samaru Project and NPTA, opines that the Samaru Improvisations was the harbinger of community theatre practice in ABU as it continues to be defined by experimentation.

Abah explains that the project lays the foundation for the community theatre project which challenges the elitist notion of students that drama is not about engaging with ordinary people in the street who are not intelligent.

Prior to an essay, Abah had argued that the programme was for the purpose of instruction and for students to earn their grades. The follow-up and continuity were not spirited enough because of the constant flux of students on a yearly basis. This leads, again, to the question of what the community stands to gain from the programme.

This is illustrated that in a few cases, there were signs of hostility from the community. The question is therefore raised as to whether the university has social responsibility towards Samaru, its host community. The question is pushed further to determine whether a curricular programme should contain an action component and of what character the action should be. All indication was to the effect that the university lacks the mandate to make a direct social intervention, hence the founding of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA). All these aforementioned developments in Samaru

Project led to the founding of NPTA as they provided a point of departure. (Abah, 1992, p. iii)

Further to the issues of independence and self-sustenance which led to the founding of NPTA, is the issue of communicative structure of TfD workshops. The Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance is deployed as a model to examine the communicative structure of TfD as a tool for development. Nyager examines the NPTA model with following procedure: (a) Community Research ... (f) Post-Performance Discussion (Evaluation) (2001, p. 144)

Nyager (2001, p. 144) submits that NPTA/TFD workshops enhance participatory learning and action by its multi-disciplinary, multi-dimensional and multi-media approach to communication. Theatre for Development is anchored on the belief that a bipartite communication structure creates an enabling environment which facilitates dialogue and negotiation.

“This form of theatre has greater relevance in the third world countries where developmental needs are higher due to obvious reasons” (Ode, 2011, p. 295). Ode appraises the effect of these projects on the societies in which they were mounted. At the close of her research, she confirms the role of theatre in engendering participatory development by reviewing the community theatre project.

Among the various scholarly works that have researched into the activities of Samaru Project and Nigeria Popular Theatre Alliance, it is discovered that many have expended research energy on the form, techniques, workshop methodology and historical development. In specifics, most were either giving reports on the various workshops while some were written on the participatory nature of the Samaru and NPTA initiatives. The

exact dividends of Samaru Project and NPTA workshops in concrete scientific terms especially as it affects the life of the ordinary man on the street were glossed over.

2.2 Features of Community Theatre

Hagher offers a definition of Community Theatre (for development) as “a theatrical style which stresses ‘participation, ‘dialogue’, and ‘Problem-posing education’ ... ” (1990, p. 3). Considering the magnitude of what can be discussed under Community Theatre, its designation (as a style rather than as form by Hagher) denies it its status as a major theatrical genre across the globe. From another perspective, Okwori’s description of community theatre as “the one that involves taking up residence in a particular community and working with the people ...” (2004, p. 26) is an extension of the most often chanted definition. It saddles the theatre practitioner with the

additional responsibility of elongated commitment to the liberation of the community dwellers.

The discourse on the nomenclatural status of Community Theatre and its relationship with other forms of Applied Theatre vis-à-vis the issues of production process, efficacy and continuity is not so much influenced by its *theatre* component as it is by its *community* component. Further to the exclusivist mode of redefining community boundaries, the same observation can equally be extended to the conceptualization and praxis of Community Theatre in Nigeria. This observation poses a question on the scope of operation of Community Theatre practice. What kind of community is in perpetual focus? The practice of Community Theatre in Nigeria and several other places in Africa appears to have been narrowed down to rural communities exclusively by many scholars (Ewu, 1999, p. 89; Harding, 1999, p. 99; Illah, 1999, p. 124; Akinwale, 2001, p. 238; Komolafe, 2005, p. 234; Isah, 2008, p. 60). This is informed by the seemingly unconscious choice of rural targets for their workshops and research work.

From the foregoing representative of the plethora of Community Theatre examples, the appellation rural has merely helped in arguably stereotyping all communities as rural. Questioning the band-wagon pattern of Community Theatre practice therefore becomes inevitable, otherwise, what is being suggested is that all theatre-hosting communities are rural which is apparently contestable.

Nicholson's approach to and apprehension of community is a comprehensive one as she observes that the sense of belonging to any singular community has become increasingly problematic. "In part, this conservatism surrounding images of localism

explains the paradigm shift from communities of locality to communities of identities ...
“(Nicholson, 2005, p. 84)

The above mentioned understanding of the concept of community is simultaneously flexible and complex but all-embracing. In that light, her position accommodates the multiplicity of identities in community and at the same time the exclusionist tendencies of community composition or membership. This perception of community negates the earlier mentioned practice of community as a rigidly rural entity.

Kershaw goes deeper to identify the distinction and common grounds between community of location and community of interests (Kershaw, 1999, p. 31). This position on the idea of the membership or composition of a community, like Nicholson's, also does not prescribe any form of restriction on what should constitute a community. Considering the aforementioned indices of common interests, sexuality, experiences, ideology, ethnic, political affiliations, the essential nomenclatural component of Community Theatre is the community in it, which draws its meanings from a complex of indices mentioned above. The notion of intendedness or “intentionality” (Ackroyd, 2000, p. 4) is also a prominent factor in Community Theatre. This invariably creates an overlap with other variants of Applied Theatre.

At this juncture, it is necessary to examine a recent definition of Community Theatre (Chukwu-Okoronkwo, 2008, p. 20) which confirms outright our earlier claim that Community Theatre in Nigeria may have been stereotyped in a straitjacket of rural locality which appears a little too narrow and simplistic to describe a concept as complex as Community Theatre. Again, the component of intentionality is equally very pronounced in its need to effect positive changes within the community. Like its Theatre

for Development counterpart, it is specifically instituted for the purpose of solving social problems with the active participation of members of that same community. If at this point, one now encounters another nomenclature like Community Theatre for Development, then one is plunged further into ambiguity.

From all of these, one is compelled to ask questions that should throw light on what the concept of Community Theatre is. Adopting a term like Community Theatre for Development therefore appears tautological, thereby eliciting a question as to whether

there is indeed a Community Theatre that is not for development.

Going by the different critical works on Applied Theatre, there is no gain-saying the fact that the terms Theatre for Development, Popular Theatre, Community Theatre and some other nomenclatures have often been interchangeably used and no absolute line has been drawn. Frances Harding however draws a major difference between Community Theatre and Theatre for Development.

Harding (2005, p. xii) goes the whole length to draw a line between Community Theatre and Theatre for Development while at the same time she admits that Theatre for Development shares with Community Theatre the central feature of being community and context-based. In her conclusion, she states that “Theatre for Development is a technique of drama-building ...” (Harding, 2005, pp. xii-xiii).

At this point, we allude to the caveat about misrepresenting Applied Theatre as a technique rather than as a form of theatre. This is not unconnected with the tendency for the art form to be used for an unworthy cause, hence the caution.

2.3 Features of Theatre for Development (TfD)

“TFD has come to be widely accepted as a theatre of the ordinary people used to address their own problems” (Abah, 2005, p. 100). The twin concept of theatre and development has generated other variants of Theatre for Development.

It is worth noting that all of the features mentioned above and ascribed to Theatre for Development can equally be ascribed to Community Theatre or Popular Theatre. This is with special reference to Kamiriithu Community Theatre which, to date, can arguably be considered one of the most successful Community Theatre engagements in Africa. One of the intentions of this review on nomenclature is to reduce the emphasis that is placed on nomenclatural differences and give room for interchange and overlap of terms and concepts. With a benefit of hindsight, even Abah can be considered to have shifted ground on the idea of nomenclatural dichotomization within the practice of Applied Theatre.

In an earlier work, and as can be deduced from the Theatre for Development nomenclature, the emphasis is strictly on development. In trying to shed lights on the term development, Abah cites a definition of development that “development can best be described as a process of positive socio-economic change in the quality and level of human existence ...” (1990, p. 17). He confirms that the definition suits the United Nations’ concepts of development.

It is noted from the above principles that participation by beneficiaries is a sine-qua-non. This, apparently, must have informed the arrival at Theatre for “Integrated Development” (TIDE) (Abah, 1990, p. 17) which focuses on the human person in the development process. This goes alongside the need for him to play an active role in his

own reality which constitutes the ethics and aesthetics of Theatre for Integrated Development. Theatre for Integrated Development (TIDE) is therefore further described as “the practice by which theatre is put at the service of the disadvantaged rural and urban poor ...” (Abah, 1990, p. 17). At this point, the practice broken down into the following units:

Theatre for Development (TfD)

Theatre for Integrated Rural Development (THIRD) or

Community Theatre for Integrated Rural Development (CTHIRD) (Abah, 2013, p. 32)

A quick observation of all these units mentioned reveals that the *urban* denominator is not in any way indicated.

While it true that scholars and practitioners generally try to ascribe some measure of limitations and distinctions to the different practices, it is also clear that they all refer to the same practice. In broad terms, they all refer to a theatre that is populist or has the popular people at its centre. This leads our discussion to another variant of Applied Theatre under a different nomenclature and that is Popular Theatre.

2.4 Features of Popular Theatre

“Performances (scenarios and dramatic skits dedicated to solving certain social problems of a select community” (Gbilekaa, 1990, p. 27).

“what is concocted and propagated at a national level will not necessarily become popular locally” (Epskamp, 1989, p. 35).

The confusion that permeates the idea of what constitutes applied or Popular Theatre is overwhelming. In between tiers and years of political history, there have been

variants of this kind of theatre that appear to share the same backcloth. Some of these are people's theatre, Popular Theatre, agitprop, guerrilla theatre, political theatre. While trying to shed some light on what makes a political theatre, it is good to note that the politically inclined theatre of accomplished practitioners has never resulted directly in any social revolution. What it produced was a social conflict.

For the purpose of this review, we shall go further by examining the major characteristics of Popular Theatre. Popular Theatre is another term that has been used loosely and this renders its meaning rather so obtuse to the extent that the already thin borderlines it shares with other variants like Community Theatre, Theatre for Development and Political Theatre have been blurred. To incisively reflect on the Popular Theatre nomenclature, Ahura submits:

Popular Theatre is the theatre of the people which uses the expressive (sic) medium of the people and which treats the actual problems of the environment ... It is a theatre that recognises the creative potentialities of the rural masses ... (Ahura, 1990, p. 55)

Ahura goes further to ascribe to Popular Theatre the quality of a revolutionary art form. Initially leaning towards the Boalian idea, he avers that the theatre is a rehearsal for revolution, but then, quickly revises his position on the question of political change and adds that Popular Theatre has made little contribution in Africa so far. His argument is attenuated further with a citation from Kidd: "Popular Theatre in the third world often claims to be a tool of protest and struggle and a means of social transformation but rarely does it challenge the status quo in any significant way ..." (Ahura, 1990, p. 56).

Upon citing Kidd himself, which appears not too helpful, especially considering the robust definition already foisted on Popular Theatre, Ahura quickly takes refuge in the Kamiriithu Community Theatre experience as an example of success in Popular Theatre. An attempt to inquire further into Kamiriithu details will certainly pose both fresh and old problems of efficacy and continuity.

In understanding Popular Theatre, a look at the Yoruba Popular Travelling Theatre tradition might be of help. On this note, we refer to Biodun Jeyifo who, in drawing from his encounter with and research into the activities of the Yoruba Popular Theatre practitioners, articulates his thought thus:

... while the travelling theatre performance idiom has, on a certain level, become a central medium for the communication and expression of the traditional values and the collective identity of the Yoruba people today, it ineluctably continues to express the attitudes, outlook and aspirations of the social class from which the great majority of its practitioners have sprung. (1984, p. x)

From Jeyifo's description of this tradition, it is clear that the practitioners are products of the social block whose lives, attitude, outlook and aspirations are being represented on stage. The aesthetic values naturally confirm the chemistry between the Yoruba Popular Theatre practitioners and the audience to be found largely among the masses generally, be it rural or urban. Jeyifo's study of the Popular Yoruba audience cuts across different social strata. And of course, it is a popular tradition that is also known for its commercial vibrancy. Even the early political satires of Hubert Ogunde (*Tiger's Empire*, *Bread and Bullet*, *Yoruba Ronu* and others.) which criticize the defunct

colonial administration and the first republic were first and foremost commercial ventures.

2.5 Efficacy in Applied Theatre

Efficacy is a word meaning the ability, especially of a medicine or a method to arrive at the intended result. In other words, it also means effectiveness. Broadly speaking, efficacy has a general meaning that denotes effectiveness and a specialized meaning that refers to potency or the power of drug to achieve its result.

Efficacy is a major component of Applied Theatre that defines the direct and practical functionality of theatre as a tool of social change. However, very scant evidence of efficacy has been reported or considered for serious scholarly interrogation. It is especially so in developing countries of the world. This state of Applied Theatre scholarship may have informed the genre being singled out as a major area of endeavour in African theatre requiring attention.

In the same vein, efficacy in Applied Theatre is also a specialized word suggesting effectiveness which is akin to the meaning attached to it in the medical parlance. This is because there are ways in which the theatre is applied to the community with prescription and precision just like drugs. A more complex definition refers to efficacy as “the potentials that the theatre may have to make the immediate effects of performance influence, however minutely, the general historical evolution of wider social and political realities” Kershaw (1999, p. 1).

Kershaw (1999, pp. 1-2) expresses his intent on investigating the potential efficacy of theatrical performance. His understanding centres on the effort of practitioners to change the future line of actions of their spectators, their community structure and their culture. He hints further at the possibility that the effects of particular

performances might bring about social change; and that there could be interactions between micro level of individual shows and macro level of socio-political order.

However, performances with serious intention always come with the ambition of trying to influence the future action of their audience. Apparently, Ackroyd's stance on this is overtly more critical as her consideration is for a worst-case scenario which examines theatre not merely in use for momentary purposes but rather for negative reasons.

I wish to consider the implications of the intentionality of Applied Theatre, and to raise the possibility that it may not always be employed for noble, humanitarian means. We need to ask ourselves what purposes Applied Theatre activities are fulfilling and what values they are exemplifying. (Ackroyd, 2000, p. 4)

Another efficacy problem identified is that of evaluation. No doubts, Kershaw's position as a director with Medium Fair Theatre Company, a small rural Community Theatre outfit in Devon between 1975 and 1980 must have furnished him with the much needed exposure and experience. Medium Fair was just one out of the several mushroom Community Theatre groups that had by then constituted themselves into a movement, the British Alternative Theatre Movement. These groups believed, by customizing performances for their spectators, they could change their lot. However, upon watching several of such shows in England and Wales, Kershaw came to a contrary conclusion (1999, p. 4)

The above argument is corroborated in the bipartite interpretation of performance as "Performance Studies and Performance Management" (Nicholson, 2005, p. 46) whereby performance studies, on the one hand, is explored as cultural practice and on

the other hand, performance management is explored from corporate angle, where accountability and achievement are the key words.

Our apprehension regarding the practice of Applied Theatre in Nigeria is premised on the findings of Kershaw on British alternative theatre. Similar traces of idealism and survivalist drive, which merely serve as nourishment for the status quo might be vastly evident in the Applied Theatre terrain of Nigeria. Kershaw's encounter with the British alternative theatre raises a question on the ideological coherence of the movement. Is there any connection between ideological coherence and the potential efficacy of particular shows or the movement as an entity for the prospect of affirming the impact of alternative theatre on British social and political history?

Just as Kershaw hinted, "very few studies of this kind have been undertaken, ... and certainly the job has not been done for British alternative theatre" (1999, p. 4) as at that time. The same can be said of applied theatre in Nigeria as no extensive research on efficacy has yet been carried out in Nigeria. So this work is aimed at filling that gap in scholarship. Kershaw's choice of latent efficacy implies interrogating the intended purposes of theatre for select viewers. This initiative comes with its own inferences and bearings on the evaluation of applied theatre practice. Examining the performance context and the likely audience perception of such a performance have become the *sin qua non* for impact assessment. If Theatre is indeed to be seen as a social concept, then it should not be perceived to be independent of its own social environment. All of the above is seen to suggest ways in which the conditions of performance can increase its potential overall efficacy.

The task of trying to ascribe efficacy to theatrical performances or movement is certainly a knotty one and it is so for a number of reasons. One of such, a major one at

that, is the fact that there is no clearly defined barometer for measuring or evaluating the effect of theatre on an audience or its immediate community. This research will therefore endeavour to propose models of evaluating theatrical performances or movements that will go beyond spontaneous audience reaction.

2.6 Process of Production

The production process covers the various research activities, creativity, performance and post-performance activities which take place in the course of Applied Theatre productions. There are three different participants that are involved in the production process. They are independent development agencies, practitioners/facilitators and the community with its audience. The development agencies are usually the initiators and coordinators of the workshops and productions. They possess the master-plan which they hand over to the practitioners. The practitioners are themselves either hired or they are students, and sometimes, part of the development agencies. The community and its audience are the central point of reference in the workshop, participating as the objects or subjects of dialogue in such workshops. The control of the process of production among these three different bodies is a major subject of discussion in this research.

2.7 Theoretical Framework: Poetics of the Oppressed

The study interrogates two different experiences, those of ABU Zaria's Samaru Project and the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance. The parameters for apprehending the two experiences are anchored upon their claim of affinity with the Freirean and Boalian education and dramatic theories respectively. This obviously

suggests a synergy in the theoretical postulations of Paulo Freire as contained in his pedagogy of the oppressed and the popular theatre practice of Augusto Boal which he too was able to articulate later in his theatre of the oppressed. In essence, the theoretical basis of this work is situated within the purview of the Freirean “Problem-posing education and Banking concept of education” (Freire, 1996, p. 60) and the Boalian “Forum theater” (Boal, 2000, p. 126).

Upon the conjecture that Applied Theatre is at variance with the conventional theatre and also that its functions transcend entertainment, the theatre has metamorphosed into a weapon of social transformation. And as a tool of change, the question of mass education and mobilization becomes very paramount to practitioners and scholars.

The pedagogy of the oppressed therefore becomes a weapon for critical discovery, whereby both the oppressed and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization. In order to overcome their problem, the oppressed are mandated by the theorist to “first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action, they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity” (Freire, 1996, p. 29). Intricately linked with this are the principles behind Forum Theatre as postulated in *Theatre of the Oppressed* by Boal. He showed in practice how the theatre can be positioned to serve the oppressed and to express themselves through the use of the new language of theatre.

For Boal to arrive at his destination, he engages his readers in an excursion into the classical age of Aristotle and his contemporaries. He volunteers, in the volume, an imaginative chronicle of Aristotle’s perception and recasting of the tenets of Greek tragedy to explain how theatre, a powerful tool of suasion was wrested from the hands of

the people and handed over to the Aristocrats and later the bourgeois. Theatre, in the hands of the aristocrats, was fashioned out to persuade the people to continue to be subservient to the rulers, never questioning their authorities or their own state of dehumanisation.

For the purpose of this research, Freire's Problem-posing education is adopted as the main theory while Boal's Forum Theatre is adjoined to it because of the vibrant theatrical platform it offers through its numerous techniques and forms.

Augusto Boal's Poetics of Liberation

Specifically, this section of the review interrogates the connection of Boal's theatre of the oppressed to related works from Aristotle to Freire and beyond. The main aim is to re-evaluate the link between Boal and some other prominent philosophers. A major reference is also made to Carmel O'Sullivan's critical work on Boal with a view to cross-examining the claims of the former. On the whole, this aspect of the study serves as a general review to some of the major reactions to theatre of the oppressed. But first, a survey of Boal's background and the theory are undertaken.

Augusto Boal was born on March 16, 1931 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil during the totalitarian government of Getulio Vargas. He first obtained a degree in Industrial Chemistry in Rio and later simultaneously studied playwriting (under the mentorship of John Gasner) and Chemical Engineering at Columbia University, New York. While in New York, Boal participated in a variety of theatrical productions and in the process got exposed to and influenced by Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre, his political themes and anti-illusionist critical production style.

He joined the Arena Theatre in Sao Paulo in 1955 as the director and started experimenting with new forms of theatre. Between 1955 and 1964, he passed through four theatrical phases: the realist, photographic, nationalisation of the classics and musicals. By 1964, he had emerged as a full-fledged activist and because he was considered a threat by the government of the day, he was exiled to Argentina in 1971. He remained there for five years during which he wrote his classic, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, fashioned after Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

A very important work in Applied Theatre discipline, Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* sets out to illustrate that all theatre is political. Beyond the exploratory studies carried out on Boal's poetics, some scholars have drawn attention to some grave contradictions discovered within the theory and its practice. Although a handful of scholars are of contrary views, Boal has been accused of being overtly "Marxist in tone" (Nicholson, 2005, p. 117) but actually intrinsically idealist in practice. This review therefore undertakes an overview of the constituent parts of the theory and explores the claims of ideological incongruity within Boal's poetics.

One of the major goals of *Theatre of the Oppressed* is to restore the ownership of theatre to the people. Beyond that, theatre, in Boal's treatise, is a most potent weapon of liberation. The ruling class has experienced theatre's strength and potency and it has proven to be a reliable tool of domination. For ages, the ruling class, under different appellations, has held on to it and subjected it to series of manipulation to the detriment of the oppressed masses. The thrust of Boal's theatre of the oppressed therefore is that the same theatre can be reversed into becoming a tool of liberation for the oppressed masses.

To understand this poetics of the oppressed, it is imperative to examine closely its main objective - which is to change the people – passive spectators into subjects of the dramatic actions. The thrust of the poetics is that the theatrical means of production should be transferred to the people whereby the human body is seen as a most potent resource.

The human body is capable of generating sound and movement. So in order to control the theatrical machinery, man is required to be able to manipulate his physique to make it more communicative. The process of transforming the spectator into an actor is outlined into four stages: “Knowing the Body”; “Making the Body Expressive”; “The Theater as Language – *Simultaneous Dramaturgy, Image Theater, Forum Theater*”; “The Theater as Discourse” (Boal, 2000, pp. 126-142).

The first stage occurs through exercises to know body limits, potentials, and chances of correcting distortions. The second stage is about developing the games that will help the participants to use their bodily resources for self-expression. The third stage has three parts denoting the various degrees of direct audience participation in the performance. The first degree refers to the first call extended to the spectator to contribute to the issues raised on stage without having to mount the stage. In the second degree of theatre as language, the spectator’s participation is more direct as he sculpts the real, ideal and transitory images using the bodies of other participants to express his opinions.

In the third degree of theatre as language (i.e. Forum Theater), the level of participation is geared towards changing the dramatic action. The process begins with the participants telling a story that portrays a problem which requires a solution. This is subsequently developed into a skit and dramatized. It is presented the second time, but

now, any of the audience members may choose to replace any of the actors and redirect the actions of the drama as he deems fit. In the fourth stage, the theorist's position is that the bourgeois theatre is a finished product as the bourgeoisie already knows what the world looks like. However, the oppressed masses do not have an idea of what their world looks like, it follows then that their theatre will only manifest in form of rehearsal not a complete production.

Over time, Boal has come under heavy attacks on the ground that he does not practise what he teaches. The major criticism against him is that although he claims to have been influenced by the theoretical works of Marx, Brecht and Freire, he has already betrayed the core principles of these parent theories. This criticism stems out of O'Sullivan's essay on the relationship between Marx and Boal, most especially the critical remarks of O'Sullivan (2001, np) that:

Boal's entire system rests upon a haphazard 'acquaintance' with the ideas of a handful of, albeit key, philosophers and theorists, namely, Aristotle, Hegel, Marx and Brecht, chiefly expressed in his seminal publication *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979).

A hint of O'Sullivan's scathing criticism of *Theatre of the Oppressed* came from Helen Nicholson's *Applied Drama* where she puts up some defence for the poetics and the practice. There is also an online essay by Raymond Teodo in defence of Boal's poetics. These led to a random survey of critical works on theatre of the oppressed. The preliminary observation is that only few essays on Boal's poetics are critical while most are merely exploratory and referential in nature.

The Boalian Polemics

The idea of transforming the theatre into a weapon of liberation for the oppressed draws a crucial intersection of pedagogy of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressed. While the former thrives on the power of education to liberate the oppressed, the latter conversely operates from the position that the theatre is a potent weapon of liberation.

It is significant that both draw sustenance from the Marxist and Brechtian theories (Freire, 1996, pp. 33-35, Boal, 2000, pp. 83-111).

This section of the study offers an insight into theatre of the oppressed as a theory and a theatrical form housing series of techniques that have dominated the practice of Applied Theatre. A close observation of the theatre of the oppressed has revealed two major trends in its scholarship. The first focuses on deep theoretical roots traceable to Boal's response to Aristotle, Marx, Brecht and Freire. The second borders on the plethora of techniques that have been devised by him.

In several essays and reports, it is not uncommon to find tangential and uncritical references made to the poetics. There are however a few essays that are significantly dedicated to the Boalian poetics. Among these few are the ones by Tunde Lakoju and Umar-Buratai. Lakoju's approach to Boal's poetics is essentially exploratory as it surveys the emergence of theatre of the oppressed right from Aristotle to Boal with the latter representing a departure from the former. "Aristotle's type of empathy immobilizes the spectator, and allows the actor to impose his own ideas and his morals" (Lakoju, 1992, p. 12). The emotions triggered in Aristotle are those of pity and fear which helps to intensify the "culture of silence" (Freire, 1996, p. 12). Boal, in Lakoju's words, "saw traditional theatre forms putting spectators in a passive unanalytical role..." (1992, p. 11).

Umar-Buratai's essay is exploratory too, especially in explaining the intent of the poetics to transform the traditional relationship between the audience and the stage. Considering the way Applied Theatre practitioners have been applying Boalian techniques to their practice, it can be deduced from Umar-Buratai that some aspects of the poetics appear nebulous and so are better left untouched. "It is in this regard that Boal's work lies at the heart of much TfD practice. Although many current practitioners find some aspects of his theory too rigid for the range of situations they confront" (Umar-Buratai, 2008, p. 189).

The poser then is, what aspect of theatre of the oppressed is considered too rigid to be followed by TfD practitioners? The general trend of discourse on the poetics has consistently tilted towards celebrating a shift from an oppressive (Aristotelian) tragic genre to a liberating genre that empowers the audience. Although Umar-Buratai is generally exploratory as no attention is given to the idealist and materialist polemics, the implication of his observation hints at a possible disconnect between Boal's theories and practice.

Nicholson (2005, pp.115-121) however explains the extent to which Boal has been influenced in his response to idealism and materialism. According to Nicholson, Marxists regard idealism as not sufficient enough to effect social progress because it fails to demonstrate how human thoughts and ideas respond to wider social and economic factors. She avers that theatre practitioners whose major motivation is social change should consider the relationship between idealism and materialism vis-à-vis creative practice. To examine some of the ways in which drama is mediated through the idealist and materialist perspectives, Nicholson focuses on the theories and creative practices of Boal.

Given his experience in the Arena Theatre days, having been confronted by an audience member in Brazil, he arrived at the decision never to decide on the line of action to be taken by his audience members. His encounter with Virgilio inspired his decision.

Virgilio (Audience member): So, when you true artists talk of the blood that must be spilt ... it's our blood you mean, not yours, isn't that so?
(Boal, 1995, p. 3)

Virgilio walked out on Boal and he never saw him again.

We were no longer giving advice, we were learning together. But the actors still retained their 'power'... The suggestion came from the audience. (Boal, 1995, pp. 3-4)

Critical attention is drawn to the position of Boal that it is not the responsibility of theatre to demonstrate the right way. Certainly his decision not to suggest solutions to their problems must have been occasioned by his experience as the director of the Arena Theatre of Sao Paulo in Brazil which he tried to recapture in his *Rainbow of Desire*. Without trying to make any excuse for him, being a theorist and at the same time at the fore front of the practice is definitely an arduous task. The incident that led to taking such a decision has merely magnified the thin line between theory and practice thereby making it look like a gulf. The simple fact is that such a line can always be bridged by a corresponding theory like Freire's notion of conversion of the development agent.

"Spectator is a bad word! The spectator is less of a man and it is necessary to humanise him, to restore him to his capacity of action ..." (Boal, 2000, pp. 154-155). From the above quotation, the purpose of theatre is perceived to restore a lost humanity to the spectator, to counter his uncritical encounters with finished version of the world that has left him dehumanised. Nicholson then argues that:

and although his language ... is often Marxist in tone, it is on this idealist and enlightenment construction of human nature that Boal depends for his vision ... (2005, p. 117))

Certainly, it can be safely conjectured at this point that Nicholson is not unaware of the fact that both Freire and Brecht proclaim an unwavering Marxist conviction in their own theoretical works to which Boal also claims to share affinity. Yet, it is the belief of Nicholson that Boal's understanding of Brechtian theatre might be germane though, his connection to the work of Paulo Freire has proven to be significantly relevant.

This is perhaps why, in retrospect, O'Sullivan's (2001, np) assessment of Boal's relationship with Freire's political pedagogies has suggested that the former's emphasis is not on the exploitative and inequitable values of the capitalist system but on corrupt or evil individuals. She argues that theatre of the oppressed is based on examining personal experiences of oppression. Nicholson observes O'Sullivan in her suggestion that Boal appears oblivious of the ways in which structures of power are created and sustained which is significant in the Freirean pedagogy. It is therefore the position of O'Sullivan that Boal is more closely aligned to idealism than to the materialism of Freire.

In spite of O'Sullivan's analysis of Boal's shifting political position, Nicholson observes her to be oblivious of Boal's consistent allegiance to traditional humanism. According to Nicholson, "Boal's optimistic belief in the essential goodness of human nature leads him to accept that individuals are not radically evil but have been corrupted by an iniquitous social system" (Nicholson, 2005, p. 118).

Thus far, this review has shed lights on the basic components of Boal's theatre of the oppressed and explored the polemics that have emerged from its poetics and practice

since its inception. Consequently, this provides a link with Ackroyd's notion of intentionality. To this end, the question has also been asked as to what noble purpose the theory and its application have served humanity. In concrete social materialist term, can it be ascribed to the theory that it has brought any significant change to any society? Although this question cannot be hurriedly answered in this study without having gathered enough empirical evidence, it has opened a window of further research into the poetics.

This study has observed the tendency of uncritical appraisal of popular theories among some Applied Theatre scholars. Even if they are aware of the contradictions in the poetics as pointed out by scholars mentioned earlier, not enough evidence has emerged to demonstrate that knowledge. This review, although acknowledges the claims of contradiction within the theatre of the oppressed, has acknowledged that the poetics provides a viable theatre platform that can be used to rescue people's theatre from the ruling class, hence the adoption of Boal's poetics as a support theory to Freire's critical theory.

It should be noted that in all of the above criticism of Forum Theatre by O'Sullivan et al, it is yet to be fully countenanced that Forum Theatre, as devised by Boal, is a viable platform or a tool designed to take delivery of the vocation of humanisation and other liberationist ideals. How theatre practitioners and other users have chosen to apply this theory to the practice of applied theatre should not undermine its value as a most potent tool of suasion and critical dialogue. The theatre of the oppressed is deployed to provide the platform in form of a people-centred forum to midwife Freire's demand for a sustained critical dialogue among the oppressed people. This engagement provides a crucial contact between Boal and Freire. It is this point of

intersection, guided by Problem-posing education that acts as a fulcrum for the upward movement of the vocation of humanisation. The fact that Boal's Forum Theatre furnishes Freire's Problem-Posing Education with a viable platform is a central concern of this study.

In spite of the scathing criticism from O'sullivan and others, forum theatre still remains a viable applied theatre platform that will help restore a lost humanity to the Spectators. What Forum Theatre has availed this research is a radical theatrical form that can earn a robust radical outlook by cohering with Freire's dialogics.

Paulo Freire's Poetics of Liberation

Paulo Freire was born in 1921 in Recife (Brazil) to middle-class parents. Recife was then considered to be the centre of poverty. By 1929, the great depression of America started to take its toll on a neighbouring country like Brazil and an eight-year-old Paulo Freire lost his middle-class status to join the wretched. He constantly experienced hunger and he was not doing well in school. At the age of eleven, he took a decision to wage war against poverty.

