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THE ARTS THEATRE, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, 1955-1985:
A STUDY OF THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A
THEATRE CENTRE IN AN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

BY:

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to highlight the historical significance of the contributions of the Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan, to theatre development in Nigeria.

A remarkable landmark in theatrical development was reached in 1955 by the commissioning of the Arts Theatre - the first well-equipped modern theatre in Nigeria. It is significant because, hitherto, the professional theatre had been sneered at in Nigeria and had only flourished as a peripatetic vocation tenuously sustained by the enthusiasm of Hubert Ogunde Dance Theatre Company and the nascent Yoruba travelling troupes. But today, theatre has become a household phenomenon, about which the Arts Theatre has disseminated positive information in the last three decades.

The educational programmes incepted at the Arts Theatre in 1963 have matured into full university degree programme. The success of this initiative has further inspired the establishment of similar programmes in many other Nigerian Universities. Today, students take degrees in Theatre Arts and fill high level manpower positions in government and private enterprises after graduation. The Arts Theatre has

development of the Arts Theatre, theatre forms, the dramatic activities of Randall Hogarth and various other contributions made by Geoffrey Axworthy, Yole Soyinka and Joe Adedeji.

also bred frontline playwrights, distinguished scholars and accomplished theatre practitioners. The Arts Theatre also remains the main source of inspiration for new theatre structures and resident university theatre troupes.

This thesis examines fully the implications of the fact that the Arts Theatre was the first architectural archetype designed for the serious promotion of theatrical activities and which has made the theatre a respectable profession in Nigeria. We conclude that, though beset by old age, the Arts Theatre is capable of further active contributions if properly refurbished, maintained and efficiently administered.

We set out by introducing our aims, our research methodology and definition of terms. Here also we identify our problem and define our scope of study.

Chapter I contains a review of relevant literary works on reputable Arts Theatres in the world, the origin of theatre as academic subject and the structural attributes of the Arts Theatre.

Chapter 2 traces the purpose of the university, origin and development of the Arts Theatre, theatre forms, the early dramatic activities of Randall Hogarth and various other contributions made by Geoffrey Axworthy, Wole Soyinka and Joel Adedeji.

Chapter 3 focusses attention on systematic theatre education at Ibadan highlighting its workshop origin, evolution of academic programmes and associated amateur student and staff production; children's theatre, Yoruba Travelling theatre and film.

Chapter 4 deals with the promotion of theatre profession in Nigeria focussing on the implications of the University Acting Companies and promotion of African writings, International Productions and Foreign Visiting Artists and workshop.

Chapter 5 contains a retrospective review of fields covered in the work and results achieved. It is also the concluding chapter.

The Appendices and the plates have been carefully selected principally to provide objective insight into the various Arts Theatre activities. Interview with Professor Fola Aboaba for instance touches on a wide range of the Arts Theatre events.

My former supervisor Professor Joel Adesoji deserves great honour for being helpful in the choice of title for this thesis; and especially for being the inspiration behind

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In the realization of this goal, my indebtedness goes to a lot of sources, people and institutions. Foremost is the Almighty GOD, who rescued me from a devastating motor accident in 1987 to enable me complete the uncompleted assignments. For this unmerited grace and infinite mercy I confess and praise Him.

The Osogbo City Theatre Centre, my fourteen - year experiment in Community Theatre practice (1974 - 1988), which stimulated my interest in playhouses and resident troupes has been a ^{rewarding} experience for which I am grateful. Being student House Manager and subscription Secretary of the Pittsburgh Playhouse (under the direction of Point Park Colege), provided insights into the mystique of theatre buildings.

The privilege of a three-month British Council Fellowship Award in Arts Administration which enabled me to observe Geoffrey Axworthy at work at Sherman Theatre, University College, Cardiff, Wales and also study Repertory Theatre System in Great Britain in 1986 was so providential in my research, that I feel very grateful.

My former supervisor Professor Joel Adedeji deserves great honour for being helpful in the choice of title for this thesis; and especially for being the inspiration behind

a lot of the indelible achievements of the Arts Theatre. I wish to mention here that this project was transferred to Professor Femi Osofisan in 1986 when Professor Adedeji was going on sabbatical and was almost certain of his subsequent voluntary retirement.

I express profound appreciation to Professor Femi Osofisan, my indefatigable supervisor and Head, Department of Theatre Arts, whose critical observations and painstaking guidance have pruned and directed this work to its focus and modesty. His learned direction have made certain books, information and materials accessible to me. For all these, I am grateful.

Professor Michael Hudson of Physics Department, Ibadan, was a rich source of information who supplied me over one hundred pictures of the past Arts Theatre productions. Professor Fola Aboaba's house was my second home for he identified most of the people in pictures for me and made himself available for interview. I am very grateful. Members of the Department of Theatre Arts have been very helpful to me for which I express profound appreciation.

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.....
Date

.....
Professor Paul Osofisan
(supervisor)

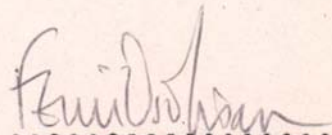
CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by
Mr. Remi Ademola Adedokun in the Department of Theatre
Arts, University of Ibadan.

to a devoted
loving children and loyal friends who nursed
to health and made this dream a reality.

17/8/92

.....
Date



.....
Professor Femi Osofisan
(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

To the glory of God, the omnipotent MYSTERY; to the committed staff of the State Hospital, Osogbo; to the Osogbo City Theatre Centre; to a devoted wife, loving children and loyal friends who nursed me back to health and made this dream a reality.

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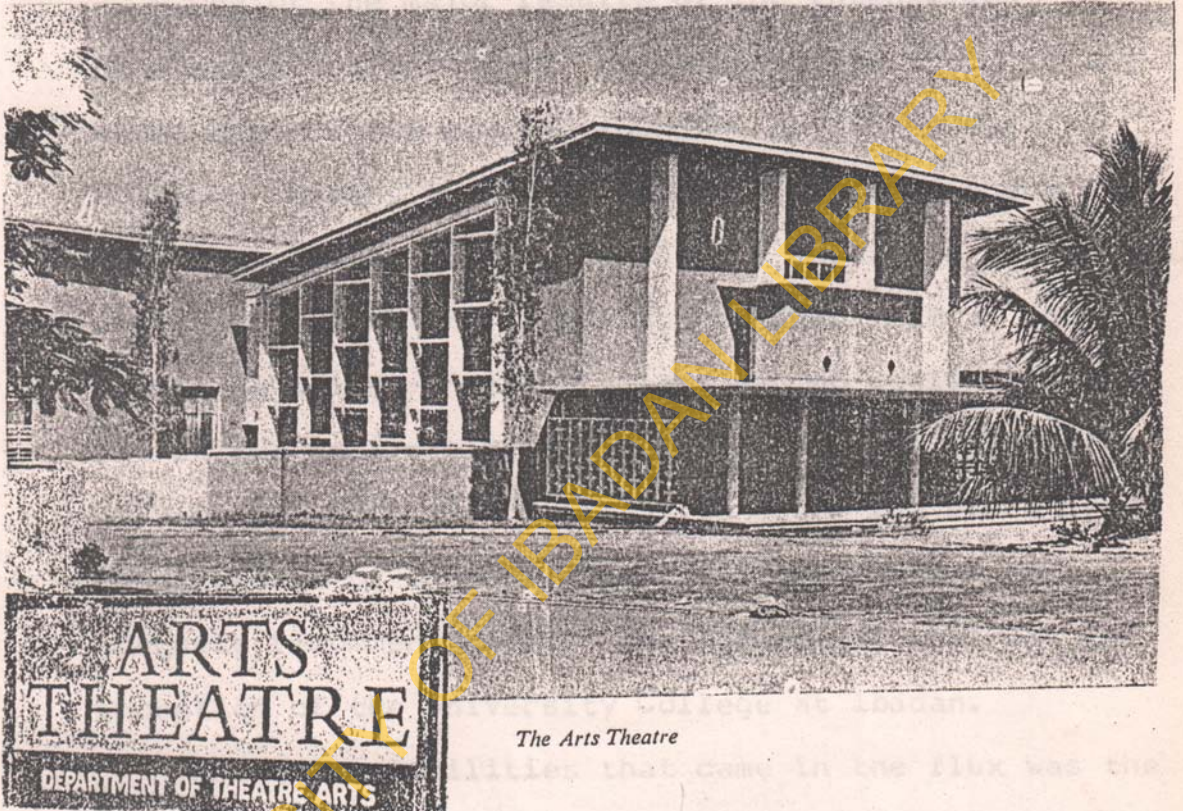
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INTRODUCTION

The Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan
Statement of the Problem



The Arts Theatre

PLATE 1: The Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan.

0. INTRODUCTION

0.1 The Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan:
Statement of the Problem

One of the major results of the intensified nationalist agitation for independence in the post 2nd world war Nigeria was the founding of the University College, Ibadan, in 1948. Prior to the war, there had been acrimonious craving for higher education in colonial West Africa, and the demand had reached such an uncompromising height that the rulers had no option but to set up two arbitrating commissions known as the Elliot and Asquith Commissions (1943) to study the educational requirements of the colonial territories and make adequate recommendations. The outcome of this was the inception of the University College at Ibadan.

Among the facilities that came in the flux was the Arts Theatre in 1955. The Arts Theatre has made tremendous impact on the socio-cultural development of Nigeria as amply demonstrated by the ~~crop~~ crop of virtuoso artistes, playwrights, directors, actors, troupes, etc. that grew out of it. Renowned theatre practitioners like Frank Aig-Imoukhuede, James Iroha, Wale Ogunyemi and scholars like Professors Wole Soyinka, Joel Adedeji, Dapo Adelugba, Femi Osofisan, Sonny Oti and a host of others, were nurtured, at least partly, at the Arts Theatre.

However, very little has been written or is known about this contribution of the Arts Theatre to the growth of theatre in Nigeria. This makes true appraisal of its historical significance rather difficult. The little that is known consists ironically, of mordant criticism launched against it by its three successive directors, Geoffrey Axworthy, Wole Soyinka and Joel Adegiji. To compound this problem, precise information about its origin and the specificity of its purpose is lacking. For instance, Geoffrey Axworthy, the founding director of the Arts Theatre only provides us vague hints about its origin by saying:

The founding fathers of the University College showed unusual foresight in this direction - that they built the Arts Theatre the best theatre in Nigeria. What thought lay behind this action is it seems, already lost in the mist of time.....1

(Emphasis mine).

Furthermore, the Arts Theatre has also been engulfed in virulent intellectual controversy regarding its objectives, architectural² and cultural relevance to the African society. It was even once slated for demolition, as can be read from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Department of Theatre Arts held on Sunday June 29, 1975:

The Vice-Chancellor's decision to schedule the Arts Theatre for demolition was mentioned. All members of staff agreed that this was regrettable and that protests should be made in the most effective way possible.

The above reflects mixed sentiments about the Arts Theatre, for while the Vice-Chancellor scheduled it for demolition, the staff of the Department of Theatre Arts opposed the move. One wonders here what prompted the Vice-Chancellor to want to demolish the theatre and one is even more surprised at the resistance launched by the Department whose staff were the most critical of the structure. Coupled with these conflicting attitudes is the notion that the Arts Theatre is old and represents significantly the European cultural vision rather than African perception. The persistence of this criticism suggests the likelihood of future discardment of the Arts Theatre. Adedeji, for instance, once proposed to build a new Theatre Arts Complex incorporating a thrust stage theatre at the present location of the University gymnasium in 1977. The conflicting views about the Arts theatre have consequently so stirred our imagination that we are inspired to find responses to curious questions that have been raised about its origin, purpose and development.

0.2 Purpose and Scope of Study

The purpose of this work is to demonstrate that the Arts Theatre, generally mistaken for a colonial instrument of indoctrination has in fact been responsible for the widespread vitality and prestige which Nigerian theatre enjoys today.

This study aims to stimulate academic interest in theatre buildings, by highlighting the historical significance of the contributions of the Arts Theatre to theatre education and practice in Nigeria. Our concern is to demonstrate the uniqueness of its services to theatrical development in Nigeria.

0.3 Methodology

Our approach will be empirical, namely to assemble documents and data hitherto scattered and use them for a detailed analysis.

We adopted this approach because of the privilege which our involvement with the Arts Theatre has afforded us, first as a student and later as the Business Manager of the Department of Theatre Arts. The study begins therefore with a critical appraisal of the Arts Theatre architecture and its purpose. Then, the documents connected

with its facilities, programme literatures, posters, productions and Box Office records are properly studied and analysed.

Scholarly articles, theses and dissertations relevant to this work are also scrutinized. Recorded operas of Kola Ogunmola and Duro-Ladipo are evaluated. Interviews are conducted with people directly or indirectly connected with the Arts Theatre Management and productions from 1955 to 1985.

Finally, a visit to Professor G. Axworthy and Martin Banham in Great Britain was undertaken in 1986 to assist us in balancing opinions and making certain conclusions.

0.4 Definition of Terms

Arts Theatre: 'Arts Theatre' in this work stands for the entire physical structure of the Arts Theatre at Ibadan or its homogeneous kind in this research.

Theatre Centre here means a repository of theatrical culture, where all variety of theatrical entertainment is presented. It is synonymous with playhouse and performing arts centre.

Theatre shall connote 'theatre building', or 'a troupe of performers', or 'theatre as artistic creation in terms of drama, music, dance, variety show or as may be implied in specific or collective terms.

Production means play, Opera, music or any creative material prepared for performance before an audience.

Literary Theatre refers to theatre performing scripted plays written in English.

Professional theatre refers to theatre which engages in full time production of plays and which does not rely on subsidies for its livelihood.

Subsidy means an annual or periodic financial assistance given to a theatre by government, university etc. to assist in implementing its artistic programmes.

Educational Theatre connotes theatre in an educational institution.

Amateur Theatre Group means a group of theatre enthusiasts gathering together occasionally to present plays for interest sake and not for financial or career benefits.

Children's Theatre connotes (in Nigerian context) a troupe (amateur group) of children actors (under the supervision of adults or drama teachers) producing plays specifically for children audience, with themes drawn from folklore, myth and fantasy.

Theatre-in-Education otherwise called 'Drama-in-education', refers to 'theatre' or 'drama' as an instrument of instruction or unit in education.

Arts Theatre Playwrights refers to all playwrights who have worked in the Arts Theatre.

Notes and Bibliography

1. Axworthy, G. "The Arts Theatre and the School of Drama" in Ibadan (Ibadan: IUP, 1964): 62
2. See Plate 1.

CHAPTER 1

1.0 A REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

1.1 Reputable Foreign Arts Theatres in the world and the Ibadan Arts Theatre.

The 'Arts Theatre' nomenclature presents a fascinating perspective from which to disentangle the Ibadan Arts Theatre from its controversial background. If we consider that the Ibadan Arts Theatre could have alternatively been called any of the following names, viz: 'The Playhouse', 'University Theatre Centre', 'Cultural Centre', 'Performing Arts Centre', or 'Drama Studio'; then we are likely to question the rationale behind the choice of 'Arts Theatre' as a name. Architecture, we observe is a metaphorical representation of purpose, beliefs, customs and history of the people that built it. Similarly, a name or nomenclature is compendious of functions and circumstances of the person, place of thing which bears it. This idea impels us to examine the origin and purpose of reputable Arts Theatre in theatrical history.

There are not many 'Arts Theatres' in the world. The only three we know and which are known internatio

lly are the Moscow Art Theatre (M.A.T), 1898, Arts Theatre, Cambridge (1926), and Arts Theatre Club, London (1927).

The Moscow Arts Theatre (MAT) was founded by Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko in 1898 to provide alternative theatre to the artificial and insipid theatre of the imperial Russia. Harold Clurman observes that: "Besides its purely professional reforms, the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898 declared its purpose to be the creation of serious art for the people".²¹ By the "people", Clurman makes it explicit this does not refer to the rabble or the commoners but chiefly to the Middle-class intelligentsia and the educated working class. The declared intentions and practice of MAT portrays it as an elitist theatre as the Ibadan Arts Theatre is.

The MAT engaged in promoting new Russian plays, reviving old ones and experimenting in world classical drama. It introduced naturalistic staging and solved the problem of finding the right stage form for Russian Drama, a dilemma still confronting Nigerian theatre and in which the Arts Theatre has served as a model to others.

The early efforts of MAT were devoted to the plays of Maxim Gorky, Alexey Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov. Among many plays directed by Stanislavski are Chekhov's masterpieces, The Seagull, Uncle Vanya, The Three Sisters, and Cherry Orchard and Gorky's The Lower Depths.

With its own professional drama school, MAT was able to build a uniquely dynamic and creatively stable repertory troupe that toured Europe and America on many occasions. From various experiments in acting and production at MAT Stanislavski developed his famous 'Method' acting. He also wrote books such as: My Life in Art (1924), An Actor Prepares (1926), Building A Character (1949), which propagated his acting philosophy.

The Moscow Art Theatre is a leadership theatre of the bourgeois whose influence penetrated the upper and lower classes of Russian citizenry. Lenin's support of the MAT illustrates the degree of its popularity and its politico-cultural relevance. This theatre was particularly a specialist theatre committed to dramatic presentations alone. This probably accounts for its retention of a singular 'art' instead of the common plural "arts" that implies 'many'.

The achievements of the Moscow Art Theatre is better summarized by the commentaries of ^{some theatre} observers. Thomson and Salgado for instance say that "... the Moscow Art Theatre was the home of experiment".¹ Phyllis Hartnoll observes that "This famous theatre ... is the best known of all Russian theatrical organizations outside the USSR,² while Clurman is of the view that "There can be no doubt that the Moscow Art Theatre occupies a central position in the Soviet and perhaps in the world theatre of our time."³ In 1968, the MAT moved into a new and larger theatre built on the site of the old one with capacity for 1,800 people.

The Arts Theatre, Cambridge (C.A.T.), another famous homogeneous type of theatre, was the initiative of an individual. we are not sure of when it was built but there exist ^{some} historical evidence that the "Footlights", a professional Acting Company, was housed there from 1926. There are also traces that certain famous actors/directors (i.e. Peter Hall, John Berton, etc.) had association with the Cambridge Arts Theatre. we are also certain that the "Footlights" was founded in 1883 but without knowledge of where it was originally housed or performed. It is speculated that the Arts Theatre must have existed before 1883

when "Footlights" was founded because it began production of Greek classical plays in 1882. The concise Oxford

Companion to the Theatre records:

The Arts Theatre, which since 1926 has housed the footlights, was built and presented to Cambridge by John Maynard Keynes and his wife, the former ballet dancer Lydia Lopokova. Under George Rylands, it continues to do good work.

Productions of Greek plays in the original began in 1882 with Sophocles Ajax. A year later came Aristophanes Birds, with music by Perry and then a production triennially. The future Provost of Kings, J.T. Shepperd, was responsible for ten of these, beginning with Aeschylus Oresteia and ending with Sophocles' Oedipus Coloneus. For each of these a modern English composer was commissioned to write or arrange the music, an excellent precedent which is still followed.⁴

The emphasis here is on the fact of succession of Keynes by Rylands and the residency of the "Footlights" Company in 1926. It is established that the Arts Theatre was built and handed over to Cambridge by Keynes. The association of Rylands, a University lecturer, suggests that "Cambridge" here implies "Cambridge university" and not Cambridge County Council.

This assumption is strengthened by the fate of Cambridge Festival Theatre (1926 - 1933) founded by Terence Gray. The Cambridge Festival Theatre, a private theatre which was described as "the centre of new movement in theatre design in Britain" was "sold to the Cambridge Arts Theatre for use as a workshop and costume store."⁵

From this development we can deduce that the Cambridge Arts Theatre was a flourishing community-oriented project with stable and reputable professional outfit. George Rylands, who at the same time as director of CAT was governor of the famous London Old Vic and who had had outstanding relationship with school acting and amateur productions of the late 19th century, was fully committed to the development of both amateur and professional theatres.

Some outstanding features of the Cambridge Arts Theatre are:

1. It specialized in production of Shakespeare plays and original Greek plays.

2. It had association with the British Council.⁶
3. It established an amicable relationship with a university lecturer who might have explored the potentials of theatre in his illustrative productions for the amateur/dramatic clubs and his students.
4. It experimented with classical Greek drama and introduced modern English music.
5. It achieved national recognition as its director/chairman George Rylands was invested with national honour.