At this early stage of his traumatised life, he discovered the "culture of silence" (Freire, 1996, p. 12) of the oppressed. He also came to realise that their ignorance was as a result of their subjugation by the oppressors. The oppressed were neither equipped nor encouraged to know or respond to the reality of their world. Their situation kept them so repressed that they were incapable of being critically aware of their reality. At this point, Freire came to realise that the entire system of education was a decisive weapon of domination and enforcement of the culture of silence.

Pedagogy of the oppressed, a recurring theoretical reference point in applied theatre scholarship and practice has produced theories on the development and liberation of the human subject in general. With development serving as a common factor to both education and theatre, the pedagogy has helped to determine the character of applied theatre as a radical practice of development.

While frequent allusions and claims of allegiance to Freire's critical theory in Applied Theatre scholarship and practice abound, many of them might not have fully explored, engaged or challenged Freire's liberationist and utopian ideals for the society. Gleaning from some earlier critical works on the practice of Applied Theatre in Nigeria, there is a general and frequent but rather uncritical reportorial allusion to Problem-posing education as an important theory that drives the practice.

To this end, Freire goes further to advocate a type of theatre that will use the image to communicate messages because images are effective ways of communication which do not require literacy (Jonathan M. D. & Oshionebo B., 2008, p. 220).

The quotation above exemplifies the claim that Applied Theatre scholars who cite Freire in their works might not have taken their time to fully understand the content and thrust of the theory. First, Freire might have encouraged the deployment of theatre as a universal language of communication in education, but the fact still remains that he was not a theatre activist. Rather, he was a revolutionary adult educator and by extension, a social activist and a theorist. That was why his pedagogy came in handy in 1973 in Peru, during the *Integral Literacy Operation (Operacion Alfabetizacion Integral)*. While the experiment relied solely on the Freirean theory, theatre was chosen

as one of the languages to be deployed and that was how Boal came in with his techniques of forum theatre and image theatre that later inspired his *Theatre of the Oppressed* in 1974 (*Teatro del Oprimido*). In his original ideas are to be found his various techniques of theatre of the oppressed such as forum theatre, invisible theatre and of course image theatre which is erroneously ascribed to Freire in the above quotation. It is also clear from the essayists' references that neither Freire nor Boal was consulted, yet the two of them were conspicuously cited in-text.

The discourse ahead is apparently an interdisciplinary one, which brings chiefly together two ancient areas of knowledge, drama and education. Although this research is domiciled in theatre, it is deeply rooted in a methodology of education. Applied Theatre as an academic discipline started as an arm of education. Most probably because of its persuasive power, drama turns out to be a most potent weapon of mass education in the hands of educators. The question of where Applied Theatre belongs or which areas of discourse it embraces has generated heated debates among Applied Theatre scholars across the globe.

The Vocation of Humanisation

Freire, in finding justification for the pedagogy of the oppressed, begins his meditation on man's attainment of full humanity. By identifying his concerns for the problem of humanisation, he unearths its twin-problem of dehumanisation. The two are perceived as a possibility for man, "as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness" (Freire, 1996, p. 25).

Dehumanisation turns out to be the end product of unchecked process of oppression. Consequently, the process of becoming more fully human is derailed,

thereby leaving the victims on both sides dehumanised by the unrestrained process of oppression. However, the struggle against oppression is feasible not only because it runs its own natural course but also because it is the resultant effect of an unfavourable social order. For a meaningful struggle to take place, the oppressed should strive towards the attainment of humanity of both themselves and their oppressors. This is the mandate of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. This is because the oppressors lack the will to liberate anybody.

There are two major branches of pedagogy of the oppressed – “the banking concept of education” otherwise known as “narrative sickness” (Freire, 1996, p. 52) and “the problem-posing education” (Freire, 1996, p. 60). The first describes and is concerned with the current state of education which also, is the oppressive practice of education. It stands chiefly to protect the status quo against the interest of the oppressed. The second, a humanising pedagogy, represents Freire’s recommendation of a panacea to counter the narrative ailment of the oppressed and the oppressors. The two branches operate from a position that acknowledges the dehumanised state of the oppressed and their oppressors.

The Banking Concept of Education (Narrative Sickness)

An observation of a general trend in education is a revelation of what Freire calls the “Narrative Sickness” (Freire, 1996, p. 52). The narrative process of education involves a narrating subject (the teacher) and listening objects (the students) whereby the teacher gives the impression of reality as something unchanging. He religiously fulfils the chore of filling the students with his narrative stuff, albeit disconnected from their

real situation. In this system of education, knowledge is bestowed like a gift upon those considered ignorant by the self-acclaimed learned ones.

Freire (Freire, 1996, pp. 53, 55) avers at this point that the preoccupation of the oppressor is in coercing the oppressed to get accustomed to the situation which oppresses him in order to consolidate his domination. Towards this end, this concept of education, alongside false generosity is enforced.

There is an underlying danger in Freire's discovery regarding the system of education worldwide. This danger is in the guise of an antithetical system of education that has not only failed to deliver its mandate but has retrogressed into working arduously

against the same mandate just to protect the status quo. This happens when education, a natural instrument of liberation has been coerced into a volte face to become a weapon of oppression. The danger manifests with any spirited attempt to enforce a counter volte face. Freire's pedagogy is the beginning of such conflictual attempt, hence the inherent danger in it.

The Problem-Posing Education (Critical Consciousness)

On the conflicting end of the banking concept of education however is the "Problem-Posing Education ... demands that the teacher-students relationship should be resolved from the beginning" (Freire, 1996, p. 60). Through dialogue, the vertical teacher-students-relationship is deconstructed to evolve a horizontal relationship.

To overcome the oppression, the "people must first critically recognise its causes ..." (Freire, 1996, p. 29). This way, a new situation which supports the vocation

of humanisation can be created. The responsibility of undertaking this struggle rests solely the oppressed. The pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed. Emanating from this reflection is the necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. The question is raised as to how the oppressed, in their devastated state, can participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation. Freire explains further:

This pedagogy avers that the reality of oppression is to be perceived as a restrictive situation which can be surmounted. However, much more than this perception is required to attain liberation. It is also not enough that the oppressed discover themselves to be in dialectical relationship to the oppressors. It is only when this perception includes them in the struggle for liberation that the oppressed can overcome the contradiction.

While this researcher agrees with Freire on his perception of the reality of oppression which he posits can be surmounted, it is very pertinent to be aware of a deep gulf that stands between such a perception and the attainment of the desired liberation. A significantly radical transition is expected to take place first in the oppressed being capable of transporting fellow oppressed from a state of ignorance or complacency to a profoundly critical discernment of reality. Considering the enormous burden of oppression, this transition may not be automatic and its resultant liberation may not be as smooth as it is eloquently articulated by Freire.

Again, the same argument is advanced with regards to the individual oppressor on recognising himself as an oppressor. Even though this may cause him some discomfort, he does not necessarily end up with fraternising or identifying with the oppressed. Further on this, Freire opines that:

rationalising his guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while holding them fast in a position of dependence, will not do. Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary; It is a radical posture.... (1996, p. 31)

Problem-posing education holds that the changing of objective reality is not achieved if the perception of reality is not backed up by critical intervention. A type of false perception could also be occasioned by a change in objective reality which threatens the individual or class interests of the perceiver.

Although it has its firm root in the field of education, Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed has continued to engender the growth of scholarship across various disciplines and certainly, Applied Theatre stands out among them. It is however puzzling that many scholars and practitioners of Applied Theatre merely tangentially allude to a few of the key tenets of Freire's pedagogy.

Applied Theatre Practitioners and the Dynamics of Conversion

"Those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly ... Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth" (Freire, 1996, p. 42-43). By implication, the task of dialoguing with the people or explaining the consequence of taking critical action suggests the presence of a third party beside the oppressed and oppressor. The third party in the Applied Theatre context is any of the middle-class practitioners who must have been converted to the cause of the oppressed wholesale. For the liberation to be complete, the conversion of the agent must be correspondingly holistic. By implication, we interpret Freire's position to mean that the

agent has to be transformed to an insider through inner conviction for him to function effectively.

James Thompson departs from Freire's position of comradeship with the oppressed by averring that practitioners are outsiders within the context they are intervening. Defining his position as that of a practitioner/scholar/development agent, he asserts that, "One of Applied Theatre's strength is in its status as the outsider, the visitor and the guest" (Thompson, 2008, p. 20).

Given the vast experience of James Thompson in Prison Theatre practice and scholarship, and coupled with the issue of security involved in Prison Theatre, his argument that the practitioner is an outsider may be partially admissible. However, considering the other arms of Applied Theatre, then his position becomes problematic as genuine commitment cannot be guaranteed based on the outsider-status of the facilitator. Thompson's position therefore paints an opportunistic or paternalistic picture of facilitators. The image of Thompson's outsider is that of a sympathetic stranger who is himself helpless when the chips are down. The implication of this is that Thompson does not believe in the holistic concept of conversion of development agents, especially Applied Theatre practitioners as proposed by Freire.

Again, self-re-examination is germane to the committed converts. The conversion is so radical that it leaves no room for ambiguous behaviour. No exclusive right is reserved for anybody to become the custodian of wisdom as it concerns the revolution. Wisdom, in this sense, is neither given, bestowed nor imposed on people. If this is so, it merely confirms the retention of the old ways. Freire sheds more light on the condition of conversion which requires a profound rebirth (Freire, 1996, p. 43).

A semblant illustration of such a conversion (albeit in a dramatic text) can be found in the character of Titubi in *Morountodun* (1999, pp.70-71). Titubi, a member of the bourgeois class, in a seemingly rash manner, tries to infiltrate the ranks of *Agbekoya* guerrilla fighters who confront the state and its police. She ends up getting genuinely converted to the cause of the Agbekoyas after living among them for months and partaking in the suffering and violence unleashed on them by the oppressors. Titubi's daring act is the closest example of the conversion that Freire has so much discussed, albeit initially ill-intentioned and domiciled within a conventional (Brechtian) drama.

The conditions of conversion as raised by Freire however, can be seen to take a new dimension within the context of Applied Theatre and paternalism. This is especially debatable when it comes to identifying who the converts are or are perceived to be. In order to have a clearer picture, it is expedient to consider development agents like funding organisations, facilitators and practitioners. And considering the Applied Theatre parallel of Freire's pedagogy, the poser is raised as to whether the above mentioned development agents are to be considered converts or potential converts.

The Conflicting Manifestation of Oppression in the Oppressed

The comradeship, according to Freire above, will enable the converts to understand their (the oppressed) characteristic ways of life which reflect the structure of domination. Chief among these characteristics is their "existential duality" (Freire, 1996, p. 43). The oppressed manifest their own image and that of their oppressors which they have imbibed. That the oppressed passionately hate the oppressor, but inwardly admire and lust after the oppressors' wealth and his life style, is an understatement. Another trait of the oppressed, self-depreciation, stems from the unquestioned and often negative

internalised opinions of the oppressors about them. This, when fully absorbed, convinces them of their own unfitness. The oppressed also exhibit their belief in the invulnerability of the oppressors. They need to see an example of the vulnerability of the oppressors so that their belief can be deconstructed.

It becomes clear at this point that it is only the oppressed that can fight for the restoration of their humanity which will in turn guarantee the restoration of true generosity. There is, at this juncture, the caution against the tendency of the oppressed to stray in the direction of becoming oppressors or sub-oppressors. This is explained by alluding to their psyche which had been mal-conditioned by the contradiction of the existential situation. Freire argues that this phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment adopt an attitude of bonding to the oppressors. This, by implication, means their perception of themselves as oppressed has been distorted by the reality of oppression.

The Ideals of Freire's Dialogics

Nicholson (2005, pp. 42-43) reiterates Freire's position that the earlier-mentioned feeling of impotence on the part of the oppressed in accepting their oppressor's lazy and unproductive perception of them is challengeable through the Freirean problem-posing pedagogies. After consciously citing a non-Boalian example to further illustrate Freire's political pedagogy, Nicholson ends up with the conclusion that, although the pedagogic strategies encourage reflection on lived experience, the process also offers the participants some measure of control.

Reflect, in Nicholson's view, is Freire's idea in that it links thought with action, being a crucial part of his praxis. The process is observed by Nicholson to countenance vernacular and the existing knowledge of the participants which are central to the learning process. Freire's praxis owes Karl Marx's politicisation of the term with its conceptual source in Hegelian philosophy.

Another thought is also echoed that the Freire-inspired critical pedagogy is transgressive such that "teachers are asked to be revolutionary agents whose role is to empower their students to work against (or transgress) the hegemonic forces of capitalism" (Nicholson, 2005, p. 44). This leaves an assumption, as pointed out by Nicholson, that there is a critical vantage point from which a transparent reality can be visible. A combination of all these with the transgressive politics of the likes of Brecht and Piscator will produce a powerful political agenda within the context of Applied Theatre.

Freire's pedagogy mandates the oppressed, having been conditioned by the death-affirming climate of oppression to achieve, through their struggle, a life-affirming humanisation. This life-affirming humanisation transcends the mundane and daily necessities of life. The people must come to terms with the fact that they have been dehumanised. And among other things, the various weapons of their dehumanisation like propaganda, management and manipulation should not be named to be part of their own rehumanisation. Freire posits at this juncture that the only effective tool is a humanising pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership engages in a tradition of dialogue with the people.

Freire has a strong bias towards the Christian liberation theology which underscores the need to understand his dialogics found at the centre of the theology.

Dialogue is an existential necessity which has the word at its centre. To be found within the word are two constituents: Reflection and action. These two components of the word work in unison. To discard one is to render the other redundant. The retention of reflection at the expense of action amounts to mere “verbalism” (Freire, 1996, p. 68) while the retention of action at the expense of reflection amounts to mere “activism” (p. 69).

This act of dumping ideas in others is not a manifestation of the ideals of Freire’s dialogics built upon the foundation of love, humility and faith all of which have a very sound footing in Christian liberation theology. The impact of Christian liberation theology on the pedagogy of the oppressed becomes more visible as Freire reveals the conditionality of his dialogics.

The first is profound love for the people, without which dialogue cannot exist. Love is the foundation of dialogue and it manifests as an act of courage in its commitment to others. Wherever the location of the oppressed might be, the act of love is committed to their liberationist cause. Freire believes love can be restored only through the abolition of oppression. Secondly, the pedagogy also states that humility is crucial to dialogue. People who lack humility cannot collaborate to shape their world. Thirdly, faith in mankind, faith in their resolve to attain humanisation is also required. “Without this faith in people, dialogue is a farce which inevitably degenerates into paternalistic manipulation” (Freire, 1996, p. 72).

From the foregoing, it can easily be deduced that the chief aim of pedagogy of the oppressed is the liberation of the oppressed from all forms of political, economic and social bondage. It is also clear that the attainment of this liberation is contingent upon certain understanding as contained in the poetics of Freire. Drawing from his childhood

experience, Freire realises that the entire system of education is a machinery of domination in ways that make even the oppressed complicit in his own oppression.

Among other imperatives for the oppressed is the need for them to understand that as long as they continue to court the perpetrators of oppression then their domination by the oppressors becomes inevitably unending.

This pedagogy also highlights some features and nature of oppression to which the oppressed have been subjected. Freire uses the banking concept of education to signpost the system of education that oppresses the people. He uses the vertical teacher-student learning relationship to explain the methods of oppressors to keep their victims suppressed in perpetuity.

Freire (1996, pp. 29-30) then proposes his problem-posing education that in order to gain their freedom, the oppressed must first be critically aware of the root cause of their problems. Having been aware, they must also be ready to diametrically combat the problem. At this point, his perception of the reality of his oppression must be a critical one, that which engages dialogue as a crucial weapon of liberation. The perception of the objective reality again alerts the oppressed to the oppressors' stratagems of paternalism, propaganda and manipulation.

The claim, therefore, of unalloyed allegiance by practitioners to Pedagogy of the Oppressed requires a deep understanding of the basic tenets of the pedagogy. These tenets should particularly reflect in the role of development agents whose conversion to the cause of the struggle must be holistic. The essence of all these is that pedagogy of the oppressed is revolutionary by nature and character. It therefore behoves those who claim allegiance to it in their scholarly works and practice to, in like manner, embrace it holistically.

Freire's Problem-posing education forms the basis of Boal's forum theatre as expounded in his *Theatre of the Oppressed*. It is in Freire's insistence on dialogue as a requirement for liberation that the principles of Boal's forum theatre evolves.

The appeal of this study to Freire's theory of Problem-posing education underscores the need for dialogue among the oppressed which crucially resonates with Boal's forum theatre and to which many practitioners have been allegiant. However, Germane to the kernel of Freirean poetics is his rejection of the paternalistic generosity of the oppressor which serves only to sustain the status quo. Freire posits that the oppressor lacks the intent, competence, and consequently, the will power to truly liberate the oppressed. Several practitioners, however, appear to have subscribed to this false generosity which helps, in any case, to maintain the continuity of their projects.

In the works of Boal and those of several other practitioners, it is quite evident that they have enjoyed enormous financial support from development and funding agencies that might directly or indirectly be affiliated with bodies that are responsible for economic, political and social oppression. As far as control and efficacy are concerned, there appears to be an inherent problem of contradiction because, with funding comes control. Efficacy in this instance becomes a relative result that frequently swings in favour of the oppressor who presents a façade of efficacy to maintain a relative social stability. And again, given a steady flow of support from these NGOs, government and supra-government bodies, continuity emerges as a façade of efficacy which is frequently and cheaply touted and alluded to as a token of success and achievements.

It is upon this premise that the issues of control, efficacy, continuity and theorising are strung together as corollaries and therefore deemed to be interdependent. Going by

the magnitude of support flowing from pro-establishment and seemingly neutral bodies to Applied Theatre projects, the claims of efficacy are suspect thereby requiring to be interrogated. This aptly captures the core and direction of this research which is to scrutinise the claims of efficacy vis-à-vis funding and production process control and perceived continuity in the Samaru and NPTA examples.

Having looked at the two poetics of Boal and Freire closely, this study is fascinated and inspired by the dialogics of Freire's Problem-posing education, especially, its liberationist ideals, on the one hand. The altruistic goal and intent of Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed account for its being chosen as the main theory to drive this study. On the other hand, because Boal's theatre of the oppressed offers forum theatre and a unique set of techniques and other forms for the liberationist ideals of Freire, it too has been chosen as the support theory for this study.

Essentially, what this research stands to extract from Boal's poetics is the radical theatrical platform that Forum Theatre has to offer. It is the radical character of Forum Theatre to empower and enable an otherwise passive spectator and to transform him into a "Spector-actor" (Freire, 1996, p. 141). By implication, what Boal is offering through his Forum Theatre is actually a RADICAL THEATRE. And this is to be perceived as a *combative* tool of *suasion* for positive social change.

Conversely, this study stands to gain from Freire's poetics the ultimate goal of radical development vis-à-vis liberationist ideals which is achievable through a process of sustained critical dialoguing. This is the nature and character of Freire's Problem-posing education and its ultimate goal is RADICAL DEVELOPMENT. It is the type of development that liberates both the oppressed and the oppressor as it guides them through a joint vocation of humanisation.

What is to be found at the heart of this study therefore is the drive towards a Radical Theatre for Radical Development (RATFORAD), hence the choice of adopting the two theories of Freire and Boal to interrogate the issues of production process and efficacy in the two case studies of Samaru Project in Zaria and NPTA workshop in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi in the Akpa District of Benue State.

Chapter Three

The Historical Development, Structure and Practice of Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA)

“We know what our problems are, but we are perpetually unable to surmount them”
(Abah, 1985, p. 42)

This chapter provides vital information on the founding and development of Samaru Project in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance which has its headquarters in Zaria. It also discusses the age-long structure and

nature of practice of the two case studies. This is will help provide a concise background information on the two examples of applied theatre which have been discovered to be on the same historical continuum. And in this regard Samaru Project came first, thereby serving as a prequel to Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance.

3.1 The Historical Development of Samaru Project

The Samaru programme started in ABU in 1975 with Michael Etherton's arrival from Zambia where he had also been involved in a Popular Theatre practice called Chikwakwa Theatre. Chikwakwa Theatre was a very Popular Theatre in Zambia which represented a synergy between the town and gown in Zambia. The guiding philosophy of the practice of Samaru, Chikwakwa, Community Theatre and Theatre for Development is reflected in what Kabue Kasoma, a Zambian theatre activist once said: instead of expecting people to go to theatre, theatre should go to the people (Researcher's Interview with Abah, 2014). And when theatre goes to the people, it speaks their language and examines the society of the people it has gone to. And in examining the society, theatre makes analyses, finds problems and deals with them. That appears to be the underlining philosophy that shaped the Samaru Project.

When the programme started in 1975, the Drama Village had not been built. The first set of students played active roles in the construction of the theatre village as they were the ones carrying the blocks. The pioneer students took part in the construction of the initial structure which has now been renovated although with the original design intact. "One of the earliest units of the university to closely collaborate with ABU Community Theatre programme was the former Centre for Adult Education and Extension Services ..." (Daniel & Bappa, 2008, p. 266). This apparently explains the

presence of a number of adult educators that were pioneer members Samaru Improvisations in 1975 and NPTA's inauguration in 1989. It creates a parallel with the Kamiriithu People's Theatre of Kenya that could also boast of significant contributions from adult educators.

Samaru Project defined a new practice within the university and the 1976 performance was a celebration of this new practice. It also celebrated the structure itself which took the shape of a traditional building within the Hausa environment. It is to be deduced therefore that right from inception, ABU theatre practice aligned itself with the culture of its immediate environment. The structure was built by Stephen Heroiz, an architect from California in the United States of America. The drama village structure is a heritage site, the prototype of which serves as a celebration of architectural designs that speak to the culture and sensibility of the environment where the building is standing. The first Samaru performance then was not called Samaru project. It was called Samaru Improvisations. The first time they were doing it, the interest was not to take a scripted play to Samaru. Students were to go into Samaru, get the information themselves and come back to the drama village, do an analysis of the information they have brought back, make plays out of them, and then go and perform them in Samaru, where they had got the information from in the first place. The main improvisation was the process of creating drama from raw data. And in the first year, when they were doing the work for the first time, the word improvisation was the key to the process – to the manner of making the plays – hence the name Samaru Improvisations.

But as it progressed, it went beyond mere play creation through improvisation. It became a research process and the word improvisation became inadequate. It could no longer describe all of that anymore as improvisations carries with it only a notion of

performance. It had become a project, hence the change in its nomenclature. And so, the change from the Samaru improvisations to Samaru Project was occasioned by the impression that Samaru improvisations were only about performance. But it was not just about performance any longer. It was about research, it was about understanding and then, change. The Samaru improvisations, as it was initially called then, staged the first performance in 1976 within the faculty building because there was no theatre to perform in.

They started to show it to students and members of the faculty which was then known as Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Social Sciences and Arts were together as one faculty before they parted ways to become two independent faculties. The first series of performances were about the history of Samaru, the environment that the university is situated in.

The ABU students in 1976 spoke mainly to very old men and women who migrated from different places as traders. In the exploration of the history of Samaru, the students also started to learn about the changes that were taking place from the early days when those old men and women first settled down there and the arrival of the university. Initially, Samaru residents did not understand the new practice that the university people had brought. Eventually, they agreed with what Samaru and especially the university stood for and those were the histories explored in the early days of the Samaru project. Afterwards, the people opened up to tell the stories of their living experiences within their environment. By 1977, the Samaru Project started to explore the stories of peoples' living experiences within the Samaru environment which then did not include Hayin Dogo, where many students live now. Between them there was a distinct demarcation between Samaru and Hayin Dogo. Now they have merged as one large

Samaru/Hayin Dogo community. It was really rural but they had started to talk about issues, problems and their need for certain government structures or whatever avenues existed to begin to address them.

The Structure of Samaru Project

As Samaru Project has been consistently executed annually for almost forty years, it appears to have arrived at a steady and enduring structure. Although there might have been some variations over the decades, the programme has successfully evolved, maintained and sustained a practice-based template. This template has recognisably defined the structure of Samaru Project as it is today.

The Samaru Project is a practical theatre course in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The ultimate goal of the course (THAP 203) is to train students in the art and business of applying theatre to social contexts. Muhammad Rabiu Isah of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, ABU is the course coordinator of what is simply identified as Theatre Workshop II, otherwise popularly known as the Samaru Project. It is a 200 level undergraduate course that “seeks to expose students to issues and consciousness” (Isah, 2008, p. 59). The issues are what he identifies as including injustice, education, unemployment, environmental crisis, poverty, marital controversies, juvenile delinquency, hygiene, etc. The idea in Samaru Project, according to Isah, is to introduce students to the skill of using drama to discuss issues of societal concern with the chief aim of attaining consciousness. Isah supports this idea with the official course description (2008, p. 60).

The Practice of Samaru Project.

One pertinent question about the Samaru Project has to do with what could possibly be its quantifiable impact on the Samaru community. Regarding the issue of impact, there are two perspectives to it. In the first place, ABU students were out to inform, educate and sensitize the Samaru residents about burning social issues. On the other hand, the residents were keen on direct intervention towards solving their social and personal problems. The recurring response of Samaru residents bordered on what the university people would do to directly solve the problem that they have unearthed.

There was a group of students who did their project on water shortage in Samaru. They were talking about water and performing plays on water shortage. Some of the youths in Samaru got angry and threatened to stone them because they thought they were being mocked. Coming from the background of a campus that had swimming pools, to stage drama about water shortage in their impoverished neighbourhood was quite offensive to them.

There are key issues of theatre mirroring society and equally the need to go beyond that point. The experiences in Samaru demanded that more needed to be done, but Samaru Project had its own peculiar problems. Chief among these is the problem of uninterrupted continuity. Students come and go, hence the lack of consistency. Students are in school for four years, they go to Samaru, get information, make the plays, go and perform there and when they are done with the performance and the discussion in the drama village, the next question is, What have I scored?



Figure 1: Rabiul Isah and his 2014 Samaru Project Class in the Theatre Village. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

At the end of the session, a new set of students comes and goes back to Samaru to engage them again. This has been one of the major challenges of Samaru Project as it does not have the continuity required for the same set of people to interrogate the issue they have listened to over a couple of years and do a good analysis of it and work out what changes can be effected. Again, on another plane, the university only receives subventions to fund its own system and not rural development projects that can hardly be sustained.



Figure 2: Mallam Rabi'u Isah and the 2014 Samaru Project class. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

Theatre in the Samaru experience, like in many other Applied Theatre variants, is deployed as a tool of research. The general approach is to isolate certain issues or problems upon which the research is to be conducted in a particular year.

The information collected is deployed to structure the plays and the performances, therefore there is a direct relationship between research information and the drama piece that is to be presented. And the process therefore is a process of training students on how to engage in social research and put that research into a drama performance.

This is a different style of play-writing. There are play scripts that have emerged from the individual thoughts and independent of any Applied Theatre experience of the

students. Someone sits down, decides on a particular interesting issue, thinks about it and carries out a research on it and then goes ahead to write a play on it.

However, Samaru Project students research the issues, and they engage in collective play-writing because they are writing the play as a group. Several groups of students go into Samaru to collect raw data and then work in their various groups to put the play together. This, according to Abah, is a different kind of play writing that one is engaging in. What this means is that the movement is the opposite movement of script to stage. The improvisations are those that can be performed and if it is a vibrant piece of writing, it can be scripted, that is, after performance. Then, that is a reverse movement from stage to script.

An example of such scripts is *Splitting Images* which defines the stage to script reverse movement. It was not written as a script before it was performed; it was performed as an improvisatory piece first before it was written into a play text. That is the procedure the Samaru project takes.

Those days, in Abah's oral account, they would write one statement and a group was mandated to create a story around it which would be followed by a 10-minute performance. The idea was to give different sentences or statements to different groups and they created a drama which other groups would watch and understand.

When Professor Jenkeri Okwori and Professor Awa Makpa were in the Masters's class, one of the things that they came up with was to have two "household characters". They created those two household characters and they were like itinerant characters going through Samaru and exploring different problems. So, in every script, every piece, they were there; and issues were seen from their perspectives, from their experiences,

from their woes, their happiness and so on. And that went on for two years and it was acclaimed to be a very wonderful experience.

This strategy provided certain continuity for the discussion that the Samaru group would engage in. They looked at the issues from the perspective or experiences of these two central characters. A lot of other people came and went but they remained. Essentially, Samaru was being dissected through these two characters. So, the Samaru project may be seen to have gone through several phases: from the phase of simply going in there, researching the issues, coming into Samaru, to put up the performances. They went to Samaru, performed it, and engaged in post-performance discussions with the residents.

Another important thing is the way the Samaru project challenged the thinking of students. Initially, many of the students frowned at going into Samaru to go and perform. They believed that was not their own idea of what the university should look like. Being undergraduate students, they were not convinced they had any business with the local people of Samaru. It took the lecturers telling them their own stories and asking them how many of their parents lived in rural communities and whose occupation was farming. Their responses revealed that many of their parents were farmers. And the question was asked as to whether they wanted their parents insulted. But for them, going to the community was suicidal. They had moved several steps up the ladder, so nothing should draw them back.

The Samaru project was not the kind of theatre practice that they had envisaged. They looked forward to the Shakespeare kind of theatre. But several years down the line, they came to appreciate the experience of going back into their forgotten communities as something they could build on. But the question is, after the experience, would they they

have a better understanding of the university community and give back to the community?



Figure 3: The researcher with Prof. Steve Abah in a Postgraduate Community Theatre class at the Theatre Village. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

Gamji Cultural Troupe – A Base Cultural Organisation for Samaru Project

In discussing the impact of Samaru Project on the community, the Gamji group is a ready evidence cited by virtually all Samaru Project handlers. One major question is whether or not, after all these years, the Samaru project has meant anything. Has it made any impact? The Gamji group is a product of interaction with Samaru Project from this drama village.



Figure 4: At Gamji Cultural Troupe Club House with Participants. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

However, because the university and the course are structured in such a way that they could not intervene, the possibility was therefore explored, over the years, to key the project into existing community associations. So that those community associations will become the resource for making that change happen. And the Gamji group is not just a theatre group. It is a community development association as well as a performance group; the group uses performances for enlightenment, sensitization, mobilization and change.

And if there is anything to claim as credit, in the drama village, from the Samaru Project and the Community Theatre, it may perhaps be the emergence of indigenous groups like Gamji Cultural Troupe which has understood the power of theatre to make change.

It is quite apparent from the various reports that the Samaru Project and the Community Theatre Workshop did not take off as the academic programmes that they are today. They did not even enjoy the official backing of the university as it was set up purely based on informal arrangements of some interested individuals within and outside the university community. Michael Etherton, in his *The Development of African Drama*, reports that the project had been anchored by some university teachers with the involvement of their students, literacy officers, and young rural farmers. They create drama which treats the problems of oppressed people.

Etherton explains that it was actually the process of making the plays that was crucial especially as it carried the collective thoughts of the whole group forward. The group priority in the first project was placed on taking the already processed performance to the spectators among the rural dwellers. It is however pertinent to quickly add that the performances relied heavily on facts about and opinions within the communities. Etherton appears to be echoing Boal when he states that, “Now the actual performances are considered less important than the ‘rehearsals’ themselves, though performance is still an integral part of the wider process of enabling the people to think things out for themselves” (Etherton, 1982, p. 348).

And so for the first time, in 1975, the drama students performed for the people of Samaru. The important point here is that the establishment of the two projects as part of

the university curriculum did not materialise until 1980, although the project had taken off independent of the university apparatus since 1975.