The coming into residence of the "Footlights" in 1926 invigorated the activities of the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, so much so that a coterie of theatrical artists got inspired and formed the London Arts Theatre Club in 1927. George Rylands, being governor/chairman of the London Old Vic (Britain's national theatre until 1977), wielded such great influence in theatre circles that his personality attracted theatrical luminaries to the Cambridge Arts Theatre. The London limitation was as vigorous and eventful as the Moscow Art Theatre and

the Cambridge Arts Theatre and left its indelible footprints in theatrical annals. About this London Arts Theatre, the concise Oxford Companion to the Theatre notes:

Arts Theatre, LONDON, a club theatre for staging of unlicensed and experimental plays, which opened on 20th April, 1927. In 1942, Alex Clunes took it over, and for ten years made it a vital centre, producing a wide range of plays and achieving as one critic said, the status of "a pocket national theatre...."⁷

The period that the Royal Shakespeare Theatre resided there was especially remarkable because of the magnitude of work done and the galaxy of theatrical luminaries involved viz: Peter Hall, Peter Brook, Michael St. Denis etc. Peter Thomson and G. Salgado recall that Peter Hall became famous for his productions at the Arts Theatre, London, in 1950s as a result of which he rose to the directorship of the National Theatre, London, in 1973 and was knighted⁸ in 1977.

Essentially therefore, the Arts Theatres have been fertile breeding places for theatrical luminaries. They engaged in myriad experimental works that gave directions to new theatrical movements, innovations and resident professional troupes. They won international acclaim

and were regarded as pace setters in the theatrical arena. Finally, they stood as symbols of national dignity and vision to the extent that both the governments and the culture patrons accepted them as outstanding cultural institutions. And structurally, they were all proscenium theatres with naturalistic/realistic style of production.

This, perhaps is one of the reasons why the colonial administration in Nigeria decided to include an Arts Theatre at Ibadan. Since its objective was to set standards for the emerging African nations, the Arts Theatre must have been visualized as a vigorous institution through which cultural goals could be achieved with encouraging results.

Another factor to examine is the extent of the British Council participation in the cultural future of the University College, Ibadan. A careful examination of the British Council sponsorship of Rylands' tour of Australia, of his recording of all Shakespeare's plays and of his preparation about 1944 - 45 of a one-man recital Ages of Man⁹ presupposes that the British Council was actively involved in the planning and execution of educational and cultural projects in colonial Africa. At Ibadan, the

involvement of the British Council in the cultural life of the college, most especially the Arts Theatre, was vigorous ~~ly~~ evident.

Our ~~view~~ ^{view} is that the leadership in theatrical profession and scholarship which has been rightly attributed to Ibadan came not because of the extraordinary talents at Ibadan and lack of these elsewhere, but rather to the fact that a modern ^{European} playhouse was available to foster and nourish the talents.

It is apposite here to recall that the Greek writers of the 5th century BC (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes) have become familiar legends because of the work they did at the theatre of Dionysus on the brow of Acropolis in Athens. In a similar vein, Shakespearean classics were popularized at the Globe theatre, while the Drury Lane theatre made for the success of Garrick. In modern theatre history, Chekhov and Stanislavski were products of the Moscow Art Theatre. The Abbey Theatre, Dublin, produced W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge, and Sean O'Casey, while the Theatre am Schiffbauerdamm, East Berlin, nurtured Bertold Brecht. And it was Antoine Andre's

"Theatre Libre" which promoted new plays and playwrights in Paris in the early 20th century. The list is endless. The Arts Theatre, like its foreign counterparts has served as workshop for talents and in the process bred Nigeria's frontline dramatists and theatre scholars.

The heritage of written drama in Nigeria ostensibly began in 1956 with the publication of James Ene Henshaw's This is our Chance.¹⁰ This was followed subsequently by his Medicine for Love (1964), Children of the Goddess (1964), Dinner for Promotion (1965), and Jewels of the Shrine (1965). The initial impetus of a pioneer and the ardent reception accorded his efforts by school Dramatic Societies resulted in his prolific output. As a medical doctor, he had a knack for drama and must have been imbued with some sense of commitment.

But before Henshaw, there had been remarkable antecedents in dramatic productions and a craving for a public hall for the promotion of entertainment as demonstrated by the aspirations of the Brazilian Dramatic Company¹¹ of Lagos in the 1980s.

Henshaw's pioneering dramatic upsurge was followed by Soyinka's Arts Theatre debut in 1958. From then onward, playwrights and scholars began to germinate and flourish at the Arts Theatre in their variegated species. They had been faithfully committed from the outset to the promotion of the African worldview and personality in the footsteps of Wole Soyinka who set the pace in African literary theory and practice. Adedeji followed suit in the historical research and documentation on the "Alarinjo",¹² the Yoruba traditional theatre. The thesis traced the origin and development of the versatile masque dramaturgy from 1700 A.D. to the evolution of a more ebullient Yoruba popular travelling theatre led by Hubert Ogunde. The work was a pioneering effort in theatre scholarship. This was followed by Dapo Adelugba's dissertation¹³ which, to this writer, is an attestation to the leadership role of the Ibadan Arts Theatre as a cultural indicator in Nigerian Nationalism and the evolution of a National Theatre. Adelugba's work is rendered from the perspective of a participant in the Ibadan dramatic activities from

1957 to 1964. His impression about the Arts Theatre is however better appreciated in his later treatise where he declares:

We have played host to several performing troupes and artists from various parts of the world. We have organized lectures, seminars and symposia on various aspects of theatre arts, the participants in which are well-known personalities in Nigeria and in other countries. Our curricular programme has been enriched by all this. In addition, the Arts Theatre has been the home of the many amateur dramatic, operatic and musical groups in Ibadan and during their rehearsals and productions: these include the professionally oriented Arts Theatre production Group, which aims at showing its audiences the best in World Theatre.....14.

From the above, the achievements of the Arts Theatre can be assessed and qualified. When the School of Drama sprang up from the Arts Theatre in 1963, all the academic and professional programmes of the school ended up in the Arts Theatre where theoretical classwork was given practical demonstration. The same theatre has served as the laboratory for all the theatrical experimentations of the Department of Theatre Arts since 1970, as witnessed Adedeji: "The Arts Theatre, through its regular productions, provides a 'workshop' for students in which they acquire first hand experience in every aspect of theatre practice. A great

variety of plays are presented in the theatre every session by both professional and semi-professional groups from within the community".¹⁵ The Arts Theatre productions have since then expanded beyond the 'community' to embrace international communities and international presentations.

Producers and directors of plays over the years have learnt to ignore the structural hindrances and adapt the proscenium in the most convenient manner that would complement their production aesthetics. Playwrights have themselves sidetracked the trappings and inhibitions¹⁶ of the proscenium which Soyinka describes as "the static imposition of the Arts Theatre"¹⁷ and Axworthy refers to as "the appalling 'hole-in-the-wall' stages now being used."¹⁸ In spite of all its failings, Axworthy was able to extol the cultural consequences of the Arts Theatre by saying:

The existence of this theatre, with all its defects, in a large University, given even a little organization, was almost bound to produce an outburst of dramatic activity. In nine years, Ibadan audiences have been offered plays of all types and periods...¹⁹.

Axworthy in this article elucidates the artistic activities of the Arts Theatre, citing productions ranging from the classical to the modern, Aeschylus to Soyinka and embracing

the Absurdist plays. The Ibadan theatrical life became extremely productive with diversified programme of activities because of the facility of the Arts Theatre and the ever surging ~~zest~~ of theatre practitioners and audiences.

1.2 Theatre-in-Education

Theatre as an academic curriculum at Ibadan was a fortuitous occurrence, especially if we consider the pace of academic integration of theatre in Europe and American at the time. In Europe and America theatre came into academic planning not as an independent dramatic art, but as an effective means of teaching elocution, rhetoric and declamation.

Theatre, in its evolution as a profession after the Dionysiac dramatic festivals, suffered unsteady growth due to consistent persecution by the rulers and the church. History informs us that the best recognition that was ever accorded theatre, (before Sir Henry Irving)²⁰, was in Greece at the emergence of drama and at the time of Thespis's innovation (534 BC). The Dionysia dramatic competitions and the honours bestowed on actors, playwrights and choregoi (financiers) were the best that ever happened to theatre as a branch of humanities before

1800 A.D. Thomson and Salgado explain:

The acting profession too, in contrast to later periods, enjoyed a high social status. Actors were exempted from military service and had special permission to travel through foreign lands even in war time. The actors travelled from Athens to Macedonia at the time of the war against Philip of Macedon and actually helped with the peace negotiation.²¹

Sir William Tarn and G.T. Griffith offer us a more detailed information in their exhaustive study of Greek History. In their book, Hellenistic Civilization, they write about the Dionysiac artists as follows:

"In their palmy days the Dionysiac artists were almost an independent state, sending and receiving ambassadors; on them were lavished honours, privileges, immunity, safe-conducts; they were subsidised by kings and cities, and the Athenian association had the right to wear the purple; it would seem that it was better to amuse people than to govern them".²² What other state honours supercede these except the crown! Permission to wear "the purple" was regal, which put these artists just on the rung next to the monarchy. This prestige had no recurrence in history until England knighted Henry Irving (1895) and subsequently Laurence Olivier (1947), Tyrone Guthrie

(1961) and Peter Hall (1977). By their immeasurable contribution to theatre these artists became revered personalities but were by no means as doted upon as the Dionysiac artists.

The fact was that shortly after the Dionysiac festivals disappeared and the empire crumbled, actors declined in social significance, most especially at the conquest of Greece by Rome, 300 BC. Disrepute, violence and sexual aberration crept on to the Roman stage which infuriated the Christian crusaders in the Dark ages (7 BC - 700 AD). In spite of this, however, literary theorists like Plato and Aristotle emerged to establish critical foundations. Aristotle (384 - 322 BC) wrote the poetics²³ and Plato (427 - 348 BC), The Republic, which establish the fundamental judgements on literary activities. While Aristotle explored all the realms of tragedy and presented complimentary views of arts in poetics, Plato's theory contrasted sharply with Aristotle's vision of the dignity of the arts.

Plato's The Republic described artistic endeavours as a deceitful imitation lacking originality, and the poet

as an imitator of superficiality, possessing no knowledge of his subject, thereby confusing his ignorant audience with his debased art. He regarded the arts in general as inferior and of no consequence in statesmanship because they appeal to passion instead of rational principles of life.²⁴ Plato's unpleasant theory perhaps aggravated the hostility of the rulers and other enemies of the theatre.

Let us take a cursory look into the integration of theatre as an academic curriculum in America and Britain at its earliest beginnings. William C. Young informs us adequately about the prejudices encountered.²⁵ The university theatre programme is recorded to have been pioneered in America by George Pierce Baker at Harvard and Radcliffe College²⁶ who started by holding classes in playwriting in 1903. A full four-year degree programme was initiated by Thomas Wood Stevens at Carnegie Institute of Technology (later Carnegie - Mellon University), Pittsburgh, in 1913, training students in acting, directing and designing. Thus if considered in general terms of degree oriented theatre programme, Carnegie Institute of Technology has the pride of place in initiating a four-year degree programme in

America. Elizabeth Kimberly throws more light:

Thomas Wood Stevens founded and developed the first degree - giving Drama Department in this country, where theatre training combined with a College curriculum. There was no precedent for this, or examples to follow when Carnegie Institute of Technology established its famous theatre course.... The Department of Dramatic Arts opened on February 9, 1914.²⁷

Stevens, as accounts indicate, was a thoroughbred theatre devotee. His mission in Pittsburgh was to "work out a plan for a school of stagecraft" but being a "dreamer" and "practical man of theatre"¹⁶, he overturned the table by changing the concept completely. This is germane to the work of Geoffrey Axworthy in Nigeria, George Pierce Baker (later) in Yale and Frederick Henry Kock in North Carolina University. Although their contributions might individually stress different aspect of theatre, their vision and impact promoted theatre development significantly.

The variation in emphasis were wide. Some innovations came in the direction of architectural design; some of these pioneers extolled the dignity of creative writing to widen theatrical curriculum, while others considered the practical application of theatre in production and administration. At Yale for instance, Young informs us that:

... the University theatre is a part of the School of Drama and an adjunct to the teaching and administering of all the arts connected with the drama and theatre, including everything from the writing of plays to the actual production thereof. It is not public theatre in any sense, but is more like a laboratory, for a selected audience, and everything that takes place in the theatre being a part of the work of the Department. But being a laboratory theatre, it is arranged and equipped to give actual working conditions under which plays would be mounted and presented. It is in no sense a place for amateur performances though such may be given, but it is a serious establishment of absolute standards in stage craft.²⁸

In Britain, the pace of academic integration of theatre was rather slower than in America where it started. The enthusiasm with which theatre curriculum took off in 1914 in America was not simultaneously echoed in Britain. The British attitude was rather circumspective and conservative. Hartnoll informs us about the beginning of theatre studies in Britain as follows:

In England, the gradual acceptance of the theatre as a subject for academic study resulted in the establishment in 1946 - 7 of the first Department of Drama at Bristol University. Since then, similar departments have been established at Manchester, Hull, Birmingham and Glassgow. Most universities now have a theatre open to the public.²⁹

Accepting theatre as a subject was not as easy as Hartnoll has put it. For Professor Gleyne Wickham, the first Professor of Drama in Britain, and the man who started its Drama Programme at Bristol, the experience was a bitter struggle. In his essay "Drama as a Study", he describes fully his bitter encounters in pushing drama through as an academic discipline. Wickham describes the situation as follows:

Drama, in short, was not a subject: simply a collection of fragments, more or less interesting, and all peripheral to sounder disciplines already in existence.... the charge levelled against drama of being 'no subject' had the ominous appearance of being derived from either plain ignorance or from fear....30

Here, one can still identify Plato's influence which up till the present persists in academic circles. The integration of theatre into the curriculum in Britain was therefore comparatively young and still a continuing process at the time Ibadan had its theatre in 1955. The theatre attached to the University College, London for instance opened in 1968. The Sherman Theatre of the University of Wales, Cardiff was founded in 1970. It therefore demands explanation why the University College

Ibadan, an affiliate of the University of London up till 1962, had a theatre building in 1955, a School of Drama in 1963 and a Department of Theatre Arts in 1970. We can only but guess now that the Arts Theatre was included in the academic ambit of the colonial administration in response to the gradual integration of theatre into academics as begun at Bristol University in 1946-7. Most of these theatre were open to the public, a tradition similar to the Arts Theatre practice. It is rather an irony of history that Great Britain which produced William Shakespeare, Garrick, Olivier, Brook, Hall etc. was so suspicious of the theatre profession as to delay its academic recognition until three hundred years after the death of the world's greatest dramatist. James Roose Evans hinted that Henry Irving's knighthood in 1895 (followed in sequence by those for Squire Bancroft, Charles Wyndham, John Hare, Beerbohm Tree, Arthur Pinero and George Alexander) set the seal of respectability upon London's theatre.³¹

Geoffrey Axworthy, the founding director of the Arts Theatre and its offshoot, the school of Drama, writes about the humble beginnings of drama and theatre at Ibadan thus:

How do you teach dramatic literature to students who have never seen a professional production of a play or often, anything like a real theatre? This was the question which faced me when I first went to Nigeria in 1956 - and I didn't realise how many questions it beqged. I found two concepts of the western theatre prevailing, one based on school productions of Shakespeare; the other, not very different, on 'realistic' 'modern' productions, usually by expatriate amateur groups. There was no need, in this context, to labour the case for an extension of horizons through practical work and less difficulty than there might have been at home in persuading the parent University of London to accept Theory and Practice of Drama for the B.A. degree in the place of a course called English life and institutions The University happened to possess a very adequate theatre, (Emphasis mine) in it we endeavour to assemble the artistic technical resources of the community to demonstrate the wider possibilities of theatrical enjoyment.³²

By this assertion, it is abundantly clear that 'drama and theatre' were integrated as illustrative tools for dramatic literature. The course 'English Life and Institutions' makes it less presumptive to suggest systematic acculturation of the community in Eurocentric values through literatures and civilizing ethics of the academic society.

1.3 The Subject Matter:

The structural necessity of a theatre building is unAfrican and its integration into cultural paraphernalia is a rarity introduced by western education. Oyin Ogunba and Abiola Irele inform us thus:

Prior to the advent of the whiteman, Africans did not have "theatre" in the western or oriental sense. Nobody in Africa built structures specially designated "playhouses" which served the purposes of entertainment or dramatic instruction and nothing else.³³

African traditional theatre was undefinable in the context of European criteria at the advent of colonialism and had remained unyielding to the western theatrical traditions despite the preponderant influences of the latter - (a rarity in theatre architecture). The popular Nigerian Yoruba Travelling Theatre, the hybrid outgrowth of the African and European cultural interaction, has however been more influenced by the latter. In spite of the long association with the proscenium stages which most theatres in Nigeria provide, African performances have remained unyielding to the rigid proscenium setting, the major obstacle being in spatial limitation. African drama is ever flowing in spectacles through curves and

circles that manifest the metaphysical realm of the African world view. Martin Banham in his discussion on African theatre buildings examines the restrictions posed by the proscenium to an African performance which he describes as "fluid and free ranging."³⁴ All that African theatrical performance requires is an untrammelled space that expands and contrasts as desired and where the audience have the convenience of surrounding the enactment without caring at all about sight lines.

The Arts Theatre, our subject matter, is worth researching into because it has been one of the most dynamic media of theatre promotion since 1955.

The discussion of this work is based on three factors that are inextricably related. These are colonialism, education and architecture. The Nigerian culture has been deeply influenced by colonialism, which is not just a system of government, but is also an inhuman stratagem to enslave physically and intellectually those who were conquered.

The major antipathy of critics against the Arts Theatre is its proscenium stage whose restrictive nature is incomparable with the convenience of traditional

African theatre-in-the-round. The critics believe its structure is based on a colonial point of view i.e. intellectual parochialism and socio-cultural manipulations, and that its inflexibility is a deliberate negation of African dramatic aesthetics. These critics also argue that since Margo Jones had popularized arena stage by 1943, and the thrust stage had equally been accepted in the theatrical culture at the time, there must have been some ulterior motive for choosing a proscenium stage which was a heritage from Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, (1585), for Ibadan. But it can be argued that the reason for this choice was purely due to what Allardyce Nicoll describes as '.... an influence exerted by the "classical" upon the "modern".³⁵ Certainly, the elegance of the Arts Theatre and the confidence the building radiates show that it was done with sincerity of purpose, aesthetic devotion and foresight.

Architecturally, the Arts Theatre displays the essential characteristics of 20th century theatre buildings and presents a charming example of what was in vogue in Europe and America at the time of construction. Some critics who visualize the Arts Theatre as the epitome of

the culture of the people (which it ought to be) contend that it ought to take cognisance of the people's need and have affinity with its creative environment, spatial relations and cultural aspirations. This would have conformed with Richard and Helen Leacroft's view that:

Theatres represent the built environment resulting from a number of actor-audience relationships which are varied by many condition.³⁶

The Leacrofts see theatre in the totality of its environmental mood and motion. If structures have meanings according to the conception of their utility, critics wonder why these are not evident in a theatre meant for Africans. John Gloat observes the veracity of buildings when he says:

Buildings cannot lie; they tell the truth directly or by implication about those who made and used them and provide veracious records of the character and quality of the past and present civilization.³⁷

If the above is true, the criticism against the physical structure of the Arts Theatre may be considered logically valid. Sir Leonard Woolley,³⁸ the famous

British archaeologist supports the above point of view and strengthens his argument by saying that building style is neither an accident nor an arbitrary thing, but a natural growth answering to the condition of life. Apparently the Arts Theatre does not reflect or rouse the sentiments of African cultural need, but adequately serves the cultural and educational purposes of the Europeans who built it. It goes without saying therefore that the structure was meant only for educational purpose.