In this vein, the Samaru Project served as a prequel to the Community Theatre Workshop which came into being as a result of some problems encountered in Samaru project. Reports have it that there was a problem of continuity as the same set of students never went back to the community until the next engagement. And so this was beginning to pose a problem.

Another point borders on the issue of efficacy which calls to question the essence of the whole effort which – striking a harmonious cadence with the people's expectations - is to proffer a panacea of the people's myriad social problems. The engagements were merely interrogating the people about their problems without providing a practical solution. It does not need to be gainsaid that both the department and her students can do no more than enlighten and sensitise the people about the problems as they lack the capacity to effect a positive social change. Hence, the first barrage of criticisms emanated from the people. This, according to the several reports, sent the organisers back to their drawing board. The outcome was the realisation of the urgent need to make the people participate in the process from the beginning to the end. This is such that by the time the students withdraw, the people would have acquired the skills they need to analyse and proffer solutions to their problems. That was how the idea of Community Theatre was birthed came into being.

Rabiu Isa, the current co-ordinator of Samaru project, in an interview, stated that the Community Theatre project started way-back in 1978 as a participatory programme whereby the people took charge of dramatization and discussion of issues that affected

their lives. The exercise draws chiefly, through a dialogic process, from their own indigenous artistic expressions which include proverbs, songs, mime, dance.

3.2 The Historical Development of Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA)

Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA), a non-governmental and non-partisan alliance of theatre artists, performers, cultural and development workers, is the Nigerian chapter of the International Popular Theatre Alliance (IPTA). Between 1980 and 1989, ABU Popular Theatre scholars first developed the Zaria Popular Theatre Alliance (ZAPTA) “Which, in turn, became the foundation and model for ... Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance NPTA” (Amkpa, 2008, p. 168). It specialises in using Theatre for Development purposes. To achieve this, it places premium on communication and development through alternative means for the employment and general welfare of the rural and urban populace. *Networker* (NPTA Newsletter) stresses the need for a body to promote and coordinate the activities of Popular Theatre in Nigeria.

“The task before NPTA is therefore great. It must seek to re-invest theatre with the tool for dialogue and mobilisation to empower marginalised groups and communities into political action” (Illah, et al., 1989, p. 1). With the above excerpt from the editorial of the maiden edition of NPTA Newsletter, the ideological focus of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance is certainly not in doubts. It suggests the founders were overtaken by genuine motives that should be able to surmount any obstacle which the pioneer members were not oblivious of.

NPTA came into existence in the year 1989, although its roots can be traced to the early activities of Samaru Project in ABU. This is another way of saying the history

of NPTA is not complete without tracing it back to its 1975 Samaru roots. Essays and reports by Steve Abah, Egwugwu Illah, Tunde Lakoju, Salihu Bappa, Jenkeri Okwori and other prominent TFD scholars/animateurs affirm that NPTA is on the same historical continuum with Samaru Project. NPTA, in Abah's words, is an attempt to fill the gap left by the Samaru Project and the Community Theatre Project.

The root of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA) can be traced to the challenges that emanated from Samaru Project experience. Abah, the pioneer head of NPTA explains the limitations of Samaru Project led to the founding of Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance. With the Samaru Project, whenever they went to the nearby community of Samaru, each time they came back and sat down to analyse the issues, the recurring question was, what happens next. What it required was to engage the community at a deeper level at a longer stretch of time. And given the limitations of engaging in Samaru project and Community Theatre from within the academic setting, the principal actors had to go for the NPTA option.

It was generally believed that a deep engagement within the university curriculum was not quite possible. And many ABU Drama lecturers who, first of all, had gone through the process as students who kept questioning and listening to questions from the community, reiterated the need to form an NGO that would extend the frontiers of Community Theatre beyond the university. Such operations would then not be dictated by the university and also would not be limited by the curriculum.

And that marked how they started talking with individuals and organisations outside the university. Steve Abah had discussions with Eva Murray, the director of Canadian Universities Service Overseas (CUSO), based in Ibadan at the time. The acronym in itself became known as a Canadian development agency. CUSO was a

Canadian development agency receiving funding from CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) which was based in Ibadan and they worked through civil society organisations with NPTA as one of their partners in the eighties.

Initially, before NPTA was founded, Eva Murray got to know about the kind of Community Theatre/Popular Theatre practised in ABU and showed interest. Her initial discussion was with Steve Abah who was on his Ph.D. in the University of Leeds, UK between 1984 and 1987.

Popular Theatre was the common terminology then and although Community Theatre was quite in practice at this time, Theatre for Development had not become a generic name as it is today. In March, 1989, Abah did a proposal for a workshop to be held at the department in the Drama Village to Eva Murray. The workshop held for one week that year with people from within the department and the drama unit. At the time drama had not become a department in ABU. It was part of the Department of English and Drama. The Drama unit organised the workshop and people were invited from the media, the art councils and the ministries. At the end of the one week of discussion, and also going into Samaru and other neighbouring communities to do this work, it was a perfect occasion to initiate the idea of formally founding the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA).

And so, on March 18, 1989, in the Drama Village of ABU, the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance was founded, but only operating from within the Department of English and Drama at the time. There was also already in existence the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance (CPTA) and the International Popular Theatre Alliance (IPTA) with people like Ross Kidd and Martin Byram who were based in Southern Africa. And both of them were directing the affairs of the organisations at the time (the Canadian

Popular Theatre Alliance and the International Popular Theatre Alliance). The practitioners in Nigeria there and then moved to found the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance in order to create a local version of the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance. The motivation was to create an NGO that would be distinctly Nigerian but with an international affiliation, hence the name Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance.

The NPTA was founded in March 18, 1989 and by the December of that year, they had already organised a big international workshop. The key members were drawn from the Department of English and Drama and everybody who came for the workshop in March that year became an automatic member of the organisation. Gradually, the organisation started recruiting members from different sectors of the Nigerian society. Membership was not limited to theatre practitioners alone, but rather it was open to medical, cultural and other sectors. The vision was to create an organisation that was going to use theatre to address development issues. Its membership was broad based, but the central determining factor was how the individual profession relates to social development. However, the core members were from within the drama unit of ABU comprising the likes of Steve Abah, Jenks Okwori, Salihu Bappa, Tunde Lakoju and John Egwugwu Illa from the University of Jos who was in ABU at the time.

The organisation also included people like Harry Hagher who later became the Nigerian Ambassador to Mexico. He was actively part of the movement. In fact, some of the workshops that were held in Benue at the time had a lot of input from Hagher who, at the time, had a close link with the Benue Arts Council, one of the hosts of the early NPTA workshops.

While NPTA was founded in 1989, the first Benue workshop had taken place in 1981/82 in Katsina Ala area of Benue State. And it was funded by the Benue State Arts

Council. Michael Etherton, Ross Kidd and Kees Ekskamp were the key people that facilitated the workshop.

The founding of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance was a response to the terms that existed in the curriculum practice in ABU. And the essence of NPTA workshops was to go beyond using theatre to identify issues to addressing the issues and that's why in those communities, one of the projects was a grinding machine, the other two were community farms that could generate income for them to attend to certain community problems." And in other places like Plateau State, in Kwanga, NPTA also was able to provide some grinding machine for the community of Kwanga just like it did in Benue.

Abah insists that the significant thing about the practice of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance is that it always identifies base organisations, community groups that are working towards community development in their own environment; so NPTA does not go there as an independent group that would make noise, go back, and then nothing is heard afterwards. But keying the work into existing organisational structure especially the civil society has always been an added advantage. And that is how NPTA has done it over the years.

In all the operating communities of NPTA, there is always the presence of their community development association and it is through the community development association that NPTA worked. When there arose a crisis because of the income that was coming from the grinding machine, NPTA had to come in, engage the community development first of all to address the issue, mobilise the community and sit down with the members of the larger community to talk about the issues and ways of solving them. And at the time they had come to an agreement about what needed to be done, the

executive members of the community development association plus the elders and the youth reached a decision together.

Development associations have continued to drive the process. Abah (Interview, 2014) states that in the village (Otobi), the particular grinding machine faded out of significance, not just because there were more pressing issues, but because the economic well-being of members of the community over the years has improved and individuals now own grinding machines all over the communities. And so that initial one is no longer in use. The significance of this is that it has identified something that is useful for the community. Abah reiterates that it is not just about whether that grinding machine in particular is still operating, but that it generated a new awareness, a new dynamics and a new practice, and all over the communities. So that single product of that workshop has multiplied.

And in the other two communities where they embarked on community farm projects, they invested the proceeds in their village clinics and Abah's report says these clinics are still running. They might not be comprehensive health centres, but they offer palliatives in times of emergencies.

NPTA Structure and Practice

There are two major arms of NPTA, the practice arm and the training and research arm. The Theatre for Development Centre is in charge of the training and research unit of the NPTA. And it is the one that has recently related a lot with the Department of English and Drama and other organisations who want training in that area.

To a very large extent, the training and research arm of the organisation has been

relatively busy by virtue of the training and seminars they conduct for government agencies and other corporate institutions. Apart from these trainings and seminars, the body is also engaged in organising workshops mostly in rural areas. It is however pertinent to observe that the practice has not proven to be a sustainable one for NPTA.

Going by the records and consistency of its activities since 1989, NPTA cannot be described as a vibrant organisation. From available literature, its workshop in the Akpa District of Benue State represents the apogee of its activities which has received critical acclaims for the grounds covered in the workshop. It is apparent that the body no longer exists the way it used to in the past.

This might perhaps be a familiar path of most development communication initiatives. In the years 1991 and 1995, UNICEF embarked upon a project of training itinerant popular theatre troupes in local government areas. The initiative was to help educate the people about the rights children. At the end of the whole exercise, and against the expectation that the theatrical machinery would have been sustainable by the people who have undergone training and have thus been supposedly empowered, the level of continuity-based efficacy is nil. “The experience of most CBOs is that once the donor related group leaves or reduces its funding, programme instability and insecurity ensue” (Bamidele, 2004, p. 70).

NPTA is a membership organisation and it has six zonal coordinators corresponding with the centre. The zone in the South West is co-ordinated by Adedayo Thomas. He is not based in any academic institution. He works with civil society organisations around Lagos. The first workshop in Lagos was in 1990, in the Mushin area, working on health issues. The North West Zone has its headquarters in Zaria under the leadership of Professor Anyideme Kafewo. There was another zonal headquarters in

Maiduguri, the North East Zone. The Middle-Belt headquarters is stationed in Jos and it is headed by Rahila Gowon. The South East headquarters is in the University of Calabar headed by Edisua Ofobochi. The National Headquarters is in ABU headed by Professor Steve Abah and the entire affairs of the organisation is run from his desk. One of the responsibilities of the National Headquarters is to organise workshops and conduct training for their members from across the zones for capacity building.

NPTA is essentially a membership organisation which gives the individual zones some measure of autonomy. In other words, these various zones are supposed to be generating activities such as workshops, conferences and training programmes. In the same vein, the responsibility rests on their shoulders to generate or attract funds to run their activities. These various zones are equally required to formally report back to the headquarters the details of their activities from time to time.

At this stage, among other issues, the question of efficacy comes to the fore. Efficacy can be looked at from two perspectives: first, from the view of the local residents of Samaru and residents of NPTA workshop sites and secondly from that of ABU and NPTA practitioners. In what practical ways could the people be considered to have benefited from the programmes? In what ways could the community be said to have experienced development on account of the projects? To determine the efficacy, one is faced with the dilemma of approaching either ABU/NPTA or their various workshop Communities for impact assessment. Community Theatre, as a tool in the hands of local residents, is what this research sets out to investigate.

That Samaru Project has continued to exist is a clear proof of efficacy, especially if continuity is one of the goals of the project at its outset. But beyond this goal are other more important ones that have to do with liberating the people from the shackles of

injustice, poverty, squalor, illiteracy and other indicators of dehumanisation unleashed on the oppressed by the oppressors.

Continuity appears to be the most conspicuous evidence of efficacy of Samaru project as it continues to exist to date. Ever since 1980, when it was adopted into the drama curriculum of ABU, the tradition of students gathering information from and about Samaru residents, building it into drama, taking same back to the people in performance and engaging the residents in post-performance debates has been effectively sustained. Although it is true that the community has, over time, grown to be accommodating and responsive, it is also true that the initiatives and the impetus to forge ahead emanate largely from the educational institutions, and not the community.

Chapter Four

Production Process in ABU's Samaru Project and NPTA Workshops

This chapter examines Production Process in ABU's Samaru Project and NPTA workshops vis-à-vis the control wielded by the people and development agents/agencies. The justification for this is underscored in the need to establish a link between the critical position of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal on the one hand, and the reality of the practice and critical engagements on the other hand.

Freire's pedagogy, influenced by the populist and economic theory of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, assigns to the oppressed the humanistic and historical mandate to liberate themselves and their oppressors. The oppressors lack the strength to liberate anybody. In exercising control over the process of production, there is the need for the people to first critically identify the root cause of oppression. Consequently, the burden of this struggle rests solely on the shoulders of the oppressed. This is because the oppressor who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others is not competent to champion this struggle.

Thus to be an adherent of Freire's Problem-posing education is to be fully aware of its core tenets and be compliant to them. And for any development agent to partake in controlling its process of production, he must first be converted and such conversion

must be wholesale as prescribed by Freire. It is worth reiterating at this point that James Thompson does not share this view as he believes that the practitioner (a development agent) is an outsider and so should not see himself beyond the designation of an outsider or a guest. Apparently, James Thompson does not believe in Freire's conversion theory, however this research work is driven by Freire's prescription of conversion.



Figure 5: The Researcher and Dr. (Mrs.) Lagwampa of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, ABU.

The analyses of our two examples adopt the argument of Freire which canvasses for a wholesale conversion of the development agents. This is based on the frequent allusion by scholars to and claims of affinity by practitioners to Freire's Problem-posing

education. In other words, this section of the study assesses how much of control of the production process is assumed and wielded by the people, as prescribed by Freire and Boal, in the course of the Community Theatre productions of ABU and NPTA workshop.

The argument in this chapter is based on two major premises. The first is the frequent claim of affinity by Applied Theatre scholars and practitioners to the Freirean and Boalian poetics. The second premise is based on the Boalian argument that the Community Theatre essentially belongs to the audience and the people, that is, the masses, the underprivileged, the oppressed and certainly not the elites or the ruling class. If the theatre belongs to the people, it becomes logical therefore that the people that ordinarily form the main bulk of its audience should cease to be a passive component. They should, as a matter of fact, take over the stage and play out their own parts as subjects and not as objectified audience. Boal deconstructed the concept of spectator to evolve what he calls “Spectator-actor” (Boal, 2000, p. 126). The kernel of Boal’s argument here is to avail the people, that is, the community audience the control of the process of theatrical production.



Figure 6: The Researcher with Mallam Rabi'u Isa, Esosa, Gamji Troupe leader and elders of Samaru/Hayin dogo during the 2014 Samaru Project performance.

Having established that the central philosophy of Applied Theatre scholarship and practice derives largely from the poetics of Freire and Boal, the core tenets of these theories are hereby employed to assess ABU and NPTA activities. It is worth noting that there is yet to emerge any known radical departure from these core tenets by any of ABU scholars and practitioners. At the most, what we have been having has not gone beyond expansion, extension and domesticating of the same theories.

Based on the function of control in the philosophy of Applied Theatre, this chapter investigates who among the principal players in Samaru Project controls the process of production. In order to carry out this assessment, the attention of this study is focused on the 2014 edition of ABU's Samaru Project which this research covers right from its classroom preparation to the last stage of theatre forum.

4.1 Control of the Production Process in ABU's Samaru Project

Since the thrust of this study is based on the deployment of theatre as a tool or weapon on which control is to be exercised, it therefore becomes necessary to first identify the key actors that are in probable positions to contend for or wield the tool or weapon of control. These key actors are: The University (ABU) as represented by the Head of Department and lecturers in charge of the course, the students taking the course and Samaru Village residents.

Going by the trend of our earlier discussions, it could be surmised that the general claim is that the practice of Applied Theatre in ABU's Samaru Project is driven chiefly by Freire's Problem-posing education and Boal's forum theatre. And that is another way of saying it is Samaru residents that are in control of the process of production which, in a way, appears to corroborate the positions of Freire and Boal that it is only the oppressed/audience who should control the process of their own liberation/theatrical productions, certainly not the oppressors/facilitators or any of its middle class elites and their agencies/actors. However, this should not be construed as undermining the important role of facilitators and practitioners.



Figure 7: A Hausa woman watching the Samaru Project from across her fence

Again, as mentioned earlier, there are two major avenues through which control can be exercised, namely; the process of production and means of production. It should be noted that the location of control in either one or two of these parameters has far-reaching implications as far as efficacy is concerned in the practice. By looking at the structure and activities of our two examples via these two parameters, we attempt to identify where the rein of control resides in the practice and whether the position of such control is well represented in earlier scholarly works.



Figure 8: The Researcher with Rabiul Isa of the Theatre Department and other spectators during the performance of the 2014 Samaru Project in the first location.

4.1.1 The Process of Production in Samaru Project

Samaru Project is fashioned largely after the template handed down by Michael Etherton and the other founding patriarchs of Community Theatre in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Nigeria. In the account given by Illah et al (2004, p. 5) in the introductory chapter of *Child Rights Theatre for Development Training Manual*, the students go to the Samaru village, Zaria which is just opposite the university and ask people questions about their problems. They analyse the data collected and turn them into a dramatic piece which is then taken back to the same community in performance. In essence, the process as described here portrays a “tradition of making theatre for the people” (Illah and Warritay, 2004, p. 5).

The first stage of the project is community research. They just enter Samaru and begin to interact with the community. They ask questions on the pressing problems of the community and observe things themselves. These problems and ideas researched are then brought back to the campus for analysis.

For the purpose of this study, Samaru Project can be split into six stages whereby one stage dovetails with the other. The division into six different stages is informed by our critical observation of the process and interaction with the students and Mallam Rabi'u Isah the coordinator of the course. The division also takes into consideration earlier observations.

Preparatory Stage

Based upon personal interaction with the current coordinator, Mallam Rabi'u Isa and my observation of the 2014 edition of the Samaru Project, Yerimah's description of the stage is more inclusive and representative of the current curriculum and practice. Students begin by preparing one or two months ahead of their first contact with the community. The information gathering stage engages the students in the preliminaries of classroom exposure to the basic style and techniques of performance and also the techniques of gathering information.



Figure 9: The opening performance of the 2014 Samaru Project at the first location. (Researcher: 2014)

The principal participants at this stage are the course lecturer/coordinator and the 200 level students. However, the course is designed such that all lecturers in department contribute to the teaching process with the Head of Department at the background playing supervisory role.

Information Gathering/Community Research Stage

The students are divided into groups that now go into the different parts of the village to collect information. This is the first contact the students have with Samaru residents, hence the need for the students to be accompanied and monitored by one of their lecturers as they approach the residents to ask their questions without asking amiss. The participants at this stage are the students, their supervising lecturers and the pockets of Samaru residents to be interviewed.

Scenario Building Stage

In the next stage, all the information collected are collated and prioritised, such that only pressing issues are brought to the fore to be diagnosed, back in the department. Impressionable characters and families are singled out for scenarios to be built around them. This allows for the scenarios to be broken down to scenes. There also emerge themes which inform the type of central message the group intends disseminating to the people. These various problems are expected to be effectively dramatized across social strata such that the feelings, reasons and actions of the community people are aroused. The major tools of the actors are improvisation, good characterisation and well-crafted dialogues. Once again, the students and their lecturers play the key roles of sifting, analysing and building the scenarios of their community drama. The venue for this is the Drama Village of the department on campus which makes the activity somewhat open to other interested staff or students and researchers like us.

Preview Performances Stage

The rehearsals in form of performances are first put up in the Drama Village of the department and are followed up by discussion and post-mortem exercise to elicit critical reactions from both students and lecturers. The language to be used is Hausa which is a practical approach considering the fact that they shall be addressing a community that is predominantly Hausa-speaking eventually. After the presentation at the Drama Village, there is also another performance at Gamji Cultural Club House within Samaru Village where the show is critiqued fiercely by members of the club. If it is necessary, the students go back to their drawing board to effect changes before finally

taking their drama back to the residents of Samaru Village where they initially gathered their information.

There is an appreciable swell in the size of the participants present at this stage of the production. The participants at this preview stage are the Samaru Project students, the lecturers directly involved, other students and lecturers in the department. There is also the Gamji Cultural Club members and their own community audience.

Performance Stage

The performance stage makes it mandatory for the organisers to obtain permission from the village head (Sarki). It is also observed that the course coordinator enjoys a very cordial relationship with the various heads of the various quarters in Samaru/Hayin Dogo residential area. The permission, according to Rabi'u Isah, is sought some days ahead of the performance days. Again, the performance is publicised by students in the village in order to attract residents to the performance. The performance proper takes place in several locations within the village; in the open, the village square or on the street to a non-fee-paying audience, usually in the evening after the 4 p.m. Muslim prayer. The performance is often anchored by the narrator who may either be a character in the play or an independent member of the audience. His role in the drama is to break down the audience's recidivistic attitude towards passivity or in-action. This lasts for about an hour and a half. An aggregate of the participants at this stage includes the students, lecturers, community heads, observers and Samaru residents without any form of restriction whatsoever.

Post-Mortem Discussions Stage

The performance is immediately followed by the Post-Mortem discussions with the audience. Individual member of the audience at this stage is allowed to address the audience by commenting on the issues raised in the drama. This stage, on the one hand, helps to ascertain the level and extent of assimilation and understanding of the community audience. The success or otherwise of the production is often determined in the course of the post-mortem discussion.

Since the post-mortem discussion stage is merely an extension of the performance stage, the size and composition of the participants remain largely the same.

4.1.2 The Means of Production in Samaru Project

We are aware that ABU's Samaru Project is essentially an academic programme, hence those to be considered as facilitators in the Samaru Project are mainly students and their lecturers from the department. The student/teacher status of the facilitators is indicative of the fact that their interests primarily lies in the area of academic research and training. In another vein, and upon chatting with Felix Akinsipe a former lecturer in the department, it is discovered that the students fund the project.

In the 2014 edition of Samaru Project, in line with its tradition, the department in its capacity as the academic department in charge of the course, facilitated the programme through the provision of props and costumes, video coverage, drums and other sundry items. Other academic and non-academic personnel also supported the students most especially on performance days.

As it obtains for now, Samaru residents do not give any financial or material support for Samaru Project. What they provide regularly has always been the venue: the

streets; open spaces; Sarki's frontage and the Gamji Cultural Club House. Outside this, the students and the institution provide the rest. Of course, it is also to be noted that the students constitute the entire production ensemble while residents make up the entirety of the audience.

Analysis of the Production Process in Samaru Project

While it is true that this theatre communicates in the people's own language and idioms, and deals with issues of direct relevance to their lives, the crucial question is whether the people can be said to be in control of the process of production. Although it builds-in the people's artistic modes of expression into dialogues and performances, the initiative and the power of choice certainly do not belong to Samaru residents.

By providing, isolating and analysing materials for the drama, the students have been positioned to be in control of the theatrical process. Theatre, like other media such as radio, television and the newspaper, is an important medium of articulating the problems of the poor, which is almost always not controlled by the government and the rich. So in addition to being a medium of articulation, the theatre is also a control mechanism for the people to engineer their own development. Not requiring any form of literacy or professional skill, the mechanism avails the people itself by merely drawing strength from the body resources of the people which are already present in their traditional abilities to sing, dance and drum.

Taking over the process of their own development is an indication of having been fully integrated. A line however is drawn between integration and adaptation. Integration is a function of the ability to adapt to reality, to make decision and to re-engineer that

reality. For as long as man cannot choose or make decision for himself, thereby being subordinated to other people's choices, then, integration cannot be considered to have taken place in him. The interaction and consciousness on general issues and challenges can help to boost people's confidence. First, the individual must have the assurance that he is not an odd fellow within the community. And when the people operate in unison, they feel freer to share their problems with their compatriots. This, apparently, boosts their sense of community as group consciousness is set in motion.

4.2 Control of Production Process in Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance

The organisational goal of Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance is articulated as that which seeks to re-invest theatre with the tool for dialogue and mobilisation. This is to help empower oppressed communities to take political action. In doing these however, NPTA is aware of the likelihood of opposition and multiplicity of motives among its members and observers.

In order to locate where the control of Production Process resides in the operations of NPTA, this section focuses on the international workshop of December, 1989 which took place in three communities of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi in Akpa district of Benue State. It was actually the first international workshop to be organised and hosted by NPTA. Aside that fact, it has also been rated to be among the most successful Theatre for Development (TfD) workshops ever organised in the country.

It should be emphasized that the priority of NPTA is communication and development through alternative means for the empowerment and general welfare of the rural and urban populace. The workshops which took place from the 7th to the 22nd of

December, 1989, according to the account of Abah in his *Performing Life*, set down the following goals:

- i) Analysing the agricultural and food situation in the three villages;
- ii) Discussing the identified agricultural and related issues and explore how these reflect development problems in the communities;
- iii) Testing and affirm the potential of Popular Theatre in identifying and analysing the community problems, and to suggest, through play-making process, probable solution within their limits; and
- iv) Using theatre to mobilise the target communities to achieve agricultural and social development. (Abah, 2013, p. 2)

Once again, like it was done with Samaru Project, analysis of the Production Process in the Akpa District workshop is conducted based on the following parameters: the process of production and the means of production. In these two aspects of production, this study sets out to determine whether the people from the communities were actually in control of the aforementioned process of production or not. The question is again asked as to the reality and implication of where control resides.

4.2.1 Process of Production in NPTA

In order to access relevant information pertaining to the different stages of production in the three villages, this study relies mainly on interviews with Salihu Bappa, Steve Abah and Egwugwu Illah who all played active roles in the said workshop. In addition, Steve Abah's *Performing Life* proved to be a comprehensive and reliable source-book that covered the entire event. For the purpose of this research, we shall

adopt what Abah outlines as stages in the Akpa Theatre for Development practice. His breakdown of the stages is as follows:

Stage I (Preliminary Visits to the Villages)

Stage II (Arrival of Participants)

Stage III (Group and International Sharing)

Stage IV (Logistics)

Stage V (Community Research)

Stage VI (Experience Sharing and Creative Stage)

Stage VII (Performance/Analysis Stage) (Abah, 2013, p. 11-60)

Stage I: Preliminary Visits to the Villages

The workshop was set rolling with the question of what their agricultural performance was like in the three villages. In all, three preliminary visits were made to the villages by the organisers of the workshop in order to discuss issues and understand the workshop. Jenkeri Okwori and Steve Abah took a trip to Katsina-Ala to discuss with the North-East Zonal Coordinator. From there, they proceeded to Makurdi to discuss with officials of government agencies and ministries like the Benue State Directorate for Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), the Council for Arts and Culture, the Ministry of Information and Culture, and the media houses. The purpose of the visit was to solicit for official support from the different bodies. The visiting team also stopped over at Otukpo, the host local government headquarters, to hold discussion with government officials there. From Otukpo, the team visited the three villages to discuss the detailed plans of the workshop with the communities and also to seek approval from the communities.

Okwori and Illah undertook the second preliminary visit in order to consolidate earlier arrangement made. The team discussed how Benue State Directorate of MAMSER in Makurdi would be supporting the programme. They also met Och'Idoma, the paramount ruler in Idoma land and the chairman of Otukpo Local Government Area Council to obtain permission to carry out the workshop in their domain. Illah and Okwori went into the villages to discuss issues of welfare and accommodation with their liaison persons before making their purchases of food items and other materials. The third visit was made by Illah and Okwori at different times to inspect and put finishing touches to their arrangements.

Stage II: Arrival of Participants

The participants started arriving Zaria on the 4th of December, 1989 and by the 5th, both the local and international participants had all arrived. Below is the composition and nationalities of the participants:

Foreign Participants

Frances Harding	UK
Gabriel Gbadamosi	UK
Ndumbe Hansel Eyoh	Cameroon
Simon Aanyeh	Ghana
Carol Lawes	Jamaica
Ghonche Materogo	Tanzania
Dale Byam	USA
Mapopa Mtonga	Zambia

Nigerian Participants

Oga S. Abah	ABU
Jenkeri Okwori	ABU
Ayo Komolafe	ABU
Tunde Lakoju	ABU

Wabare Paul	
Egwugwu J. Illah	ABU
Steve Daniel	ABU
Victoria Lagwampa	ABU
Lantana Ahmed-Onucheyo	University of Jos
Ene Obi	University of Jos
Kizito Ijeh	University of Jos
Joab Bonat Tagwai	College of Education, Kafanchan
Tar Ahura	College of Education Katsina-Ala
Helen Iyoha	Family & Social Relations (FAMSOR) Unit of MAMSER
Cosmas Laniyan	Basic Community Development Project (BCDP) Lagos
Alache Abah	Catering Services
Olivers Ochinya	An unemployed graduate of Theatre Arts
Eva Murray	Director, CUSO Nigeria
Ola Ogunyinka	Attendee (Abah, 2005)

The other important group of participants in the workshop are residents of the three communities (Onyuwei, Otobi and Adankari) and their respective rulers and elders. These are the representatives of the people that Boal and Freire recommended should wield control over the theatrical process if efficacy is to be achieved.

The keynote address was delivered by the Director of Council for Arts and Culture. The contextual framework of the workshop, according to Abah, was provided by masquerade performances from the three workshop villages, namely: Akrakpa and Anumowowo from Otobi, Ikpokw' Ikinabo from Onyuwei and Ano from Adankari.

It could, however, be gathered from participants' report that, it was not part of the opening ceremony plan to feature masquerade performances by the villagers. Rather, it was on the insistence of the villagers that if the workshop was about them, then, they wanted to contribute their own quota by displaying a portion of their cultural heritage.

When eventually, Akrakpa from Otobi performed, the agricultural theme of the workshop came alive and was consequently made manifest.

In addition to the ritual of opening the workshop, a parallel ritual of community affirmation and continuity was happening. The masquerades, as it were, summoned the ancestral spirits to engender participation in, and to guarantee success of the workshop.

Stage III: Group and International Sharing

The group and international sharing referred to the sharing of ideas among participants in the plenary sessions during the three days spent at Dolphin Hotel, Otukpo. The sharing also included the familiarisation visits to the three workshop villages. The first plenary session on the 8th of December saw participants giving their individual country's experience of Popular Theatre. This stage revealed that Popular Theatre practice was growing and spreading beyond the borders of developing worlds. It was also discovered as a medium for empowerment through its enabling structures and emphasis on conscientisation. And lastly, the theatre was also confirmed to be an appropriate medium for development communication.

The second plenary session on the 9th of December was led by Dr. Emmanuel Onucheyo, the Managing Director of Agricultural Managers and Consultants (AMC), to discuss the problems of Agriculture in Nigeria. His argument was hinged on the position that agricultural performance was based on whether it was small or large scale. The whole essence of the session was to explore the problems of different farmer groups, especially, the small scale farmers.

Stage IV: Logistics

The availability of only one functional vehicle created logistic problems especially as participants started dispersing from their Otukpo hotel base to the workshop villages. The participants were split into three groups and they were to familiarise themselves with the new environments. They were also required to understand the rhythm of life in their respective communities. The Onyuwei group entered the village just in time to partake in Aja group celebration of its new chairperson. Aja group is a cultural/credit organisation whose membership comprised both young men and women.

The Otobi workshop group arrived Otobi to meet a festival of second burial rites which attracted people from neighbouring communities. The team immediately participated in the dances and performances to establish rapport with the people and to understand the village structure and rhythm. The group maximised this opportunity by interacting with the several age groups while wining and dining.

Although the Adankari workshop group arrived late (9.00pm), the village woke up to usher them into a welcoming buffet of food and palm wine. Their late arrival denied them access to the village routine which they were only able to experience the following day. However, participants were still able to interact minimally with the villagers that night.