As a medium of education, the Arts Theatre by its presence heightened people's theatrical awareness and sharpened their critical ability. The Arts Theatre provides a forum for a general education in Theatre Arts and a sound knowledge for theatre criticism. It has given prominence to the works of African writers and promoted a balanced international repertoire.

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9. Thomson Salgado: 470.

10. Martin with Clive Wake, African Theatre Today (London: Pitman, 1970), 49.

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CHAPTER 2

2.0 THE UNIVERSITY, BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARTS THEATRE

2.1 Purpose of the University

The immortal declaration "Here shall be the University of Nigeria"¹ by Sir William H. Fyfe on December 28, 1946 marked the culmination of the nationalist's agitation for Higher Education and the inception of a new social order in the British West Africa. Dr. Kenneth Mellamby was appointed Principal designate of the University College, Ibadan in 1947. In his lecture at the Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos, on 22 April 1948, Mellanby succinctly explained the mission and vision of UCI by saying:

The University College is being established with the primary object of producing a West African University which will be a centre of learning and culture, and which will make the maximum contribution to all aspects of the development of the country. The standards of the University College must be equal to those of the best universities of any country but the college must also have an African bias, and while not neglecting any branch of learning must concentrate on subjects, of special interest and importance to Africa.²

In Mellanby's vision the University was to be "a centre of learning and culture" which suggests that the Arts Theatre had a central purpose in the cultural and academic conception of the University planning. We are reliably informed and historical evidence shows that the theatre facility was originally conceived as an Open Air Theatre, for communal cultural activities which structurally would have been adaptable to African needs. But there were frequent structural and locational changes when the erection of buildings commenced in 1951. The Open Air Theatre which for example was to be located on the Western side of the stadium disappeared and an Arts Theatre was substituted.³

On 20th October, 1947, a Committee of Colonial Office and Inter-University Council (IUC) including Dr. Mellanby interviewed a number of distinguished British architects for the building of the University facilities. Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew group of architects were selected. The architects immediately set to work and produced a layout plan of the permanent buildings. But as Mellanby informs us, "on 3rd October, 1949, the layout and plans submitted by the architects were

examined by the Academic Board. It was unanimously resolved that they be not approved"⁴. Subsequently, a Building Committee was appointed to "revise, reject or accept plans and give directions to the architects in the name of the Council"⁵. The ground on which the design was rejected was that it was so diagrammatic that it would be impossible to realize practically.

Mellanby makes it clear that the architecture was not an imposition from London but a choice made by the colonial administrators in Nigeria. Ironically, frequent changes on the plan made the London authorities doubt the competence of the Building Committee in Nigeria. Of course, there seemed to be genuine reason for changes.

The vision of the University College, Ibadan, was to achieve the totality of all that amounted to civilized values in all academic disciplines and Western culture and discerningly adapt them to accelerate the technological and socio-political transformation of the agrarian Africa. The significance of UCI's pioneering role and the eventual production of outstanding scholars and leaders for the young nation in transition cannot be overemphasized. The leadership role of Ibadan continues as its products get appointed as Vice-Chancellors of New Nigerian Universities thereby perpetuating standards in scholarship

and relevance in educational needs. The dreams of Mellanby have been translated into reality as Tekena Tamuno observes:

The proud image of UCI in the academic world was in many ways a product of the dedication and care which the IUC gave the emergent University in Nigeria⁴.

The reference point for the new Nigerian Universities in theatre traditions, curriculum development and scholarship was the University College, which became autonomous in 1962. Its autonomy became a political issue in 1960 when Nigeria became Independent. For such an instrument of progress to remain tied to the apron string of the University of London did not show intellectual maturity and true political freedom, so the autonomy was proposed in 1960. In 1962 UCI became the University of Ibadan, a proud product of the University of London, awarding its own home manufactured degrees. The same year three other universities - Lagos, Nzukka and Zaria were established with great inspirations from the UCI.

Although the foundation of Nigerian development was colonial in all ramifications in that all academics,



PLATE 2 - A Scene from Wole Soyinka's
The Lion and the Jewel (Obed Ada
as Bale Baroka in the Scene) 1958/59

Photograph Courtesy Prof. G. Axworthy,
Cardiff, Wales, 1986.

architecture, ethics etc. were based on the archetypal British standards as proposed by IUC, graduates were able to adapt their skill to suit the environmental need of the people. Professor Ferguson reveals:

... because Ibadan was unique, all we did in sport, drama, music, worship, was setting standards for a nation then of 65 million people. When we put on Shakespeare this was Stratford, our operas were La Scala, our Chapel Choir the Mormon Tabernacle, our Madrigal group the King's Singers. And graduates went out from us to develop what they had experienced with us in their own way ...⁶ (Emphasis mine)

The manner of what graduates perpetuated has been the object of controversy since independence. Have they developed styles that really show their African background? The theatre has been used to challenge the colonial acculturation policy and the Arts Theatre has been very strong in its appeal for Afrocentric productions since Wole Soyinka's Lion and the Jewel⁷ and The Swamp Dwellers were produced in 1958/59. But the challenges have not been equally met in other facets

of human development by the University. This has necessitated a reorientation of African educational horizons which made Wandira Asavia to call for total change to suit present need. He says:

What seems to be required, therefore, was a new working definition of University, which would signify its commitment, not just to knowledge for its own sake, but to the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of, and for the common man and woman in Africa. The African University must in the 1970s not only wear a different cloak, but must also be differently motivated. It must be made of different and distinctive substance from the traditions of Western Universities, and must evolve a different attitude and a different approach to its task. The truly African University must be one that draws its inspirations from its environment, not a transplanted tree, but growing from a seed that is planted and nurtured in the African soil.

The above recommendations are some of the vital reactions to which the Arts Theatre in its gradual evolution attempted to find responses and solutions to.

The Arts Theatre being included in the final layout plan was a later development that grew out of the constant structural adjustments and conception or

perhaps the inclusion was instigated by theatrical waves in Europe or a review of the role of theatre in the cultural life of a university in a socially disadvantaged economy. However, there is no evidence as to when the decision was made to build the Arts Theatre or for what purpose. Geoffrey Axworth, the founding director of the Arts Theatre, himself observed: "What thought lay behind this action is, it seems, already lost in the mist of time ---"⁹. However, there is historical evidence to support our suspicion that Tom Child and Randall Hogarth, the two pioneer members of staff of UCI, played prominent roles in theatre development and that their work must have influenced the integration of a mixed programme of theatre in the University plan.

2.2 Theatre Forms

Theatre buildings are often classified by the type of stage form they have. The proscenium stage a very European structure was chosen for Ibadan, the largest African City, South of the Sahara, a fact which, surprisingly has continued to surprise theatre scholars. Buildings generally are

motivated by needs, and their purposes determine the nature of their structure. As Horold Burris-Meyer and Edward C. Cole observe:

The plan of any modern building depends on a knowledge of the purposes for which it is to be built. An Architect designs a factory only after consulting freely with his client regarding the processes of manufacture to be housed; he does not design a residence without first studying at length the composition, personalities, habits, and circumstances of the family; nor does he design a church without knowing thoroughly the services, rites and ceremonies to be celebrated therein. He cannot succeed in designing a theatre unless he obtains, from some sources, information regarding the use of the building.¹⁰

We will examine the rationale of choice of the proscenium for the Arts Theatre from the purpose which the theatre was meant to serve and the advantages of the stage form chosen. The variety of stage forms that have emerged over the ages have been precipitated by changing styles in writing, acting and production which encouraged the increasing desire of theatre artists to achieve perfect audience-actor

interrelationship in a theatre performance. The stage has become so much an object of controversy and constant experimentation because it influences the playwright's writing; limits or broadens the director's artistic vision; hinders or enhances production styles; encourages or discourages the actor's creativity; ignites or frustrates the dancer's ingenuity; and in its final impact hampers or promotes audience-actor relationship in the realisation of the ultimate artistic objective.

At the time the Arts Theatre was built, ~~new~~ stage forms had emerged among which were the 'arena' otherwise called 'theatre-in-the-round' and the 'open stage' or 'thrust stage' etc. But the proscenium stage was the most prominent with the longest historical tradition. Allardyce Nicoll traces its origin to the Greek 'proskenion' in 425 BC on which the more elaborate Roman 'proscenium' was based¹¹. It applied to the whole acting area and its picture frame background which was usually ornamented in front with columns and niches. The proscenium was developed further during the Italian renaissance of the 15th century at the introduction of classical drama. Basing their designs on the architectural works of Vitruvius (16 - 13 BC), the renaissance

architects built new theatres which incorporated proscenium arch combined with painted scenery or perspective painting to achieve naturalism in production. The theatre was essentially scholastic and the plays were written in Latin.

But the proscenium stage did not have a continuous history from its earliest origin in Greece to its full manifestation in the 20th century. Burris-Meyer and Cole explain that "The history of theatre shows twenty-four centuries in which the picture frame was either non-existent or was modified by the use of acting areas in front of it, against the last century and a quarter during which the proscenium developed in prominence"¹². Richard and Helen Leacroft observed that "the Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza, represents the contemporary academic theatre ..."¹³ during the Italian renaissance. The proscenium flourished again in the 19th and early 20th century before the avant-gardists revolted against it because of the sharp division it created between the audience and the performer. By this division they reasoned, the theatre was architecturally divided into two distinctive territories representing two separate realities and functions which ought not to be so.

They advocated for a united whole where actors and audience could interact freely. In this regard Brooks McNamara, Jerry Rojo and R. Schechuer observe the nature of the revolution:

In a sense the whole of the 20th century in Europe and America demonstrates a gradual retreat from these conventions, a retreat made clear by the development of arena and thrust stages and the growth of various schools of design which modify or abstract the naturalist vision of reality¹⁴

By this reaction, the proscenium realism which was pictorially achieved through perspective painting was declared unrealistic and true realism according to contemporary dramatists demanded that genuine and original material or setting should be presented physically on stage¹⁵. As a form that promoted directional perception of action, lacking side vision and physical ability to cope with the sophistication and dialectics of modern (revolutionary) dramas such as those of Antoine Andre (1858 - 1943), Ibsen, Strindberg, Appia, Meyerhold, etc., the proscenium was considered too simplistic and anachronistic. Furthermore, the aesthetic distance¹⁶ or objective viewing which the division in a proscenium promotes

significantly was not considered an advantage. The movement has therefore been towards the elimination of the orchestra pit and the proscenium wall. This is necessary for as Arthur Miller complained, "You just can't write for these 'shoe boxes' with the same ideas, with the same emotional scope, as you would for a more adaptable theatre"...¹⁷ However, in spite of all its ~~defects~~, Barris-Meyer and E. Cole claim that the proscenium stage:

... affords the maximum confrontation of performers and audience and is best for lecturers, concert singers, recitation and dramatic presentations.¹⁸

The thrust or open stage is a mid-twentieth century development. It is a direct descendant of the Greek theatre and much related to the Elizabethan stage. It enjoyed some measure of success but the triumph was not a lasting one. Unlike in the proscenium where the audience sits directly opposite the actor face to face, the open stage projects into the auditorium. The audience sits on three sides of the stage (three-quarter-round) to encourage a closer audience-performance relationship.

There is neither a proscenium wall nor a gaping orchestra pit. It is therefore possible for the actor to move in and out of the audience.

This stage provides the opportunity to see the action from different viewing points, and promotes diversity in writing, acting and audience participation.

Nevertheless, the thrust stage has its own limitations too, as Richard and Helen Leacroft observe:

While this theatre shows that a much larger audience may be seated within an acceptable distance from the actor than is possible in a directional picture or end-stage arrangement, it also indicates that such a thrust stage is more restrictive to the movement of actors, in that their points of entry and exit are both fixed and limited compared with the many variations than can be created by the use of movable scenery on an end-stage¹⁹.

While there is intimacy between audience and performance, the problems of obstructed view, impeded movement and distractions have to be tackled.

The arena stage is known by other appendages such as theatre-in-the-round, central staging, circle theatre, and bandbox. It is said to have been derived from "circus, ancient amphitheatre (double theatre), and

primitive ritual sites"²⁰. The arena is a twentieth century development in Europe but it was also the form of the traditional African staging style. Here, the acting area is in the middle of the audience, either circular, rectangular or square in shape. What is most important is that the acting area is surrounded by the audience on all sides. Players enter and leave through the audience, which creates an even more intimate interaction between the audience and the performers.

Richard and Helen Leacroft elucidate the attributes of the arena as follows:

The round is an ideal form for circuses, gymnastics, wrestling, boxing, and the antics of clowns - which suggest that productions intended for presentation in the round should be devised to make the most of such possibilities. But too often even those plays written to be performed in this way have not broken free from picture frame conventions, and in such cases, or when picture - frame plays are adapted, production patterns are limited by the fixed positions of the entrances and exits, and their distance from the acting area. Limitations are also placed on the movements of performers, and on the use of furnishings and scenery which may restrict the views of members of the audience²¹.

This stage form seems suited to purely undiluted African diversifications which are circus-like, acrobatics gymnastics and wrestling practised by the traditional 'Alarinjo theatre' or the 'cultic masquerade theatre'. But for the modern theatre which is an admixture of Western and African cultural orientations, a new concept, true to the present circumstances must be evolved to reflect the theatre's hybrid nature.

Although the audience-player relationship is improved in the arena stage, it is obvious that its shortcomings can mar or frustrate audience enjoyment.

The extended stage, on the other hand, is a theatrical novelty of the mid-20th century. This is almost an antithesis of the arena staging. While the audience surrounds the arena stage in a latter form, it is the stage that nearly surrounds the audience in the extended staging format. This type of stage has been differently described as side stages, multiproscenium, theatre-all-round and theatrama.

The extended stage however is more ^{of} a flexible proscenium than a different or isolated form of stage. The difference is the extension of the left and right

sides of the stage into the auditorium to surround the audience almost three-quarters-round. This type of stage allows for multiple or simultaneous settings. The extended stage is suitable for a multi-media production, an advantage which makes it more relevant to today's technical and artistic needs.

The advent of electromechanical devices in theatrical production has added new dimensions to the flexibility of space, set mobility and the manipulation of stage relationships. This has led to the 'Free form stage', otherwise called flexible or experimental stage, a theatre that stresses no particular form of stage but maintains absolute freedom in its auditorium and stage arrangement. The seats could be rearranged to achieve any form of dramatic style and appropriate audience-performer relationship. The seats are not permanently fixed and may not be in tiers, unless built on collapsible frames. With the push of a button the stage can bring out a scaffold, a staircase etc. The acting area can shrink and expand at will while the auditorium itself is subject to the same electro-mechanical juggling. Burris-Meyer and Cole discuss the intricate nature of electromechanical manipulation and the fact that everywhere in the theatre except the walls could be changed at will²².

The free form theatre does not however provide absolute satisfaction as it has its own limitations. The movement of the parts of the theatre is usually mechanically restricted in direction and rate. The extent of desirable flexibility has to be predetermined and the speed at which change would be effected must be mastered. The available space and extent of manipulatory utility is also a factor to consider. Power failure in the third world, technological application, cost and computer services make free form theatre an expensive undertaking. However, inspite of its novelty and the diversity of its means to achieve a variety of audience-performance relationships, it may not be the final panacea to production stylistics and creative plasticity. More weird forms may be introduced in future.

The solution to this endless search for ideal stage form may be found in a multiform theatre which combines all known stage forms within its building. The Pittsburgh playhouse complex, Pittsburgh, Pa, U.S.A. and the National Theatre, London are typical examples. They both have three different theatres with various stage forms and capacities. The National Theatre, London for example has the Olivier Theatre, (1,160), the Lyttelton Theatre (890), and the Cotteslo Theatre (400).

The Olivier, which ^{is} the the largest and most radical of the three auditoriums is "designed to be flexible enough to serve dramatists of every period"²³. Its auditorium is fan-shaped. The Lyttelton has an adjustable proscenium stage while Cottesloe has a rectangular room with two tiers of galleries on three sides, and a floor space that can be rearranged for actor and audience.

2.3 Choice of Proscenium Stage for the Arts Theatre

An ideal Arts Centre according to Burgard does the following: It

- (a) stimulates creative interaction among the professional personnel of participating arts organization,
- (b) creates new interest in the organizations occupying the center and by this new interest generates the increased financial support for them that eventually makes progress possible,
- (c) develops new and larger audiences for the arts ..., and

- (d) forces community leaders to undertake comprehensive long range planning for the arts in relation to the entire community²⁴.

Apparently the Arts Theatre fulfils all these conditions, but it by no means satisfies the structural expectations of the critics. Our study of the origin of the Arts Theatre reveals that the choice of a proscenium stage was not in any way connected with colonialism or political motives.

We recognize that the proscenium regained popularity and wider acceptance in America at the time the Arts Theatre was built. Most of the theatres built at the turn of the century in the 50s, whether colleges, commercial or provincial theatre, were largely proscenium theatres²⁵. It is possible therefore that it was because the colonial administrators wanted to keep pace with theatrical development, that they adopted the proscenium stage. We must remember also that the Glover Hall, Lagos, which was the first Nigerian public hall of repute, had a proscenium stage.

All the Arts Theatres we have studied had proscenium stages and Teatro Olimpico, the earliest academic theatre, had a proscenium stage. Apart from these reasons, the advantage stressed by Burris-Meyer and Cole, that the proscenium stage "affords the maximum confrontation of performers and audience and best for lecturers, concert singers, recitation and dramatic presentations"²⁶ satisfied the main purpose for which a University College theatre was needed.

2.4 Early Dramatic Activities and Randall Hogarth

Kenneth Mellanby, the Principal of UCI, described Tom Child as "an enthusiastic photographer and even more enthusiastic amateur dramatic producer"²⁷. He also described Randall Hogarth as "a senior Education Officer, another enthusiast for the theatre, in charge of the course in Teacher Training"²⁸. This was a fortuitous coincidence indeed, and it gave Ibadan a rich inspiration and solid theatrical background. Professor John Ferguson enlightens us further about Tom Child's profundity and commitment as follows: "the Ibadan Operatic

Society had been formed two years before (1954) by a fanatic named Tom Child. He had produced four in a year, which was perhaps too many"²⁹. The Operatic Society which he founded in 1954 was responsible for the spread of operatic culture in Ibadan and contributed to the vibrance of the Arts Theatre programmes of these early years.

Randall Hogerth was also in those early days a respected name in theatrical development who employed the talents of the teachers-in-training to elevate the social life on campus. He made a success of the transferred Yaba Higher College Teacher Training programme. He was close to power at Ibadan for Mellanby said he decorated the ceremonial platform when the University was formally opened on 2nd February, 1948. Apart from this, the gradual evolution of drama from extra-mural activity to a teaching subject at Ibadan could be traced to his initial brilliant efforts and impetus. Mellanby testifies to this by saying:

No Greek dramatist appeals more
to modern taste and no Greek
play is better known than
Oedipus Rex.

One of the major contributions the teachers in training made was in drama. At the end of the 1949-50 session they presented Oedipus Rex. The high standard of this production owed much to the immense efforts of Randall Hogarth who produced it, and who spent endless time and trouble over the production, but the students gave a notable performance of a kind seldom, if ever, seen before in West Africa³⁰.

Randall Hogarth initiated dramatic culture and promoted theatrical awareness *greatly*.

The production of Oedipus Rex reveals a conscious effort perhaps, by Hogarth to relate theatre development in Ibadan to the antecedents in world theatre history. We do not know what recommended the choice of this play but history reveals that the Tiatro Olimpico in Vicenza, the first outstanding academic theatre of renaissance Italy was opened on March 3, 1585 with an epic production of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex³¹ Robin May also observes the popularity of this play by saying:

No Greek dramatist appeals more to modern taste and no Greek play is better known than Oedipus Rex³².

Hogarth launched theatre tradition at UCI in 1949, thus providing a solid foundation for theatre education and practice in Nigeria on which Geoffrey Axworthy and others built their reputation.

We suspect that the Open Air Theatre was the Architects' concept of a rural theatre as in the tradition of the classical Greek theatre in Athens of the 5th century B.C. We are also inclined to believe that while the Inter-University Council recommended the inclusion of the Arts Theatre in the tradition of the British University as precedented at Bristol University, it was people like Randall Hogarth who made the relevance of the theatre in Ibadan apparent.