Stage V: Community Research

The community research phase of the workshop commenced simultaneously with the participants identifying and complying with the rhythm of the community. The method of enquiry adopted by the three groups was the homestead approach, whereby

beyond interviewing the residents, they also observed and experienced the problems first hand. The issues and problems encountered in the three villages were virtually the same. Generally, the problems reflected neglect by the government in the areas of education, access roads, health care delivery, agriculture, potable water and electricity. Other issues were those of unity, taxation and culture conflict.

Stage VI: Experience Sharing and Creative Stage

On the 15th of December, 1989, all the participants met at Onyuwei to exchange and discuss experiences. Participants, at the plenary, discussed the practice of Theatre for Development in their respective countries. These various experiences were examined in relation to their current encounter in Adankari, Otobi and Onyuwei. Although residents of the three villages were initially slow in responding to improvisations, the level of hospitality and cooperation was high.

The creative stage came immediately after the community research by the homestead approach. And because the concept of the production itself was that of a continuing process, opposed to the conventional idea of having a finished product, the creative process extended to the performance proper. This was evidenced in the forum outlook of the performance which embraced series of interventions from the audience.

The creative process was to be identified under Scenario building and improvisation which covers analyses, role play and research. Characteristically, this stage had to deal with “shifting perspectives and non-permanency of the skits” (Abah, 2013, p. 38). The improvised skits in each of the three villages came from research findings and demands from the villagers in particular.

Since it was not possible to include all the information gathered from the field in the improvisation, the group had to isolate key issues to be dramatized. Members of the

communities were the ones that freely chose the issues which affected their lives most. In other words, they had some measure of control in determining the direction and content of the drama. After streamlining the issues to be treated, the groups now moved into the stage of making stories out of the issues.

Stage VII: Performance/Analysis Stage

The stories from the three communities were woven around some fictional characters who probably have strong semblances with some people in the communities. Improvisation and role play enlivened the stories and made the issues concrete before the community audience. From the verbal account of participants, it was obvious that the three communities along with their facilitators followed the same collaborative creative process. And considering the fact that the communities were purely rural and agrarian, their social needs were essentially identical but were narrated through different story lines.

However, at the end of the performances, the central question that emanated from the three communities was one: Why do we pay tax? This is a pertinent question coming from three rural communities that have never enjoyed social amenities like good roads, hospitals, good schools and employment for the youth. Abah observes that this was a question borne out of experience, analysis and as a result of a new understanding located in and operating from within their cultural matrix.

Once again, the essence of this section of the study is to determine the sway of control in the production process of the workshop. For the purpose of this research, the most robust in terms of community audience participation and control of the Production Process is that of Onyuwei community.

The people of Onyuwei used an electioneering campaign scenario to foreground a political setting against which other social problems were identified. The narrator (Ogiri, a cripple in the village) announced the intentions of two sons of the village to contest in a forthcoming election. Afterwards, one after the other, the two contestants, Ejembi and Ejiga came out with their manifestoes which promised heaven and earth.

Later on, a government official came from Lagos to demand explanation from the chief why his people were refusing to pay tax. The community audience rose up spiritedly to confront the official from Lagos on why government too has, over the years, neglected their village. This was a spontaneous intervention coming from the audience. Before this point, there had been some spontaneous interventions from the audience. In all, according to Abah's report, there were four points of spontaneous interventions from the community audience and these shall be closely examined in order to discuss the issues of control.

Before going further to examine the interventions by the community audience of Onyuwei, it need be reiterated that the villagers decided on the problems they considered most pressing. Some of them actively participated in critiquing/structuring the narratives during rehearsals before the final performance. However, the arguments of the people neutralised the mandate of the representative collective and eventually surpassed the earlier narrative. This came about through intermediations by different people in the course of the performance. It is worth noting that majority of the people who intervened did not take part in the scenario building and rehearsals. They had intervened on the spur of the moment.

Before the appearance of the government official from Lagos, there were two major interventions from the community audience. The first came from Etta who

confronted the contending politicians with the non-availability of health care delivery in the village of Onyuwei, in spite of their beautiful manifestoes and their past involvement in government. Omagono also challenged and questioned the sincerity of the politicians in the same manner. Agboji, the natural village chief was trying to compere the occasion through a summary of the arguments when official from Lagos came in to ask Jenkeri Okwori, the chief in the drama, why the community people have not been paying tax. Upon asking this question, the official received a barrage of angry responses from irate community audience led by Aladi who handed the official their condition for paying tax: a tarred link road for the transportation of their farm produce and a health clinic to assist pregnant women during labour, and other sick people in general.

The drama took a different dimension when the real chief spontaneously assumed the role of a director by giving out instruction thus, “move closer to the man from government. Make as if you want to slap him” (Abah, 2005, p. 47). The report of the drama as it takes an unexpected turn is illuminating:

He adopts belligerent posture and advances towards the official. Ghonche (Participant from Tanzania) is becoming uncomfortable ... He is no longer sure if there is any divide between drama and reality. Ndumbe Eyoh (Cameroonian) sends an SOS to Jenkeri (Nigerian), ... Jenkeri shoos the person off and declares: “That is it! The community has taken over and the people are writing their drama. Let it go on!” The tension is still on. A young man standing right behind Ghonche threatens, “We will beat you!” Ghonche picks on the threat: “You beat government! He guffaws, looks around and picks on a small boy,

pats him on the head, declaring “My friend, This is my friend.”

The arena bursts out laughing. The tension is diffused. (2005, pp. 47-48)

The government official again asked the fictional chief (Jenkeri) why his people have refused to pay tax. He in turn then redirected the question to the real chief who now took the floor to direct his people to boo him. He used this to illustrate that he has lost his respect among his people as a result of government’s neglect of their community.

These interventions reveal a deep closeness and involvement in the issues raised in the improvisation. Adopting the homestead approach of living in the community for ten days assisted them to build a scenario that mirrors the community problems. “But the aesthetic and dramatic discourse informed by ten days of sojourn is a far cry from experiences of a life time for the villagers” (Abah, 2005, p. 46). Inevitably, the scenario painted on stage represented a continuous creative process that is bound to change.

This is what Applied Theatre scholars call the aesthetic of un-completion, that which is concerned with process rather than the finished product. It allows for the changes in perspectives which, in turn, demand a new analysis.

The choice of analysing the improvisation by Onyuwei among the three villages at this stage is informed by the fact that it alone, among the three, provides a robust example of a creative process that enjoys the direct input and control (to a considerable degree) of the villagers. This has been based on verifiable official reports and testimonies from participants like Steve Abah, Salihu Bappa, Egwugwu Illah, Steve Daniel and others.

It is noted here, however with caution, that the initiative for the workshop did not come from the villagers, rather it came from the Theatre for Development scholars and

practitioners that formed the nucleus of NPTA. This also constitutes some measure of control exercised by the practitioners and not the villagers. On a general note, the community drama production represents a theatre experience with the people, and not just for the people. In other words, the community people had an input in the creative process during both the rehearsals and the performance proper.

4.2.2 Means of Production in NPTA

Means of production refers to the resources required to organise theatrical productions or workshops as the case may be, and this can be either monetary or material or both. This section sheds light on who actually provided what and exercised control on the means of production with respect to the first international workshop of NPTA organised in the three villages of Adankari, Otobi and Onyuwei. And this began with the profile and character of the sources of all the means and promises for the community production and how they translated into a self-sustained practice and efficacy.

Once again, Abah's report in his *Performing Life* provides a clue regarding the source of funding for the workshop. His report on the source of funding is corroborated by other participants like Salihu Bappa, Egwugwu Illah, Steve Daniel and others. The workshop, according to them, was assisted by the following bodies:

1. Directorate for Mass Mobilisation for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER at the Presidency in Abuja)
2. The Benue State MAMSER
3. Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Makurdi
4. International Fund for the Promotion of Culture (UNESCO)
5. UNESCO Centrum Nederland

6. Sweedish International Development Authority (SIDA)
7. World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)
8. Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO)-Nigeria
9. Commonwealth Foundation
10. German Foundation for International Development (DSE)

MAMSER (Mass Mobilisation for Self Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery

It was an agency established on July 25, 1987 by the defunct Babangida military regime based on the recommendation of the Samuel Cookey-led Political Bureau. The bureau was saddled with the responsibility of consulting with the Nigerian populace and recommending to the Federal Military Government a generally acceptable method of political transition.

MAMSER was designed to cultivate support for the transitional programme of the government, to educate the citizens about the political process, mobilise them to participate in the elections and political debates, and also inculcate a dependence towards locally made goods and Nigerian products.

Some of the policies of MAMSER were:

1. Re-orient Nigerians to shun waste and vanity.
2. Shed all pretences of affluence in their lifestyle
3. Propagate the need to eschew all vices in public life
including corruption, dishonesty, electoral and census
malpractices, ethnic and religious bigotry.

Ordinarily, MAMSER was the most relevant and appropriate body that could have easily synergised with NPTA because they appeared to share similar vision of nationhood. Considering the goals and policies of MAMSER, theatre was such a powerful tool of suasion that could be and was indeed useful to carry out the ideals and principles of MAMSER.

Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)

The Nigerian Television Authority is owned, funded and controlled by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The facilitators of this workshop were obviously not seeking financial assistance from NTA. What they needed and was indeed promised them was a full media coverage of the event.

Canadian Universities Service Overseas (CUSO) and Other International NGOs

Canadian Universities Service Overseas (CUSO) is a development organisation with the goal of reducing poverty and inequality. It goes about this by engaging volunteers who are highly skilled and collaborating with compassionate partners. The body helps people realise their potential and participate fully in society.

Other Bodies/Organisations

The other bodies, as mentioned above, are just like CUSO as their general goal is to assist underdeveloped and developing nations with funds, human capital development and other material assistance, depending on the peculiar needs of recipient nations.

The Response of Development Agencies

So the questions are: How much was NPTA able to get from these bodies? How promptly did NPTA get the assistance promised and where was control situated in the release, management and disbursement of these funds and other assistance? A dispassionate apprehension of the situation might throw some light on this aspect of assistance from external bodies.

Most of the logistic problems encountered in the workshop were occasioned by the financial problems the NPTA had to contend with. By the time the workshop started on December 7, none of the funding support promised to the Alliance by development agencies was readily available. CUSO Nigeria had to loan the NPTA the money to run the workshop. The timing of President Babangida's visit to Benue State during the workshop compounded the problems for them. Many of the equipment, transport and funds promised were redirected into preparing for the visit of Mr. President.

Analysis of Production Process in Nigeria Popular Theatre Alliance

We have gone all this length to establish the fact that neither the communities nor the facilitators can claim to have had control on the means of production. This goes on to show that the various donor organisations and government bodies have their own policies, ideologies, programmes and priorities which may not always align with the projection of TFD practitioners and their workshop communities.

However, with the way the workshop started and progressed especially with the homestead and participatory approach which allowed the residents of the villages to dictate the direction of the drama, it is obvious that the people wielded a large amount of

control which Samaru residents are yet to come close to wielding. The participation of the villagers in the drama was very robust as they even redirected the theme of the workshop to meet their own communal need. Like Okwori argues, “most rural people know their problems. What they are not sure about are their causes and solutions” (1992, p. 51). Okwori continues further to argue that the problems are human in nature and so requires human solutions. Theatre intervenes at this point to motivate the rural or urban masses to “dialectically question their existing reality, critically determine the roots of their problems and work out strategies for solving them” (1992, p. 51). This process enables the people find meanings to their lives and reason for their existence. Okwori opines this is the task that NPTA has set for itself since its inception.

Again, Okwori identifies two high points of the workshop, the creative process and the communal forum for the discussion and analysis of the identified problems. The residents determined the pace of the performance and challenged the docility of their fellow villagers. On several occasions, fiction gave way to reality and they were able to achieve what Boal in his theatre of the oppressed had advocated, that is, the dissolution of the divide between the audience and the performers. Consequently, the performance experience was able to obviate the differences between art and life.

Judging by the participation and zeal of the people, it is undeniable that their consciousness has been aroused. However, Okwori observes that what now remained was for the aroused consciousness to be translated to good roads, health facilities and other social amenities that the people had all along been deprived of by the government. “This is where conscientizing the people through Popular Theatre becomes a crisis. If the people are abandoned at this point, would we not have raised a false consciousness and frustrated hopes?” (1992, p. 52)

NPTA's response to this was that, right from the outset, it had either hooked up with or established a community base group. The strategy is to use the community base group to sustain the on-going discussion and mount pressure on the relevant government agencies to facilitate actions that will bring about positive change in the community. This therefore appears to be another limitation to the control which the people have wielded as far as the process of the production is concerned.

In order to be empowered, the three communities now sought for ways to generate income to fund their development project. Adankari and Onyuwei desired to operate communal farms while Otobi wanted a multi-purpose grinding machine. With the assistance of NPTA, they were able to access some funds from Canada Funds.

A cursory examination of the two examples of Samaru Project and NPTA workshops in the three villages has revealed that there is limited or no control of the process of production by the residents of the four villages. In very strict terms, on the one hand, no measure of control can be ascribed to Samaru residents in Samaru Project. On the other hand, and to a very reasonable extent, the three villages of Otobi, Onyuwei and Adankari exercised some control as far as the production process was concerned. However, the idea of seeking the solace of empowerment in external funding bodies diverted their attention away from the need to see the theatrical process as a potent machinery over which they can continually exercise control and which would move them towards liberation.

Chapter Five

Efficacy in Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA)

Having examined the source and deployment of control in the production process of the two case studies in the previous chapter, this chapter is devoted to exploring the various kinds and evidences of efficacy in the two examples. Although efficacy in this study is being considered with the intent of identifying its specific relevance to the primary community, its general social relevance will also be observed keenly. This is another way of saying that theatre, as a tool of development, can hardly ever lose its potency.

So efficacy as it is being studied here is in the context of theatre as both a tool of development and as a weapon of liberation for the target community. The task in this chapter therefore is to locate any evidence of efficacy in ABU's Samaru Project and NPTA workshops in the three villages of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi. To set about this, five expandable major areas in which efficacy can be deemed attainable are identified. They are:

1. Goal-Based Efficacy
2. Continuity-Based Efficacy

3. Artistic/Performance-Based Efficacy
4. Testimonial-Based Efficacy
5. Theory-Based Efficacy

5.1 Goal-based Efficacy

In any theatrical engagement, be it conventional or applied, it is taken for granted that there must have been a purpose or reason why such an engagement is being embarked upon in the first place. It is also in the bid to realise such purpose or reasons that a number of goals or targets are set to be attained at the eventual or temporary conclusion of the engagement. If these goals or targets are met, then efficacy is deemed to have been attained through the method employed. And at such an instance of achievement or attainment of set goals, the method can therefore be considered to be efficacious. It is therefore in this sense that we are considering the Samaru Project and NPTA workshop examples.

5.1.1 Goal-based Efficacy in Samaru Project

A discussion of goal-based efficacy in Samaru Project requires a historical perspective which naturally leads us to the basics of the programme where we can have a close examination of the aim and objectives of the course. Again, such a move will expose us to the description of the course.

Documentation supporting the establishment of the Drama appears non-existent and efforts to get any have failed. Professor Egwugwu Illah of the University of Jos, a

pioneer student of drama in ABU and also a former lecturer there, confirmed that such was nowhere to be found.

In essence, the major document to rely on here is the official course description as found in the departmental handbook provided by the course handler, Mallam Rabi'u Isah.

In unmistakeable terms, and from the above official course description, the primary goal of Samaru Project is to teach students to be knowledgeable in the art and techniques of using theatre to impact directly on the society through development communication. Although the ultimate goal is social change and development, the brief of the academic personnel at the department is to impart the knowledge of the history, theory and techniques of theatre to their students and Samaru Project happens to be one of such courses.

To determine the goal-based efficacy of Samaru Project is tantamount to asking whether the unit which has now gained its autonomy as a full-fledged Department of Theatre and Performing Arts has succeeded in its goal of training students to use theatre beyond the conventional purpose. The success of Samaru Project which is subsumed in the bachelor's degree awarded at the end of four years of study over a period of more than thirty years is self-evident. The goal-based efficacy is therefore to be found in an effective educational process that has produced hundreds of theatre graduates knowledgeable in not only Community Theatre but theatre generally yearly.

5.1.2 Goal-Based Efficacy in NPTA Workshops

The NPTA workshops, conducted simultaneously in the three villages of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi constitute the focus of this segment. The task here is to

identify the specific goals of the workshop in order to determine whether or not the goals were attained at the end of the exercise. Three years after the workshop, in the 1992 NPTA journal, *Na We*, Jenkeri Zakari Okwori provides an illuminating background to the plight of the rural and urban poor in Nigeria:

The rural and the urban poor in Nigeria have existed under decades of colonial and neo-colonial plunder. They lack the basic necessities of life; good portable drinking water, health facilities, good food, access to information, techniques and innovations which they can use to better their lives. (1992, p. 51)

They live below the poverty level and dominated by ignorance and superstition. Their resources are siphoned away to meet the needs of the oppressor. The only thing they have to show off are their extreme situations of poverty at the various social, economic, political and cultural levels.

In what may be considered an official report of the workshop, Abah's *Performing Life* goes further to shed light on the social context that necessitated the workshop. Abah avers that the resolve to organise the theatre workshop became inevitable due to the events of the moment. "It was a period of acute shortage of food. The trend of inflation for essential commodities in Nigeria was between 75-100%" (Abah, 2013, p. 3). The true picture, according to Abah, was that of hunger and poverty among the majority of the Nigerian populace.

The 1989 NPTA workshop was on Theatre for Integrated Development (TIDE) and the theme was "From Celebration to Survival" (Okwori, 1992, p. 51). Although the theme of agriculture was the basis of initial work, it was later overtaken by the more

immediate challenges which the communities identified as link roads and bridges, health centres, potable water and power supply. So the attention of the participants was redirected towards the pressing issues raised by the villagers themselves. This was, however, situated within the context of the politics of rural development, community relations and strategies for reviving village economies. Still serving as a backdrop to all these, however, is the motif of agriculture and harvest.

The focus of the workshop is agricultural and related problems. While the central aim is to test the potential of theatre in identifying and analysing the community problems, this primary aim or goal is extended to include using theatre to suggest the means to solve the problems. It is however pertinent to note that the communities did not need any theatre to identify their problems although they needed the critical analysis that theatre had to offer them. It is, however, clear that their problems were those of access roads and bridges, health facilities, pipe-borne water and electricity supply.

In other words, the goals of the communities, if it could be assumed they had any, were those of basic social amenities which had to be annexed to the goals of the workshop. Of course it is apparent that the practitioners lacked the wherewithal to put these social amenities in place for the villagers. The crucial question at this point is whether NPTA was able to attain its set goals or not. The same question is asked in Abah's report of the workshop to which he relays seven responses from the workshop participants. The first response, according to Abah, (2005, p. 68) is "What the people are talking about out there is not agriculture. They are talking about roads and bridges." This response, coming from the participants, is very crucial to our understanding of the whole enterprise of Theatre for Development in the three villages. The participants had come to

do a play with the villagers on the agricultural situation of the people with the intention of using the play to solve agricultural problems of the people. Meanwhile the villagers on their own had a different set of problems like roads, health care delivery, schools and bridges bothering them.

In the long run, all these problems might be interrelated, but the fact still remained that the TfD facilitators came to the village with an objective that was not exactly identical with the aspiration and need of the villagers. The disconnect observable at this juncture cannot be ignored because it raises a question on the quality and direction of community research carried out before the commencement of the workshop proper.

At a glance, the question of leaving behind a base group borders on the plausible continuity of the programme but what concerns us is the fact that it was part of the set goals of the workshop to hand over a programme that would continue to be in existence long after the facilitators must have gone.

5.2 Continuity-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project and NPTA

The ability to run a theatre workshop or theatrical production at regular intervals, be it weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annually without a break can be considered to be the attainment of efficacy. Continuity of the theatrical process in this regard is self-evident efficacy. This can, in a way, be linked to the set-goals efficacy if there is an initial desire to have a long running workshop or programme at the commencement of such engagement.

Efficacy, for the sake of emphasis, has a direct bearing on the attainment of desired result. It is only after the attainment of the result that the process leading to it or

the method employed can be considered efficacious. So a simple question can be asked as to whether continuity is part of the desired result of ABU's Samaru Project and NPTA's Akpa District workshops. If continuity is discovered to be part of the desired results of Samaru Project and NPTA workshops, then it can be safely conjectured that continuity or its lack in the two examples goes a long way to determine or confirm the efficacy or non-efficacy of its process or method of production.



Figure 10: Researcher at Otobi junction, off the main road linking the three villages (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 11: The Multi-Purpose Grinding Machine at Otobi (Abah, 2013)



Figure 12: The 'scrap' of the Multi-purpose Grinding Machine in Otobi (Researcher, 2017)



Figure 13: The ‘scrap’ of the Multi-purpose Grinding Machine in Otobi as shown to the researcher by Otobi indigenes (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 14: The only Health Centre in Otobi before and after the workshop. (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 15: The wooden bridge between Otobi and Adankari as at 2017
(Researcher: 2017)



Figure 16: The researcher with the chairman of Otobi Community Development Association and some community members (Researcher, 2017)

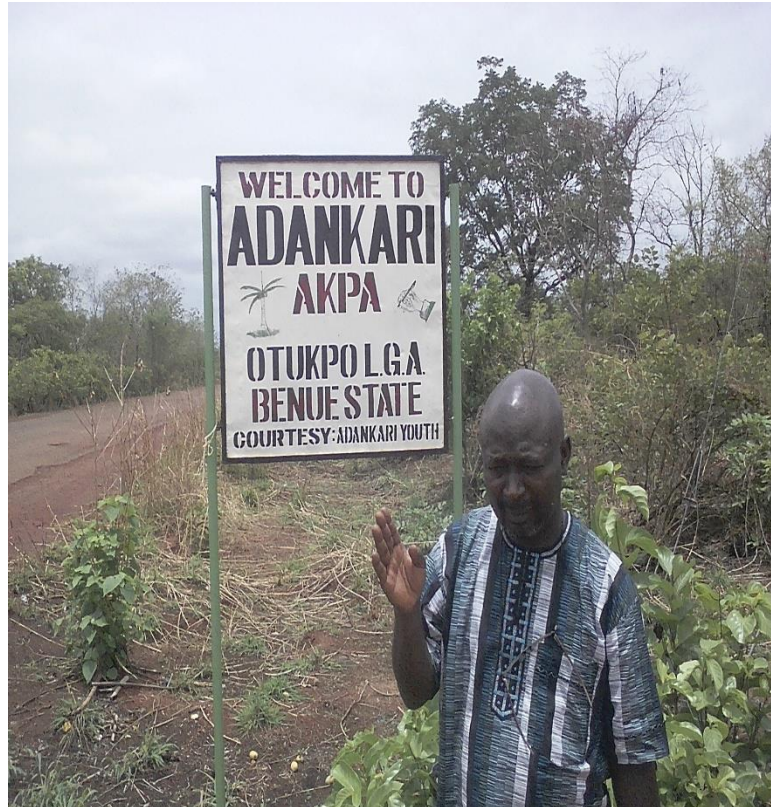


Figure 17: The researcher at Adankari Junction off the road linking the three villages (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 18: Dilapidated side of the building of Adankari Health Clinic – a relic of the outcome of the 1989 NPTA workshop. (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 19: Adankari Health Clinic from another side. (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 20: Frontage of the Health Clinic in Adankari (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 21: The researcher in Adankari community (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 22: The researcher, with Mr. Abah, a retired headmaster, who was a participant of the NPTA workshop in 1989. The young fellow, a native of Adankari, was the Okada rider who took special interest in taking us from Otukpo to the three villages. (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 23: The open space where the workshop took place in Adankari (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 24: One of the bridges linking Adankari with Onyuwei (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 25: The researcher with an elder in Onyuwei (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 26: The open space in Onyuwei where the workshop took place (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 27: The researcher with some of the community members in Onyuwei (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 28: The researcher with two Onyuwei elders (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 29: The researcher, with his Idoma guide, Mr. Donny Anwudi a graduate of Political Science (Researcher: 2017)



Figure 30: Another bridge linking Onyuwei to the major Otobi road (Researcher: 2017)

5.2.1 Continuity-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project

This is a self-evident type of efficacy, that which manifests in the ability of a programme to run right from its inception without any break or stoppage. Evidences abound that ABU's Samaru Project, ever since its inception as an academic course in 1980, has been running for as long as the school is in session. The latest edition of Samaru Project was held in March 2014 (as at the moment of this writing) and it was taken round the entire villages of Samaru, Hayin Dogo and Makera. Its reception within the villages suggested an annual event that the people are delightfully used to watching. Generally, the skit presented spoke about the social and family life of people in the neighbourhood, and so, apparently, the people identified with the story and its social relevance immediately the drama began to unfold.

The continuity of the theatrical event is however tied to and therefore dependent on the continued existence of the federal institution of ABU under whose auspices the programme is running currently. The initiative of the programme in the first place came from the university and so the commitment in running the programme is as firm as that of running the university. This, in itself, is an assurance of its continued existence and an evidence of perpetuity.

The past unbroken record of continuity gives an assurance of continued existence which in turn can be considered as an evidence of perpetuity. What this produces is a kind of desired result of continually meeting the expectation of all concerned parties. This therefore points in the direction of an effective process of production that is regular and consistent in its yearly occurrence. Efficacy of continuity is established in the ability to continually put up a production at regular intervals.

5.2.2 Continuity-Based Efficacy in NPTA Workshops

The major concern here is to determine whether, since that first international workshop of 1989, there has been another similar experience or a tradition of using drama to analyse and proffer solutions to community problems. Having visited the three villages recently, the answer, in clear terms, is not in the affirmative. This was reaffirmed in interview sessions with Professor Steve Abah, Professor Egwugwu Illah and Mallam Salihu Bappa. There was no continuity of the TfD practice among the residents of Onyuwei, Otobi and Adankari. Having also confirmed from the residents of the three communities, it is also clear that NPTA never went back there to conduct another workshop since 1989 (27 years after the initial contact).

All that notwithstanding, it is worth mentioning that NPTA followed up in the three villages after sharing the donations granted them equally. Abah's report shows that Adankari community invested her donations in rice farming which proceeds were expended on establishing a health centre. The report shows further that Onyuwei invested in soya beans and later on in cassava to construct a make-shift bridge and attend to other sundry communal needs.

In the case of Otobi however, Abah's report is very extensive as crisis started brewing soon after a multi-purpose grinding machine was procured with their portion of the Canadian Fund donation. The fracas that broke out in the village of Otobi over the control of the grinding machine actually polarised the community. It was a face-off between the Otobi Community Development Association (OCDA) and the Machine Project Committee on the one hand, and the Chief and elders of Otobi on the other. With a carry-over from a pre-workshop feud over a purportedly dubious sale of communal land by community elders to a faceless military front, the youth of the community with

members of OCDA at its vanguard were hell bent on resisting the elders. This turned out to be a stiff challenge of the status quo that extended to the operation of the Machine Project Committee and the OCDA largely dominated by the youth and women. A warning letter was written to the elders, committee members were detained, a court case was instituted against committee members and sanctions were imposed on them while the grinding machine was locked up and rendered idle.

Abah (Interview, 2014) revealed further that this was the situation in Otobi until a mediatory NPTA team was sent in December 29, 1996 to resolve the issue. The strategy of NPTA at this point was to intervene with a resolution drama which is considered more effective than mere talking. The drama emphasized the possibility of withdrawing the grinding machine and giving it to some other community that would not fight over it. After this, the warring parties sheathed their swords and peace was restored in Otobi community.

Given the fact that this is a mere post workshop drama, which took place only once in one of the villages as a mediatory measure to ease off the tension in the village, it would therefore not be correct to consider it an example of continuity based efficacy.

Upon being asked when the likely date of next NPTA workshop would be, Abah said he didn't know, because it was all a function of funds. The deduction to be made from the above is the fact that NPTA is solely dependent on external funding to run its programme. Going by my interaction with some of the key figures in the NPTA hierarchy, the continuous running of workshop is largely dependent on the availability of funds from external sources which, according to Abah is epileptic and therefore not dependable enough to guarantee a continuous flow of workshop activities. Coupled with

this is the fact that the task of writing proposals to source for fund has been left to the central organisation of NPTA.

The developments described above in the activities of NPTA naturally make the continuity of its workshops unattainable. It goes without saying therefore that there has not been continuity-based efficacy in the NPTA workshops since it was first held in the three villages of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi.

5.3 Artistic/Performance-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project and NPTA

Efficacy at this level has to do with the effectiveness of the various arts of the theatre that have been harnessed and put together in order to entertain the community audience. Although at this stage, there is less emphasis on a comprehensive assemblage of the various arts of the theatre, it is very imperative to fully embrace the indigenous art forms of the local community that is hosting the workshop or the theatrical engagement.

The level of artistry desired at this point can only be minimal in order not to make the theatre digress towards the conventional mode of theatre production which is almost always strictly commercial and entertainment driven. This is a soft requirement of efficacy that can be easily met as long as practitioners fall in line with the indigenous art forms of the local community they are working with. Generally, these art forms include dance, songs, drumming, chants, mimicry, mime, proverbs etc.

5.3.1 Artistic/Performance-based Efficacy in Samaru Project

The parameter of performance or artistry as a basis for the measurement of efficacy focuses majorly, in the first instance, on the 2014 edition of Samaru Project which was covered by this research. This parameter is concerned with the aggregate of the various arts of the theatre brought together to entertain the audience without in any way undermining the primacy of development communication.



Figure 31: 2014 Samaru Project at the frontage of the Sarki. (Researcher: 2014)

It was observed that the student-practitioners representing ABU accessed the indigenous art forms of the local community of Samaru in their artistic performance. Their assemblage of art forms like dance, songs, dialogues, chants, mimicry, mime and costumes were identifiable within the local community of Samaru. By so doing, they were able to entertain and communicate effectively, having already secured the attention of the villagers.

The dialogues of the skit and the songs were rendered in Hausa language. This linguistic strategy alone brings the drama much closer to the people. However, it is crucial to know that this was not the case in the distant past of Samaru Project as dialogues were given in Pidgin English, and by design, no special attention was given to costumes. But over the years, they switched to pure Hausa and started dressing to depict typical residents of the local community. Watching the 2014 edition of Samaru as a first

timer, I found it slightly difficult to distinguish between the students and the local residents. All of these added up to the performance aesthetics of Samaru Project.

Of course, it is noteworthy that not all the students speak Hausa fluently. In fact, it is suspected that quite a couple of them do not speak fluent Hausa. This is confirmed in an interaction with the coordinator about the characters. One was Igala while the other was Igbo. That notwithstanding, their own versions of Hausa provoked lots of humour within the presentation which the resident audience enjoyed a great deal.

The ability to be able to generate humour and in the process, communicate effectively is in itself an evidence of performance efficacy. A good performance is to be considered the result of an artistic process that is efficacious. But then, it should be added that efficacy is being considered in this chapter in a holistic manner that transcends the level of performance efficacy.



Figure 32: A comic twist in the 2014 Samaru Project drama (Researcher: 2014)

5.3.2 Artistic/Performance-Based Efficacy in NPTA Workshops

The opening ceremony reveals a lot in terms of the entertainment values because the workshop theme yielded to the artistic concept and centrality of the villagers as evident in their insistence on the Akrakpa post-harvest performance. According to the various reports accessed, it was not in the original plan of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance to have masquerade performances in the opening ceremony. The villagers, in Abah's account, had insisted that if, indeed, the workshop was about their lives, they wanted to be part of it right from the beginning in order to display their culture. The facilitators had no choice than to acquiesce to their demand which helped to define the rural image which was one of the objectives of the workshop.

So the contextual framework of the workshop was provided by the masquerade performances from the three workshop villages. Akrakpa and Anumowowo came from Otobi, *Ikpokw'Ikinabo* came from Onyuwei while Ano came from Adankari. Akrakpa is however the most relevant to the workshop theme being a post-harvest masquerade which celebrates harvest. The above only serves to describe the performance content of the opening ceremony.

The main drama presentation from the three villages can also be broken into two broad categories: the dramatic presentation and the discussion forum that follows it. The major concern at this point is the dramatic presentation preceding the discussion forum. In order to effectively discuss the dramatic presentations of the three communities, two factors are hereby considered. The first is the scenario built for each of the communities while the second are the art forms employed to make their presentations interesting. In examining the scenarios, focus is on the conflict and theme of the scenario. Again, under the art forms deployed, focus is on the singing, drumming, dancing and other indigenous

art forms of the communities. The essence of this is to assess how the whole presentations can be deemed to have achieved artistic efficacy.

The Performance in Adankari

The improvised drama in Adankari was titled *The Road* and it comprised five scenes. The first two scenes were celebrative, comprising an egwugwu (masquerade) performance, a political jamboree and a work scene. In the first instance, the appearance of the egwugwu was predictably accompanied by singing, drumming and dancing. And more importantly, its presence was not idle as it was a dramatic prelude bearing the warning of an imminent disaster. The egwugwu performance was closely followed by the political campaign promises of a public office holder in search of a fresh mandate from the people. The village road work scene that followed was also filled with singing, drumming and dancing amidst their myriad problems. The art forms employed in Scene Five were of mixed moods, reflecting joy, sadness and protest. It was the protest songs that eventually ended the drama. All of these served to entertain their community audience most especially because the art forms deployed were the ones they could easily identify with.

The conflict generated in the drama was not as incisive as the picture painted of poverty, squalor, superstition, poor hygiene, non-availability of primary health care delivery, roads and bridges. It took a neighbour and a co-wife to convince a sick girl's parents to rush a dying girl to a clinic in the next village instead of consulting a herbalist. However, before they could cross the river to the next village, they had already lost the girl. The mourning gave way to protest songs of disenchantment, disappointment and disillusionment with government. At this point the tax collector showed up to demand

for tax and expectedly, the crowd went wild with the tax collector. With the foregoing, it is obvious that the scenario had enough dramatic action to hold the village audience down for development communication.

The Performance in Otobi

The scenario built in Otobi village was a rather more complex one with emphasis laid on an intricate storyline. The Otobi drama, titled *Naked Soup*, had only two high points where there were dances and singing. The rest of the drama was devoted to the story line where the various problems of the community were discussed. In scene two, the Akrakpa masquerade ushered in the new planting season with singing and dancing. And in the last scene, after the death of Okada, the pregnant girl, there was a dirge performance arranged according to age grades to console the bereaved.

With this minimal introduction of indigenous art forms, the people of Otobi appeared keener on the histrionics of their communal problems which centred around *Ochidechie* (Credit System), poverty, generational and gender feuds, transportation problems, poor health facilities, bad roads and juvenile delinquency. Akpa was at the centre of the story as a school leaving delinquent who had refused to assist his mother in farm chores. He however had enough time to put Okada in the family way. When Okada's time was due, she was rushed to the maternity clinic only to be given a referral to the General Hospital in Oturkpo. Because of the problems of bad roads and unavailability of means of transportation, Okada died while still waiting to get a transport to Oturkpo. Afterwards, in the course of transiting to the forum session, the question was asked as to why the girl died. From my perspective, it was the most complex, hilarious and well-conceived storyline among the three. The conflict and

character development in the story were better handled and the people easily identified with the characters and the storyline.

The Performance in Onyuwei

The scenario at Onyuwei was built against a rather short-lived village political campaign platform parading two contenders of a public office. The appearance of each of the candidates was heralded by fluting, singing, drumming and an overall atmosphere of celebration heightened by the *Aringa* (now known as *Ikpokw'Ikinabo*) masquerade performance. In addition to this, a renowned female singer known as Etta “amplified and embellished each political aspirant’s speech in song” (Abah, p. 43). And the rest of the drama was punctuated and accentuated by Etta’s singing and the flutist’s display.

The real conflict of the drama was not to be found in the campaign histrionics of the two politicians, but rather in the critical response of the people to the much accustomed tradition of making empty promises by all politicians. Beyond this however was the stiff conflict generated by the appearance of the tax collector who had come to query the people on why they stopped paying their taxes. This later developed into a highly charged situation whereby the tax collector was almost lynched by the people. At this point, because the people were so much engrossed in the issues raised by the drama, and this was because the issues of the drama resonated with the reality of their life in a striking manner.

The treatment of the crucial issues and the build-up of the conflict embodied that quintessential spirit of a liberating drama. At that very point, the people were not just close to taking over the dramatic process but rather the tradition of playmaking.

5.4 Testimonial-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project and NPTA Workshops

Efficacy in this regard refers to the confessions coming from participants, practitioners and most crucially members of the target community. It is however well understood that such confession could be easily tinted by individual sentiments and a wide range of biases. Nonetheless, the assessment of the theatrical process through verbal confessions would go a long way to determine the type of efficacy attained.

It is well noted that for the workshops and project under survey, there are reports written to cover the activities of such productions. Beyond these reports, scholarly essays have emerged to capture the successes or otherwise of these theatrical activities. And in each of these testimonial documents, inferences and claims of efficacy have been assessed as they relate to our examples of Applied Theatre. All of these will be eventually linked with efficacy in development communication.

5.4.1 Testimonial-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project

The testimonial idea of efficacy is drawn out of the general and individual responses or reactions of participants to the whole production process and outcome. The testimonial based efficacy is therefore conceived to be another way of aggregating various verbal and written assessments of the theatrical process from audience and facilitators in order to know, justify, confirm or refute the nature of efficacy professed. To achieve this purpose, the research relied on the interview of key figures in the community and key facilitators from the university and outside. The key figures in the community include the Sarki and some other members of the community while the

facilitators interviewed are the course coordinators and some lecturers within and outside the university.

Beyond the interview conducted with the above-mentioned people, the research also relied on a forum theatre session which usually marks the end of each performance at the various locations. The forum theatre is a technique devised by Augusto Boal to allow the local audience or other participants have some meaningful input in the production or creative process. The input may be in form of observations, recommendations, criticisms, corrections, commendations or a general assessment of any aspect or the entirety of the production process.

For this purpose, two categories of testimonial based efficacy are identified, the first being the interview-based testimonials and the other being forum theatre-based testimonials. In the interview-based testimonial, excerpts from interviews have been isolated, analysed and considered as probable parameters for determining efficacy. From another end, contributions from resident audience members at the forum theatre sessions have been set aside for analysis, also for the purpose of determining efficacy. This time, the forum theatre session is a coordinated community audience reaction to the current (2014) edition of Samaru Project. As a matter of fact, it is a constituent part of the entire production.

Aside the above two, the research also considers academic essays and post production reports, all of which have direct bearings with Samaru Project. In most of these reports and essays, categorical statements and pronouncements made regarding the efficacy of the programme are of utmost importance to this study. All of these constitute testimonials or claims of efficacy which will be gathered and subjected to analysis. These testimonials will be taken for what they are, claims of efficacy, before being

subjected to interrogation to determine whether they can be accepted as valid parameters of efficacy or not.

Interview-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project

An interview was conducted on the 7th of October, 2013 with the Sarki of Makera in Samaru who had witnessed several editions of Samaru Project along with his chiefs. Below is an excerpt of the interview.

The researcher's interaction with the Sarkin Makera revealed the following perception of the community head about the activities of ABU and her Samaru Project. The interview session was facilitated by Mallam Rabi'u Isa who did the translation between the sarki and the researcher.

On the question of what the situation was like before they started experiencing changes and the indices of the perceived change, the Sarki responded that The way it affected the place is that the elderly men who come to watch the performance are able to see graphically the negative impact of the drug-abuse on their children. So the parents know the impact on them as family and community.

On being asked whether parents feel the positive effect of the drama at home, the Sarki claims that parents now have now started taking action to stop their children from participating in the activities of drug abuse. This is because once drug abuse is reduced, it reduces crime. So they do not just fold their arms anymore. They now say, *we go back home and look at it.*

From the above, the Sarki is attesting that Samaru Project has been yielding the desired result of positive social and attitudinal change among the youth, hence the efficacy of the process. The Sarki believes strongly that the dramatic activities have helped to reduce the scourge of drug abuse and by extension the crime rate within the

community. He is unequivocal about the positive impact of Samaru Project on the community and so has absolute confidence in the efficacy of their annual performances. Through observation, he appears to enjoy a mutually cordial relationship with Mallam Rabi'u Isa, the course coordinator and the university community as a whole.

The confession of the Sarki notwithstanding, the testimonial alone does not guarantee the overall efficacy of the production. The contribution of the Sarki is merely commentatorial as it is not in any way critical of the process of production with a view to reflecting some of the tenets of either the Boalian or Freirean theory.

Samaru Project Students's Report

Samaru Project students' report was also looked at closely with a view to finding a self-assessed claim of efficacy or an admittance of failure to attain efficacy. However, upon looking through some samples of students' report on Samaru Project, it was discovered that their reports do not cover a self-assessment on the issue of efficacy. Their report follows an almost uniform structure and pattern featuring regular topics like the ones listed below:

Background of the Course

Expectation of the Course

Games and Exercise

Community Research

Data Analysis

Scenario Making

Technical Rehearsal

Performances

Weakness

Strength

Way forward

In general, the students are chiefly concerned about the performance end of their course, especially as it is hinged on the acceptability of the production by the community. The idea of ensuring audience participation beyond passive involvement which Boal recommends is hardly given any consideration. A close look at the responses of the Sarki and other community residents readily reveals that the production and creative processes are not critically examined. In discussing the forum-based efficacy, the responses of audience to the 2014 edition are examined closely in order to determine the profundity of their contributions

The programme was tied to the University curriculum, hence the problem of continuity of drama content. Even if a Community Theatre performance decided to focus on a particular issue for a period of time, the students were always in a flux. This is a testimonial against the continuity-based efficacy.

Forum-Based Efficacy

The assessment of the forum-based efficacy of Samaru Project focuses on the responses of audience members from the various locations where the performance took place. The general trend of the forum theatre contribution of audience members is that of showering encomiums on the efforts of the Samaru Project students. The residents demonstrate an understanding of the issues raised by the students' presentation and the implication on their social reality. However, most of the time, they are carried away by the relevance and suitability of the drama presentation in creating awareness on the social problems. It becomes imperative at this point to quickly observe that even conventional theatre actually performs this function effectively.

While it is true that the Samaru residents have an understanding of the drama, it is also true that they are yet to fully grasp the role which this type of drama has come to play in liberating the people from the shackles of poverty, illiteracy, violence and oppression. It is obvious that the theory that backs up the practice is yet to be simplified enough for the residents in order to help them critically engage the students and their lecturers in their dramatic presentations.

The comments and observations captured from the 2014 Samaru Project live are representative of the general response and attitude of the community audience towards the presentation.



Figure 33: Researcher, Rabiun Isa, the Sarki and his chiefs as an integral part of the audience in one of the venues. (Researcher: 2014)



Figure 34: The Sarki responds to the drama. (Researcher: 2014)



Figure 35: The youth leader responds to issues in the drama. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)



Figure 36: One of the chiefs responds to the drama. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

5.4.2 Testimonial Efficacy in NPTA Workshops

Once again, as in Samaru Project, the thrust of this section is to identify and examine claims of efficacy in the first ever international workshop organised by the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA). These claims or testimonials of efficacy are randomly drawn from post- performance reports by participants, research papers and interviews of principal participants in the workshop.

In specifics, attention is drawn to Steve Abah's post-performance report on the Akpa District Workshop of NPTA as contained in his *Performing Life*. Indeed, Abah's report is comprehensive and this is justifiably acceptable since he was right at the centre of the workshop in his capacity as the chief organiser. *Performing Life* therefore captures the minds of participants and those of its core organisers.

In Abah's report, he was able to extract the following confessions from fellow participants. First, some participants were of the opinion that the desires of Akpa people were different from those of the workshop organisers. While the workshop participants were concerned about the dwindling agricultural production in the country, the people of the three villages were desirous of hospitals, schools, water, electricity, roads and bridges.

Some of the participants rearticulated one of their objectives as stated in the workshop guide which was to establish base groups. It is clear that none was established and where they already existed, they did not work long enough with them to enable the groups carry on after the facilitators must have left. Again, some participants are not convinced any real change will come to the community because of the limited time at their disposal. Hence, they conclude that the workshop will have more gain for the participants than for the community.

From another perspective, some believe that what the group has done with the workshop is that they have laid a serious foundation which only needs to be followed up. And in what appears to be Abah's position (especially going by my earlier interactions with him) and considering the fact that NPTA was then only nine months old, the workshop was deemed to be a success. It was also stoutly believed that, more than these agricultural problems, there were some other problems identified by the community.

Several years after the workshop in the three villages had taken place, Regina Ode, a theatre scholar from Benue State University, among other things, conducted a post-workshop research to assess the impact of the project on the people and also the developmental gains of the affected societies. Precisely, on the 29th of April, 2009, about

twenty years after the workshop had taken place, Regina Ode visited the communities to reassess the development of the prevalent issues addressed in the workshop.

The findings of Ode were not too encouraging. First, in Otobi, she found out that the multi-purpose grinding machine had been abandoned for quite a while. It was further confirmed by the chairman of the committee, Chief Gabriel Agbo Okesi that the machine had been in that state for ten years. There were accusations and counter accusations of mismanagement of the facility. In Onyuwei, investigations were also carried out on their cassava farm project and again, it was also confirmed that the farm was no longer in existence. Adankari appears to be the only exception among the three workshop villages. In the first instance, the farm project initiated through the workshop was still in existence. It was also from the proceeds of the farm project that they were able to establish their own local clinic. Ode confirmed that the farm project and the clinic were being managed by the Adankari Development Association. It was found out that the make-shift bridge they were constructing was funded by the community through the proceeds from their farm project. In all of these, it is obvious that the three villages still lacked good roads, bridges and other basic social amenities.

Ode reached the conclusion that the NPTA Akpa District workshop was able to achieve its aim as planned, especially with its follow-up exercise. “The Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA) was able to assist the communities of Adankari and Onyuwei to set up fair (sic) projects” (Ode, 2011, p. 312). The Otobi community got a multipurpose grinding machine and the communities benefited from the workshop through the grinding machine which they operated and managed independently.

In spite of the above acclaimed success on the part of the workshop, Ode does not shy away from the fact that there is a persisting problem of sustainability which has

apparently made the acclaimed success story of the workshop suspect. Ode queries the attitude of donor agencies to the issues of the sustainability of the initiated developmental projects. She also raises a question on the need for adequate plans for sustainability of projects.

Given all of the above, especially as it relates to the testimonial of efficacy, it is discovered that efficacy in the sense in which it is being referred to, can only be understood vis-à-vis the workshop project and its continuity or sustainability as the case may be. Apparently, the objective of theatre as a perennial tool and weapon of positive social change appears to have been jettisoned on account of so much dependence on external assistance. Both scholars and practitioners along with their chosen communities appear to have forgotten that theatre in its applied form is the tool of change.

External funding and supports are okay as we have argued earlier, but if caution is not exercised, they can be a source of distraction that will only help to defeat the primary purpose of the exercise. Upon asking Abah and Illah whether there was a legacy of Community Theatre units or structure left in the villages that the communities could always fall back upon in order to solve their communal problems, their answer is “No”.

5.5 Theory-Based Efficacy in Samaru Project and NPTA Workshops

There are some major theories that constitute the bedrock of the whole practice of Applied Theatre which practitioners lay claims of allegiance to. In this case, Paulo Freire’s critical theory and Augusto Boal’s theatre of the oppressed will be in focus vis-à-vis the practice in ABU’s Samaru Project and NPTA’s workshops in Akpa District of Benue State.

The general thrust is to crosscheck the tenets of the theories against the practice of Applied Theatre in our two case studies. This researcher posits that efficacy is deemed to have been attained where: one, there has been a prior claim of affinity or affiliation to the theories in question; two, where such claims are being followed by a strict adherence to the tenets and principles of the theories. This research also countenances any form of extension or adjustment of the original theory, any of which can be claimed as reasons for non-adherence to the tenets of the theory which practitioners claim guide their practice.

As discussed earlier, the core issue here is the practitioners' self-professed affiliation to the Freirean and Boalian theories in the practice Samaru Project. To be able to determine the parameters of the theory-based efficacy, we have highlighted the basic tenets of the two theories. This begins with Paulo Freire's Problem-posing education as contained in his pedagogy of the oppressed and it is followed by Augusto Boal's forum theatre as contained in his theatre of the oppressed.

Paulo Freire's Problem-posing education (Critical Consciousness)

Below is a diagrammatic explanation that shows Freire's pedagogy and Applied Theatre as two related tools of liberation. And because they are related, there is an intersection occasioned by the principles of Problem-posing education which main goal is the attainment of full humanity with the objective reality of oppression serving as a take-off point. Consequently, the point of intersection is the point of Problem-posing education which also signifies the take-off point of the vocation of humanisation. A vertical upward movement from this point is a movement of liberation which should

define the activities of Samaru Project and NPTA workshops. A more robust illustration of this is to be found in Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed where he proposes various theatre techniques to suggest that theatre is a tool in the hands of the people that must be used by the people.

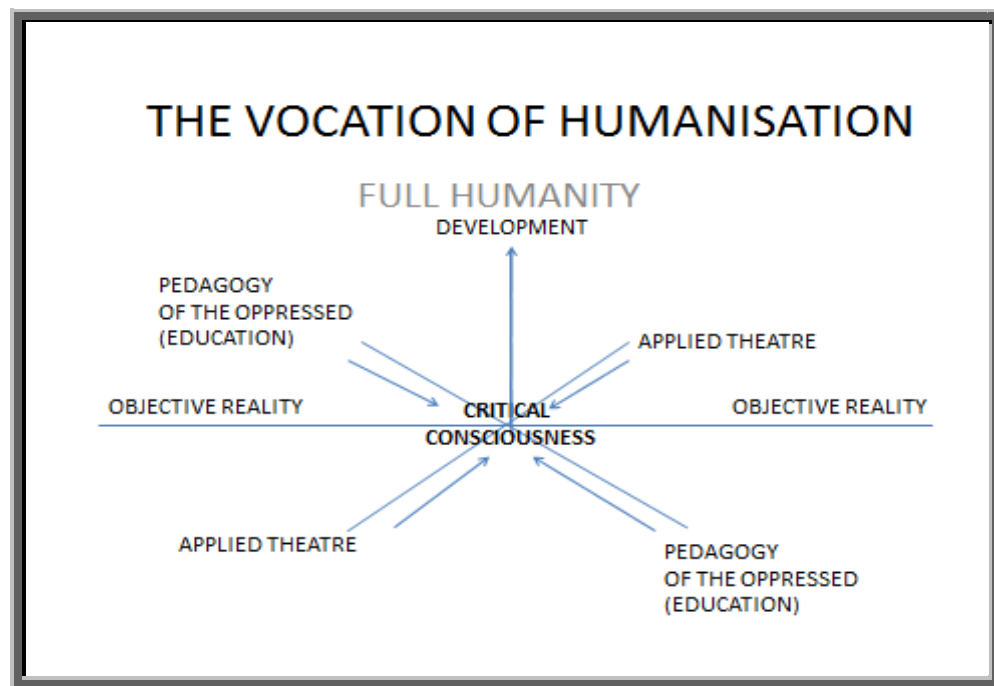


Figure 37: The Researcher's diagrammatic representation of Freire's Pedagogy and Applied Theatre meeting at the point of Problem-posing education to attain Full Humanity. (Researcher, 2014)

This diagram offers an explanation of Freire's Pedagogy of the oppressed, and at the core of this pedagogy is his theoretical postulation of Problem-posing education. The drawing illustrates Freire's apprehension of the man's vocation of humanization occasioned by his objective reality of dehumanization.

Paulo Freire's pedagogy as shown in the drawing above is represented by a diagonal line. At the centre of this line is Problem-posing education, the theoretical mandate of the pedagogy. Using his Brazilian socio-economic depression of the early

twentieth century as an example, Freire describes the objective reality of the oppressed as that of bipartite dehumanization on the part of both the oppressed and the oppressor.

Freire's Problem-posing education, a core requirement for the pedagogy to take place, defines Dehumanisation as an alteration of the task of becoming fully human. It is represented in the diagram to suggest the need for the oppressed to be critically alert and aware of the root cause of their dehumanized reality. This consciousness places at the feet of the oppressed the mandate of liberating themselves and their oppressors.

To overcome the oppression, the graphic illustration explains the pedagogy further that Samaru residents and NPTA workshop communities must first be positioned at the point of intersection of Freire's pedagogy and applied theatre which is also the point of Problem-posing education. It is the duty of practitioners to consciously and methodically guide the communities to this point of Problem-posing education at which point they will begin to engage themselves in the vocation of humanization. The oppressed people in our Samaru and Akpa case studies were not guided to this point of critical realization of their objective reality. Consequently, they lack the critical awareness to help them critically identify the causes of their social problems such that, through transforming action, a new situation which engenders the pursuit of fuller humanity can be created. The responsibility of undertaking this struggle of liberation rests solely upon the oppressed, but first, the Samaru and NPTA organisers must usher the people to the point of critical awareness.

By first considering the above postulations, the following summation can be arrived at to make the central tenets of the theory clearer and simpler:

1. Samaru and NPTA communities owe themselves the obligation of identifying the cause of their oppression and critically reflecting on it.
2. Attempts to mitigate the suffering of the oppressed always end up in false generosity.
3. The oppressor's generosity (which is false) is nourished by death, despair and poverty.
4. This pedagogy requires a collaboration *with*, and not *for* the oppressed in the struggle to regain humanity.

Boal provides the theatrical platform for Freire to operate and therefore recommends that the spectator in the people's theatre cannot continue to be passive victim of oppression. From the above postulations, the following summary has been arrived at:

1. The main objective of Boal's theatre is to change passive Samaru and NPTA spectators into subjects, actors and transformers of the dramatic actions.
2. Revolutionary theatre should transfer the theatrical means of production to the people for use.
3. The theatre is a weapon and it is the people who should wield it with the human body as a most potent resource.
4. The human body is the source of sound and movement and to control the production, man should know and be able to control his body to make it communicative.

Any Applied Theatre action that professes affinity with these theories therefore, should not in any way contradict or attenuate this line of thought, otherwise such should not be considered to be theoretically efficacious. Such theatrical actions will be deemed to have failed theoretically, and consequently, fundamentally.

5.5.1 Theory-based Efficacy in Samaru Project

It is imperative to note that a direct application of the tenets of Problem-posing education to Samaru Project may pose a problem because of the peculiar nature and primary goal of the programme which is to impart knowledge. The central goal of Freire's poetics transcends imparting knowledge, it goes further to liberate the oppressed. What can at most be extended to the community of Samaru in its link with the theory is its getting exposed to the features of the theory in its most simplified form. Samaru community has no business shouldering the material responsibility of running the programme because they have no claim of ownership. The aspect of the theories articulated above cannot wholly apply to Samaru audience or community because of the identity and affiliation of the programme with the university.

Applied Theatre enjoys a tripartite outlook of being produced for/about, with or by the people. In the case of Samaru Project, it happens to be a theatre for and about the people. In other words, the people do not exercise any control on the entire production process and so have no claim of ownership on the process. By nomenclature, Samaru Project professes to belong to the people, but in practice, it actually belongs to and is indeed controlled by the university. There has been no pretension about this in Samaru Project over the years. This defines Samaru Project as an Applied Theatre variant that teaches the Freirean and Boalian theories without being necessarily bound by most of its tenets. This is admissibly so because there is actually a sequel to the course which makes it mandatory for students to go out and live among various communities in order to make plays with them. It was as a result of the systemic limitations encountered by practitioners in the two courses that the founding fathers of community/Popular Theatre

in Zaria, most of whom are lecturers in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, came together to establish NPTA outside of the university control and its bureaucratic procedures. The idea was for NPTA to enjoy the autonomy which Samaru Project does not enjoy.

In an assessment of the 1984 edition of Samaru Project, Abah submits that “the practice in the end contradicts the aim” (1985, p. 44). This observation admits that there is incongruity between the practice and its goal. The Project has the intention of sensitising the people socially and politically. The Project, he argues, expresses interest in the social problems of the people and engages these social issues with the people using drama as a vehicle of expression. The engagement is aimed at helping the people to understand politics which determine the structures of their society.

There are three steps through which Samaru Project has always aimed to achieve awareness. The first is the research stage whereby the students approach the community dwellers to interact with the people in order to extract useful information from them. At this point, they share information and experiences and attain a certain level of integration. Following this stage is the analysis and scenario building stage which is carried out by the students solely and to the exclusion of the residents of Samaru and Hayin Dogo. The workshop ultimately loses the people’s perspective and only reflects how student facilitators perceive the issues.

At the third stage, drawing from previous and current experiences, the whole exercise becomes very abstract. Much attention is focused on the technique of scenario-building and students are examined based on their understanding of the technique of play-making. It therefore becomes inevitable that they have turned totally abstract and

elitist in their evaluation and also that they have now ostracise the people whose issues they are supposed to be solving.

Between 1984, the year that particular edition of Samaru Project took place, and 2014, the year of the edition of Samaru Project which is under this research focus, Abah's pertinent question still remains relevant. This is particularly so as the question raised borders so much on Freire's apprehension of the domestication of the oppressed.

A core argument of Freire's pedagogy is that just as reality does not happen by accident, but rather as the product of the action of man, in like manner it cannot be transformed by chance. Oppressive reality naturally leads to the identification of men as privileged and under-privileged. Freire's pedagogy insists that the oppressed has the mandate of struggling to attain liberation along with those who identify with their cause. But first, they must attain a Problem-posing education of their reality of oppression.

The argument here is that in order to achieve the set goal, the oppressed must confront reality critically and at the same time act upon that reality. A mere perception of reality not backed up by this critical intervention cannot guarantee a transformation of objective reality because that would not be a true perception. At this juncture, it becomes expedient to raise the poser to determine whether the perception of Samaru Project can be considered to be a true perception of reality or not.

The above aptly explains the disconnect between Samaru Project and the Freirean theory it claims propels its practice. The same argument can be extended to Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed which, itself enjoyed a seminal relationship with Freire's experimentation with the over-five million illiterate adults of Peru in 1973. Samaru residents, as nurtured by the programme for almost four decades, are far from being liberated spectators. It is apparent from the way in which Samaru Project

procedure has been observed above that the residents of Samaru have not come to terms with the core potentialities and potency of theatre as a tool of liberation. It is also clear that scholars, most of whom are TFD practitioners themselves, have not succeeded in translating the full logic and letters of the two theories (Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Theatre of the Oppressed) into the practice of Applied Theatre.

This position is being taken without necessarily suggesting that the two theories are fool-proof. However, a close observation of the various reports on Samaru Project has revealed that there is still a wide gulf between the two related theories and their application to the practice of Applied Theatre in its various forms. Discussing the efficacy of the two theories at this point is tantamount to discussing the efficacy of a drug that is yet to be administered.

From the text of the last edition of Samaru Project and previous ones, aside interacting with the villagers and building scenarios around their predicaments, none of the efforts has ever reached the nuclei of the theories which centre around issues of Problem-posing education and launching directly into the dramatic action of self-liberation. It becomes inevitable therefore that, other than the purpose of formal education for which Samaru Project is known, the question of theory-based efficacy hardly ever arises as it is actually non-existent.

In any case, the university is one of the many agents of the ruling class, that is, the oppressor. So the community can only work with the university, it cannot depend on the university for material support which it cannot sustain. Although Samaru Project is a community based theatre, it is also true that the university is not primarily established to directly provide panacea to social problems.

5.5.2 Theory-Based Efficacy in NPTA Workshops

It is expedient at this juncture to put it in proper historical context that it was partly because of certain limitations and constraints that were confronted in Samaru Project that NPTA came into existence. ABU, as a public tertiary institution hosting the programme, has also produced a larger and key number of the practitioners behind NPTA. Beyond all these is the fact that there appears to be a general consensus that the practice and activities of NPTA are inspired and largely propelled by the tenets of the two theories of the oppressed by Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal.

The practice of applied Theatre, all over developing and underdeveloped countries, has always been about and for the oppressed people. Again, to corroborate Abah's earlier position, applied theatre comes out strongly as a practice of empowerment and of liberation. It is also an engagement which is deeply rooted in the poetics of Bertolt Brecht, Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal. However, Abah drops the hint that "a distinct body of African characteristics have, however, established themselves in the practice across the continent with great modification to the ideas of Freire and Boal" (2005, p. 34).

This immediately brings Abah's "perforaltics" into the fore. However, a close study of Abah's perforaltics does not in any way suggest any radical departure from the poetics of any of the three theoreticians (Brecht, Freire and Boal). Rather, his (Abah's perforaltics) is an extension or at best an adaptation of a foreign theory, whereby he encourages the use of indigenous art forms of the people at the grass root rather than foreign ones. In any case, the three points raised above as the focal point of the practice have not in any way dwindled or diminished even with the modifications so talked about.

However, in order to stay focused, emphasis is laid on the need to determine the efficacy of the two theories in the workshop of NPTA. To determine the efficacy of the theory in the 1989 Akpa District workshop of NPTA, we shall continue along the line of narrowing down to the core tenets of the two theories.

First, the common and most generally met conditions of the theories is the belief that the theatre should primarily be about the people (oppressed/audience), hence the presumed transfer of ownership of the theatrical production to them. On a second note is the belief that the end goal of the endeavour is the attainment of empowerment and liberation. The third belief is premised on the discovery of the oppressor having been found to be culpably the root cause of the woes of the people. Consequently, this explains the observation that the oppressor lacks the wherewithal to liberate the people since he is responsible for their plight in the first place.

It is at this third point that a most crucial aspect of the theory is almost always glossed over. However, for the purpose of a balanced discourse, let us look at the first condition of applying the theories. It says the pedagogy or the theatre as the case is, must be about the oppressed people. As far as the three villages of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi are concerned, there is no contention about this because setting the workshop to be about the people provides the basis for embarking on the project in the first place.

The second tenet centres around the issues of empowerment and liberation. With the three communities of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi in focus, the attempt at empowering the villagers became visible in the activities of the development agencies. At the end of the workshop, the need arose for the villagers to solve some of their social problems, and this process revealed that the women needed to be at the centre of the empowerment drive. Eventually the dream of empowering the communities came to

fruition with the establishment of two farm projects and the procurement of a multi-purpose grinding machine.

The concern of this research is not so much about these attainments on their face value, but rather, it raises a pertinent question on how the fund was sourced. Going by documented reports mentioned earlier on, the money was sourced on their behalf by NPTA through CUSO from Canada funds. Ordinarily, accessing funds from external donors for the purpose of rural development is a welcome gesture for which the target communities should show gratitude, but this study takes a deeper and more incisive look at it.

Our approach is to examine closely, the character of Canada Funds along with those of other development agents in the chain of events leading to her act of “generosity”. The body Canada Funds, being an international NGO interested in rural development operates through other bodies like International Popular Theatre Alliance IPTA, Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA) to help actualise this vision by facilitating financial assistance for rural communities like the ones under survey. In spite of all these, an attempt to define the gestures of these bodies would, especially going by Freire’s disapproval of the dependence of the oppressed on the oppressor or the middle class for assistance, cast it under the paternalistic form of generosity. This position is being taken with the conjecture that the most apt description of the development agency chain can only fall within the oppressor-middle class bracket. It follows then that if the base theory for the practice of NPTA had earlier on fingered this class of people to be responsible for the woes of the people in the first place, then their generosity can at best only be paternalistic. In other words, the communities in question should not expect a

far-reaching solution to their social problems. Towards this end, the theory-based efficacy can be said to have remained unattained.