Hogarth's production inspired also the undergraduates to present Charley's Aunt³³ which Mellanby said was not so successful. Also, we suspect that Oedius Rex and Charley's Aunt (1949 - 50) were the earliest notable dramatic productions at Ibadan. And while we also recognize the significant contributory role of the British Council in the Arts Theatre activities, it was the Inter-University Council that recommended the

inclusion of the Arts Theatre to complement the cultural and academic responsibility of the UCI, the first West African University.

2.5 Arts Theatre Structure and the idea of an Open Air Theatre

Topography and weather conditions obviously form a major consideration in determining the architectural or physical definition of any structure. These factors invariably influence other things such as land or space use, purpose and accessibility. Locations are always purposive with their aesthetic implications especially with regard to Education and Religion. The enclosure of Trenchard Hall in the Tower Court garden is suggestive of exclusivity and a sense of occasion. The placement of the Arts Theatre at short picturesque distances from the Administrative blocks, student hall and central parking lot suggests the communality of its purpose.

A question often asked by theatre observers is connected with the choice of the present physical structure for an African theatre and why it was located where it is. But if we have to rely on the

Layout Plans of Permanent Buildings of the University there was no provision for an Arts Theatre but an Open Air Theatre which was located at a very remote area of the campus. The small place in which the Arts Theatre is cramped in means it was an after-thought. Circumstances surrounding the frequent changes in the final building plans, which we already discussed were responsible. The motive behind the Open Air Theatre was pleasure and an attempt to provide possibly an adaptable open theatre that has a semblance of African market square or courtyard which is conducive to African entertainments. ^{This} would have promoted African ritual drama immensely. The location of the Open Air Theatre was however too distant to the small community of intellectuals and their servants who lived on the campus. The campus itself was three miles away from the indigenes who could not appreciate African theatre in a westernized open air environment. The African staff population on campus was negligible and theatre as a cultivated habit had not become fashionable in Africa as in Europe. For these reasons we strongly suspect that the colonial administrators found it expedient to replace the Open Air Theatre with a mixed-programme theatre which

would be easily accessible to both staff and student population. Similarly we guess that weather considerations might have also influenced the decision to discard the Open Air Theatre project, particularly at the rain forest belt area of Nigeria where Ibadan is located.

2.6 The Arts Theatre Development and the Management Committee

Professor Molly Mahood found herself in a great dilemma as to what to do with the Arts Theatre when it was completed in 1955. As the head of the Department of English, she realized very early that there was no limit to which she could utilize the theatre to achieve the university's academic-cum cultural objectives through Dramatic Literature exercises. The need to achieve the cultural objectives of the university and animate the facility theatrically instigated her to invite Mr. Geoffrey Axworthy, who was a lecturer in drama at the University of Baghdad in 1956. Professor Joel Adedeji informs us appropriately on how Axworthy persuaded the University to set up an Arts Theatre Management

committee to formulate policies and ²suprintend its activities³⁴. The ATMC was set up in January 1957 by the University senate to manage the theatre and plan its further development. The promotion of cultural and academic interests was to guide the committee in its work³⁵. This was a most imaginative action taken both by Mahood and Axworthy to strip the theatre of redundancy and circumvent the British attitude of ignoring the arts or doing nothing to encourage their practice³⁶.

With the inception of the committee came the appointment of specified officers charged with the day-to-day supervision of the Arts Theatre programme. These officers included a General Manager, a stage manager and a Technical Director. The theatre by this development ceased to be a workshop of the Department of English Officers were elected from among the members of the committee. These officers attracted no remunerations since they were staff of the University, and were nominated or elected in recognition of their aptitude and devotion to the theatre.

Except for the Principal of the University College, who was the chairman of the Committee by virtue of his position, the majority of the members were theatre

enthusiasts. They were principal officers carefully selected to represent various interests and departments of the University so as to give the Arts Theatre a broad-based support and patronage from the community. It was also, presumably designed to enable the theatre enjoy sympathetic consideration in University budgeting.

In the ATMC meeting of October 7, 1961, held in the Arts Theatre at 12.15p.m.

Mr. G. J. B. Allport was re-elected General Manager and Mr. G. J. Axworthy and Mr. F. E. Speed were re-elected stage Managers for the academic years 1961/62.

The account of Miss G. Minter (Secretary to ATMC, 1963/64) is most revealing. In a memorandum to the Secretary of the School of Drama she listed out the membership of the Committee as follows:

The Vice-Chancellor or his representative as Chairman (he is asked at the beginning of each session who he would like to represent him, and he always says the Dean of Arts).

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts

The Director of the School of Drama

The Technical Director of the School of Drama

The Business Manager of the School of Drama

A member of the School of Drama
(Normally a Nigerian - now Mr. Nwoko)

2 Representatives of the Senate
(Now Professor Ferguson and Mr. Allport)

1 Representative of the Faculty of Arts
(Now Professor Maxwell)

1 Representative of the Finance Department
(Now Mr. Preston)

1 Congregation member of the Senate
(Now Dr. Olubunmo)

The Secretary of the School of Drama
(as Secretary - no voting power)³⁷

The committee formulated policy and drew up rules and regulations concerning the hire, maintenance and management of the Arts Theatre. Granting approval for the use of the Arts Theatre, improving the facilities, general administration and planning for further development were the committee's major functions.

The calibre of the people in the committee also assured its success as they were no ordinary people. They were men and women of tremendous influence in the University administration. Added to this advantage is the fact that most of them were creatively inclined and they knew the implications of every decision taken³⁸.

In cultural and professional projections, the ATMC encouraged the growth or the founding of many semi-professional and professional performing groups. Professor J. A. Adedeji enlightens us further on this by saying:

The function of the ATMC and their programme of activities encouraged the emergence of two groups of amateur dramatic societies; the University College Dramatic Society (a student group) and the Arts Theatre Production Group. The following cultural groups also emerged to use the facilities of the Arts Theatre: The Music Circle, the Ibadan Operatic Society, the Film Society and the HOI Phrontestal (for classical plays in Greek and Latin)³⁹.

Beginning with the Arts Theatre Production Group in 1957, the Arts Theatre has spurred the emergence of other resident troupes such as the University Travelling Theatre (1961) with its corollary Theatre-on-Wheels (1964; School of Drama Acting Company (1967); University Theatre Arts Company (1970); Unibadan Masques⁽¹⁹⁷⁴⁾ and the Unibadan Performing Company (1980). The ATMC strived for balance in both academic and cultural pursuits to avoid lopsidedness. Its fervent yearnings for development of an academic programme out of the Arts Theatre is vividly demonstrated in its applications to three foundations

(viz: Rockefeller, Ford and Gulbenkian) for funds to establish a School of Drama and update the technical facilities of the Arts Theatre⁴⁰.

2.6.1 The Arts Theatre and the School of Drama

The agitation for political independence which fructified in October 1960 had its impact on the status of the University College. In January 1961, three months after political independence, a visitation panel led by Sir Charles R. Moris, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, was sent to Nigeria to study the academic and administrative situations at Ibadan in preparation for granting her full autonomy.

At this time, the Arts Theatre had become an active centre of cultural activities and awareness. Drama and a variety of theatrical presentations were regularly featured by amateur and semi-professional groups. Although there is no traceable evidence that the members of the visitation panel saw productions at the Arts Theatre, it can be reasonably conjectured from its vivid reports on the Arts Departments and the Arts Theatre, that

they must have witnessed certain impressive theatrical activities at the Arts Theatre. This must have prompted them to include in their report the prospect of developing a Department of Dramatic Arts, a report which has generally been regarded by theatre scholars and observers as the impetus for the creation of the School of Drama and a credit to the efficient Management of the Arts Theatre by the ATMC.

The relevant parts of the report reads as follows:

We were much impressed by the part that has been played in recent years in the work of some of the Arts Departments, and in the life of the College generally, by the Arts Theatre. Under any circumstances the work of some Departments is hardly complete without some attention to the Arts of the theatre; and this is especially true in Universities in countries where there is little or no opportunity of attending the theatre. Nigeria, moreover, is rich in traditional drama, and its traditions can provide valuable basis for modern Nigerian drama. There could be danger however that they might be discarded in favour of imported material, disseminated by radio, film and television, and there seems to be no institution in the country other than the college which has the necessary facilities for teaching all aspects of the drama.

Also we feel - and this seems to us to be important - that greater use of the drama would be made in the schools if it were possible for future teachers to have some experience of the drama in the University. We do not know whether it will be consonant with the academic and teaching plans of the college to consider favourably the establishment of a Department or sub-department of Dramatic Studies; but we very much hope that some way will be found of giving official recognition to the activities and education in the drama which are made possible by the existence of the Arts Theatre and which have flourished unofficially to such good effect in the recent year.

(Emphasis mine). We do not think that these activities, and especially their quality, should be left at the mercy of those accidents and hazards which are inseparable from a state of total dependence on purely voluntary initiative and support⁴¹.

In this report three significant facts that stand out clearly are that there existed active dramatic activities in the Arts Theatre; that efforts should be made to establish drama education through the Arts Theatre and that Nigerian culture should be promoted in order to forestall the incursion of foreign culture.

With this report, the ground was prepared for nursing the ambition to establish a Drama Department. The Arts Theatre Management Committee was on the look out for the golden opportunity which arrived in the guise of Rockefeller Foundation representatives in Nigeria.

The idea was capitalized upon by the University authorities to persuade the Rockefeller Foundation to provide a grant towards the realization of the dream. This had a positive response, and a grant of \$200,000 was received for the establishment of the school of Drama in 1962. The grant was to last for five years and its specific aim was to carry out dramatic training designed to develop the use of such media as theatre, film, radio and television in Nigeria and to train Nigerians for positions of responsibility in these fields⁴².

The School of Drama was established in October, 1963 with the Arts Theatre as its nucleus and base. With this also came extraneous responsibilities for the ATMC which now had to oversee the harmonious coexistence of the School of Drama and the Arts Theatre while also maintaining its cordiality with outside users of the theatre facility. Geoffrey Axworthy was appointed the director of the School. The School took over the technical

responsibility of the Arts Theatre from the ATMC in 1963 and henceforth started lobbying for the possession of the theatre which it regarded as its main physical asset necessary for its programme development. In 1970 when the school became the Department of Theatre Arts, the ATMC of the Senate was disbanded and the Arts Theatre and its management transferred to the new Department. This will be fully discussed under the chapter dealing with Soyinka's directorship of the School of Drama.

2.6.2 The Role of Geoffrey Axworthy

The arrival of Geoffrey Axworthy in 1956 ushered in great changes in the history of the Arts Theatre. His contributions were startling, varied and farsighted. Notably however are the facts that he gave a vision to the Arts Theatre in the area of management, a direction in play production, and a stability in its public image; he also won for it a loyal audience and a reputable standard. A graduate of Oxford, Axworthy

was a member of the Oxford University Dramatic Society (OUDS). He taught drama at the University of Baghdad (1951 - 1956) before he was invited by Professor Molly Mahood to join the staff of the English Department at the University College, Ibadan in 1956.

Axworthy, before he left Baghdad had learnt a lesson or two about how to develop drama. As he himself declares "... I then understood up till 1956 when I left Baghdad that theatre could be introduced to places where it did not exist. I then started to have a new aim, which was to construct a theatre where there wasn't one"⁴³. Evidently, Geoffrey Axworthy's work at Ibadan was that of a pioneer on whose shoulders rested the responsibility for the artistic development of the Arts Theatre.

The work of Axworthy can be loosely categorized into four compartments, namely,

- (i) Amateur productions,
- (ii) professional productions,
- (iii) the physical development of the Arts Theatre, and
- (iv) his directorship of the School of Drama.

To achieve all these, Axworthy proceeded by recommending the establishment of the Arts Theatre Management Committee in 1957. He was also a supportive member of the Committee. As earlier mentioned, two amateur groups, the Arts Theatre Production Group (a staff group) and the University College Ibadan Dramatic Society (a student group) emerged to use the facilities of the Arts Theatre. Axworthy started his production activities with the Arts Theatre Production Group (ATPG) of which he and some members of the ATMC were members. The first production was Andre Obey's Noah about which the programme note informs us as follows:

"NOAH" is the first production of the University College Arts Theatre Production Group - a group which has been formed with the assistance of the college authorities, to perform modern and classic plays in the Arts Theatre. The group aims, in the course of its work, to provide good entertainment for the whole community; its primary task is, however, academic - to provide students of the college with a cultural facility which in most countries is taken for granted - the experience of going to the theatre. Firsthand experience of drama in production is particularly relevant to studies in literary departments and the group aims, in the course of time, to demonstrate a wide variety of

types and styles of theatre.

This is both a policy statement, as well as a background history of the group, The ATPG produced wide ranging classics and modern plays and through his extra-curricular activities, Axworthy encouraged other amateur groups to supplement ATPG's efforts.

Between 1957 and 1963 (when the School of Drama was founded), Geoffrey Axworthy directed an average of twenty productions, - that is, about three productions per year - for various organizations such as the ATPG, UCIDS, Ibadan Operatic Society and Music Circle. These were not related to classroom dramatic exercises but were community oriented activities. He was an energetic and inventive director who took the Arts Theatre beyond the immediate anticipations of the ATMC. The reason why Noah was chosen as the first production, for instance says the programme note was because of its "theatrical quality" and "its striking and enduring topicality". The choice, in other words, was guided by its "topicality" which we can regard as its universal applicability focussing on community living, courage and catastrophe as epitomized by the biblical story of Noah and the flood.

The play had fourteen characters (and seventeen actors) among whom were three Nigerians - Frank Aig - Imoukhuede, Fola Aboaba⁴⁴ and Gordon Unuigore. The production crew consisted of seven people with Axworthy as Producer and the Assistant Registrar (Finance) Harold Preston who later became the University Bursar serving as the Front-of-House Manager.

After Andre Obey's Noah, Axworthy produced works of Shakespeare, Gogol, Anouilh, Fry, Sophocles, Ibsen, Aristophanes, Pinero, Miller, Dryden, Shaw, Oscar Wilde, etc. which testify to the ATPG's assiduity and the commitment to its objective "to demonstrate a wide variety of types and styles of theatre".

Axworthy as the mentor of the UCIDS also guided the dilettante efforts of the students' Drama Society towards professionalism and the promotion of plays by Nigerian playwrights. He pioneered this in 1958/59 with the production of Wole Soyinka's The Swamp Dwellers and The Lion and the Jewel. In 1960, he produced Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero and That Scoundrel Suberu, an adaptation of Moliere's Les Fouteries de Scapin, by

Dapo Adelugba, Alfred Opubor, Brownson Dede and Ayo Amu. He attempted to make professionals out of the students through the establishment of the University Travelling Theatre that went on annual nation-wide tours from 1961 to 1966. We shall discuss this later in detail in our chapter on performing groups.

The other aspect of Axworthy's work concerns the physical alteration of the building. Plans had been under way to establish a professional theatre school in 1960 before the Visitation Panel report of 1961. The Arts Theatre as it stood then had been found unsuitable for professional practice and the ATMC had approached various organisations for financial support to carry out physical alterations to suit professional needs. The main defects of the Arts Theatre then included nearness to road traffic and a students hall, open-louvred walls, lack of backstage working space and of "equipment appropriate to this type of stage"⁴⁵. Axworthy, in conformity with the theory of Richard and Helen Leacroft, that, "theatres are living organisms being altered and adapted throughout their existence to conform with changing and developing ideas and patterns"⁴⁶, went ahead to rectify the inadequacies of the Arts Theatre⁴⁷.

Various alterations were attempted at different stages. The establishment of the School of Drama further incited the director to more challenging plans for a true professional theatre. He laid out his schemes and ably chose his working partners. With a devoted staff among whom were the gifted artist Demas Nwoko, Eburn Clark, Martin Banham, and other loyal artistic companions, he was able to take the Arts Theatre and the School of Drama to greater heights. He did not mince words about his plans for the Arts Theatre and the School of Drama when he said:

Our plans for future include professional training in dance and drama, the creation of an open-air dance arena in which visiting and local dance groups may perform under advantageous viewing conditions; the design and construction of a low-cost model school theatre, made of local materials, to replace the appalling 'hole-in-the-wall' stages now being used; and of a 'flexible' school of Drama Theatre, in which experiments in new forms of staging to suit the needs of Nigeria's own playwrights and actors may be explored⁴⁸

It is obvious here that Axworthy's plan to build a new theatre shows his disagreement with the structural provisions of the facility; and also his hope for a flexible theatre in future to satisfy Nigerian writings marks his recognition of emerging Nigerian writers. Axworthy definitely had a thorough sense of mission which environment or cultural differences did not hamper. His being a Briton did not prevent him from having a dream of what a true Nigerian theatre should be. Although he could not achieve some of these lofty ambitions probably due to financial constraints or his sudden departure from Nigeria precipitated by the impending Nigerian civil war, the idea continued to be echoed by his successors.

Perhaps it may be relevant here to present the formal proposal for a School of Drama in the Arts Theatre as Axworthy conceived it, a proposal which later grew into the academic Department of Theatre Arts and nurtured a contagious Nigerian theatrical culture. The document which was Appendix II Attachment to the Paper: INTRODUCTION TO THE PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL OF DRAMA (Faculty Board of Arts) Paper Nov. 6, 1968/69, spelt out the nature

of theatre theory and practice. It is here below reproduced:

Proposal for a School of Drama in the Arts

Theatre:

- A. The objects of the School would be -
1. To provide courses ... (sic)
 2. To assist the development of drama and dramatic teaching within the University and outside it, in the following ways:
 - (a) by assuming responsibility for the technical maintenance and operation of the Arts Theatre, ensuring the safe and orderly conduct of extra-curricular work within the building; (emphasis mine)
 - (b) by establishing contact with colleges, schools, and other organizations engaged in dramatic work, to provide advice; to exchange information; to collect and circulate dramatic material and the results of research;

(c) by sponsoring performances in the Arts Theatre by suitable outside companies, and by University groups; such as the University Travelling Theatre, elsewhere.

Signed: G. J. Axworthy
20/2/62

The proposal was accepted but the School of Drama could not effectively take off in 1962 as there were myriad problems to combat. The question of where to start, how to find staff and other administrative problems had still to be solved. The Director of the School was compelled to travel to Britain and America on a staff recruitment exercise. Axworthy finally got on his staff, himself as Director; Martin Banham, as Deputy Director; Bill Brown, Technical Director; Demas Nwoko, Scenic Designer; Peggy Harper, dance teacher; and Joel Adedeji, as lecturer who set up a certificate Drama course in Education. There were also American Peace Corps members such as Mary Lou Frederick, a Yale trained scenic designer; Mary Caswell, who worked in the Wardrobe part-time and taught Costuming; Tom Herbert, as Mime and Movement

Instructor; Bob Moulthrop, as Acting and Directing teacher and Iquo Offiong as Wardrobe assistant who succeeded

Mary
May Lou Frederick.

Prior to the gathering of staff, Axworthy had commenced activities at the School by bringing into residence the Kola Ogunmola Travelling Theatre for a six-month workshop training. As he explained later, one of the reasons "that led to the introduction of the folk theatre groups to the University was the grant we had from the Rockefeller Foundation, which was about a quarter of a million dollars, and that was a lot of money. Moreover, we could not begin classes that year. We had to wait another year, so I suggested that we should establish a relationship between the University and Ogunmola's group through a period of residence, and we invited him to the University as Artist-in-Residence for a year. My aim was that we would get his work written down, learn his style from him and teach him some of the things he did not already know"⁴⁹.

That might not have been the whole story. Axworthy must have been influenced by certain other factors. There had for instance been theatre workshops jointly organized

by the Dramatic Society, the Department of English, and the Extra-Mural Department of the Institute of Education, such as the one conducted by Professor Anne Cooke Reid, former Professor of Drama, Howard University, U.S.A., from June 13th to 20th, in 1962. This 1962 workshop linked the University, probably for the first time, with the Yoruba operatic theatre by presenting The Reign of the Mighty by Ogunmola Theatre from Osogbo on June 16, 1962. This was an eye opener to the ingenuity of the Nigerian operatic theatre. The production recommended Ogunmola Theatre for a Rockefeller fellowship which enabled the entire company to undertake a six-month workshop training in the Arts Theatre, beginning from October, 1962.