A parallel to this argument can also be observed in Boal's theatre of the oppressed which emphasizes the need for actors to rely mainly on his own body resources. The actor, according to Boal, does not necessarily require the accoutrements of the modern day conventional theatre to function effectively.

On another level, Boal also has recommended the need by the community artists to explore their own indigenous art forms. As far as this was concerned with the three communities, they looked inwards by accessing their own indigenous art forms like songs, dancing, fluting, chanting, and egwugwu festivals. This alone not only produced a theory-efficacy, but also yielded a dividend of performance-based efficacy. By this, we mean a successful application of the theory.

Twenty years after the 1989 workshop, Regina Ode from Benue State University visited the villages to conduct a post-workshop research. In her findings, she learnt that but for the village of Adankari, there was no evidence of continuity of the empowerment programme. While Adankari was still maintaining her farm project and the health clinic, the two other communities failed to sustain and manage the farm projects and the multi-purpose grinding machine. In spite of the marginal success of Adankari, the perennial problems of the lack of roads and bridges in and around the three communities still remained unsolved.

Going by the initial encounter of the participants at the inception of the workshop, the villagers did not mince words in identifying their most pressing needs as those of hospitals, schools, pipe-borne water, tarred roads and bridges. In the course of

the dialogue that ensued from the dramatic production and deliberations and the development that followed, we were able to arrive at the following extrapolations:

- 1) That the government that had been collecting taxes from the communities for decades had never bothered to construct roads and bridges at the appropriate places within and around the three communities.
- 2) That their own representatives in successive governments had never deemed it fit to help the communities pursue any of these goals conscientiously to a logical conclusion.
- 3) That the three communities lacked the wherewithal to embark on these capital projects on their own.
- 4) That they had no option than to continue paying their taxes like law-abiding citizens.
- 5) That the best they could do under their given circumstances was to humbly accept and utilise the financial assistance to be handed them by Canada Funds through NPTA which could at best solve their immediate but much smaller problems.

If one is inclined to agree with Abah that TFD is a practice of empowerment, however shortlived, as one finds in the example of Akpa district (especially with Adankari), it will certainly be difficult to agree that the NPTA version of TFD is a practice to liberate. This is not so much because of the unattained desires of paved roads and bridges, but rather, because of the unsustainable means of theatrical production which should have guaranteed the hope of liberation through continuous critical deliberations.

Using Freire's position to continue the argument, it is clear from the portraiture of the character of the tax official from Lagos and the local politicians contesting for public posts that the objective social reality does not exist by chance. Quite on the contrary, it is the product of the conscious action of man. And, in like manner it can only be transformed through conscious efforts. Oppressive reality in contradistinction identifies the tax official as oppressor (or his agent) and the three communities as the oppressed. Freire posits and I quote:

the latter (*oppressed*) whose task is to struggle for their liberation together with those who show true solidarity, must acquire a critical awareness of oppression through the praxis of this struggle. (1996, p. 33)

In order to achieve this goal of liberation, Freire's argument is for the oppressed to confront reality critically, simultaneously objectifying and acting upon that reality. The perception of reality must be followed by critical intervention in order to transform the objective reality. It therefore appears as if NPTA found an escape route in the empowerment projects that could not liberate Akpa people from their perennial problems. A sustained critical dialogue through the instrumentality of theatrical machinery would have engaged the people's minds and kept them focused on the root cause of their problems until they agree on a course of action to arrive at their desired result.

Upon being asked which project they will choose, Ode reports that the villagers said, "They would choose bridge construction because they are surrounded by water" (2011, p. 309). Their reason being that they would need proper concrete bridges at the

required points to ease the transportation of their farm products to the big towns surrounding them. Right from the outset of the workshop, the communities confronted the organisers with their environmental and infrastructural needs. Their problem was not to be found in agricultural production as proposed by the workshop participants, and they made this clear. Although they could not find an immediate solution to their main problem, the dialogue should have continued. More attention should have been given to instituting a self-sustaining theatrical machinery that would keep the tradition going. In this regard the people missed the most important point and that is the immense potentiality of the theatrical machinery. If only they had grasped this, they would not have plunged the communities into dissension over the *crumbs* handed them by a foreign body. But the tragedy is that the theatrical machinery has, since the first and only workshop remained un-activated.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This research work has investigated the issues of production process and efficacy in Samaru Project of ABU and NPTA workshop in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi, Benue State. The effort has been guided by Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal's poetics of the oppressed. In the last two chapters of this work, we have been able to arrive at some findings which shall be presently summarised and afterwards followed up with recommendations.

The question raised in this research has been whether, in reality, applied theatre in Nigeria belongs to and is beneficial to the oppressed people as often professed by scholars and practitioners. To answer this question, the researcher identifies the examples of Samaru Project and an NPTA workshop for the study of production process and efficacy. It is also pertinent to reiterate that many scholars/practitioners profess that the earlier mentioned theories of Boal and Freire have been the driving force of their engagements. So part of the preoccupation of this research work is to document the extent to which these scholars and practitioners have explored and implemented the letter and spirit of the theories.

6.1 Production Process in Samaru Project and Nigeria Popular Theatre Alliance Workshops

The pertinent question raised about control is to determine who controls the activities of Samaru and NPTA projects. Towards this end, in Samaru Project, the key participants are students, lecturers in the Department of Theatre/Performing Arts (ABU) and Samaru residents. In addition, the parameters for determining where the control lies were discussed. Specifically, the two parameters are Process and Means of Production.

Upon examining these parameters against the activities of Samaru Project, it was observed that the university, her students and the course handlers are in control of the production process. It is apparent through a close observation of the process of production that the audience has no control over its production process. This is not in consonance with Brecht's position as he unequivocally assigns control to the people. The observation seems to validate Iorapuu's claim that "the report of TfD activities have revealed that not in all cases have audience explored the inner dynamics of TfD to initiate sustainable action ..." (2008, p. 64)

However, considering the production process in NPTA workshop, there is an appreciable difference in its production process control. In the first instance, the villagers were able to influence a change in the workshop theme. Again, to assert that they too had a stake in the process, the villagers insisted on masquerade performance from the three communities which they believe reaffirms the ethos of the communities. This development is a departure from the university-controlled curriculum.

The second parameter borders on the material means of production. The general truth about the situation is that all the communities involved are hundred per cent dependent on external support. And almost always, the primary initiatives come from development agencies and facilitators. The students fund the project to earn their grades while the university provides institutional support to keep the programme running.

The logic of assigning the control of Samaru Project to the university and its agents (that is, lecturers, technicians and students) is incontrovertible because without the university, there would be no Samaru Project. It is incontrovertible because Samaru Project's source of life can only be located within the university system of ABU.

Even in spite of the Boalian, Brechtian and Freirean theories that support what should have been an active role of the people, the university remains firmly in control of the programme. In spite of their lack of control of the entire process, the residents of Samaru have been benefitting from the programme especially on health-related matters. Drama, on several occasions, has been deployed to enlighten and mobilise the people to clean up their environment and learn the habit of keeping good hygiene.

A case study of the control of the means of production in NPTA takes a different dimension because a major driving force behind the Akpa district workshop happened to be the prospect of sponsorship from NGOs. Other than giving their permission for the workshop to take place in their communities, the residents did not control any of the funds and supports made available for it.

It follows then that neither Samaru community nor the three workshop communities of NPTA had access to the funds made available for the production. The concluding observation is therefore that none of the four communities can claim to have exercised any form of control on the source and means of production. And if they did not control the means of production, it would only be logical to believe that they could not in any way have controlled the process of production.

6.2 Efficacy in Samaru Project and Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance Workshops

Having just discussed the issue of production process control in Samaru Project and come to the conclusion that the people of Samaru do not in any way control the programme, it will then be inevitable that the efficacy of its process cannot be examined from the perspective of residents. It would also be logical to examine its efficacy from the perspective of those who wield the most control on the process. From another end, in the case of NPTA workshop in the three villages, the communities have been discovered to have enjoyed some measure of control specifically in the production process. So the potentiality of efficacy can be deemed to be plausible in our NPTA workshop example.

The continuity-based efficacy in Samaru Project is dependent on the continued existence of ABU. While it is undeniable that the people of Samaru have continued to benefit from the yearly programme, it is also a fact that the people are not responsible for its sustenance. The efficacy here is that of the continuity of a process which has been set in motion and sustained by the university. It is therefore self-evident that the credit of continuity of the programme goes to ABU, and not people of Samaru.

On the other hand, the issue of continuity as it relates to the NPTA workshop in the three villages of Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi can be viewed from two angles. First, based on the research conducted, it is clear that the tradition of using drama to diagnose and proffer solutions to social problems in the three communities started and ended with the maiden edition in the three communities. From another perspective, that of NPTA, it appears the body has ceased to exist the way it used to in the past. As a matter of fact, some pioneer members believe the body is dead. However, from my interaction with Prof. Abah, who insists the body is still alive, it is apparent that there is no fixed time table for their activities since they depend mainly on funding from external bodies.

Next is the interface between theory and practice. Scholars and practitioners are yet to see the need to engage themselves more deeply in relevant theoretical discourse especially that of Paulo Freire - the bedrock of this study. Consequently, it would be right to conclude that Applied Theatre practitioners and scholars appear to have forgotten the Marxist import of Freire.

Records and past experiences have shown that the middle-class practitioners almost permanently depend on funds from donor agencies and individuals not immediately visible to the rural dwellers. So without the prospects of fund coming, there would be no proposal from the middle-class practitioners. And without proposals, no workshop or development communication activity would take place. Freire being aware of these, insists on a holistic conversion of the development agent.

It therefore should not appear as if, on the one hand, the practitioners' understanding of the theory they claim guides their practice is not deep enough to drive the practice to major breakthroughs. On the other hand, the high probability should be considered of scholars and practitioners being afraid of the potentially far-reaching effect of Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed. And because the middle-class scholars and practitioners benefit directly from the *fruits* of the oppressor's paternalistic gestures (via grants and sponsorships), the perpetual state of squalor of the oppressed may have turned out to be a permanent fount of their own survival. If the latter is the case, then the scholars and practitioners will have further defined themselves as agents of the oppressors rather than of the oppressed whom they claim to represent. Then Freire will have been justified in his position that the oppressors and its middle-class compradors lack the will and wherewithal to liberate the oppressed.

6.3 Recommendations

There has been no pretension about the appeal of this study whose nucleus is to be found in Paulo Freire's theory of Problem-posing education. The theory underscores the need for dialogue among the oppressed and this crucially resonates with Augusto Boal's forum theatre techniques. We are persuaded that it is not fortuitous that most practitioners have been eternally adherent to these two theories. However, the kernel of Freirean poetics is his rejection of the paternalistic generosity of the oppressor which serves only to sustain the status quo. One cardinal point of Freire's theory is that the oppressor lacks the intent, competence, and consequently, the will-power to truly liberate the oppressed. Several practitioners, however, appear to have subscribed to this false generosity which helps, in any case, to maintain the epileptic continuity of their projects. But the crucial question is, how many people, communities, villages have indeed, through the application of this brand of theatre, been liberated from illiteracy, oppression, violence, poverty, squalor, unemployment, drug abuse and so forth? The liberation in question goes beyond the offer of *multi-purpose grinding machine* kind of success that would only leave the entire community in perpetual dissension or the building of public latrines in rural enclaves or a one-off scholarship award among millions of indigent school children.

In the works of Boal and those of several other practitioners, it is quite evident that they have enjoyed enormous financial support from development and funding agencies that might directly or indirectly be affiliated with bodies that may have been

responsible for economic, political and social oppression. As far as control and efficacy are concerned, there appears to be an inherent problem of contradiction because, with funding comes control. Efficacy in this instance becomes a relative result that most frequently swings in favour of the oppressor just to maintain a relative social stability by merely glossing over the social problems. And again, given a steady support from these NGOs, government and supra-government bodies, continuity emerges as a façade of efficacy which is frequently and cheaply touted and alluded to as a token of success and achievements.

It is upon this premise that the issues of production process control, efficacy, continuity and theorising are deemed to be interdependent. Going by the magnitude of support flowing from pro-establishment and seemingly neutral bodies to Applied Theatre projects, the claims of efficacy are suspect, hence the need to continuously interrogate them rigorously. And the important tools of interrogation are the existing theories, most especially Paulo Freire's Problem-posing education which appears to be the most incisive and audacious. Scholars should engage more in theoretical discourse while practitioners and facilitators should be bold enough to embrace theoretical applications in the course of their professional practice.

Engaging in theoretical discourse would help in defining the grey areas when it comes to classifying the variants of Applied Theatre. For instance, Popular Theatre, Community Theatre and Theatre for Development can acquire deeper definitions and characters for the purpose of ease of classification. To this effect, we make the following suggestions of nomenclatures and redefinitions: Community Theatre (CT), Theatre for Development (TfD) and Radical Theatre for Radical Development (RATFORAD). Actually, the only addition is the third which appears to be replacing

Popular Theatre. But the fact of the case is that there are elements of Popular Theatre in all the three. The redefinition is not about changing their meanings from the original ones but rather re-contextualising the purpose for which they should be deployed.

Community Theatre

This is being redefined to mean a theatre outfit that comprises members of a particular community exclusively, that is, theatre by the people. It is imperative for rural and urban communities to own what they can call their own theatre where they can dialogue on any issue that bothers them. There must be a conscious effort to make sure it does not inherit the characteristics of the conventional theatre. This is what I had imagined should have been the pre-occupation of NPTA in Adankari, Onyuwei and Otobi, to help them form a Community Theatre outfit in each of the communities. Monitoring the group and helping them to sustain the legacy with periodic workshops and visits would have been enough to keep the tradition going. With many theatre and performing arts departments all around, interns and youth corps members should be regularly posted there to strengthen and encourage them. Among other things:

- Their theatrical productions belong to the outfit and the outfit belongs to the community.
- The leadership of the theatre is based on democratic principles in such a way that it is not hi-jacked by any oligarchic caucus within or outside such a community.
- Their plays are produced by the people, for the people and for the development of the community.

- The language of communication for their productions must be the language that the people are most comfortable with, in other words, that which is generally acceptable.
- This Community Theatre will stand in for what Abah identified as base organisation. They can host other theatres or group of facilitators as the case may warrant. If the Community Theatre is strong enough, it would serve as a viable platform for the other mentioned variants of Applied Theatre to operate with ease.

However to institute this kind of theatre, one may not need TFD practitioners from all over the world to attend the workshop in the community for it to thrive. It could be a departmental project of a university to establish it, it could also be a major final year project. In essence, there are more than enough resource persons that can manage such projects effectively locally. There are higher institutions across the country that are replete with intellectuals and resource persons whose areas of specialisation include Community Theatre. Such are Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, University of Jos, Benue State University, University of Ilorin, University of Ibadan, College of Education Kastina Ala, College of Education Kafanchan and Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Theatre for Development

The populist approach to drama, as found in Community Theatre as discussed earlier, will also be very crucial to the Theatre for Development brand of Applied Theatre. Its peculiar feature however will define it as “making theatre for the people” (Daniel et al., 2004, p. 12). There is nothing new about this in the sense that it is still Theatre for Development (TfD) as it has always been.

- The composition of the participants under this category would be development agencies and general theatre practitioners who are interested in making a vocation out of it.
- It is for public enlightenment, for education, sensitisation, mobilisation.
- This TfD group can be driven by government agencies, parastatals, ministries, and development agencies like UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and so forth. It does not matter where the funds come from, the most important thing is the developmental project at hand which is for the benefit of the chosen community and which must be executed.
- They are to liaise and cooperate with the Community Theatre base groups in order to carry out their own functions effectively. Whichever way it is perceived, it is still very much Theatre for Development (TfD) the way it has always been.

Radical Theatre for Radical Development (RATFORAD)

This is the only major departure from what has always been practised under the auspices of Applied Theatre. By way of recommendation, this constitutes a modest contribution of this study to knowledge. First, it is founded strictly on the core tenets of Freire's Problem-posing education and Boal's Forum Theatre or other theories driven by the genuine passion to liberate the oppressed. Its chief aim is therefore to liberate any oppressed community from the shackles of illiteracy, poverty and violence unleashed on them by the oppressor. And so it does not go about writing proposals, asking for sponsorships and grants to organise workshops and productions. The simple reason is that the oppressors can never give them enough to solve their problems which they (oppressors) created in the first place in order to maintain their status quo. So the first lesson for the oppressed is for them to learn to depend on their own limited internal resources and continue to use drama to dialogue and to query the root of their problem.

The implication of this on the RATFORAD practitioners is that they must de-emphasize or remove outright dependence on sponsorships and grants as a matter of policy.

“The major task of cultural workers still lies ahead – to create institutional solidarity and art forms with a holistic perspective which can mobilise African communities to struggle against an iniquitous world system” (Kerr, 1999, p. 86).

The people that can effectively realise this dream are genuine civil rights organisations and academic departments of higher institutions, especially the ones that anchor related and relevant courses in their curricula, for example, Theatre and Performing Arts, Public Health, Regional and Town Planning, Medicine, Pharmacy, Criminology and so forth. It is also imperative for any of these humanistic groups mentioned to collaborate with community-based theatre in order to function effectively. The reward for these humanistic groups resides largely in the joy of liberating their fellow human beings from the violence unleashed on them by the oppressors. In addition to this reward is the opportunity of enhancing their academic and professional profiles which certainly should not be for materialistic purpose.

Another important feature that should distinguish Radical Theatre for Radical Development is that it must be fully participatory, in other words, members of the community should be able to play a role and have a deep sense of belonging. Nurturing a sense of belonging in the community and its theatre will be the driving force in this type of theatre that should not be overlooked. Participation is certainly not a new feature of this type of theatre because it has always been there. Although audience/community participation in theatre is as old as theatre itself, the difference here is to take participation to the next level. In other words, the people must guard the theatre

jealously through a high level of participation, and like a sole weapon of liberation in their possession, so that it is not again hijacked from them.

For every one of their productions: production process, development attained and post-production script, there must be a proper record (in both hard and soft copy). The need for this emerges because, in the course of investigating Samaru Project, it is discovered that there has been no formal paper record (post-performance script) of their skits over the years. In this research work, I have tried to transcribe and translate the text of 2014 edition of Samaru Project from its video recording in order to have a post-performance script. I strongly believe that in subsequent editions, post-performance scripts should be compiled always immediately after productions.

And finally, a core aspect of pedagogy of the oppressed which is required for this new model of Applied Theatre (RATFORAD) to take off is the Freirean conditionality of holistic conversion of the development agents. The focus here is on the applied theatre practitioners, especially the ones domiciled in the university setting - the academics. The initiative of driving this model to a point of sustainability rests solely on these practitioners who must be totally sold out to the cause. However, they will not be the only participants in the entire engagement. But the principles and ideals of holistic conversion will have to apply to them first.

Participants

There are two major categories of Ratforad participants, the Performing/Theatre Arts Departments and the chosen community. Although civil rights organisations have been factored into the equation, they should only be co-opted after the programme must have taken off and stabilised. Their proposed involvement should be for the purpose of

possible support. But they are not to come in until the programme has fully taken its shape. The community group must first be trained to be independent and to value the theatrical machinery as their most potent weapon of liberation. “To the extent that the people are made to be dependent upon the goodwill and support of other groups, to that extent will they remain vulnerable to their domination and manipulation” (Raji, 2009, p. 96). Once they come to that realisation, they will exercise the courage to turn down any form of paternalistic handouts.

Like that of Samaru Project, the initiative will have to come from a university running a Theatre or Performing Arts programme. The department must also have a bias for applied theatre or any of its variants. In other words, there should be competent and enthusiastic resource persons on ground to drive the programme. Later, other departments running relevant programme will be drafted into it. A dominant feature of the department is the ability to engage their students in SIWES programme for a minimum of two months.

Extended Homestead Approach

The method to be adopted will not be the migrant approach of Samaru Project, but rather, it will be the homestead approach of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance NPTA. The difference however will be in the extended duration of their interaction with the chosen community. The duration of the interaction between the practitioners and the community will be for a minimum period of two months during which the facilitators will be conditioned to experience life from the same perspectives as the residents of the community. The extended homestead approach is expected to effect the surgical operation of holistically converting the practitioners to the side of the oppressed people.

To be able to sustain the RATFORAD model, it will have to rely on an academic institution running a Performing or Theatre Arts programme. It is imperative for such academic department to key into the SIWES programme of the host institution. This will provide the opportunity of sending students to host communities as facilitators under the supervision at least two lecturers with the right drive, qualification and cognate experience.

The Community

There are different kinds of communities, but any oppressed community will do, be it urban or rural. However, for the early part of this programme, preference will go to a community that is close in proximity to the hosting institution. As time goes on, it could extend to some other communities, far or near. The compelling factor however is that it must be a grossly disadvantaged community and this fact must have been thoroughly investigated and confirmed.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The introduction of Radical Theatre for Radical Development (RATFORAD) still requires a lot of clarification and modification, and more importantly, it needs to be subjected to empirical tests in the hands of Applied Theatre practitioners. Towards this end, a community base group must be identified alongside an academic institution and genuinely committed civil rights organisations. These three groups are required to unite to formulate and execute policies that would liberate the chosen community in any

aspect of their social life. It is believed that this will open a new vista of academic research endeavours and professional practice in the area of Applied Theatre all over the world.

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Appendix i

An Interview Session with Esosa, the Waziri of Makera (Also the Chairman of Gamji Cultural Club at the Club) October 6, 2013

Upon arriving ABU Zaria, I was received by Mallam Rabiou Isa, the departmental co-ordinator of Samaru Project, a 200 level course. The mallam took me to the performing venue of Gamji Cultural Club where he normally brings his students to have contact with the club and the community. The venue is a fairly large courtyard, open air and bare. My first interaction was with both Mallam Rabiou Isa and the Waziri.

Pleasantries...

Rabiou: So this is Gamji Cultural Club. This is the orchestra.

Waziri: This where we perform

Rabiou: They only have a room

Yomi: Oh, it's rented? What about the people?

Waziri: These are some of our audience

Yomi: The ones Boal calls specactors

Rabiou: Yes.. But the difference is that they don't climb on stage to change the performance

Yomi: Is it more of a forum whereby they contribute or query?

Rabiou: Yeah, what happens is that they query it. They interject.

Yomi: Can they stop the performance?

Rabiu: Unless if they arranged it because they charge fees.

Yomi: Oh they charge fees?

Rabiu: Yes they charge fees. But the issues they discuss are issues that concern the Samaru community

Yomi: Is it professional, I mean the fees? Is that what they live by?.

Rabiu: No, they charge to sustain the club. They are volunteers, they are workers. Some of them are policemen and policewomen, staff of ABU, Aviation workers. Some of them do menial jobs. They also have visiting artistes, they come here and spend some time with them. All over Zaria, they are here.

Yomi: But those who act must be able to speak Hausa. So people like me will be very useless here.

Rabiu: No, that's why we are here to help you.

Yomi: No, I mean taking part and being fully integrated into the process.

Rabiu: The only thing you can do is that you come and spend one month here. Like I told you that time, if we are doing the Samaru Project, the process, most especially when they begin to do the research. If you come around that time, then you can see the process we take. And when they are doing their rehearsals, you'll see all their rehearsals.

Yomi: How they build up their scenarios.

Rabiu: That's why I said when you are going to talk to me, by the time I give you the way it is done from what you read, you'll see there is a big difference.

Yomi: From what I read?

Rabiu: Even what I gave you. There is something we didn't put there. Even right from the beginning, it's like a hypothesis. If you try it this way and it doesn't work, then you try another.

Yomi: How is the club sustained largely. Is it that you don't look out for external sponsorship?

Rabiu: If we in the department have a programme, we invite them to participate Because they are the only one with cultural dance troupe around here, so people invite them for naming ceremonies, for occasions but it's not a regular thing. But they sustain themselves from the contribution the make.

Yomi: Okay, they make contribution.

Rabiu: They do what Yoruba people call "Ajo" If somebody is wedding among them, there is a special one for that, if it's naming there is a special one for that too. So that's how they sustain themselves. And then the local government also around here recognise their ability to perform. So they sometimes represent the local government to perform at the state level and NAFEST competitions. Other local governments used to come and hire them to represent them for the State before they go for national. And also, some organisations that are coming to work with them.... They do a lot of radio drama... Tomorrow, we'll come and see the chief. You can't see him in the night.

Yomi: So there is a chief in charge...

Rabiu: That's what I am telling you about the transformation in Samaru community. Before, it was a guerrilla technique, we go and do our work outside, but now over time...

Yomi: It's like they have taken over from you.

Rabiu: No, we from the campus. What we are doing now is that when we are going for the performance, we now go in front of the chief's house and do the performance. By so doing, the community leaders participate. Because of political nature, before, nobody involved them. Before if we are going to perform, we just move to any arena to perform and move out. But now we can move in front of the chief's house and perform. He will sit there and participate in the discussion.

Yomi: You now move to other places and perform?

Rabiu: Yes. And Samaru and Hayin Dogo have grown larger than what they were in 1980. Samaru is no more a village as referred to in earlier articles. The number of schools, the number of clinics they have now.

Yomi: How do you evaluate extent of transformation since 1980 till date? And how would you ascribe the development to the activities of Samaru Project?

Rabiu: When you talk about that transformation. Transformation in that regard is gradual. There are so many factors that contribute to change. The theatre, both the campus in Samaru and the Community Theatre practice and the Gamji performers have made their own contribution in various stages. One, our own is a yearly affair. We just come once and walk away and leave them. Theirs (Gamji's) is daily. Everyday, they perform.

Yomi: You perform daily?

Waziri: Yes.

Rabiu: And when you come, you see this filled. Even breathing, you need to breathe because the people who come to watch the performance include even people from other communities. They come from market, the Samaru market is Friday

Waziri: When they close from their market, they come over.

Rabiu: And because of that coming, when they have occasions in their village, they invite them. One of the major epithets in terms of what they have done among them... because there is no empirical research in relation to that efficacy from the people. But you can see it in relation to ... environmental sanitation.

Yomi: How?

Rabiu: Before, in the community, you can find refuse dump all over. Now, every year, we must do something on environmental sanitation and health issues. Now they pick up on their own. They participate in community self-help.

Yomi: Do you see Gamji as an appendage of the Samaru Project?

Rabiu: Let me allow him answer that.

Waziri: Yes, because, normally, whatever they (ABU) are doing, they normally used to invite us and we now go to performance. Or in this environmental something that you people are talking of, we call Aikin Geiya (community work). We can even invite other people from other communities to join us and we now work together. At times if we are doing that kind of work, we used to look for assistance from the Sick Bay (University Health Services), maybe their truck to come and pack the refuse dump... that's what we have been doing.

Yomi: Apart from health issues, what other issues do you deal with in relation to efficacy?

Rabiu: Gamji cannot give an answer, because as they are doing their thing, it happens. Like the Chinese saying, by doing continuously, you remember. So in their performances, what you do, if you want to do a drama today, they don't have to tell you come and watch this kind of performance. When they come in the evening, they will now rehearse scene by scene... They don't rehearse it long before here. The only thing they rehearse continuously are their dances... What they do is that once they are inside that, they have their structure. They have director of dance and director of drama. Director of drama is the one to create the drama. As members of Samaru community... Something that has happened, then they will discuss it. They will now create a play on it. Now if there is an issue.

Yomi: And the issue is usually fresh?

Rabiu: Yes. If there is an issue they want to talk about right now, then they bring other experiences which they have experienced in Samaru (related to that one) and you see it in the same play. There is one play they did and kept on telling him I love it. It me who reminded him they did the play. Whoever watches the play would love it. You know Samaru is a migrant community... People come and go. Especially these young men who make some money and go back home. So also are the girls. This girl has come to town because she's having crises in their village. This boy has come to live there, he is selling water in town. He too wants to gather money and go back to the village. They now met and she became the live-in-madam. She used to beat her. When she got tired of life in

the town resolved to go back to the village. On going back home, she met an old man whose wife died. Now everybody says they don't want her because she has gone to the city, that means she prostituted. But he says by religious prescription, if he marries her he has done something because she will not go back to prostitution, so he agrees to marry her. Mainwhile, this young man who is in the city, he too suffers frustration. His brother came to call him to come back home, their mother died long ago. He hasn't come home. So he said let him come. He didn't have kobo... When he reached home, his father asked why he didn't come home when his mother died. So he entered the house. Behold, his girlfriend in the city is his father's wife. Do you understand that? That's what we are talking about the issues. The issue of unemployment is there, this young man is unemployed. Within the ambience of the play, you see a variety of themes – marriage, domestic violence, polio, immunization etc. they took off from Samaru Project. They say they want people to comment on that play. Then you see people participating in the discussion. Nobody is looking for any solution. They just want to discuss it and walk out.

Yomi: Are you saying, they are in total control of the creative process?

Waziri: Yes.

Rabiu: Instead of them to be learning from us, we are the ones bringing our students to come and learn from them for Samaru Project for quite some time. After they have done all their research in Samaru, the students come back to the campus to develop their story. They are afterwards mandated to bring them here. They will have to perform here. The people here now butcher them. They talk to the students who will now go back to fine-tune their work. So the actual Samaru project is presented with the actual participation of the people but through this technic. They have to convene here. Not that we are doing it in Samaru. We do it here, why because there is control here. And when they are going to come, it is announced that students are coming. But students will first of all come, see the kind of performance they are doing here and make their own comment. Later, they will come back to do their own performance. In essence,

Waziri: What I even want to add is that there are some people in the community that normally used to come to tell us the story of something they have seen in the community. They would want us to act on it...

Yomi: What is the youth/adult ratio?

Waziri: We have more of adult.

Yomi: What about the genda? What is the male/female ratio?

Waziri: The females are less than the males.

Yomi: What is the ratio? 40/60

Waziri: Yes, sixty males to forty females

Yomi: Are you sure the female ratio is not less than 40%?

Waziri: Yes, it is less than that because the environment that we are in here people don't allow their wives and female children ... But the place whereby they invite us // for ;an occasion. You know, some people whenever their wife born, they invite us to go and perform there. You find out that there are lots of women there. Some people invite us and prescribe to us the kind of issue to perform on. So before we reach there, we rehearse on it. The audience would be wondering how we got to know that such things are happening... We pay N1000 for the space every Friday and we also pay N1000 for the room. Making N2000 every Friday.

Yomi: But you can come here anytime of the day to do whatever you want to do?

Waziri: Yes, anytime. We are the ones that built those two rooms for her. That is why we are paying that amount. We used to help the woman, the owner of the house (the husband) is dead. We started with the man. Before the man died, he called me, he tell the wife that even if he is late, he should not drive us from this place. This is what we are doing to help him, so he is sure that we can still help her.

Yomi: How long have you been using this place?

Waziri: Almost twenty something years.

Yomi: Why haven't you tried to improve the condition of this arena?

Waziri: Assuming it is our land, we will make better than this. We had started discussing with the late man that died because he was telling us that we should even build a theatre here, that he can even give us this place...

Yomi: How old is the woman?

Waziri: The woman is..., has almost twelve children now.

Yomi: Are they grown-ups?

Waziri: Yes. They are grown-ups.

Yomi: Maybe they are the ones you should be talking to... Are they not part of the group?

Waziri: It is only one of them that is part of the group. But what really happened is that the woman just leave the children like that... Some of them doing their own business. She cannot be able to pay their school fees... You see this place that you are seeing now, just look at it very well. It is the prostitute that are staying in the house... Maybe some of the children are involved... The woman has not been talking to them... She just left them like that.

Yomi: There is a bit of a paradox here, it is like you have a doctor living with sick people.

Waziri: Yeah! Exactly.

Yomi: You are the doctor, the Physician.

Waziri: You see, what we have ... although... If I call the children now...

Yomi: Not just the children, even the other people

Waziri: The staying there? (the prostitutes)

Yomi: They deserve to be transformed.

Waziri: Yes. I think the club has been trying to do... You know there are some of them that normally registered with the club. You find out that there is some audience that will come to watch the drama, then they will see one of them there and maybe one of them will think that he can marry one of them... What they used to do is that they will just come and meet us, we as the executive of the club. We talk to the girl and we now take her back to her house from wherever she came. Then we now go and discuss with the parents. Although, we don't allow them to come and join us like that. We have a form that they will fill. They will indicate where they come from, whether they are married or not. There is a case of one married woman. She just left where she is there and come and join us here as a member. We even issue her an ID Card. So one day the husband was just looking for her. Luckily enough, he just come to this Zaria and met her in this house. What he did was that he just took us to court. He sue us to court and tell them that he saw his wife here and the person that even signed her ID card. We had to go and confront him that we did not know that she's married. Because what we normally used to do is that we used to interview them first before we register them. So we do not know that she's married, she tell us that she is not married and then we now registered her not knowing that she's married. That is how the thing ended, since from then, we now come and put a strict warning. If they want to join, we want to know where they come from, we have to know their house, maybe we have to ask some members of their family to come and stand surety... Even this university, maybe like the department of Theatre and Performing Arts as we used to work with them like that. What we used to do is that we used to go there, talk to the head of the Department if they have any job such as maybe this casual. This is what we have been doing.

Yomi: So you engage members

Waziri: There is a time that one of the VC was with us during that environmental cleaning exercise. And after the environmental thing, he looked at the member of the club. Are they all the member of the group? What are they now? We tell him that they are not doing anything. At the end, he now told me that I should go home and bring ten people

out of the people, so he now gave them casual work. And most of them they now gave them this month month appointment. Ten of them at that time. Even the former VC that came at that time, we also went and met him and told him what the former VC did. So he also helped us. So that is how we have been doing to engage some of the members of the group. Even if we register them, and they don't have anything to do. They know that they have to go back to school. It's just like now, you know we did not perform yesterday and today. Tomorrow, we are performing tomorrow. Tomorrow we are performing 4.30pm.

Yomi: So when do you finish your performance?

Waziri: We finish around 6.30pm /7.00pm. That's when we used to finish.

Yomi: And you are going to perform tomorrow?

Waziri: What we normally do when we lost someone, maybe from the club or from the family of members of the club, so we used to give three days interval. You know according to Islam, by that three day, they will pray and after the prayer, we now come back to continue.

Yomi: Do you have the performance text of your plays?

Waziri: Only in video.

Appendix ii

An Interview Session with the Sarkin of Makera (October 7, 2013)

(Introduction and pleasantries in Hausa)

Yomi: I feel honoured to meet you and I thank you for the time spared to talk to me.

Sarkin: Nagode.

Yomi: What does the Samaru Project mean to you and the community?

Sarkin: The Samaru community has progressed. The community is a place where you have a variety of people. It is the melting pot of every Nigerian. And the plays consider the way of life of the people living together. The plays always talk about issues of unity of Nigerians whether you are from the North, from the West, or from the South or from East or even from the centre. The plays try to show you that you should come as one Nigeria and live together. And the audience look at that as very important. And the drama always look at issues, social issues facing the community e.g. drug abuse, petty theft. The particular youths who participate in this social misdemeanour come to watch the performance. And any time the performances are shown, particularly the drug abuse, there used to be reduction. There is reduction. They always used to change their attitude. On the issue of environmental sanitation – dirty environment. Even within the various houses and outside – polythene bag all over. So the plays are organised in such a way that they should see the way and manner they should clean their environment. Also the drainages.

Yomi: I would like the chief to tell me what the situation was like before you begin to talk about changes.

Sarkin: Like young men now, they move about smoking anyhow. The inhale solution – drug-abuse. Now it has reduced.

Yomi: What is the indication of such reduction? Is there a police station around here?

Rabiu: No Police Station. It is very far away.

Yomi: But there is reduction in crime rate?

Rabiu: We are talking about drug-abuse not the general crime rate which the play addresses.

Yomi: But they are connected.

Rabiu: Yes they are connected. He said yes they have reduced.

Sarkin: The way it affected the place is that, especially the elderly men who come to watch the performance. They are able to see graphically the impact, the negative impact of the drug-abuse on their children, so both the parents, they know that the impact on them as family, okay and community. So the parents also participate in the drama.

Yomi: They feel the positive effect of the drama at home?

Sarkin: Yes, as a result of that, they now begin to take action to stop their children from participating in this drug-abuse. Because once drug-abuse is reduced, it reduces the crime.

Yomi: But they have a role to play through the drama, not just folding their arms.

Sarkin: They don't fold their arms anymore. They now say, we go back home and look at it.

Yomi: How I wish I could speak to one or two of the parents that can give me a direct testimony.

Rabiu: You have to make arrangements to return – before you can get them now. People have gone to their work. Only in the evening. And the best time is only when the performance is taking place.

Yomi: What effect does the project have on children in the neighbourhood?

Dong: (Dongara Saleh, the Mai Angwa of Iya / Ward Head) If to say that some of them that would come during the performance, they smoke around, you know, they show such kind of social misdemeanour. They will not enjoy it. But now the children like us coming always. That's why the place is packed full anytime. All we need to do is just shout across and say we are coming. You will hear children singing in the rear. You will see women peeping.

Yomi: Are the women allowed to come out?

Rabiu: Some, their husbands will permit them. Some, they are not permitted. They will just seize the opportunity like they are looking for their child who has gone out, "Come back! Come back!" They will go and watch it. And some it's only on their way from the road.

Appendix iii

An Interview Session with Mallam Saliu Bappa of the Department of Performing and Theatre Arts, ABU, Zaria (October 7, 2013)

Bappa: ...Social responsibility or you feel some form of social compliments which propel us into reaching out to the community. I mean, let's... That's how it started. But in doing that, a lot of things now came to our attention. Some of the presumptions we had were in a way dispelled because of what we found on ground. So whatever informed our intervention at this level into the community changed. The game plan and everything changed. And we noticed that the people that we assumed needed us, needed our enlightenment, needed our intervention, have so much more to offer. So it became more of a partnership with the people because when the whole thing started in the mid-seventies, I mean, an oyinbo man was in charge – Michael Etherton. Students were being used. We were taking the tour of enlightenment from Gown to town. But the change came in by the time between the mid-seventies and seventy nine, when in my own involvement, we discovered that in fact we had more to learn from this people.

Instead of agriculture and health and things like that and adult education, we learnt that they themselves had a perception of us which we did not know. They had a perception of government, of society, of all these things... It is important to see that we ourselves did not know this and we ourselves could benefit from the way they saw us. So you are performing and showing them. They said they wanted to perform and show you them and then what they show you, you discover you did not know.

That in a way would make you tarry a little and see what else you could learn. I'll give you an example. The issue of Jangali – the collecting of tax for cattle. When we came they mistook us for cattle tax collectors. And they came to ask, because we had all these actors that read under a tree telling them about adult education. They said no! It is the issue of Jangali. We told them the people are acting. They said no! no! They are not acting. These people are Jangali collectors. Why are we trying to use disguise and things like that. We did not understand what the issue of tax or taxation had done to the community. Every other party is suspect, government is suspect... Everybody is suspect. That was an eye opener in a small community out there. It was interesting that that 78-79, the state government now decided to abolish the Jangali, to abolish taxation, to abolish poll-tax. And we noticed for the first time the governor was addressing the thing and he now lapsed into the local lingua. He's been trying to reach out to those people, because he himself had an understanding which he did not understand about the complexity of life in that part. By the time we moved to a neighbouring community by 1980, that's Bomo. These people took over the thing. I think Etherton tried to document this in his own book. Bomo is a very small community, walking distance just across there, older than Samaru. Part of the land that we are even sitting now is Bomo land.

Yomi: So It's not solely Samaru.

Bappa: Samaru is like a small hamlet under Bomo... That's the tradition... Whenever the Emir comes, he goes to Bomo. Samaru only came as a result of the University. What we discovered is, in their own relationship with the University over a long time, a bulk of the junior workers are from there. The residents have also formed their own perception of us. They also do their own drama and they now represent the way they see government, they represent the way they see us, these so-called agents of enlightenment.

Yomi: They have their own drama too?

Bappa: In a festival they call Kalankwa.

Yomi: Is there any work that captures that?

Bappa: Etherton ko? Yeah. I have something, I have to look for it. It is called Kalankwa. Within the context of Kalankwa, they now do a whole graphic representation of their own perception of you. And honestly, we discover at this point, the least we can do is to be facilitators in a way, in their own show. And this Kalankwa keeps going on year-in year-out after harvest. It's an ancient festival in all Hausa society ... It remained on for quite some time. At a point, too much of our intervention led to its collapse. Those details you can pick up if people are ready to tell you the truth. Money came in, lots of money came in. I know a friend who pumped millions into it. And the millions were pumped in my name. I was the facilitator, the chief facilitator. There were problems, people wanted to hijack... problems, problems.

Yomi: I think that actually touches on the question that I asked earlier on, Freire's caveat on the idea of paternalistic generosity.

Bappa: That is because international funding came in. international NGOs came in.

Yomi: Do you feel comfortable with it? Because Freire actually frowns at it, believing that the solution can never come from outsiders.

Bappa: The people out there have their own ways of doing things. It's our intervention that seem to have crippled that ability. In fact, each time they see us, each time I go there, they ask, "Where is our money?" It kept going on, "Where is our money?"

- In fact, you should talk to Ibrahim, one of them in Taraba, he'll come. I would have asked one of them to talk to you, but he speaks in Hausa, the chief organiser, why things did not go. And I think to some extent, it portrays what you are talking about. Again, this is an intervention, it is documented. They mention Freire.
- Yomi: As for the university programme, apart from Prof. Abah's Perforaltics and Methodological Conversation, are there any other theories driving the programme beside the traditional Boalian and Freirean theories?
- Bappa: Maybe apart from the one in UNICEF publication, maybe you have to see Steve Daniel, because he's the one who kept working consistently. But don't forget the limited area within which we are working. I mean the scheme that spilled over to Funtua, that spilled over to Southern Kaduna and to so many other areas. The work has gone beyond what I can even talk about because I don't participate much out there. A younger generation has taken over, and beyond the younger generation, our own students in Kafanchan, I know they have been doing...
- Yomi: There is a College of Education there.
- Bappa: They run a very successful programme there. Even if it's by email I wish you make contact with them. I can only talk, if you notice, about the years before. After a certain time, I disengaged from the university. I left the university, I moved into mainstream civil service. The only thing is that when there is something they call me. When they needed something...
- Yomi: Consultancy?
- Bappa: No. Funding. When I was in government, I worked in the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) Iganmu and that's where... Iganmu. I worked there for several years. While I was there, we kept contact with them. When they needed help, either personal or official or institutional, we make sure our director who was also a product of...
- Yomi: Are you a member of NPTA?
- Bappa: I was a founding member of NPTA, in fact, a founding official.
- Yomi: How often do they hold their workshops?
- Bappa: Do you want me to tell you the truth or you want me to tell you politics. The truth of the matter is that NPTA as we used to know as an organisation that held workshops may no longer be there.

Appendix iv

An Interview Session with Professor Sam Kafewo of the Department of Performing and Theatre Arts, ABU, Zaria (October 7, 2013)

- Kaf: The programme is essentially African. It was designed to have a meeting between the town and the gown which is antithetical to the idea of the university in Africa, because their university was originally designed as an ivory tower where the community would look at it as elite institution far removed from it. But we try to marry town and gown and even some of them found it very strange. The first time we have them go to Samaru community, they have this sense of aloofness. We have to take them through all kinds of orientation, how to behave, how not to behave towards those people. But I think the starting point precisely has a theoretical foundation. We had to go back to this Brazilian Ideologue, Paulo Freire. Freire was against the paternalistic type of education where the teacher is said to have known it all. So Freire talks about sharing knowledge...
- Yomi: The Banking System of education.

- Kaf: Yes, the Banking System of education. Freire thinks, and I think he's very correct the man you see on the street may be far more knowledgeable than you. When we call them illiterate, it should be classified that it's in the context of Western education, otherwise, they are all very very literate. They can analyse situation very deeply and they can listen. So the whole idea is to let the students know that they can a functional educational policy. Even the very philosophical foundation of the department started like that. Like most theatre arts departments that sprang up in the country borrowed from Ibadan and Ibadan was a model of University College in London. But this university started, when the drama programme was going to start, they went to Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to borrow their educational philosophy. You know of course, all the things about Julius Nyerere, the Ujama and other things like that. That is the foundation upon which all these things started coupled with the sojourn of people like Michael Etherton who went through Botswana and other places. You are talking of a potpourri of experiences that have been brought to bear at the foundation of this place. So that for me is the theoretical underpinning that now allowed us to do things differently from what others were doing.
- Yomi: Are you saying the affinity that the programme here has with the theoretical postulations of Freire is holistic?
- Kaf: Very very holistic. It's just like on the performative angle, we will embrace Brecht. Again, you know what Brecht stood for. His theatre was antithetical to that of Aristotle, he wanted a functional theatre that was useful to the peasant, to the farmer, to the ...
- Yomi: From your own understanding of Freire's paternalistic generosity, is it total dissociation from paternal generosity or you can take whatever they have and still come back to discuss with the people and not minding their political...and still go against the people that pay the piper.
- Kaf: There is a Chinese proverb that says, "it's better to teach a man how to catch a fish than that to give him a fish. If you give him a fish today, it will finish. He will still be where he is. But if you teach him how to catch a fish, it will be life time practice for him and if you leave him, he will survive on his own.
- Yomi: Is that what you did with the Gamji people?
- Kaf: Gamji is another form of relationship. You see, the Popular Theatre that you see thrives on the people's art forms. It thrives on the people's performance practices.
- Yomi: Their indigenous...
- Kaf: Exactly. Gamji is into that and they are members of the community. So we established a relation with them as a continuum of this community engagement. But there is a limit to what we can know.
- Yomi: So would you see Gamji as an appendage ?
- Kaf: They have come to relate closely
- Yomi: Were they existing before the Samaru Project? Or they emerged from your various interactions.
- Kaf: It's a long history, I can't tell you whether they existed before, because I am just about 22years old here but I am sure that this department is over thirty years and Gamji itself may be that long, I don't know...
- Rabiu: No Gamji is less. Gamji started around 94/95. They were not the name before. They were bearing other names before which he mentioned... there were other main group, there is this Sodangi, aminafata. When you came for NUTAF, those people you worked with, it belonged to those group.
- Yomi: Not Gamji.
- Rabiu: Not Gamji. Gamji, they were initially called Gamzaki. They were just a dance group. They metamorphosed into Gamji and have been doing what they are doing. And they started relating with us... I think it during our "Democracy and Governance" From that point they started relating with us.
- Yomi: So they were a parallel kind of cultural group?

- Kaf: There have been very vibrant cultural and performance troupes everywhere and what the department did was to relate with them in furtherance of that particular programme. We are operating within a curriculum, students come and go, but those groups live in those places. So if you work with them and they adopt your method ... What they started doing basically was to use drama to address social issues like what we are doing on campus, like from a purely dance troupe, they don't just do dance, they infuse some dramatic dialogues and even within the dances, they use it to critique... so that beyond entertaining people, they can use art also to educate, to change the society. So you don't go into a community to give them handouts. If you look at the history and I think you have met the right person, Bappa and if you have the opportunity of talking to Steve Abah, maybe Jenks yeah...(recognition and pleasantries)
- Kaf: You were talking about the fact that sometimes we cannot help but be paternalistic and I think it's dangerous to be paternalistic. If you go with very clear agenda that...
- Yomi: You can easily derail?
- Kaf: Yes, I am sure you have talked with Bappa, and you know, a lot the projects that were done around here...you cannot go into the communities saying that you are going to provide anything for them... is to engineer them, to ginger them because basically, the potentials are there, very likely potential for the people to use their skills and resources to better their lives. It is just that most of the time, they are resigned to fate. It's like we can't do it.
- Yomi: Don't you think the Gamji people deserve a better place than what they have now.
- Kaf: But there are other things that go into that. Sometimes, you don't know whether that place is a rented apartment. And the owner might not be interested in giving it out on permanent basis. There are different attitude towards performance, because some people could see them like that they are corrupting...
- Rabiu: They were even taken to court...
- Yomi: You said so.
- Rabiu: But they lost the case. Then one man brought religious matter into it. But he is a tailor. But will tailor tell you he's religious, no I am just saying it, just any tailor you know. No tailor can tell you this because he will never keep his promise... They said they are corrupting the society. Like those people you saw yesterday, They are not members of the club. They just there, they are enjoying themselves. They are only like any other person that comes to watch the show. And like you said, that space and that room are the only placed they rented. In fact the space is rented for other people to use...
- Kaf: In essence, they attempt or dream of having a permanent place more befitting, it stands on a number of issues. One, the resources to acquire a place, and the political environment, the willingness of the owner s of the property to agree... You know if I have that place, I may not have any problem giving it out to anybody. But a colleague would just say, you, you are giving your property to people so that they can use it to corrupt people ... Maybe they will tell me that I am not a good Christian if I do that, that is if I was a Christian, or I am not a good Muslim. You know, the politicisation of everything... But I think the group is functioning well the way they are and even within that environment, I am sure they are touching a lot of lives. But I agree they can do better if they have those things. But again, there is also a danger if the place become more beautiful, it could become very elitist.
- Yomi: I have also discovered that there are no performance text, don't you think there is need for proper documentation? Be it pre-performance text, if there was any or post-performance text and as many variations because I understand, he made me realise that as they move from spot to another, the oral texts keep changing.
- Kaf: Yeah, but you see we always feel that the literary aspect of the theatre is su-ordinate to the theory which is basic so all these writing writing writing is a recent development. He was one of the greatest dramatists that ever lived, Shakespeare and others. He never

wrote, he just composed this thing it was people that transcribed for him later. So you are trying to raise a western performance and impose it on a purely traditional system that this people have been doing, they are very comfortable with it. They come together, this is our story for today, you , you are taking this part, you, you are taking this part. This is how we are going to go and have a performance. So they have got it, their memory is the text.

Yomi: Sir, you are preaching to the choir... But talking about scholarship, the idea of documentation is very important for scholarship.

Kaf: That's what you can do. Ebun Clark did it with Ogunde. Ogunde never wrote his plays, he just performed them and his songs were recorded, but Ebun Clark now went and provided some form of documentation. You are the one that is worried about the documentation, so you commission somebody to be putting what they are doing into text so that it doesn't get lost. But for them, they have their own tangent that they have developed. And they are not worried at all. Those who live in Samaru, their children, their children.. will tell the stories of their performances one day. And so that has its place. But I agree that maybe they could make do with some form of documentation. But you cannot blame them for not documenting because that is not what they set out to do.

Yomi: If anybody is to blame then that should be the department, scholars, us. Nothing stops me for instance like you... the programme, taking it up and documenting it.

Kaf: It could be one of the things you'll recommend at the end of your study. In fact, even in the department, the few of the performances that have been documented have come from when somebody is doing a research. We did a very successful Community Theatre and then this Samaru Project experiment. That was 96/97 academic year are fully documented. In fact I have a whole chapter in my Ph.D. devoted to Samaru project and a discussion on this.

Yomi: How do I get a copy of that Ph.D. thesis?

Kaf: Yeah, you could have access to the thesis even though it's already in the press for publication with Merylin in US

Yomi: Okay.

Kaf: Don't say okay, because you will not even have access to it by the time they publish it, they will tell you to go and bring \$175.00 and to order for it you'll need credit card and other things like that.

Yomi: Could you please give a closing remark on the issue of efficacy.

Kaf: You know somebody said drama is a rehearsal of revolution...

Yomi: That's Boal.

Kaf: Yes Boal. But sometimes the revolution can happen there, I give you an example. You are talking about NPTA ..is as well. We did a work in one community called Wanga in Plateau State, it's behind Kuru, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies. It was a health project, because we discovered that the community had health problem, the women, they suffer from back ache. So what is the problem, you discover that there was no grinding machine in that village. The women had to trek to Jos town, the children had to queue.

Yomi: Is that not the Onyuwei or Adankari...

Kaf: Adankari, No. This one was another project with similar problem. And by the time we got there, women get beaten by their husbands for not preparing their meal on time. So we did everything, we had a public performance. One woman in the middle of the story, which we did not plan, broke out and took a tray that they are looking for money to buy a multi-purpose grinding machine that they have now discovered that that is the problem in this community, so people just dropped some money. And Lenny, the daughter of the McArthur foundation in Chicago. She witnessed the performance, she was so moved... I think they got barely (N1,2??) one thousand, two hundred and something. And the

machine, to buy and install was about N48,000. She just told Professor Abah, she said I am going to send you that money to come and install the machine for this people in the community. So you can see that drama has had a direct intervention. There have been several projects like that. When we did the “Bola” project, Bola is the hausa word for a dirty situation. We had a refuse heap in front of the Quarter 3 Gate the intermediate and Junior Staff Quarters that was competing with the fence and symbolically, everybody moved to start packing the refuse. That place is neat today.

Yomi: Now.

Kaf: So it's myriad. Efficacy. We cannot claim that drama can solve all the problems in the world, but drama can provoke the action that will lead to the solving of these problems.

Yomi: Thank you very much sir. I will be back soon.

Kaf: You are welcome.

Appendix v

An Interview Session with Professor Steve Abah on NPTA 19th March, 2014 –ABU

YOMI: It is a privilege sir to talk to you. I have read so much about you. There is nowhere we discuss in Nigeria today, even in Africa, where your name will not be mentioned. So today is the day that I had longed for and I feel privileged. My Ph.D. work is on Samaru Project and NPTA. I intend looking at some of the workshops. I know you are involved in the two, there has been so much written about Samaru Project while very little has been written about NPTA. First of all, I want to know how NPTA came about.

ABAH: The beginning of NPTA is a very interesting one. Interesting because it has a relationship to the work that we have been doing in Zaria. Our Popular Theatre, Theatre for Development in the last thirty something year, maybe about 35 or 36 years.

YOMI: Since 1975.

Abah: Yeah since 1975, in fact, you are talking about 39 years. So the relationship was that in doing the Samaru theatre, in doing the Community Theatre, we take students to communities. With the Samaru Project, they go to the nearby community of Samaru, engage with community members, research the issues, come back and package their drama and go back to go and perform there. And em... that has been going on for a long time since 1980. Interestingly the Community Theatre precedes the Samaru Project because 1977 was the first Community Theatre project when we went to Soba on the way to Jos, we did the work. I was a student then... And all those engagements, each time we came back, each time we sat down to analyse the issues, discuss the matter. The constant question was what happens next? And that question of what happens next was always a problem to answer. What it required was that it is possible to engage the community at a deeper level....for that period. And given the limitations of doing Samaru project and Community Theatre from within the curriculum definition. The time was never there. The deep engagement was not quite possible. And many of us who were lecturers here who first of all had gone through the process as students who kept questioning, kept listening to the questions also from the community then said is it not possible to form an NGO that will take some of this work forward beyond the university whose operations are not dictated by the university and not limited by the curriculum. And that was how we started talking with organisations outside the university and I particularly was talking with one lady called Eva, Eva Murray. Eva Murray was

the director of CUSO (Canadian Universities Service Overseas) They were based in Ibadan at the time.

Yomi: CUSO, what does it stand for?

Abah: CUSO was Canadian Universities Service Overseas. But eventually they were not really interested in all the detail of the name. The acronym in itself stood and became known as a Canadian development agency. And CUSO was a Canadian development agency receiving funding from CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) the Canadian government, if you like. And they were operating in Nigeria. They were based in Ibadan and they work through civil society organisations and NPTA was one of their partners. Well, initially, before NPTA was founded, Eva Murray got to know about the kind of Community Theatre, Popular Theatre that we do here and she showed interest. And the first time she talked to me, I was in the UK. I was doing my Ph.D. in the University of Leeds. This was between 1984 and 1987. The first time she ever got in touch with me was 1986 and facilitated... CUSO facilitated my attendance at a workshop in St. Vincent in the Caribbean while I was still in the UK. As soon as I returned to Nigeria in 1987, I got back in touch with her to say I am back to the country and I was ready to carry our discussion forward. So she said I should do a proposal for a workshop on Popular Theatre. By the time the name, the popular that it was called was Popular Theatre.

YOMI: It wasn't Community Theatre; it wasn't TfD?

ABAH: The Community Theatre was there alright, but TfD had not become a generic name as it is today. It was Popular Theatre that was the name at the time.

YOMI: It's like even TfD is giving way for Applied Theatre.

ABAH: Well, not quite. You see the thing is that within different countries, you see different people using different names. They give it different nomenclatures. I think the term Applied Theatre is very much British. And, if you like, what they are saying is what do you use Theatre for Development for. You apply the techniques to issues, to development, to this to that. And they are more comfortable to say Applied Theatre. If you go to the US, many of the people who practice it prefer to call it under the rubrics of Augusto Boal's book, Theatre of the Oppressed. The popular this thing is Theatre of the Oppressed. That's the term they use more than Theatre for Development. You will hear more of theatre of the oppressed. They will say I am going for a T.O. workshop. They are referring to Theatre of the Oppressed. So I think the terminology depends on the people in the driving force, driving seat in whatever location. But I think Theatre for Development remains the generic name, more generic than the other ones.

So I think, when Eva gave... I did a proposal for department Eva and then in this same drama village, in 1989 March. In 1989, we had a one-week workshop here with people from within the department, the drama unit. At the time drama had not become a department. We were part of the Department for English and Drama. The Drama unit organised the workshop. People were invited from the media, from the Art councils and the ministries and they were here for one week. At the end of the one week of engaging in the discussion, and also going into Samaru and other neighbouring communities to do this work, it was a perfect occasion to say we need to formally found the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance. And so, on March 18, 1989, in this Drama Village, the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance was founded. The thing is that while we were practising from within the department at the time, there was already in existence the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance, the International Popular Theatre Alliance which people like Ross Kidd. Martin Byram... was based in

Southern Africa... in Swaziland, Botswana with Ross Kidd. And they were in the driving group at the time, the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance, the International Popular Theatre Alliance. And therefore, we then said okay, why not Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance if they are having Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance and all that.

YOMI: So that was what informed the name you gave own group.

ABAH: Yes. Exactly. We said our own must be distinctly Nigerian, so Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance. That's how it was founded and in that same year March that it was founded, by December of that year we were doing a big international workshop.

YOMI: Who were the people at the... I mean the key members apart from you.

ABAH: The key members were drawn from the department and everybody who came for that workshop in March of that year became an automatic member of the organisation. But then gradually, we started recruiting members from different sectors of the Nigerian society, whether it is the medical sector, cultural sector, it wasn't limited to theatre people. Because our own thinking was this is an organisation that was going to use theatre to address development issues and development has different sectors, therefore, it was about segregating the organisation to just theatre practitioners. That's why, in its membership, it was broad based. But the central determining factor is how your work relates to development. That was the issue. So the core members were from within the department here. The late Professor Jenks Okwori, and people like Dr. Tunde Lakoju, Professor John Illa University of Jos, he was there at the time.

YOMI: Was Professor Kofoworola there too?

ABAH: Professor Kofo was here in ABU, but he wasn't quite active in the movement, but he had sympathy for the practice. And people like Professor Harry Hagher who became the Nigerian Ambassador to Mexico, he was a minister. He was part of the movement, in fact some of the workshops that were done in Benue at the time had a lot of input from Professor Hagher because at the time, he was closely associated with the Benue Arts Council. Benue Arts Council was one of the hosts of the early workshops...

YOMI: The one at Akpa District?

ABAH: No. The one at Akpa was not hosted by that... Interestingly, interestingly, the movement, when you look at it, the Nigerian Popular Theatre Movement, at the time we did the first Benue workshop, 1981/82, NPTA had not been founded. NPTA was founded in 1989. But the first Benue workshop was in 1981/82.

YOMI: Where?

ABAH: In Benue, in Katsina Ala, around Katsina Ala area. That was the one funded by the Benue State Arts Council. And Ross Kidd, Kees Ekskamp who is now dead. Kees Ekskamp was there. Michael Etherton. These were the key people facilitating the workshop. Michael Etherton was a lecturer. here at the time. In 1975. We were the ones there then. But anyway, the founding of the Nigerian Popular Theatre was responding to the terms that existed in our curriculum practice and over the years, I mean when I was talking to the students, you heard me talking about that project in 1989 – Onyuwei, Otobi, Adankari- which is captured in my book, *Performing Life*. And the very essence of that workshop was, going beyond using theatre to identify issues to addressing the issues and that's why in those communities, one was a grinding machine, the other two were community farms that could generate income for them to be putting it to use for some certain community problems. And in other places like Plateau State, in Kwanga, we also were able to provide some grinding machine for the community of Kwanga just like we did in Benue. Some of the other places we

went to, the significant thing about the practice of the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance is that we always identify base organisations, community groups that are working towards community development in their own environment, so that we are not going there as independent group who would make noise, go back, and then nothing is heard afterwards. But keying your work into existing organisational structure especially the civil society has always been an added advantage. And that's how we have done it in the last 25 years.

YOMI: In those communities- Adankari et al, do they still have that tradition going on there without you?

ABAH: One of the things is that, in all the three communities, there is what you call their community development association and it is through the community development association we were working. Although, like I said, there was crisis because of the income that was coming from the grinding machine. When we had to solve the problem, we still had to engage the community development association to be the ones to whom we will first of all address the issue, mobilize the community and sit down with the community development association, members of the larger community to talk about the issues and ways of solving them. And at the time we had come to an agreement about what needed to be done, the executive members of the community development association plus the elders and the youth were the ones who then said this is an agreed position. And so that solved the problem. Development association had continued to drive the process. Today, in that village, that grinding machines faded out of significance.

Yomi: Were there other more pressing issues?

ABAH: Not just because there were more pressing issue, but because... the economic wellbeing of members the community over the years has improved and individuals now have grinding machines all over the communities. And so that initial one that was the only one is no longer the case. But what is significance is, it pointed the direction that yes, this is something that is useful for the community. And those who have the wherewithal several years down the line invested in it and that is something available all over the community today. So I think, if you ask me, it is not just about whether that grinding machine in particular is still operating, but that it generated a new awareness, a new dynamics and a new practice, and all over the communities. So that single product of that workshop has multiplied.

YOMI: The seed dies, but the fruits are all over.

ABAH: Yes all over. And in the other two communities where they embarked on community farm, the proceeds that they got from the community farm. They invested the proceeds, interestingly, in both communities, in their village clinics. And this clinics are still running. I mean, they are not comprehensive health centre, but they offer palliatives in times of emergencies. So it stays on. And for me, those are the things to look for. It's not whether the "acrage" of the farm has increased from one acre to twenty/fifty acres. But has it been invested usefully in the community and I would say yes.

YOMI: How does NPPTA run its workshop? Is it yearly? Bi-annually or quarterly?

ABAH: The workshop that we use to run between 1989 and 2004, in fact up to last year. There is hardly any year that we are not running the workshop.

YOMI: When was the last workshop?

ABAH: The last workshop we held was last year in Benue, we had a workshop in Benue, we had one in Zaria first and the next one was in Benue State University with people drawn from Benue State University and Kogi State University, Ayingba. So this was happening around the issue of governance and the whole

business of politics and impunity issues. What we normally do especially in those early days. NPTA is a membership organisation and has six zonal coordinators corresponding with the centre.

YOMI: There is one in the South West?

ABAH: Yes, There is one in the South West, headed by Adedayo Thomas.

YOMI: Where is he based?