At the same time, in the early 1960s, America was going through similar theatrical experiences about which Axworthy must have been aware. For instance, Stephen Langley informs us about situations in America, similar to this use of Rockefeller Foundation grants for the Ogunmola Theatre workshop, as follows:

In 1962 the Association of Producing Artists (APA), under the direction of Ellis Rabb, took up residence at the University of Michigan. With a large grant from the Rockefeller Foundation,

New York University established a professional theatre training program and with another Rockefeller grant, Stanford University hired nine professional actors to form a resident company to work with its students.... The list of professionally oriented programs offered by colleges is impressive. Most were inaugurated during the sixties and many were accompanied by ambitious plans for the construction of new campus theatre facilities ..⁵⁰

These examples, we believe, partly inspired the IUC in its search for standards for UCI. As a spontaneous response to what was current in America, the Ogunmola experiment was not actually in the direction of academic learning but rather, in that of professionalism. Axworthy said in this regard: "I got the first intakes to read a diploma instead of degree course because I wanted them to discover what things are all about by doing. I was more concerned with professionalism than with academic accumulation."⁵¹

Dapo Adelugba, one time president of the University of Ibadan Dramatic Society (UCIDS) and Manager of the University Travelling Theatre, who has studied the growth of the School of Drama/Department of Theatre Arts

confirms this: "In the first few years of its existence the Ibadan School of Drama concentrated its work on professional training of would-be theatre educators and artists. A two-year Diploma programme in Educational Drama (later) replaced by a two-year Diploma in Drama and one-year Certificate Programme also in Educational Drama were set up. Later the School broadened out into participation in the Bachelor of Arts degree curricular of the Ibadan University"⁵².

The first production of the School of Drama was The Palm Wine Drinkard written by Amos Tutola and adapted by Kola Ogunmola, the first product of the School. The production was not a part of the normal season of plays which was customary with theatre department, since the School of Drama had not yet established such tradition. The motive behind this production was for it to serve as a graduation thesis for Ogunmola after the training. The graduation production was so successful that critics who had opposed the experiment in the beginning had reasons to applaud the outcome. The union of the academic and

Figure 11: Kola Ogunmola as the "Drinkard" in his seminal search for palm wine.
A scene from "The Palm Wine Drinkard".
Photograph Courtesy of Prof. G. Axworthy, Cardiff, 1986.



PLATE 3: Kola Ogunmola as the "Drinkard" in his eternal search for palm wine. A scene from "The Palm Wine Drinkard".

Photograph Courtesy of Prof. G. Axworthy, Cardiff, 1986.

the professional theatres was not after all as unwise as it seemed. Wole Soyinka paid his compliments in the following terms:

One's veins fairly thump with joy at evenings such as the Ogunmola-Nwoko team has provided, and this is not for the fact of one success merely, but for the fact that it promises orgies of the theatre for the future. Ogunmola's presence on the stage is that of a theatre-breathing, theatre-eating fiend, and one feels that with a few more demons of possession like this man ignited at the tail and let loose on the world, a transformation might indeed take place in the public's aesthetic consciousness. We may even live to see those cinema theatres burnt down in anger which still purvey sterile Indian imitations of Hollywood juvenalia⁵³.

The overwhelming success of the palm Wine Drinkard puzzles one when one realizes that the privilege Ogunmola had could not be extended to other operatic troupes⁵⁴.

New factors such as the unavailability of funds and the emergence of the University Travelling Theatre might have militated against a repetition of the Ogunmola experience. Before Ogunmola graduated, the School of Drama and the University Dramatic Society had jointly formed the University Travelling Theatre which then

began to tour the nation during Easter vacations. Its Productions made this period the most active years of the School of Drama. The School became a full fledged academic Department of the University in 1970 as we shall see subsequently.

2.6.3 The Arts Theatre and the Department of Theatre Arts

The Arts Theatre was in the 1960s a vibrant centre for the development of theatre and allied arts at the University of Ibadan. It was its presence that inspired the founding of the School of Drama, and the Acting Companies and eventually gave birth to the Department of Theatre Arts. These departmental outgrowths of the Arts Theatre had all been accidental. They were circumstantially imposed with such irresistible spontaneity that they look preconceived. There is no doubt, of course, about the preponderant influence of foreign theatrical developments in this growth.

The Rockefeller grant to the School of Drama expired on June 30, 1968 and the School was plunged into a great crisis. Since it was not within the

financial ambit of the University to maintain its future was uncertain. After seven years of dynamic operations it had matured into a department with academic and professional programmes. It had represented the country in International festivals through its Acting Companies in Dakar, Senegal (1966) and Nancy, France (1967).

The School's achievements were so outstanding that ^{they} were given special mention in a graduation day address of Professor John Harris, the Acting Vice-Chancellor, on June 30, 1967. He commented as follows:

In a different kind of contest at the World Festival of University Drama, held in France, our School of Drama entered a team of eighteen students who presented two plays, one of them by Wole Soyinka. They were competing against twenty six Universities from major countries of the world. They gained third place, beaten only by Finland and Britain. This was a magnificent performance. It reflects the greatest credit on all concerned, students and staff alike, and provides a fitting climax to the Ibadan career of the School's Director, Geoffrey Axworthy.

He is one of those leaving us this year and can do so with pride in his achievement. When he came to Ibadan there was no School of Drama. He has built it from nothing to international eminence⁵⁵.

This is a most befitting testimony to the selfless contributions and achievements that marked the end of a worthy era.

Mr. Wole Soyinka, a well-known Nigerian playwright who took over as Director of the School of Drama in 1967 unfortunately spent the greater part of his tenure in prison custody, detained by the Federal Military Government. Dexter Lyndersay, a native of Trinidad took over as Acting Director while Soyinka was away. A technician by specialisation, he was a thorough man of the theatre who guarded the fort ably till Soyinka was released in October, 1969. Lyndersay's major contributions were in the directorship of the Unibadan Masques (1974 - 76) which we shall examine in Chapter 3.

There are at Ahmadu Bello and
Makuta Departments of Fine Arts
with emphasis on painting,
sculpture, graphic arts and
Sculpture of Arts. The proposal

2.6.4 Wole Soyinka and the Struggle for the Arts Theatre

Shortly after his release from detention, Soyinka launched a fierce battle against the Arts Theatre Management Committee to secure the full control of the Art Theatre. Simultaneously, the prospects of a full-fledged degree awarding Department of Theatre Arts were being developed. Soyinka was fighting for the revocation of the ATMC mandate and seeking transfer of the Arts Theatre Management to the School of Drama for a smooth administration of a Department of Theatre Arts.

Soyinka was working from the background of a new development. It had been proposed in the 1968/73 Quinquennium Estimates of the University of Ibadan, to the National Universities Commission, that a Department of Fine Arts be established to replace the School of Drama. The proposals had read inter alia:

There are at Ahmadu Bello and Nsukka Departments of Fine Arts with emphasis on painting, sculpture, graphic arts and history of Arts. The proposal

here is to establish a Department of Fine Arts with emphasis on the Performing Arts which can through teaching and research make an invaluable contribution to the development of the well-attested rich cultural heritage of Nigeria in this field....

The nucleus of such a Department already exists in the Arts Theatre, the first if not the only modern theatre in Nigeria, and in the School of Drama which has already made its mark in the development of Drama in Nigeria ...⁵⁶

On these premises Soyinka researched into the the history of the Arts Theatre and the Arts Theatre Management Committee in order to devise flawless strategies to acquire the Arts Theatre for the development of his academic and professional programmes. The battle had a long history as Axworthy himself had discovered these obstacles and had begun efforts to rectify them through demands which yielded some results⁵⁷.

With regard to what motivated him to take these steps, Soyinka declared:

Working on future plans for the School of Drama I find that even its present programme is hampered by the fact that the Department is not in full control of the Arts Theatre which is its only laboratory.

Development, especially now that its acting company is finally in formation, is likely to remain on paper without a complete and immediate take-over of the theatre. I began to look into the history of the Arts Theatre and the Arts Theatre Management Committee⁵⁸.

The main contention between the School of Drama and ATMC was the Arts Theatre. In 1963 the ATMC was reconstituted to include six members of staff of the School of Drama (i.e. Director, Deputy Director, Technical Director, Business Manager and a member of the School of Drama, usually Nigerian). The Secretary of the School of Drama was Secretary to ATMC but without voting power. In 1968 the Chairmanship of the Committee passed to the Director of the School of Drama.

Dexter Lyndersay, the Acting Director had pursued the struggle as far as that point when Soyinka came back. Soyinka was to deal the last blow on the ATMC when in 1969 it was clear that if the new Department of Theatre Arts were to achieve its objectives, then the Arts Theatre must be under its control. Soyinka saw no rationale in depriving the School of the absolute control over the

minutes of January 17, 1970 - recorded as follows:

theatre since it had been superintending its day-to-day technical operation for the ATMC since 1963.

Although the University had a plan to build another theatre for the School, the proposal was not attractive enough to placate the agitation for the ceding of the Arts Theatre to the School. In the ATMC minutes of June 15, 1968 it was recorded as follows:

The Chairman reported that the Faculty of Arts motion to Senate had been withdrawn by the School of Drama; but he pointed out that at its first presentation to Senate, the resolution had been considered and Senate had noted with sympathy the need of the School of Drama for a theatre of its own. (Emphasis mine)

Professor Desmond Hill had also stated in Senate that he had caused a note to be recorded in Development Committee that, funds being available, a theatre for the School of Drama must be considered a priority. It was generally agreed that the root of discontent in the School of Drama was that the School was only a tenant of the Arts Theatre and has no place of its own. (Emphasis mine).

Soyinka was unrelenting in his pursuit. Consequently the ATMC passed a motion to Senate which the ATMC minutes of January 17, 1970 recorded as follows:

That the Arts Theatre Management Committee hereby recommends to Senate that in view of the existence of the School of Drama and its programme of Development, the Committee feels its existence redundant and therefore recommends that it be dissolved and the management of the Arts Theatre transferred to the School of Drama.

This motion was presented to Senate on January 26, 1970, and was the last and most welcome action that secured the Arts Theatre for the School of Drama. Its ratification by the Senate made the Arts Theatre a laboratory of the School to be exclusively administered by the School. By October of 1970 the new Department of Theatre Arts took off with the Arts Theatre under its control. So its programme of activities in relation to the Arts Theatre were executed without recourse to any external body. The ATMC was now based and constituted within the Department of Theatre Arts. Wole Soyinka became the first Acting Head of Department. But unfortunately, for reasons best known to him, he could not wait to translate his dream for the department into reality. He resigned his appointment in 1971⁵⁹ and his place was given to Dr. J. A. Adedeji, an able lieutenant of his who had shared in his struggles and ambitions. Before

Soyinka left he had formed the University Theatre Arts Company which premiered Madmen and Specialists at Waterford,⁶⁰ Connecticut, U.S.A. in 1971.

2.6.5 Adedeji and His Expansion Programmes

Dr. Joel Adedeji's ^{headship} headship would have been encumbered with problems had he not been familiar with and sympathetic towards Soyinka's theatrical ideals. The immediate but intricate challenges that confronted him were connected with how to develop the young Department. His ambition was to establish a tradition uniquely his own, build the curriculum to a high standard and staff the Department adequately. To this end, he made incessant demand for increase in staff quota⁶¹.

Adedeji's contributions were in various directions. He established the Departmental production culture (1971) and the Secondary Schools Drama productions (1971), restructured the Arts Theatre Stage (1973), and founded the Unibadan Masques (1974). He also established the students Drama Fiesta (1980), founded the Unibadan Performing Company (1980) and repaired the Arts Theatre

stage which was gutted down by fire in August 1982. His other credits exist in the area of Theatre-in-Education or the development of drama as teaching subject in secondary schools.

Immediately on assumption of office, Adedeji reactivated the dormant Theatre-on-Wheels with the production of Kiriji by Wale Ogunyemi. With Kiriji, his maiden production as head of Theatre Department, he established a completely new tradition of "Departmental Production" otherwise known as the "Festival Show". He describes the project as one:

in which everyone has a part to play: on stage, back stage, and front of house. It attempts to communicate the view that the theatre is a community where ideals, concepts and percepts (sic) are shared through the communicative act between those who stage the show and those who come to see it⁶².

The Arts Theatre audience customarily had the first taste of production before it was transferred to the Theatre-on-Wheels which took it to the town or outside the state⁶³. Some of the other productions include Hassan

by Elroy Flecker (1972), King Emene by Zulu Sofola (1976), Lucifer and the Lord by Jean Paul-Sartre (1981), The Man Who Never Died by Barrie Stavis (1985) etc. Also in 1971, Adedeji introduced the Secondary Schools Drama projects in certain schools in the Ibadan Metropolis. In essence, the drama projects in schools encouraged the production of small African plays and dramatic literature texts for school examinations. Those plays were quite different in purpose to the Departmental productions which were aimed at extolling the total nature of African drama in its use of music, dance and drama.

Adedeji's penchant for big and multi-cast productions as exemplified by his innovative Departmental Productions put him at variance with the technical and artistic restrictions of the proscenium stage⁶⁴.

Prior to 1973, Adedeji had mounted his festival plays, Kiriji (1971) and Hassan (1972) with spatial constraints and compromises in artistic vision. But the 1973 production, an adaptation of J. B. Danquah's The Third Woman⁶⁵ could not be compressed within the proscenium limitations. This multi-level play demanded multiple or

simultaneous settings for its magnificent scenes. It set Adedeji ruminating over how to break away from the constrictions of the proscenium stage.

Such scenes as the throne of Olodumare, the Garden of Creation and Moremi's processional entry needed abundant space that could accommodate processions and pageantry. Adedeji decided to extend the stage on both sides to join the auditorium on the same level. The apron was generously extended into the orchestra pit to a point of eliminating the orchestra. That gave the Arts Theatre the "extended stage" which it retains till the present. By this bold step, Adedeji broke the inhibitions of the proscenium and made the stage adaptable for the promotion of African plays.

After scaling over the hurdle of proscenium restrictions, and having established the schools drama project, Adedeji embarked on the founding of a semi-professional troupe to make effective use of the new stage form to experiment with modest African plays. The Unibadan Masques was founded in October 1974 to promote African plays and playwrights. The overwhelming success

of this enterprise resulted in Adedeji's inauguration of the Unibadan Performing Company in 1980. Also in 1980, at the termination of the Secondary Schools Drama productions, a festival of student productions "Drama Fiesta" (which will be examined subsequently under student productions) was instituted.

The staging of Bode Sowande's two plays Flamingo and The Night Before, on Friday August 27, 1982, by Odu Themes organization brought disaster to the Arts Theatre and temporarily eclipsed theatrical activities on the campus. Fire gutted down the stage and burnt the theatre's Bentley Piano⁶⁶.

Adedeji did not allow this disaster to paralyse theatrical activities, for he quickly approached the University authority for assistance in repairing the theatre. But as the economic instability of the University made this less feasible, the authorities could only promise to undertake the repairs whenever its fiscal position improved. At the same time, Adedeji appealed to the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (NICON) which insured the facility to release the ₦32,000 claim to repair the damage. While NICON was delaying in

providing the necessary funds for repairs, Adedeji negotiated for a ₦10,000 loan with CEREMAC (Centre for Resource Management and Consultancy - the commercial Venture of the University). This was channelled through the Unibadan Performing Company (a unit of CEREMAC) on June 13, 1983. In order not to paralyse the theatre completely, Adedeji invited the Maintenance Department to restore light in the theatre by replacing the burnt cables and also repair the stage for temporary use to enable the theatre resume (partially) its cultural and academic activities.

Inflation soon caught up with the loan arrangement before it matured, which necessitated a renegotiation under new terms. The rehabilitation of the stage was now estimated at ₦18,410.00. The terms of agreement for the payment of the loan were as follows:

- (i) That the Department of Theatre Arts would allow U.P.C. to use the Arts Theatre for 3 days in the week during term and 6 days during holidays at a rental fee of ₦25.00 per day;

- (ii) That the loan would be liquidated by U.P.C. from the rental fee of ₦25.00 per day; and
- (iii) That the use of the Arts Theatre be confined to film shows and stage performances at period mutually approved in advance by the Business Manager of the Department and that of the Unibadan Performing Company⁶⁷.

The renegotiated loan of ₦18,410.00 dated January 13, 1984 secured the money for the full rehabilitation of the stage. In August 1984, the Arts Theatre swung back to full operation with the Extra-Mural Theatre Workshop production of Isi Agboaye's Lagoon de come. Adedeji ended his long (almost uninterrupted) tenure in 1985 as head of Theatre Department with the production of Barrie Stavis' The Man Who Never Died. This was an international presentation to mark the 21st anniversary of the Department of Theatre Arts. It was also a befitting valedictory for his exit and a visible display of the mastery of world drama and the height of theatrical expertise at Ibadan.

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37. Correspondence captioned - "Booking the Arts Theatre, Secretaryship of the Arts Theatre Management Committee from Miss G. Minter (Secretary ATMC 1963/64) to the Secretary of the School of Drama-dated June 22, 1964.
38. One of such most revealing incidents occurred in a correspondence from the University Bursar, Mr. G.J.B. Allport to Mr. G.J. Axworthy in a correspondence Ref. 8.631/186 dated 25th October 1963 to Mr. Axworthy while on holiday in Britain. It deals with Arts Theatre programmes and developments.
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40. ATMC Minutes of November 4, 1961, No. 244, furnishes us with details in this regard.
41. Report of Visitation Panel to the University College, Ibadan, Jan. 1961, (Ibadan: IUP, 1961). Paragraph 76, p. 29 - 30.
42. See Commonwealth Universities Year Book, 1964: 848.
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44. Fola Aboaba is now a Professor of Agric-Economics at the University of Ibadan. He participated in all dramatic and musical activities involving various organizations*. He was past chairman of the Music Circle and Secretary of the Ibadan Operatic Society in which he was actively involved until the groups disbanded. The Music circle is not totally dead, but is no longer active. See interview with Professor Fola Aboaba in Appendix 6.
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47. An evidence of Axworthy's tireless efforts in this area is revealed in a correspondence from the University Bursar, Mr. Allport to Mr. Axworthy while he was holidaying in Britain. The letter dated July 24, 1963 speaks about the various alterations being carried out by the ATMC as directed by Mr. Axworthy.
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56. Extract from Appendix I, Schedule I of the Proposals for the Quinquennium 1968/73 submitted to the National Universities Commission in December 1966. Part B: New Development under Faculty of Arts, Paragraph 2: Department of Fine Arts.

57. As far back as 1963, right from the inception of the School of Drama, Axworthy had been demanding for the reconstitution of the ATMC membership to include more staff of the School of Drama. He succeeded only in securing technical administration of the Arts Theatre as ATMC minutes of 8th June, 1963 reveals.
58. See ATMC minutes of 10th January, 1970 and Soyinka's submission captioned - The Arts Theatre Management Committee.
59. In an article titled "Why Did Wole Quit" by a Correspondent in the May 1972 edition of Afriscope Magazine pages 13 - 15, circumstances surrounding his resignation was examined.
60. Gibbs, James. Modern Dramatists: Wole Soyinka (London: Macmillan, 1986): 99.
61. See Memo to Dean of Arts, Professor V.A. Oyenuga on "Special Case" for additional staff for both the Department and the Arts Theatre dated May 6, 1972.
62. Cited from the Programme notes of The Man Who Never Died, 1985 Departmental Production, page 4.
63. The present writer witnessed the revival of Theatre-on-Wheels by Adedeji in 1972 with the production of Hassan by Elroy Flecker directed by Bayo Oduneye for the 2nd All-Nigeria Festival of the Arts in Kaduna, December 9 - 19, 1972. The play was also performed at Abadina School for the Community free of charge and at Agodi Garrison - being a command performance for the Military Government of Western State headed by Governor Rotimi (1972).

64. See Appendix I for available technical facilities and dimensions of the Arts Theatre.
65. The play was reviewed in the University Register, a monthly opinion magazine published and edited Egbe Mengot c/o Mellanby Hall University of Ibadan. May 30, 1974 issue page 22.
66. The disaster was caused by the unextinguished fire in a coal pot used in the production which smouldered over the night into the morning of August 28, 1982. See Report of the Investigation Panel on The Fire Incident in the Arts Theatre, Faculty of Arts University of Ibadan, Nov. 1982: 13. The panel of 7 members was headed by Professor O. Kujore.
67. See "Loan of ₦10,000 by CEREMAC Towards Repair of The Arts Theatre: Terms of Agreement" dated 13/6/83 in Business Manager's Arts Theatre Booking File 1984.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 THEATRE EDUCATION: THE PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 The Philosophical Latitude

In this chapter we shall examine the educational philosophy of the Arts Theatre by highlighting its workshop origin, academic programmes, extra-curricular activities and associated staff and student productions that made the Theatre the hub of theatrical activities.

Theatre has aims - general and particular, great and small. If they are to be of any value, these aims must be worthwhile in the eyes of the programme originator, but also dynamic in the practical operation. The evolution and development of theatre at Ibadan did not follow any definite pattern but was a mixture of general and particular. If we asked Randall Hogarth who began theatre tradition at Ibadan how and why he started theatre as extra-curricular activity involving only the teachers in training, he might give us a long list of reasons. Among them might probably be: to improve teachers' understanding of English Language, to improve fluency, transmission of culture, mental development, public

speaking habit or that he used drama as a technique in Education.

We have both general and specific aims in all of the aforementioned. Geoffrey Axworthy's philosophy of theatre was slightly different in theory and practice to that of Wole Soyinka, while Joel Adedeji's perspective was quite distinguishable from both. But if we consider each as unique and examine the consequences of their approaches, we would see that they have all promoted theatre theory and practice significantly in their variegated ways.

It is comparatively easy for theatre initiators to *formulate* aim, or a set of aims at a high level of generality such as - to promote the highest intellectual and moral development of students; enhance environmental adjustment, to transmit cultural heritage etc. Such aims could be accepted easily without critical analysis and in consequence lead to vague hopes ending up in the limbo of lost causes. At Ibadan, and at different stages of development various theatre programmes have been designed and discarded after awhile. They were the hallmarks of the uneasy paths to acceptability and progress.

The Arts Theatre is an educational theatre principally because it is located at an educational institution. John Clifford identifies the purposes and values of educational theatre as follows:

- A. The main purpose is to entertain an audience.
- B. The secondary purposes are:
 1. To preserve in living form, the great heritage of the Dramatic Literature of the past.
 2. To raise general public's level of taste, appreciation and standards for theatre arts.
 3. To provide quality theatrical entertainment for the academic and the local communities.
 4. To provide opportunities for interested persons to participate in an artistic endeavour.
 5. To provide an opportunity to learn the arts and crafts of quality theatre to students interested in pursuing Theatre as a profession¹.

We presume here that Randall Hogarth was thinking in terms of secondary purposes of educational theatre when he introduced theatre at Ibadan. His efforts stimulated many theatre workshops.

Theatre as an academic discipline was further enhanced in December 1956 through the Department of Extra-Mural Studies Study Conference for Teachers held

from Monday 17th to Friday 21st December, 1956. The main focus of the conference was the Shakespeare Seminar, dealing with the study of his Richard II. Geoffrey Axworthy delivered lectures on the History and Poetic imagery of the play, while Martin Banham spoke on characterization and production aspects. Recorded extracts of the play were used for discussion. This was an exposition of drama through teaching and demonstration by theatre experts. The 1962 drama workshop conducted by Professor Anne C. Reid of Howard University, U.S.A., for teachers and theatre enthusiasts was particularly crucial because it presented the theatre in relation to the American university. The theme was "The American University and the Theatre". Participants were exposed to the techniques of play criticisms, play selection, production and film. Workshop tutors included Professor Reid herself, who spoke on "The University and the Theatre in the United States", and Mr. Axworthy who lectured on "Impressions of Educational Theatre in America", while Mr. Martin Banham's topic was "Production at Yale University". Mr. Banham supplemented his lecture with colour slides and tape recordings illustrating the growth of two productions at Yale School of Drama - Shakespeare's Tempest and a modern Greek play He Who Must Die.

A colour film, Paul Baker's Hamlet, an experimental production of Hamlet at Baylor University, Texas was shown after the lecture. This workshop was organized by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, from where it acquired the epithet "Extra-Mural Drama Workshop" in association with the United States Information Service (USIS).

Without doubt, these teachers' workshops and seminars were the remote causes that inspired theatre scholarship and practice in Nigeria. At the commencement of the School of Drama in October, 1963, Drama Workshop (later called Extra-Mural Theatre Workshop² after the conversion of the School to Department of Theatre Arts) became less spasmodic and undefined. The thrills of Ogunmola's internship at the School made the significance of the drama workshops evident. Some of the past productions of the workshops included The Reign of the Mighty by the Ogunmola Theatre, 1962; The Palmwine Drinkard written by Amos Tutuola and adapted by the Ogunmola Theatre (1963); Owuama-World of the Water Spirits and Creation, both directed by Peggy Harper; Enia by Wale Ogunyemi directed by Dapo Adelugba (1983); Lagoon de Come by Isi Agboaye directed by J. Oyesoro (1984) and Nobody Ever Accepts written and directed by Evru Longley (1985).

The advantage of these workshops and seminars lies in their ability to illustrate theatre as an academic study and as an entertainment of immense diversity. When Axworthy drew up his proposals for the School of Drama, he took cognisance of the potentials of these workshops. The School was to provide courses in Theatre Arts and also ensure the safe and orderly conduct of extra-curricular work within the building. The school was also to establish contact with schools, colleges, dramatic organisations, and also share products of research and expertise.

At the initial stages, the main target of theatrical education were teachers who were supposed to establish dramatic or cultural activities in their various schools after graduation from the University. Courses like Dramatic Literature, Dramatic theory and Criticism, Acting, Directing, Dance, Stage Management, Film etc became aspects of studies. A two year Diploma course in Educational Drama was initiated in 1963 for teachers. This was replaced in 1965 with a two-year professional Diploma in Drama. In 1966 a one-year Certificate Course in Educational Drama³ was introduced.

The advent of the School of Drama ushered in new dimensions in the Arts Theatre theatrical activities. The student dramatic classes were held in the Arts Theatre, their productions were staged there and the extra-curricular theatre workshop productions also continued to increase the volume of activities. In 1966 the School of Drama began participating in the Bachelor of Arts degree programme of the University by offering Drama as a subject for Combined Honours degree in the Faculty of Arts. Later in 1969/70 when the School of Drama was converted to an academic Department of Theatre Arts, it began to offer a single Honours degree in Drama. With the conversion of the School also came the expansion of academic curriculum.

The centrality of 'education' in this ^{research} and cognition of the variety of its semantic variables ^{require} that we circumscribe our limit and interest. 'Education' here implies the training received formally or informally through interaction with or inspiration derived from the Arts Theatre. 'Theatre Education' as a concept in this study places 'theatre' on a par with 'education' in its dynamics to instruct people, influence them and finally change them. This is conversely disposed to the concept of 'Drama-in-Education' or 'Theatre-in-Education', and which presupposes 'Drama' or 'Theatre' as

an integral unit in 'Education' with its curriculum definition. In other words, it is the practical consequences of the Arts Theatre activities as they affect the spread of theatre culture. It is in this purview that the pedagogic impact of the Arts Theatre is better illuminated as an all embracing entity which is unlimited by academic theory and practice.

Since the mode of education obtained through the Arts Theatre laboratory is formal and practical, we share more than a coincidence in Glenn Langford's concept of 'formal education'. He says:

'Formal education', then, is the name of an activity distinguished from other activities by its overall purposes; and that purpose is that someone should become educated. Since its purpose is to bring about change, it is a practical and not a theoretical activity....⁴.

The functionality of the Arts Theatre includes therefore a formal education in that it provides opportunity to see, learn and practice theatrical activities regularly. The pragmatic media of achieving its objectives vary widely. These include workshop, student and staff productions. Amateur works which receive heavy support and the semi-professional and professional productions of the campus and non-campus troupes complemented the pedagogic output of the Arts Theatre. The international presentations of the Arts Theatre based troupes like the University Travelling

Theatre, University Theatre Arts Company (UTAC), University Dance Ensemble; Visit of Foreign troupes, and film exhibitions are also considered the legitimate and serious educational channels of the Arts Theatre. Except professional theatre productions which will be discussed in the next chapter, all of the above listed productions will be discussed here. But before we proceed further let us consider the phenomenology of 'style' in theatrical production.

3.2 The Development of Production Styles

A crucial attribute of production throughout theatrical history is the element of 'style'. Style, a rather evanescent element provides an insight into the aesthetics of production. But 'style' as a creative idiom is so illusive a phenomenon to define since it inheres in the ingenuity of practice manifested intrinsically and extrinsically. It embraces the qualities of all components of production, sustained and externalized by ethnological belief system, outlook and cultural transmission processes. Theatre architecture, and functions, audience - performance relationship, quality of acting, music, period, light design, costume, diction, technical realities, and type of writing (realism, symbolism,

romanticism, absurdism etc) are all embodied in the word 'style'. The contemporaneous application of 'style' to fashion, fads, mannerism etc has further complicated its scope.

'Style's is distinctly discernible in the disparity between Aeschylus's Agamemnon and Shakespeare's Macbeth because they relate to different theatrical eras with different literary ideologies and socio-cultural orientations. The declamation of the classical theatre with its verse speaking and Aristotelian tragic heroes is linearly related to Shakespearean tragedies. But in spite of this relationship the styles of the two kinds of theatre are vastly dissimilar and this is perceptible in their dramatic elements.

The rhetorical aspect of the Greek plays is evident in the mastery of the syntax, subtlety of passion and the imperativeness of their language. Declamation, imagery, metaphor, elocution etc hold attraction for the Greek audience and are indeed styles in tragic characterization. Plays helped them master their language and also acquire skill in oratory or use of new words and idioms.

The Elizabeth society and the glory of its drama can also be easily appreciated for instance in the speech of Lady Macbeth, a self-willed woman, no less superhuman than Clytemnastra. Although she is more peremptory, her

valour is much in her words (consequences) rather than in her action. The language of Lady Macbeth is definitely disrespectful, vulgar and dagger drawn. The oratory flamboyancy is instigated by the propelling force - a mad ambition to make Macbeth king so that she could become queen of Scotland.

With the above illustrations, 'style' can be visualized as elemental characteristics and qualities of a production which manifest themselves in language, action, music, costumes, imagery etc. A look at plates 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 definitely shows these productions have unique styles in costumes, set designs, aesthetics etc. that give us insight into what the productions looked like.

In his study of 'style', Michael Saint-Denis said that "style is the man himself" which according to his explanation means "that the most authentic part of a man's personality, all that is deepest in him, is revealed by the style of his work"⁵. The result is that the training a man receives, how he behaves, dresses, his morals, way of speaking and the period he lives - all are inherent in his 'style'.

At Ibadan, the choice of plays and production style was determined by the vision of the Arts Theatre Management, particularly the Director of the Arts Theatre.

It was therefore to be expected that the artistic outlook in the first decade of the literary theatre history was inevitably colonial in practice and taste. Of course, this was neither intended by the Government nor designed by the University administrator but was an unconscious imposition of the dilettante efforts of the colonial workers. Mellanby informs us that much as his work was complicated by the nascent Nigerian nationalism, political situations were not allowed to shape the academic development and academic freedom.

The Inter-University Council (IUC) whose duty was to ~~suprintend~~ ^{supervise} the young university college was alert to its responsibilities by not tolerating any encroachment from the government. But a production, as a vision, can neither be isolated from its society nor devoid of a focus or what R.A. Banks calls "point of view"⁶. This is apparently enshrined in the Senate's mandate to ATMC in 1957. This mandate itself depends upon a correct interpretation of the codified philosophy of the University as found in its motto "Recte Sapere Fons" (meaning "The source of sound judgement and correct knowledge"⁷) to fully articulate the cultural aims of the University. Certainly, the Arts Theatre as a microcosm of the wider university must develop a style in culture and learning, and had to

reflect the university policy in play selection and production style between 1955 and 1985.

3.3 Types of Productions Over the Years 1955 - 1985

Prior to the advent of Geoffrey Axworthy and the establishment of a formalized programming at the Arts Theatre, the British Council had been playing a remarkable role in the cultural life of the University College. For instance, it donated 7,000 volumes of books⁸ and had begun sponsoring theatrical productions at the Arts Theatre through the colonial workers' cultural activities. Such plays as Don't Use Big Words, Tobacco Road, Sheridan's The Rival and Moliere's The Would - be Gentleman had been performed by these groups. Environmental needs, taste and availability of funds guided the choice of repertory. The motive behind these productions as Axworthy explains "was purely for entertainment to recall some annual Easter and Christmas Pantomime of England"⁹.

The active participation of the British Council in the cultural programmes of the Arts Theatre, no doubt added to the misconception, which we consider erroneous, that the Arts Theatre was a colonial instrument of ^caculturation.

The teaching of a course known as English Life and Institutions earlier mentioned, also promoted this suspicion. These activities, aimed at heightening awareness of foreign culture, were obviously done with less discretion and regard for African culture. It was a matter of Europeans taking the initiative when Africans had not been sufficiently prepared for the task, and their giving cultural leadership, when the Nigerian elite were unsure of the future of the academic theatre in African culture. The period 1955 - 1956 may be regarded as the time when there was no clear cut policy or concrete management philosophy and when productions were exclusively managed by the colonial workers with colonial inspiration.

The creditable success of the Arts Theatre productions from 1955 to 1985 has been due to the virtuosity of its leadership and the finesse with which programmes were selected. The nature of management vision and the employment of specialists to carry out specialized functions, be it artistic, technical or administrative as well as the personal commitment brought into the organization were largely responsible for the profusion and maintenance of the high standard productions. While the Arts Theatre was still young, Martin Banham noted the quality of its productions in these terms:

The University Arts Theatre has seen almost a hundred productions in less than ten years, not only the works of established and famous playwrights, but also first productions of new plays by Nigerian writers, plays written by students, and dance dramas by such talented groups as Ogunmola Folk Opera Company. Much of the stimulus for all this activity has come from the personnel of what is now the School of Drama, who working actively with students and colleagues, have demonstrated that the theatre has a strong part to play in Nigeria today, and may be expected to contribute considerably towards the cultural life of Nigeria in the years to come¹⁰.

It is quite difficult to list out all the theatrical activities that took place in the Arts Theatre since numerous student and amateur productions were unrecorded. They left no programme notes and are therefore lost to history. What we have listed as Arts Theatre Productions 1955 - 1985 in Appendix 2 consists of 174 productions from Noah to Circus of Freedom Square - which are by far below the actual number that the Arts Theatre accommodated in the period under study. Appendix 2 contains only the major productions initiated by the Arts Theatre Management, the School of Drama and the Department of Theatre Arts, usually two or three in a year¹¹.

The Arts Theatre has seen numerous productions that cut across all cultures and taste. It has been able to satisfy various artistic, educational and entertainment

needs and expectations in terms of quality and diversity. Drama, dance, music, operas, film, amateur, professional and international packages have been intricately presented on the Arts Theatre programme over the years, a situation which made Geoffrey Axworthy to declare that:

Through its wide-ranging art programme Ibadan's Arts Theatre became, in ten years, not only an important cultural centre, but also a training ground for creative artists, and technicians who led the remarkable development of all the performing arts in that country¹².

This discriminately objective programming constitutes the alluring influence which makes the Arts Theatre an indispensable cultural institution in Nigeria.

Today, the Arts Theatre has made international impact artistically through its productions. Geoffrey Axworthy acknowledged that the establishment of the Sherman Theatre, University College, Cardiff Wales of which he is the founding director (1970) was based mainly on his experience as Director of the Arts Theatre of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria¹³. William T. Brown, a former staff of the School of Drama, Ibadan, similarly based his "Shakespeare-on-Wheels"¹⁴ at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, U.S.A., on his experience with the Ibadan Theatre-on-Wheels.

Such productions as Danda and Kongi's Harvest represented Nigeria at the First World Black Festival of Arts and Culture in Dakar (1966), and the University Drama Festival held in Nancy, France in 1967 respectively. Daybreak in Jebang, toured U.S.A., 1980 - 81, A Flash in the Sun, participated in festivals in U.S.A. (1982) and Japan (1984) and Circus of Freedom Square toured Italy in 1985. These productions placed Nigeria on the world theatrical calendar.

The types of productions that have taken place in the Arts Theatre since 1955 can be sharply divided into three categories and three periods viz: (1) European (1955 - 1958), (2) Euro-African (1958 - 1974) and (3) African (1974 - 1985). A study of Appendix 2 shows that productions during the years 1955 to 1958 were purely European plays and operas. Even the Student Dramatic Society (UCIDS) was producing European plays. But as from 1958/59 when Soyinka's plays were introduced, the UCIDS commenced spicing theatrical activities at the Arts Theatre with African plays. An amateur group, the Players of the Dawn, which was incepted in 1959 also supplemented UCIDS efforts. However, the years 1959 to 1974 witnessed ardent competition between European and African productions.

This period also witnessed the emergence of the University Travelling Theatre, the School of Drama Acting Company, Ibadan Players, 1960 Masks, Orisun Theatre, and Unibadan Masques.

Furthermore, with the transfer of the Arts Theatre to the Department of Theatre Arts (whose emphasis was the promotion of African plays) in 1970, the production of European plays declined. The success of the Unibadan Masques (1974 - 1979) in the production and promotion of African plays gave birth to an independent professional troupe, the Unibadan Performing Company (1980 - 1985). The contributions of the Secondary School Drama Workshop productions at the Arts Theatre, which was Adedeji's innovation (1971 - 1979) also deserve mention. The types of productions which all these groups embarked upon will be examined subsequently.

3.4 Academic Integration of the Yoruba Professional Travelling Theatre

The Departments of Extra-Mural Studies and English explored all possible prospects to make theatre academically and culturally relevant to Nigeria. Professor Ayo Ogunseye of the Extra-Mural Studies and Geoffrey Axworthy assisted by Martin Banham, both of Department of English, were

particularly involved in this project. The 1956 Teachers' Study Conference Studied Shakespeare's Richard II as an academic phenomenon. The 1962 theatre Workshop conducted by Professor Ann. C. Reid also examined the theatre as an academic discipline in America. Through these academic seminars and frequent promotion of amateur productions in the Arts Theatre, theatre was seen as a virile instrument of cultural transmission and a recognized academic vocation. The brilliant performance of The Reign of the Mighty by the Ogunmola Travelling Theatre established the fact that the Yoruba travelling theatre had unique characteristics worthy of academic study.

This fact was further strengthened by the success of Ogunmola's Palm Wine Drinkard in 1963. The rich folkloric contents of the play and the versatility of the actors in music, dance and poetry were irresistible elements of this theatre that propelled Wole Soyinka to describe the play as "first rate" production. He concluded his commendation by saying that:

With the right and sensitive kind of guidance, the 'people's theatre' of folk opera can rise to an appreciable level of professionalism¹⁵.

To elicit this kind of brilliant commendation from Africa's foremost playwright/director and a university lecturer meant recognition for the Yoruba theatre formerly ignored by the University. In this way the Yoruba theatre attained some respect as a profession.

The 1960s was a period most conducive to the fostering of the professional theatre as there was an evident global theatrical revolution that linked the university with the professional theatre. The inherent aversion the academic theatre had for the professional theatre was gradually eliminated through integrated theatrical activities mutually beneficial to both.

Stephen Langley enlightens us further on this:

... the academic world long dissociated itself (rather snobbishly, at times) from the commercial and professional theatre. But as higher education in general came to recognise and use the knowledge of professionals...., its attitude toward professional theatre began to change. Ivory towerism faded as practice was mixed with theory, practitioner was heard alongside the professor More and more theatre programmes became vocationally oriented¹⁶.

The mutual association of the two types of theatre at Ibadan matured rapidly that the artistic input of the vibrant professional theatre to the enrichment of the cultural life of the Arts Theatre could neither be

ignored nor dismissed as trivial. Serious thoughts were given to the encouragement and promotion of the travelling theatre. The aim to improve the professional theatre has since then become the prime motive and the institutional passion of the Arts Theatre authorities who have organized series of theatre workshops and seminars for the travelling theatres¹⁷.