ABAH: He's not based in any academic institution. He works with civil society organisations around Lagos, so he is the one and what we use to do...well, our first workshop in Lagos was in 1990, when we worked in Mushin, the Mushin area, working on health issues and it was a very interesting workshop. So after that, in the yearly activities that we were engaging in, we will invite people from the... all the zonal coordinators would be there in attendance and we would say each zone should have two members plus the zonal coordinator making three and we go through the whole process of training and the idea is for you to go back and step it down within your zone building capacity, build skills. To what extent that has been successfully done is another issue, because what happened, what I found is that, a lot of time, they will be waiting for the centre to call a workshop. Of course, Workshops are dependent on funds. And when you say raise funds at the zonal level to conduct activities, that hasn't been very successful.

YOMI: Is it possible to envision a practice of TFD beyond holding workshops, I mean the one that will be dependent of funding, like you did in Akpa district, I mean is it possible to leave a legacy of TFD, not just of development, yes we know that the awareness about development is there. But of TFD as the vehicle, the tool to drive development, without having to invite you, whereby they can look inwards and say let's use our own local TFD...

ABAH: I think that has grown more around Samaru here than elsewhere because of our long interaction with the communities here, with communities around Zaria. So that is more easily available and you can point to in Zaria than in any of the other places. However, if you take somewhere like Kano for example, we have an organisation called Tararuwa Organisation. It is a very vibrant organisation that... they are one of our affiliate members. We've worked with them over the years, whether we are there or not, they constantly are making use of TFD. And one of the areas they make use of it a lot is in conflict situation because of the insurgency in Kano, the lead person has always mobilised the youth to make use of drama to give, to provide peace education away from conflict and violence in Kano and that has been going on even... when was it? The last crisis...I can't remember.

YOMI: Is there an NPTA zone in Kano?

ABAH: No, Kano belongs to North West and the headquarters is in Zaria. The zonal coordinator was the late Professor Kafewo. So we will have to think of replacement. So work has been going on there. We had a vibrant group in Maiduguri before the Boko Haram took over the whole place. So you can't do anything there.

YOMI: Even my coming here is with lots of prayer.

ABAH: Ah. Here, there is no problem. And then the middle belt zone, the coordinator is in Jos.

YOMI: Who is the coordinator?

ABAH: Rahila, Rahila Gowon. And the South East is Edisua University of Calabar, Edisua Ofobochi.

YOMI: Do they give yearly or quarterly report back to the headquarters here?

- ABAH: Yeah, we were – They are supposed to do that.. but part of the problem I was saying is that they just depend on the centre calling them for workshops and not generate activities by themselves, so they hardly have things to say. And at some point what that meant is that the generation of funds for the workshop is solely dependent on the centre especially myself and a point comes when you get tired. Writing proposals all the time...
- YOMI: And you are the one going there to write it all the time.
- ABAH: Yes. That's one of the challenges. That's the challenge of membership organisation generally, that they will always leave the work to few, especially the secretariat. That has been the case with NPTA and I think in terms of rethinking NPTA. Perhaps one should start thinking of moving it away from membership organisation and all that. I don't know what the exact structure will look like. I am wondering whether this membership structure works and so far, it has had a lot of problems.
- YOMI: When is the likely next date of workshop?
- ABAH: I don't know, because, again, like I said, it all a function of funds. We had some funding from Ford Foundation which is the one that.. And now I am in the process of writing a whole load of proposals looking for money, so I don't know... What we have at the moment is just like, if you like a consultancy. If you were listening I was talking to the students about a DIFRI based project that has identified us said we would like you to go to the community.....I mean, that's strictly on invitation. They pay us on what we do for them. But the kind of workshop that we used to have that is training oriented. And then the field component of it is how you translate some of the things you've heard into the practical whatever. I can't quite say when the next one would happen.
- Yomi: Apart from the Workshop arm of your operations, is there an intellectual unit?
- Abah: I think the Theatre for Development Centre is like the training and research unit of the NPTA. And that's the one that has recently related a lot with the department and other organisations who want training in that area.

Appendix vi

A Samaru Project Talk Delivered by Prof. Steve Abah to 200 Level ABU Drama Students 18th March, 2014 at the Theatre Village, ABU.

And that dogonyaro tree, that's part of the history of the Samaru project. Three years ago, I think that's 2011, Michael Etherton who started the programme here, came back to the drama village. And ehn... He started shedding tears. You know oyinbo with emotions.

The programme started in 1975 and in 1975, he had just come back from Zambia where he was also engaging in a very Popular Theatre practice called Chikwakwa Theatre. Chikwakwa is spelt the way you hear it ... Chikwakwa Theatre was a very Popular Theatre in Zambia which was, if you like, bridging the academic environment with the rural villages in Zambia.

And I think the underpinning practice of Samaru, Chikwakwa, Community Theatre and Theatre for Development, that's a long trajectory, can be captured in what Kabue Kasoma, again, Kabue Kasoma is a Zambian theatre activist – And the popular thing he said is “instead of expecting people to go to theatre, let theatre go to the people” And when theatre goes to the people, what does it do? Theatre cannot go to the people and speak a strange language to them, cannot go to the people and discuss abstract to them, cannot go to the people and tell them stories that do not connect them. Therefore, when theatre goes to the people to tell their stories,

it speaks their language and it examines the society of the people it has gone to, the society they are living in and in examining society, are you simply making an analysis – the society is A B C, What if you find problems, then you would want to deal with the problems.

That is the underlining philosophy. That philosophy shaped the Samaru Project. Yes. In 1975, when Michael Etherton came, and started the programme here, this village was not here, the Drama Village as you see it today, we were the ones carrying the blocks. There were trees all around here, most of those trees are gone now. We were part of constructing this structure. This is no longer the original structure that was built, The first performance inside this village happened in June, 1976. And in June 1976, when the first performance happened, it was a celebration of two things. One, the celebration of a new practice, which had come into the university system because drama was new in ABU. 1975 was the year drama started in ABU. And many of us who read drama did not come in originally to read drama. We got admission to various courses, but the attraction that drama held drew many of us and 28 of us graduated in drama in 1978.

When we came in here, like I said, it was like defining a new practice within the university. And one, that performance in 1976 was a celebration of this new practice. Two, it was also a celebration of the structure itself. Because if you look at this structure, it takes the shape of a traditional building within the Hausa environment. So right from the word go, the theatre practice in ABU was aligning itself with the culture of where it is situated. And you won't know but this structure, if you like, is a heritage site, because the architect that built it, Stephen Heroiz is one of the richest architects in California in the US and he uses the prototype of this drama village as a celebration of architectural designs that speak to the culture and sensibility of the environment where the building will stand. And that has informed a whole architectural movement not just in the US but all over. And the daughter, about eight or more years ago, came here to see the building. She had a picture of the father and the building, and she said I must do a pilgrimage and she came here. So this is, it looks very simple. You'll take it for granted because you have been admitted to study here, you walk into the structure everyday, do your rehearsal, make noise with Mallam Rabs and all that and go away. But you are in a very historical site.

And if it was in a place where people would take the right steps. This will really be declared as a heritage site and nobody should touch or think of demolishing it. So two things, the celebration of this structure which epitomises the sensibility of the place, and the new practice which is the theatre practice. And in defining that new theatre practice, the critical question was, what is the role of theatre in society. A lot of times you will read in books that theatre mirrors the society, That's only half the story, We mirror the society for what purpose? And for us, the theatre practice we have engaged in since 1975 is not just painting the picture of society on stage. You will see more as you progress. You go to the Community Theatre practice. You'll see the mechanics of the movement related to this. Our interest is, "let's mirror society but use that mirror to do an analysis and ask questions about possibilities for change". Because if you paint a picture of something that is not good, the next question you want to ask is, "is it possible to change it?" The first Samaru performance, that time it wasn't called Samaru project. It was called Samaru Improvisations. The Samaru improvisations, the first performance was in 1976 within the faculty because there was no theatre to perform in. We started first of all to show it to students and members of the faculty. That time it was Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. What is social sciences today and arts were together as one faculty before they divorced each other and went their separate ways but they used to be one and when we did that, it was like a rehearsal and a trial run then we went into Samaru and that first series of performances was about the history of Samaru itself, trying to understand what is this environment that this university is situated in. Let's begin to understand that and I can tell you that a lot of students who first graduated from here have no idea what the history of Samaru is and in 1976 we were talking to very old men and women who migrated from different places to come to this place as traders and were just stopping as a half-way point in their trading journeys and businesses until the

university decided to take shape before it became a bigger place that people would say this is a place to settle in. And we explored the history of Samaru, but in the exploration of the history of Samaru we also started to hear that the changes that were taking place from the early days when some of those old men and women who settled here, and the things that were now happening, the arrival of the university, on another level, worrying because they were not sure. This new structure, what is this new discussion, the new practice that this people have brought here. In the end a lot of people agreed with what Samaru and especially the university stood for and those where the histories that we were exploring in the early day of the Samaru project and once we started to explore the history and to look at what changes are happening then people started to tell us stories of their living experiences within their environment and that is why from about 1977 - Samaru project by then... it had gone to Samaru project... the name had changed-Samaru project then started to explore, to listen to stories of peoples' living experiences within the Samaru environment and the Samaru I'm talking about of those days does not include Hayin Dogo where you are where many of you live now between them there was a distinct demarcation between Samaru and Hayin Dogo. Now they have merged as one large Samaru/Hayin Dogo congregation or city. It wasn't like that then, it was really rural but the cities have started to merge about issues about problems and their need for certain government structures or whatever roots existed to begin to address them. And it was then we then said, ok, we can't take all the issues at the same time, so let us begin to take issues every year. Let's focus on a set of issues. And then the students will focus on a set of issues every year for my own set after we did the history by 1977, the Community Theatre project came on board and those of you who are from the Jos area, Soba on the road to Jos, that was when the first Community Theatre practice happened in 1977. Interestingly, you also, as you continue to do your reading in the course when you get to 300 level you will also start to hear about Kamiriithu project from Kenya which Ngugi Wa Thiong'O, Ngugi Wa Miri and all of those people were involved in it - was happening at the same time the Samaru- I mean the Soba project were happening at the same time without really being aware of each other so they were practices of similar philosophies taking place in Nigeria and in Kenya at the same time. Now let me leave the Community Theatre aside and focus on the Samaru subject.

The Impact.

I think what should be of interest to you is, what did the students do with the Samaru project did it affect anybody in Samaru did it impact on the people of Samaru. Today we can look back and say, yes it has, but it is a long difficult journey because the questions that the Samaru residents used to ask us is, "ok, you've come and done drama we've told you our problems. So what are you going to do about it and I remember one of the sets of a group of students went doing then and one of the key issues that year was water shortage in Samaru. They were talking about that water and performing plays on water and some of the youth in Samaru were angry and threatened to stone them and say, "why are you coming here to mock at us you will come and talk about water shortage to us you go back to your university and you have swimming pools all over you jump in and swim and you are talking to us about water without addressing the issue." Those were the good old days when all the pools maybe were functional I don't know how many pools function now. Those comments raised key issues about the questions of theatre mirroring society. Should we do beyond, present a mirror of society? And our experiences in Samaru was telling us that we needed to do more, but, what of the key problems of Samaru Project, Community Theatre Project. That you are here for four years, you go to Samaru Project, get information, make the plays, go and perform there and when you are done with the performance and the discussion in the drama village, the next question is, "did Mallam Rabs give me an A or B or C?" And if you have an A, "Oh my God, I did a very good job." If it is C, "Mallam Rabs gave me C," It is not you. That is the way students think. But anyway, at the end of your grades, thank God Samaru Project is over. You move on and a new set comes and that new set goes back to Samaru to begin ask questions again. And that has become one of the big challenges of

Samaru Project that it doesn't have the continuity that it would require for the same set of people to interrogate the issue they have listened to over a couple of years or three years and to do a good analysis of it and to work out who do we need to relate with in order for a good discussion of what changes can happen. Again, if you take the university, the university also, is a curricular activity. The university is not so interested in "the students have gathered so much information about problems in Samaru, so let's put money into these issues and do it." No, that hasn't been happening. Mallam Rabi'u will tell you a different story when you come to the Community Theatre in terms of certain collaborations that have happened when the drama department and local government and some individuals who commitments to supporting changes within the society, but then that story is not for today, but you will hear it eventually.

And so the series is about this year, let's isolate what we are going to and you gather information. One of the things that you should understand about going into these communities, to Samaru to ask questions is that theatre is based on research. You know when you talk about research, a lot of people usually will not think about theatre or connect theatre to research. Theatre is a tool for research. Theatre is also informed by research, because when you go into Samaru and you gather information, you are doing research. It is that information that allows you to structure your plays and your performance, therefore there is a direct relationship between research information and the drama piece that you are going to present. And the process therefore is a process of training you in how you engage in social research and put that research into a drama performance. And again, this is a different style of play-writing. You know there are play scripts that you would read and those play scripts have emerged from the individual thoughts of the different playwrights who is sitting and saying this is an interesting issue, why don't I think about it, maybe research it on my own and write a play on it.

But what you are doing, you research the issues, and you come and engage in collective play-writing because you are writing a collective thing as a group. Several groups of you who are going into Samaru and then you work in your groups to put the play together. This is a different kind of play writing that you are engaging in and what it means is that the movement is the opposite movement of script to stage, if you like, the improvisation you are doing are improvisations that can be performed and if it is a vibrant piece of writing and you can then say, this shouldn't get lost, let us script it, then you are moving from stage to script. Then, you are moving from stage to script – which is a reverse movement. I think... *Splitting Images* defines stage to script. It was not written as a script before it was performed; it was performed as an improvisatory piece first before it was written into a play text, and that is the procedure the Samaru project takes, and it is a very interesting process which I don't think we should take for granted. Those days, one of the things we used to do; we'd write one statement: 'I WAS LATE TO CLASS'. And you give it to a group and you say: "create a story around that, and let your group do a performance – a 10 minutes performance to that". 'I was late to class'. Just that; and you give different sentences or statements to different groups and they create a drama, and the other groups will watch and try to understand: how did this drama emerged, what was the originating statement before you came up with this? And it is a wonderful way of doing analyses of play creation, analysis, and what it means for a play to come on stage. I am not sure that that procedure has been followed recently but maybe that is something that (23:20) you may want to experiment with your group again. And then, the second one, again, during the late Professor James' time when he was doing his masters, and Professor Awamankwo (23:40), who now teaches in the US, they were the two masters students at the time and one of the things that I came up with was: let us have two household characters, and we created those two household characters and they were like itinerant characters going through Samaru and exploring different problems. So, in every script, every piece, they were there; and you saw the issues from their perspectives, from their experiences, from their woes, their happiness and so on. And that went on for two years and it was a very wonderful, wonderful experience. I think again that that process is a process that I would like to see revived so that what it does is that it provides a certain continuity for the discussion that the Samaru group will engage in. If you take those two

characters or any similar approach, what you are doing is: you are not just doing isolated pieces. What you will do is: how can we look at the issues from the perspective or from the experiences – everyday life experiences – of these two central characters? A lot of other people will come and go but they will remain. And then, you are dissecting Samaru through these two characters. So, the Samaru project has gone through several phases: from the phase of simply going in there, researching the issues, coming into Samaru, put on the performances. You go to Samaru, play it, and ask for post-performance discussions or questions and people will talk and say: ‘this is good’, ‘why didn’t you do this - that?’ and so on. But one of the things that is important for me is the way the Samaru project challenged the thinking of our students. Initially, many of the students say when they come here, they say: ‘why should I go into Samaru to go and perform? This is not my own idea of the university should look like. I am an undergraduate student. What business do I have with all these dirty people in Samaru?’ (26:25)... that resistance, and some of us were telling them their stories. I remember I use to challenge them and I say: ‘how many of you have parents who live in rural communities who are farmers? And many of them would stand up and say: ‘my parents are farmers.’ And I say: ‘do you want to insult your mother or your father?’ But for them, coming to the university meant committing class suicide. ‘We have moved several steps up the ladder, so don’t take us back’. That was their thinking. Therefore, the Samaru project was not the kind of theatre practice that they’d envisaged. It is the Shakespeare theatre, the glamorous theatre that they were looking forward to; but now, it is Nollywood. But one year down the line, a lot of appreciation came from the students saying: ‘yes, this is a good experience that I can build on’. And I think, eventually, you are going to see that the experience of asking you to go back, if you like, into your forgotten society or community, for those of you who have rural affiliations. Those of you that have never seen a rural community – you may live in certain parts of the city close to slums where people have similar circumstances as Samaru, and very often, you don’t want to go back there. But the question is, after the experience, maybe you will have a better understanding of your own community. And you may say: ‘if I had the opportunity to give back and to do something, then perhaps I have the tool to be able to do that. So I think there are several stages that the Samaru project can pass through. One of the questions I asked initially was: after all these years, has the Samaru project meant anything? Has it made any impact? And I said: ‘if you ask me, I would say yes because... how many of you are aware of the (31:50) Gamji Group? The Gamji Group is a product of interaction with Samaru from this normal (31:55) village, and the issues that the Samaru project always identified are issues that needed action. But like I said, because the university and the course are structured in such a way that you couldn’t intervene, we therefore needed, over the years, to say: ‘is it not possible for the project to key into existing community associations? So that those community associations will become the resource for making that change happen. And the Gamji Group is not just a theatre group. They are a community development association as well as a performance group; they use performances for enlightenment, for sensitization, for mobilization, for change. And if anything that we can claim, in the drama village here, from the Samaru project and the Community Theatre, extending to... (33:08), it is the emergence of these groups who have understood the power of theatre to make change. So, yes, we have made impact.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION

FIRST QUESTION: ???

SECOND QUESTION: Sir, the rhymes, the elements or nutrients during your time, the things that make the Samaru project more unique during your time... that... from the one we’ve witnessed, is no longer in it??? (35:14) For instance, I remember when we were young, we used to watch *Tales by Moonlight*, but now, there’s no longer *Tales by Moonlight*, but now all our tales are in books now. There are times I feel like going back to those days and listen to the old tell stories. Now, we want to know those elements, those nutrients that have... that enhance your performance that have been lost... so that we can put them into this performance to throw more light into it?

ANSWER TO FIRST QUESTION: The first time we were doing this, the interest of our lecturers was: you are not going to take a scripted play to Samaru; you are going to go into Samaru and get the information yourself and come back here, do an analysis of the information you have brought back, make plays out of them, and you will go and perform them in Samaru, where you got the information from. The main improvisation is the process of creating drama from raw data that is not already scripted. And that first year, when we were doing the work for the first time, the word 'improvisation' was the key to the process – to the manner of making the plays – and so, we say, these Samaru improvisations, but as we were going on, it went beyond just about play creation through improvisation. It became a research process. And when it became a research process, the main improvisation didn't describe all of that anymore. It was a project. And so, they change from the Samaru improvisations – the impression of Samaru improvisations is this is only about performance. But it wasn't just about performance. It was about research, it was about understanding and then, increasingly, we had started to think about change. And when you have these trajectories of movement, it's not simply improvisations anymore but a project that you are engaging in, that's why.

ANSWER TO SECOND QUESTION: Then in relation to how it was done then to what it is now. I think...ehn... one of my articles... I think in 1986 article... it is a very interesting article in terms of.... There are several articles that I think that you need to read...(38:50) I think there are about 4 or 5 different articles, and especially this...ehn...the 19...ehn...86 article – I was in the UK then, but I came back. I think the central character they were using that year was called Tribe (39:23) during John Hays' time. John Hays was very interested in the project... (39:30) and I think if you look, if you read the different articles. Those days, I was like the documentary. Every year, I would look forward to

Appendix vii

A Post-Production Transcription of the 2014 Edition of Samaru Project Drama

The performance opened with a montage of the Boalian image theatre that lasted about four seconds after which they burst into an opening glee (singing and dancing). The song articulates the theme of the impending drama such that it prepares the mind of the audience for what is to come. This is followed by an introductory speech from the narrator, also a character that is close in function to Boal's joker. In order to give a vivid picture of the drama, and because the drama was presented in Hausa language, a transcription/translation of the drama and the forum session in one of the locations is made available in the appendix.

(The stage area is marked out by the mats spread on the bare ground of the street with the actors and actresses serving as backstage wall from which actors and actresses emerge to play their various roles on the mat (the acting area.) A group of performers burst forth from the wall singing and dancing. Below is a loose translation of the song and the dramatic text which was originally rendered in Hausa.)

(The opening song)
People of our land, you are welcome.
It is well with you, we greet you all.
People of our land, let us come together to discuss.
Let us come together to examine.
Let us come together to sweep our environment.
Let us come together to sweep our land.

Because we are all one, let's greet one another.
Let's hug one another, let's relate well with one another
(They dance back to their position.)

Narrator: You are all welcome, we are the past, we are the present and we are the future. God has brought us back, we are the students of Ahmadu Bello University, students of Theatre and Performing Arts. We have come back with another new play/performance. And I am telling you that you will not pay a penny for watching this play. If you look into the audience, you'll see Yar mata hisbi (special ladies)

(The young ladies dance forward again singing)

Sweeping, sweeping, mother, choose a place for me to sweep,

Washing, washing, mother, give me some plates to wash,

But taking syrup (drug) is my own personal attempt,

But to smoke Indian hemp is my own personal attempt,

But to steal is all personal indulgence.

Narrator: (To the audience) Now, without wasting time, let me introduce to you Alhaji & Hajiya. On my right hand side is Hajiya leka gida kowa.

Audience: (Chanting) Hajiya leka gida kowa.

Hajiya leka gida kowa.

Narrator: On my left hand side is Alhaji Idan Gari

Audience: (Chanting) Alhaji Idan Gari gida Gari.

Alhaji Idan Gari.

Narrator: Okay, the play we are introducing to you is between Alhaji and Hajiya. Hajiya like gossiping.

Hajiya: May peace be upon you all. As you all know, the narrator has said that we are facing different problems in our society. First, there is the problem of unemployment, poor personal and environmental hygiene, lack of potable water.

Narrator: (After echoing what Hajiya leka gida kowa has just said to the audience) Let us hear what Alhaji Idan Gari has to say.

Alhaji Idan Gari: (The one with an ear to the ground) What Hajiya has just said is not the problem we are facing in the society. As you all know that I am a man with an ear to the ground. What Hajiya deemed to be the moral decadence of the society is not the problem at all. The problems are: Rent, we have problem paying the house rent, polluted environment and the worst of all is gambling.

Narrator: (After echoing what Alhaji Idan Ngari. As a result of his view of the society, it seems the two parties' opinion vary)

Audience: (Chants: Gambling, Gambling, we have stopped gambling.)

Narrator: Without wasting time, we are now going to introduce the play to you. Lend us your ears.

Episode I

Half-sister: Yar autar (last born), haven't you finished eating?

Hafsat: No.

Half-sister: Let me go and see if I can fetch some water. (Exits)

Jummai: Our half-sister is very kind.

Hafsat: You are right.

Jummai: Yar autar, I don't like hawking. I just want to go to school.

Song: Mother, I want to go to school

I don't want to go hawking

Jummai's Mother: My Jummai, I heard that you want to stop hawking to embrace education. But I hope you know that it is from this hawking business that we will gather money to send you to school. You know my brother in Kaduna, didn't he promise to enroll you in a boarding school?

Jummai: Yes (She nods)

Jummai's Mother: So don't worry, eh, my Jummai. Let me get you something from my room, I'll be back.

(Hafsat's aunt returns with a bucket of water)

Half-sister: You are still eating? Look at the little water I was able to fetch. May God save us from the problem of water scarcity in this town.

Hafsat: Too much pepper in the food. (Starts coughing violently while her aunt fetches her some water from the bucket. Jummai's mother comes in and pushes the cup away from her hand)

Jummai's Mother: Hey! Hey! Do you want to kill my daughter? (She starts beating half-sister)

Half-sister: They want to kill me! (Screams)

(Half-sister's mother storms in)

Half-sister's Mother: Hey! Why are you beating her? (The two mothers engage themselves in physically. A man suspected to be their husband enters and tries to separate them. He ends up getting beaten up himself)

Episode II

(Two young men are on stage with one admonishing the other)

Man: I told you to go to school but you have refused to show any concern.

Tintinni: How is that any of your business? I have told you, I am not interested in going to school.

Man: Be rest assured, you will regret it. (Exits)

Tintinni: Yes. I have heard you.

(Jummai enters hawking her groundnuts. Tintinni tries to molest Jummai thereby leaving her groundnut scattered on the ground. A neighbor passing rescues Jummai from the scuffle and leads her home crying.)

Episode III

(Tintinni's home. Tintinni's father comes in with a chewing stick while his creditors come in one after the other. First, two women, Jummai's mother and then his landlord.)

First Lady: Baba Tintinni, I have come to collect the money you owe me. Give me my money. Everyday na soso borrow borrow.

Second Lady: You are always borrowing, owing people. We will not agree today. You must pay us our money. (Jummai and her mother come in)

Jummai's Mother: I want you to warn your son. He keeps beating my daughter, but today I must deal with him.

Baba Tintinni: My son?

(The landlord enters not greeting everyone)

Landlord: Where is my rent?

Baba Tintinni: (Distraught, he bows in respect) I don't have money now

Landlord: For the sake of Prophet Mohammed, I want you to pack out of my house.

Baba Tintinni: (He addresses the audience)What am I to do? Everyday my son brews trouble out of his daily mischief. He goes about troubling people. And I don't have money to pay rent. My people, what does one do now?

Song: In this town, if we fail to give correction;

Everything will go wrong.

Episode IV

(The people assemble around the village head for deliberations over the social problems already enacted in order to find solutions)

Village Head: I greet you all my people. Without wasting your time, let me call on my assistant to speak to you.

Assistant: As you all know the adage that says, "A beautiful song is best heard from the original singer's mouth." Hence, I shall also call on the Late Mallam Hamza's sister to address us.

Hamza's Sister: Village head I greet you. I also greet the rest of you. It is true that we have a good village head, but our people leave their children untended, so they do whatever they like. This has created the room for these children to steal people's property.

Ensemble: (They sing) In every corner, they are known
These thieves are known in the community

Episode V

(Two ladies walk across the stage discussing while two rascals lurk around a corner watching them from a distance, unknown to the ladies)

First Lady: I don't know what is wrong with me, but I must make this night call no matter what happens.

Second Lady: You and this your boyfriend, you know we must hurry up to reach where we are going.

First Lady: Wait let me show you something. (As she brings out her handset to show her friend, the two rascals come out of their hiding and rob them of their handsets)

Episode VI

(So hoodlums are seen smoking indian hemp in their hideout)

First Thug: Hey! How far now? You sold the phones and gave me just one thousand naira. Where is the remaining money?

Second Thug: I forgot to ask the guy who brought the money. After bringing the money, the guy left and the police came looking for him. When he comes back, we will hear from him.

First Thug: I will be here waiting for him. (A third thug rushes in panting)

Second Thug: Look at this stupid guy, he scared me. I think the police are after him. I will kill him now.

First Thug: Nothing will happen. We are the owners of this land. Whoever challenges us, we are ready to finish him. Let them come. (Just then, some police officers storm the hideout and arrest them.

Ensemble: (Singing) The security came and took the away.

Episode VII

(At the police station, a man comes in to lodge a complaint about his arrested he-goat)

Goat Owner: I have come to take my goat.

Officer: Are you the owner of the he-goat (Busuru)

Goat Owner: Yes.

Officer: Do you know the offence of your he-goat?

Goat Owner: Did my goat go about eating people's food?

Officer: No.

Goat Owner: Did my goat eat other people's millet?

Officer: No.

Goat Owner: Did my goat eat other people's maize?

Officer: No.

Goat Owner: Then I cannot understand you. What is the offence of my goat?

Officer: Your goat impregnated all the she-goats in the neighbourhood.

Goat Owner: (Laughs) What is the work of a he-goat? Is it not to impregnate the she-goats?

Officer: Well, we are going to release your goat to you. But you are going to pay the sum of two thousand naira.

Goat Owner: Two thousand naira!

Officer: You are going to pay another one thousand naira for keeping your goat in our custody.

Goat Owner: Three thousand naira!

Officer: And another two thousand naira for bailing your goat. So your money is five thousand naira only.

Goat Owner: (Exclaims) Five thousand naira!

Police Officer: That is it, just pay the money. (The goat owner collapses) (The police officer spring up in surprise) Don't die here o. don't allow the people in this community to burn down our police station. Officer, take him out of this place and release his goat to him. (The goat owner is led out by another police officer).

(An Igala woman and a man enter the police station)

Igala woman: Police!

Police Officer: Welcome, what can I do for you?

Igala Woman: (Panting), Police, my son is here.

Police Officer: Your son?

Igala Woman: Yes.

Police Officer: What is his name?

Igala Woman: Musa Hamza

Police Officer: (The officer looks through the list of people in their custody), we have someone bearing Musa in our custody. (She turns to the other man), what about you, who are you looking for?

The Man:- Auduga

Police Officer:- (She laughs) I will tell you the offences of your children? (They both kept quiet). I will tell you, they are smokers, they are drug addicts, they kill and steal.

Igala Woman:- Not my son (She pointed at the other man), your son has influenced my son, now they are in trouble.

The Man: What!

Igala Woman: Don't insult me o, don't insult me here.

Police Officer: They fought and killed a man, so, yesterday our senior officer came here and took them to our headquarter in Kaduna. For now there is nothing that has been said as regards their case.

(Igala woman fainted while the other place his hand on his head)

Appendix viii

The comments and observations below are representative of the general response and attitude of the community audience towards the presentation.

Random Samples of Comments from the Forum Theatre Session

Galadima's Comment:

I greet you all. Firstly, we are very happy at this performance. But this performance is actually not a play but a re-awakening and a message to the people of this community in particular. ...

Firstly, these students have staged this play, they are from different places across the country and they have come to study in ABU. ...

Also, if our youths are able to study, they will reach the level of these students who have performed this play. Today, if they are able to attain knowledge. ... And the one that staged this performance should read and listen to their teachers well. In order for them to come out with a good

result at the end of their study. Thank you very much. May God bless you all! (Galadima, Samaru Project 2014 Forum Session)

Mai Unguwa's Comment

May peace be upon you all. I greet you all. You are all welcome. We are really impressed with the way you presented the play. May almighty Allah bless the performance. May God guide us and our family, may God make peace to reign in this country. Galadima has said it all, May God bless you all. I am greeting the ...sitting over there, my brother I greet you. (Mai-Unguwa, Samaru Project 2014 Forum Session)

Figure 37: Researcher, Rabi'u Isa, the Sarki and his chiefs as an integral part of the audience in one of the venues. (Researcher: 2014)

Yalabai's Comment

If I am to mark these children as regards all the plays that have been (sic) performed here, I will grade these ones well. Because they brought out all the problems we encounter, not only in this town alone, but all over Nigeria. Because, when we talk about the act of smoking, drinking and stealing, they are recurring events that happen all the time... Firstly, I am wishing you success in your studies, and as you are creating this awareness in the people, especially on our cultural and traditional practices. ... We thank you and your teachers who have managed to come with you for this performance. God bless you. I wish you all a safe journey to your destination. Thank you! (Yalabai, Samaru Project 2014 Forum Session)

Figure 38: The Sarki responds to the drama. (Researcher: 2014)

Youth Leader's Contribution

Actually it was a good play. I enjoy the play because it is very educative. And it talks about the current problems we are facing in communities. Not only here but in various communities. And there are things I expected to see in the play, particularly, the way the generation is going these days. ... And I am appealing to our youths to use this as a medium to fight corruption, to fight crimes and other activities that are not beneficiary to our community. I think that's where I will stop on behalf of the youth. (Youh Leader, Samaru Project 2014 Forum Session.)

Figure 39: The youth leader responds to issues in the drama. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)

Journalist in the Community

Okay students, I have said it all. What you have demonstrated here on the piece, you should try to preach it where you live. You should make sure that wherever you are, let the message reach them. It is not only acting. So students, their destinies are in your hands. And it is the time... So you should focus on what you are doing so that you become perfect and you become important. Thank you. (Journalist, Samaru Project 2014 Forum Session.)

Figure 40: One of the chiefs responds to the drama. (Researcher: 2014 Samaru Project)