The professional Yoruba theatre used the Arts Theatre on regular basis for their performances either by hiring the facility or coming under the sponsorship of some University societies. Through periodic training, the travelling theatres were exposed to the economy of media productions, scriptwriting, technical realization, theatrical styles, management technology, and international market that made them professionally self-reliant and independent of the academic theatre.

It is pertinent to note here that the Yoruba travelling theatre was promoted for fundamental reasons which included:

- i. recognition of its existence since 1946 and its popularity among the Nigerians;
- ii. its potential as professional model for an academic institution;

- iii. serving as a veritable means of providing cultural unity between the town and gown;
- iv. its richness in cultural content, versatility of its artists in music, dance, folklore and spectacle;
- v. extemporaneous or scriptless nature of its production.

and the fact that the "Alarinjo Theatre" the mask dramaturgy of the Yorubas which predated the 1946 emergence of the modern Yoruba travelling theatre of Hubert Ogunde had an imperishable traditions upon which the modern travelling theatre heavily relied for continuity; and from which the literary could have an eclectic taste.

Axworthy believed these were stirring qualities in the travelling theatre in which the literary theatre must have a background and perhaps draw some inspiration. But some members of his team did not see any rationale in this. Undauntedly, Axworthy used folkloric adaptations such as the Palm Wine Drinkard and Danda to establish his logic. He also adopted the travelling theatre tenets into his Shakespearean productions¹⁸. The success of these productions vindicated his daring approach to theatre professionalism at Ibadan.

3.5 Amateur Theatre Groups

The task of a detailed analysis of the work of all the amateur groups that performed in the Arts Theatre or a chronological arrangement of their productions from 1955 to 1985 would be too cumbersome to attempt when we consider the enormity of work done at various times and the diversity of people involved. We shall only look at the activities ^{of} the Arts Theatre Production Group, University College Ibadan Dramatic Society, Ibadan Operatic Society, and the Children's theatre closely. The work of a few others like the Orisun Theatre, Mbari Theatre, Players of the Dawn would be mentioned.

3.5.1 The Arts Theatre Production Group (ATPG)

The Arts Theatre Production Group, one of the earliest resident groups began its excellent production of classical and contemporary world drama in the Arts Theatre with Andre Obey's Noah. This play, according to Axworthy was chosen for its theatricality, a quality which is confirmed by Fola Aboaba¹⁹. Aboaba also noted the fact that although the

title of the play suggested a thematic christian content, there was little christianity in it. The play according to him provided limitless opportunities in acting exposure, exciting experience in costume making for human beings and animals, construction on the ark and many other attributes which were essential to make theatre really fascinating to people who had not been very much used to the European experience of theatrical productions. The sounds of the carpenters' hammers; the shouts and tunes of the builders climbing up and down the ark, the din of carousing; the prurient populace and their jeers at Noah that stir our imagination make Noah very theatrical.

From Noah, the ATPG moved into mundane themes and a wide variety of world drama and musicals. In all, the ATPG produced 44 plays of which 15 were classical and 29 modern plays. Apart from Antigone by Sophocles, An Enemy of the People by Ibsen, Othello by Shakespeare, The Duchess of Malfi by Webster, which were tragedies, all others were either romantic comedies or tragi-comedies with musical accompaniment. They included The Merchant of Venice and A Midsummer Night's Dream by Shakespeare,

Lysistrata by Aristophanes²⁰, You Never Can Tell by Shaw, The Bald Suprano by Ionesco, Uncle Vanya by Chekhov etc. Works of major playwrights in Europe, Britain, America and Russia were well represented. There exists no literary reviews on these productions from where we can sample opinions and assess the audience reaction, but box office records reveal enthusiastic reception. Posters and handbill information as well as their quality give brilliant impressions about the artistic standard of productions and of audience taste.

The big task of selecting plays (usually two for a year) for production depended largely on who was willing to do what among the ATPG membership. More often than not, Axworthy found himself directing the plays since most of the members were primarily theatre enthusiasts and not experts. This is much in consonance with Stephen Langley's view that decision-making in play production in College Theatre is largely guided by what plays the artistic directors wish to direct at the moment. Although Axworthy's influence in the choice of plays was overwhelming, it was far from being arbitrary. He knew the society and his audience so well that the chosen plays often coincided with their taste. Professor John Ferguson observes that Axworthy "had a penchant for minor



PLATE 4

A scene from Aristophanes' Lysistrata, ATPG Production (1961). Fola Aboaba standing at the extreme end of the steps on the left. Note the subtle aesthetics of the production in symmetry, set solidity, the columns and costumes that reveal its Roman Greek setting. The fanciful costumes of the women also provides insight into the lewdness of Lysistrata (Pix courtesy of Professor Michael Hudson, Dept. of Physics, University of Ibadan).

Shakespeare"²¹ hence his choice of Shakespeare's comedies which complemented his own conviviality and jocular nature. But no matter his own personal preferences, the academic and cultural interests of the university took precedence over all other considerations. He explains the reason for the choice of plays in the following terms.

The first plays were chosen very specifically to this end. Obey's Noah offered a familiar story treated with humour, opportunities for multiracial casting, unconventional staging, and the use of masks. The Merchant of Venice, familiar as an examination play... All this arose from the simple desire of a teacher to teach better, and of lover of music and drama to share their excitements²².

Other delineable factors that accounted for play selection, apart from teaching and entertainment, were the question of the audience's desire and the economic demands of production. The nature of audience is one of the first things to inquire about in any discussion of theatre. The Arts Theatre audience of the 1950s and early 1960s composed mostly European intellectuals and civil servants and for them the hilarity of Brendan Behan's The Hostage and Pinerro's Magistrate was just what they needed to kill boredom in the socially underdeveloped colonial environment.

Consequently plays that were not irksome and long were preferred. Axworthy provides a clue in his description of the cultural taste of the university community at this time thus: "African audiences appreciate most plays with **clear** plots and well defined character preferably with a moral or argumentative flavour ... The European community, numbering many thousands, is largely lowbrow, but would rise to Christies, Sawyer, Priestley, etc. A broad farce like Pinero's Magistrate would probably span both audiences"²³. Perhaps comedy was a trans-continental favourite, for Evans noted that farce and romantic drama were in general, the fashion²⁴.

Competition with other amateur theatre groups that used the Arts Theatre affected the programmes of the ATPG and influenced its choice of production significantly. Groups like the University College, Ibadan Dramatic Society (UCIDS), Ibadan Operatic Society (IOS) founded by Tom Child and the Music Circle more often than not collaborated in productions in which they were all mutually interested. Such common productions include Noah, Antigone, Lysistrata by ATPG and UCIDS and King Arthur by ATPG and the Music Circle.

The advantage of the competition was that it promoted healthy rivalry, and standards. The harmonious co-existence of these groups enhanced the development of various genres

of theatre and stimulated new groups to sprout up. In 1959, a group known as The Players of the Dawn comprising of graduates of Ibadan and fellow civil servants in the town of Ibadan was formed to take theatre to the people, performing in school halls, Arts Theatre and the British Council Hall. They were active enough to attract criticism from Wole Soyinka²⁵ and comments about their Arts Theatre heritage from Geoffrey Axworthy²⁶.

A cursory look at Appendix 7 reveals the wide range of their repertoire and the fair geographical spread of world drama which justifies ATPG's objective to provide variety of world dramatic styles²⁷. Conspicuously African or Nigerian plays were not represented in the repertoire. Axworthy explains this omission by calling attention to the fact that there existed no African plays and playwrights at the time²⁸. We observe this may not be completely true, as James Ene Henshaw had published his first play This is Our Chance in 1956. Axworthy's other reason "that they did not attempt to bring in the African culture at all"²⁹ seems more authentic. This is corroborated by Dapo Adelugba's accounts³⁰. Later, European productions, particularly, Ahmal and the Night Visitors³¹ by Ibadan Operatic Society attempted costumal and nominal adaptation of African culture.

The best they did according to Professor Aboaba was to adapt "African names and costumes into production"³².

In such colonial atmosphere, there was little the Europeans could do in promoting African culture which they did not understand and did not make any pretention about. It was not until Axworthy in collaboration with the dramatic society (UCIDS) produced Wole Soyinka's The Swamp Dwellers and The Lion and the Jewel³³ in 1958/59 session that realistic African plays and culture emerged at the Arts Theatre. These Leeds plays, James Gibbs wrote, "opened doors for him (Soyinka) in London and established his reputation in Nigeria"³⁴.

Wole Soyinka and the Night Visitors jointly produced the Indians Operatic Society and the Music. The actors in costumes could not be recalled by members of the cast who are around the lapses in memory. But in this particularly organized production, records reveal that Chief over Oyesiku and late Femi Johnson played the roles of turbaned Chiefs. (Fix Courtesy N. Hudson).



PLATE 5: Scene from Amahl and the Night Visitors jointly produced by the Ibadan Operatic Society and the Music Circle. The Actors in costumes could not be identified by members of the cast who are around due to lapses in memory. But in this particularly Africanized production, records reveal that Christopher Oyesiku and late Pemi Johnson played the roles of turbaned Chiefs. (Pix Courtesy M. Hudson).

Tony Adestola, Bapu Chana and Vincent Abobo in the scene. Pix courtesy Prof. Fola Abobo of the Dept. of Agric. Economics, University of Ibadan.

1.5.2 University College Ibadan Dramatic Society

The first serious concerted effort made by a group of educated Nigerians for the regular promotion of the literary drama



in Nigeria was that of the University College Ibadan Dramatic Society.

about the society's activities and its role in the promotion of drama in Nigeria.

the society was also a strong and effective instrument of student union activities.

As an integrated aspect of student union work activities and

the fact that the UCIDS was affiliated to the student Union and was subsidized with

small grants to produce two plays annually

PLATE 6: Scene from Outward Bound. UCIDS Dramatic Society production 1956/57 with Fola Aboaba, Tony Adegbola, Raph Opara and Vincent Akobo in the scene. Pix courtesy Prof. Fola Aboaba of the Dept. of Agric. Economics, University of Ibadan.

inclined, began active participation in

3.5.2 University College Ibadan Dramatic Society

The first serious concerted effort made by a group of educated Nigerians for the regular promotion of the literary drama in Nigeria was that of the University College Ibadan Dramatic Society. Though Adedeji informed us about the origin and purpose and put the date of the UCIDS' foundation as 1957, Aboaba disagreed totally with this. Aboaba is of the opinion that the UCIDS existed unofficially from 1948 as a means by which students came together to entertain themselves and was also a strong cohesive instrument of student unionism. Drama as an integrated aspect of the student Union Week activities and the fact that the UCIDS was affiliated to the student Union and was subsidized with small grants to produce two plays annually evidently reveals that the Dramatic Society must have existed unofficially before 1957. It is observed that staff of the University, especially those who were theatrically inclined, began active participation in

student productions from 1957. It is not far fetched then to assume that the UCIDS was the forerunner of the university troupes which developed in later years.

The practice of presenting two plays a year is clearly illustrated in the list of productions held in the Arts Theatre from 1956 to 1959. In 1956/57, two plays, Outward Bound³⁵ by Sutton Vane and The Man from the Ministry by Madaline Bingham form the repertoire. In 1957/58, The Gentle People by Irvin Shaw and Antigone by Sophocles were produced, while in the following session, 1958/59, the first Nigerian plays, The Swamp Dwellers and The Lion and the Jewel by Wole Soyinka appeared.

Obviously, the students' motive for promoting theatre was selfishly for academic and entertainment purposes, its overall impact had great consequences in the development of theatre in Nigeria. Dapo Adelugba commented on the misguidedness of the students efforts as follows:

Students dramatic activity was minimal and misguided in the University of Ibadan in its first decade. The plays presented were stale old English or American plays with poor dramatic content and without any bearing on the tastes of Nigerian audiences³⁶

One could blame the "misguidedness" on the primacy of the Arts Theatre Production Group as precursor in the presentation of standard Western theatrical culture. Their errors lie in the misconception about the audience potential of African plays for a white audience. However, this was latter corrected after The Lion and the Jewel (1958/59).

Reflecting on the global racial politics and the temerity of colonialism, the UCIDS started questioning itself and its production philosophy in the 1960s. The tactical approach the society adopted towards unshackling itself from the European dramatic fetters was its deflection from the presentation of pure European plays to adaptations into the Nigerian cultural interest. This development was strengthened by Soyinka's pathfinding plays of 1959 and the closure of the Arts Theatre in 1960 so that its physical inadequacies could be rectified and additional facilities added to meet the growing demands on it. The closure of the Arts Theatre inspired the students

after-dinner entertainments in the various dining halls of the university³⁷. The initial difficulties they encountered did not discourage the students, particularly as patriotism was at its peak. The lack of portable African plays for instance, compelled students to write their own plays. In a kind of playwright workshop, the Students wrote thirty minutes' plays with simple scenery and few characters. Such experiments included adaptation of The Monkey's Paw by W. W. Jacobs as The Munchi Charm, adapted by Frank Aig-Imoukhuede and Earnest Ekem's of spreading the News by Lady Gregory as The Gossips of Ewa. There exists no adequate records or reviews on these plays, so we would never know the number of adapted or improvised plays staged in the student halls or elsewhere. But there are indications that they were popular.

A typical indicator is John Ferguson's comment on the students' versatility and contribution to the Arts Theatre. He says:

The Arts Theatre was an exciting place. Geoffrey Axworthy came at the same time as we did, and showed a remarkable capacity to get the best out of amateurs.... The two most memorable evenings in the Arts Theatre did not involve us directly. One was a fascinating evening in which the students put on three plays written by students themselves³⁸. (Emphasis mine).

X

The popularity which these productions enjoyed increased the students' enthusiasm such that they started touring the surrounding villages in the manners of the Spanish farandula³⁹ strolling players and the Italian commedia dell' Arte⁴⁰ presenting and improvising in adapted comedies. William T. Brown explains that "students did tour during their holidays to nearby villages, presenting short scenes and skits of local interest. Their capabilities were limited, the facilities inadequate, and lighting effects were non-existent"⁴¹.

A close study of The Gossips of Ewa, a play quite representative of the student productions reveals it is a farce or what Brown describes as a 'skit', using a simple theme to explore societal vices (gossips), and their complex and dangerous consequence. The play speaks to the Nigerian populace in terms of its theme, characterization, and successful localisation; and the simplicity of its language makes it accessible to the school children. It opens with a market scene as follows:

INSPECTOR: So this is the town of Ewa! Dogs...
goats.... mud all over the place
No system!

CONSTABLE: Yes, sir.

INSPECTOR: I suppose there's a good deal of lawbreaking in this place.

CONSTABLE: Lawbreaking? Yes, sir.

INSPECTOR: Common assault, I suppose.

CONSTABLE: Very common, Sir, very common...

INSPECTOR: Even ... murder, perhaps.

(constable opens mouth, but no reply). Oh, this place has been shamefully neglected; but I'll change all that. When I was at Ikeja we had a system. Never fails. (Looks suspiciously at Mrs. Tapi and speaks aside to constable). What has that woman on her stall?
(constable gapes).

CONSTABLE: Orange, mostly sir, and Kolanuts, Sir, and

INSPECTOR: That 'll do ... Just look underneath and see if there are any contraband goods there - illicit gin or anything. (Walks away. To audience). We had a lot of illicit gin at Ikeja.

There is evidently nothing to show that this play was an adaptation of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin play. It sounds perfectly Nigerian. This is the kind of literary craftsmanship and transposition students embarked upon to evolve the people's theatre in the footsteps of Abbey theatre Dublin and W. B. Yeats, at a period when plays by Nigerian playwrights were yet to appear.

Although the closure of the Arts Theatre deprived its patrons of their regular entertainment, it ushered in an era of repertory tradition in amateur productions. Axworthy, being conversant with world theatrical developments, perceived merits in the itinerant programmes of the UCIDS and so encouraged a stronger association with the group. For him, he had found a modest troupe, which he had been yearning for and upon which he could build a model troupe for Nigeria.

This new arrangement was to integrate UCIDS partially into the School of Drama productions so as to attract needed funding from the University, the British Council and the commercial firms, and hence enable them embark on nation-wide tours. This type of strategy Reis discusses exhaustively under "Corporate donations and programme sponsorship"⁴².

The idea was warmly welcomed by the Society and in 1961, the University Travelling Theatre was inaugurated with a grant of £200 (two hundred pounds) to produce one play a year.

The University Travelling Theatre lasted from 1961 to 1966. During this period, there existed no single production exclusively embarked upon by the Dramatic Society, as the list of productions reveals. Not until one year after the death of the UTT did the UCIDS re-organize again to produce The Servant of Two Masters in 1967.

One applauds the sudden reappearance of the UCIDS in 1967 for several reasons. The sublimation of its individuality to a partnership which crashed in 1966 definitely restrained its growth and frustrated its artistic future. Most people interviewed in this connection like Mr. Val Olayemi⁴³ believed that the association was a most welcome and productive one. The expiration of the Rockefeller Foundation grant to the School of Drama, the uncertainty of its future and programme as well as the impending Nigerian civil war were the traumatic blows the Travelling Theatre could not survive, but the UCIDS persevered.

The advent of the School of Drama's Acting Company in 1967 provided stimulus for the regrouping of the UCIDS that year. The father figure of Wole Soyinka, the new director of the School, whose plays the society had premiered in 1959 and 1960 was stimulating enough to spur members to action. Soyinka's remarkable role as Yang Sun, the unemployed pilot in Bertold Brecht's The Good Woman of Setzuan produced by UCIDS in 1960 and directed by Axworthy was momentous.

The Dramatic Society operated again from 1967 to 1972, increasing its repertoire of Nigerian plays by introducing Femi Osofisan's Oduduwa Don't Go (1968), Wole Soyinka's Kongi's Harvest (1969) and Zulu Sofola's King Emene (1971). The artistic vision and projection of these plays show that the UCIDS, apart from its academic objective, had identified its dramatic predilection and style as cultural and historical drama. The emerging playwrights went back into history, reviewed past experiences to challenge the realities of the present.

The society disintegrated in 1972 due to a number of factors. Firstly the academic programme of the Department of Theatre Arts had expanded to the exclusion of amateur productions and the Arts Theatre was occupied most of the time with student projects.

Secondly the European groups that inspired the UCIDS had died and the student enthusiasm had waned. Thirdly the University introduced a new academic curriculum known as "course System" which necessitated examining every course taken in a semester at the end of that semester. This demanded more time and increased seriousness from students so that they hardly had time to spare for a time consuming extra-curricular activity as theatre. Finally the issue of "pay as-you-eat" system was also introduced at this time which placed much constraint on students' finances.

3.5.3 Miscellaneous Troupes

The amateur groups that performed at the Arts Theatre were as varied as the objectives that motivated their inception. The Ibadan Operatic Society which was founded in 1954 by Tom Child for instance specialized in Opera production as a result of which the works of many famous European composers like Mozart etc were popularized in Nigeria. The IOS was essentially a European cultural society that produced two operas per year. Nigerians were exposed to this exotic musical tradition

through regular performances at the Arts Theatre by the group. Professor John Ferguson informs us thus:

It had begun as an expatriate thing, but the following year saw Nigerian participation....⁴⁴.

Christopher Oyesiku⁴⁵, Femi Johnson, Lanre Ogunlana, Elizabeth Ighrakpata, Mary Adebajo and Solomon Pitan were a few of the Nigerian members of the IOS. Some of the productions in which the Nigerians participated as opera singers, actors or instrumentalists included Ruddigore, HMS Pinafore, Iolanthe, Princess Ida, Lilac Time, The Gondoliers, Patience and The Yeomen of the Guard⁴⁶.

Altogether, 25 productions have been listed to the credit of IOS between 1956 and 1972, an evidence of a very active life. The 1970s witnessed the decline of this group due to the fact that the majority of the expatriate members left Nigeria at the time. The small members left behind merged with the Music Circle as the past Chairman of the Music Circle and one time Secretary to the Ibadan Operatic Society, Fola Aboaba informs us:

We found there was a lot of duplication of efforts and the Music Circle was doing more or less what the Operatic Society was doing A few of us who were Nigerians felt well let's get together.... Eventually we merged and jointly put up one or two productions⁴⁷.

The Music Circle, a musical and operatic group, was established to provide the University and Ibadan community an opportunity to attend and participate in musical events. It usually produced operas and oratorios in alternate years.

Among the past productions of the Music Circle are Magic Flute by Mozart (1958), King Arthur by Dryden and Purcell, The Bartered Bride by Smetana (1960), Air and Graces (1964), The Telephone by Mozart, Bastien and Bastienne by Glan-Carlo Menotti (1966) and Don Giovanni by Wolfgang Amadeus (1982)

These productions of the expatriate groups consisted of mixed experiences in artistry - acting, aesthetic conception and presentation⁴⁸. Each production presented unique opportunity for wider exposure or general education in theatre practice. The visible pictorial evidence tempts us to believe strongly that the Nigerian members were not ignored but were practically exposed to all areas of production.



PLATE 7: Dress Rehearsal for La Belle Helene
I.O.S. 1964 production in which the Nigerian members include in (standing from left to right) Lanre Ogunlana (as Ajax I, King of Salamis), Femi Johnson (as Jupiter), Elizabeth Ighrakpata (as Bacchis, Servant of Helene) and Fola Aboaba (as Ajax II, King of Locris). Michael Hudson, in stripped toga played Menelaus, King of Sparta and Janetta Mayer, (standing on the right of Hudson with overall over gown) played Helene. Other could not be identified due to space. (Pix courtesy M. Hudson).



PLATE 8: The Orchestra group in La Belle Helene conducted by Lucy Parker (in white flowing gown) with two Nigerians Mary Adebajo, (next to the left of Lucy Parker), playing Violin and Solomon Pitan (first from right in the front row), playing Violincello. Others could not be identified due to space. (Pix courtesy M. Hudson).



PLATE 9: A scene from The Royal Hunt of the Sun, ATPG Production, 1967. Harold Preston (University Bursar) in the centre of the two opposing forces. There is no programme notes to identify the rest characters and our source could not confirm the character H. Preston was playing. Our interest in this picture is the high sense of creative imagination displayed in set design and stage decor. (Pix courtesy M. Hudson).

Some of them played lead roles in productions as exemplified by Femi Johnson, Fola Aboaba etc. In spite of their excellent productions and the exposition of Nigerians to the European cultural values, the European efforts were highly criticized for exhibiting a purely European interest at the expense of African cultural expectations.

Many Nigerian amateur groups rose to the challenge of catering for African cultural needs but none succeeded as much as the acting companies of the University which we shall examine in the next chapter. The Players of the Dawn was the earliest community response to European monopoly of the Arts Theatre and a strong boost to the University College Ibadan Dramatic Society's cultural vision. This group was founded in 1959 by Ibadan graduates working as civil servants, teachers and businessmen in Ibadan. Though Mr. Val. Olayemi claimed that the group, of which he was a staunch member presented plays at the Arts Theatre and many other centres like Obisesan and the British Council Halls, the only production with traceable evidence at the Arts Theatre is Moon on a Rainbow Shaw performed in 1967. The group attracted criticism from Soyinka for being Eurocentric in its production philosophy.

Apart from this, the activities of the Players of the Dawn inspired the initiation of other groups like the Revels, Mbari Theatre, Armchair Theatre etc which had their stint at the Arts Theatre.

The 1960 Masks and the Orisun theatres founded by Wole Soyinka in 1960 and 1964 respectively also made significant contribution to the cultural life of the Arts Theatre. Before being integrated into the School of Drama in 1967, the Orisun Theatre had to rent the Arts Theatre like the travelling theatres, and similarly its productions were often sponsored either by the School of Drama or some societies. Among its repertoire were Soyinka's A Dance of the Forests, Kongi's Harvest, and J.P. Clark's The Raft and Song of a Goat.

The Odu Themes (1972) and the Kaunkaun Sela Kompany (1979) founded by the iconoclastic writers Bode Sowande and Femi Osofisan introduced great novelty into the Arts Theatre productions in the 1970s and 1980s. These two playwrights who have been greatly influenced by both Soyinka and Bertold Brecht write to shock their audiences in the depth of their dialectical postures. Both Sowande and Osofisan like to experiment with stage forms in the performance of their plays⁴⁹.

Repertoire of Sowande's Arts Theatre productions in included Farewell to Babylon, The Night Before, Flamingo and Circus of Freedom Square. Osofisan's plays that have been performed at the Arts Theatre include Oduduwa Don't Go (1968), A Restless Run of Locusts (1970), Kolera Kolej (1975), The Chattering and the Song (1976), Who is Afraid of Solarin (1979) etc Sowande and Osofisan's plays have become widely accepted not only by the Arts Theatre audiences but also by educated theatre patrons at large as displayed by the frequency of their inclusion on the cultural repertoire of schools and universities.

Another dynamic approach through which the Arts Theatre promoted theatre in Nigeria was the integration of the Children's Theatre programme otherwise called Saturday Theatre for the Young People (STYP). The children's Theatre is a useful instrument for children's education and for the development of their perception of a Nigerian world view. The STYP programme is a Saturday ritual held in the Arts Theatre between the hours of 9 and 11 a.m. involving children from ages 6 to 12. The objectives of this theatre are to stimulate children's interest in creative expression and cultural heritage through creative work like

painting, modelling, puppetry, acting and speech; give enjoyment and also provide plenty of opportunities through improvisational dynamics, folklore and performance.

The Children's Theatre was inspired by Geoffrey Axworthy in 1963 in order to simultaneously develop théâtre culture in both adults and children. Axworthy envisaged that this theatre would bring a corresponding increase in theatre patronage. He was correct because this theatre cultivated its own audience which boosted the Arts Theatre attendance. The S.T.Y.P. was very active between 1963 and 1985 and contributed substantially to the programmes of the Arts Theatre and the Department of Theatre Arts. Among its numerous productions are King Who Caught Ghost by John Stoddartz; In Search of the Stone by Wale Ogunyemi; The Substitute by Demas Nwoko and Tall African Tales by Danny Lyndersay.

The Children's Theatre (STYP) has participated in international Youth Festivals in places like Denmark (1979), Britain (1980), U.S.A. (1981), Japan (1982), Sweden (1983), and Florida, U.S.A. (1985). The success of the S.T.Y.P. led to the formation of the National Youth Theatre at Ibadan in 1969.

This Youth Theatre, set up for children between the ages of 6 and 12 years, had its first performance in the Arts Theatre in commemoration of the 1969 World Theatre Day.

The productions of these amateur groups covered a wide range of artistic exposure in African and European cultures that we hold the impression that both children and adults alike benefitted from the practical artistic education offered at the Arts Theatre.

3.5.4 Student Productions

The priority of Dr. Joel Adedeji on assuming the headship of the young Theatre Department was different from the expectations of most of his colleagues. They had envisaged the pursuance of the professional ideology espoused by Axworthy and based on the logistics of Wole Soyinka's University Theatre Arts Company (UTAC) recently disbanded. But far from this, Adedeji's immediate preoccupation now was the total exploration of drama, first, as an educational tool and then as a business profession. To this end, he established simultaneously the traditions of Departmental

Productions and the Secondary Schools drama production workshop projects in 1971. Although these were considered academic approaches, and were severely criticized, Adedeji's diplomatic presentation was convincing.

This approach was not without an antecedental history of its own. Perhaps, Adedeji was reflecting on the aims and objectives of the certificate Drama Course in Education which he set up in 1963/64 or correcting the wrong notion that theatre was a non-academic subject as espoused by Professor Glynne Wickham⁵⁰ with whom Adedeji was in contact and who happened to be the first external examiner of the Department. The misgivings surrounding the notion of theatre as an academic subject made Adedeji experiment with it in secondary schools and diversify theatrical activities in the Arts Theatre enormously. The student productions fell into three categories:

- (1) Secondary Schools drama productions;
- (2) Drama Fiesta and (3) Private productions.

The Secondary Schools Drama Productions Workshop was intended to serve as a link between the university and the community at large through the secondary schools.

Technically it was an attempt by Adedeji to introduce Drama experimentally into the secondary school curriculum in Nigeria. The method was so flexible and attractive that all the principals of schools approached about the project consented to the programme. It was regarded as an extra-curricular activity optional to the students. This was operated by sending final year diploma and degree students, in groups of three and four students, to various schools in Ibadan. Each group was to teach the rudiments of play production, organize a Dramatic Society and produce a play which would serve as the group's final practical examination. The plays were usually staged, first, at the school halls and finally at the Arts Theatre before a panel of adjudicators as well as a fee paying audience.

The 1973/74 rehearsal schedule shows that 34 schools participated in the project⁵¹. The excitement of performing in the university Arts Theatre, the improvement of memonics and elocution were the main stimuli for the school children's support and enthusiasm. The performance, which often lasted a week or two at the Arts Theatre, featured various secondary schools and school audiences. It almost became a dramatic competition for schools, to which students trooped out to cheer their

schools or to see other schools in performance. It was usually a special occasion in the Arts Theatre and a rewarding experience for the Department of Theatre Arts in July of every session.

In terms of productions, an average of twenty productions emerged from the Schools Drama project every season out of which at least 15 were African plays. In 1973/74 for example some of the African plays that were performed included Soyinka's Child Internationale, Death before Discourtesy, and The Swamp Dwellers; James Henshaw's Dinner for Promotion, and The Jewels of the Shrine; Olu Olagoke's The Incorruptible Judge; Zulu Sofola's Wedlock of the Gods, and Abiona in Love, J.P. Clark's Song of a Goat, and The Masquerade; Obi Egbuna's The Anthill; Femi Euba's The Game; Ime Ikiddeh's Blind Cyclops; Ama Ata Aidoo's Dilemma of a Ghost; James Ngugi's The Blind Hamit; Edward Braithwaite's Odale's Choice; Arthur Maimane's The Opportunity; and Pat Maddy's Yon Kon etc.

Through this medium Adedeji popularized drama in schools, increased the schools' awareness and patronage of the Arts Theatre, diversified Arts Theatre activities, promoted African plays in schools, cleared the inhibitions

of the conservative educators about drama and consequently exposed theatre as a profession of immense dynamism. The success of the schools drama project culminated in the National Workshop on Drama-in-Education held at the Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, April 4 to 10, 1976.

Unfortunately, this projects was halted in 1979 due to a number of factors. Transportation and administrative complexities coupled with the cancellation of the boarding system in secondary schools were principally responsible. Commuting various distances after the school hours to rehearsals was an ordeal which the students could not bear. The reluctance of parents to allow their children out after school hours for rehearsals, even when they had letters from the school principals also contributed to the killing of the programme.

The emergence of the Schools Drama Productions reduced to the barest minimum, the activities of the outside productions groups like the Ibadan Operatic Society, the Music Circle as well as those of the Arts Theatre Production Group which was based in the Arts Theatre. The Players of the Dawn did not fair better either. The competition which the productions of the

schools, the Department and Unibadan Masques posed in the crusade for African drama could not be adequately challenged because they were all based in the Department of Theatre Arts. The Arts Theatre was busy most of the time with various rehearsals and productions originating from the Department. This, critics observed, was prejudicial and unsympathetic towards the amateur theatre productions from outside the Department. Professor Fola Aboaba, an avid theatre enthusiast and member of the ATPG observed the state of despondency in the amateur groups as follows:

Another thing which I am sure discourages members the senior members of staff in the ATPG and the Ibadan Operatic Society..... has been the fact that we had to conduct our rehearsals outside the Arts Theatre⁵².

Evidently, Adedeji was not against these groups and did not design his academic and Departmental programmes to destabilize or frustrate the amateur efforts. His own purpose was to build an academically strong Department and a professionally viable troupe. He explains the reason for his stand as follows:

Yes, one could say that these amateur groups filled the vacuum at the time when there was no school of Drama or a Theatre Department. The ATPG was made up of amateurs who saw theatre as a diversion, as a recreational activity, but were lacking in any commitments to the development of the theatre as a surviving artistic institution in Nigeria. The ATPG was not geared towards the need of the new Theatre Department, which has responsibilities to train students. It used the resources of the School of Drama but gave nothing in return because of its lack of commitment to theatre development in Nigeria. It was primarily committed to doing plays by European and American writers. It was therefore to be expected that, with the establishment of a Department of Theatre Arts, all efforts would be concentrated on the development of the students⁵³.

This corroborates, what Adelugba meant when he said that "student dramatic activity was minimal and misguided"⁵⁴ and this is what Axworthy means when he said "they did not bring in the African Culture"⁵⁵. Soyinka was very blunt and explicit when he described the same situation as "frequent misguidedness"⁵⁶. Adedeji was in a most auspicious position to remove the stigma by deviating from Eurocentric productions through various innovative programmes.

Furthermore, the year 1971/72 marked the employment of a full time Business Manager for the Arts Theatre, a post which previous Arts Theatre directors had hankered for and made incessant demands for without any success. With the Business Manager as his administrative assistant, Adedeji pushed his programmes ahead by starting the 'Drama Fiesta' at the expiration of the schools drama project in 1979/80. Henceforth, instead of going to schools, final year students, and third year students in recent years, were expected to present plays with actors chosen among themselves or within the university, for practical examination as was the practice with the schools drama production workshops.

African or European plays that were highly experimental, and ^{various} other plays that could not come under the sponsorship of the Department and amateur troupes were attempted by students. It gave the student directors opportunity to produce works of their favourite authors. The drama fiesta also allowed a student actor to feature in as many productions as his or her talents could cope with. It also enabled the staff to assess students' capability and diversity. And importantly too, through the fiesta, staff members were privileged to see how creatively students adapted a variety of plays to the structure of the Arts Theatre or vice-versa.

The repertoire varied widely in genres and numbers, from five to twelve plays per session. For instance, the 1982 fiesta consisted of Oby Egonu's dance drama Odalibe, Julius Spencer directed Blood of A Stranger, James Henshaw's Medicine for Love, Philip Egetei directed The Island, Femi Osofisan's Birthdays are not for Dying, Owusu's Pot of Okro Soup, Yemi Ajibade's Lagos, Yes Lagos and Osofisan's Farewell to a Carnibal Rage. The schools drama project and the drama Fiesta were two channels by which Adedeji boosted African plays and which had positive impact on the dramatic experimentations of the Unibadan Masques and the Arts Theatre.

The Drama Fiesta is a continuing practical examination exercise, and indeed an event which students look forward to, not only because of its academic significance but also because of the variety it offers and the prestige associated with the productions. The standards are high because every student director wants his play chosen for the fiesta. While the university community sees the fiesta as a presentation of a medley of enthralling entertainments, for the Department of Theatre Arts, it is a unique occasion to show the community the quality

of the students it is producing by displaying the best of their productions.

Private productions by students also contributed a considerable percentage to the promotion of African plays from 1960 to 1985. The UCIDS adaptations as discussed under the University Travelling Theatre gave direction to students' initiative in the 1970s and 1980s. Students like Emman Avbiorokoma who wrote The Child Factor and Domestic Strife and Bode Osanyin who wrote Omo Odo and The Shattered Bridge emerged from the Unibadan Masques playwriting experiments. They also mounted their own private productions in the Arts Theatre. Segun Ashade who in 1984 wrote Freedom from Bondage and founded the Campus Players provides remarkable instance of students' private contributions.

Through these private contributions, students have been able to demonstrate their ability to organize theatre troupes, manage them effectively and produce drama of high standards. Some of these student groups are always commissioned to present low budget plays in students' halls during their annual hall week festivities or to mark the anniversaries of clubs and societies. More often than not, these clubs hired the Arts Theatre for the performance of commissioned productions. These private productions serve

as extension services unit of the Department of Theatre Arts and fill the entertainment vacuum in the lives of the inert and hall-bound students.

Apparently, the Departmental productions, the Drama Fiesta and the students' private contributions have been the most enduring efforts that have sustained theatrical traditions and profusion at Ibadan since 1970s. Semi-professional, professional and amateur groups seem to die as soon as they are inaugurated due to unpredictable economic and socio-cultural problems of the country.

The most salient point we have to note in the student theatre projects is that theatre development at Ibadan had been directed by circumstances rather than rigid design. Reverses in certain areas were often resorted to when it was strategically observed it would strengthen developments in other directions of theatrical innovation.

3.5.5. Film Shows and Film Study

Film shows and film study played prominent role in heightening the theatrical awareness and ^{virtues} ~~virtue~~ of theatre profession. Unlike the stage which present physical realities, the film provides

celluloid illusion of life in a most fascinating manner which often attract more audience to theatre than live shows. Theatre practitioners learned to improve their arts also by watching the theatrical styles of Europe and Western world through various dramatic films exhibited at the Arts Theatre.

Prior to the establishment of the School of Drama, film exhibitions had depended strictly on the initiative of the Europeans. International cultural organizations like the British Council, the United States Information Service (USIS) and foreign embassies occasionally showed promotional films about the people and socio-cultural life in their homelands. In the 1950s, attention was given more to the development of the dramatic and musical theatre than the establishment of film as study or regular entertainment at Ibadan. The film, like the literary theatre in the 1950s was a novelty for which there was no cultivated African taste. But the teeming European population was stirred up to action and organized themselves into groups of film enthusiasts that contracted films from local distributors for showing in the theatre and some other private venues.

On the arrival of Geoffrey Axworthy, film services at the Arts Theatre became well organized, creatively selective and widely circulated. A cinematograph was

installed in the Arts Theatre in 1962 and a Film Committee consisting a few members of ATMC was appointed to ^x superintend film shows at the Arts Theatre. Messrs H. Preston, F.E. Speed, G.J. Axworthy, G.J.B. Allport and Dr. D.H. Irving were members of this committee (1963). The Ibadan Film Society was launched the same year, recruiting its members from the University staff, students and interested residents of Ibadan. Membership was by subscription which entitled members to see two films in a month, Martin Banham enlightens us further:

The Ibadan Film Society which brings outstanding films regularly to the University Arts Theatre is another activity of the school of Drama, and represents its desire to see the highest standard of the art of the cinema displayed in Nigeria in order to encourage the growth of interest and creative work in film⁵⁷.

The demand for cultural relevance in the theatrical activities in the Arts Theatre could not however be enforced in the area of film exhibition at this time since there were no films made with African culture in mind. Wole Soyinka's film Kongi's Harvest⁵⁸ did not appear in the film market until 1970. Hence the films chosen were mainly entertaining educational films aimed at stimulating interest in the study of film as an art and also boosting its meagre patronage. A critical look at the 1966/67 film

repertoire clearly shows an inclination towards academic relevance. For instance, L'atlante, a French classic directed by Jean Vigo and starring Michel Simon reveals interest in classical works of art. Its supplement Theatre Laboratium, a 20 minute Polish Film consisted of experimental film works of the Polish State High School of Film, which was quite relevant to film study. Nicholas Nickleby (108 minutes) an English film by Cavaleanti was an adaptation of Dicken's novel. Children's Theatre (17 mins.) by the Studio Theatre, Adelaide, Australia and many others like Shakespeare Wallah (118 mins.) from India/USA, concerning the adventures of a travelling Shakespeare theatre company in post-war India, directed by James Ivory with Felicity Kendal, Shashi Kapoor, and Madhur Jeffrey; L'affaire Est Dans Le Sac (47 mins.) a farcical French film by Prevert brothers and a Dancer's World (30 mins.) by Martha Graham Dance Company were objectively selected teaching aid films.

Film audiences were exposed to not only the rudiments of filmmaking, but also its appreciation and aesthetics through presentation of these choice films. The film committee was critically selective of the type

of other films booked in apart from the educational films shown in the Arts Theatre. In a correspondence No. B. 6307/99 dated 23/7/63 from Mr. G.J.B. Allport to Mr. H. Preston and copied to other members of the film committee, Mr. Allport highlighted the quality of films to be shown and the significance of it to the image of the Arts Theatre.

In the course of time the film became so popular that the Ibadan film society expanded its horizon beyond the vicinity of the University and its Arts Theatre and inspired similar societies in other towns in Nigeria. A hint of the wide extent of its operation system of film circulation can be gleaned from the report of the director, Geoffrey Axworthy:

I think that apart from the link with Ghana, things did not go too badly last season (1965/66). I propose that we follow the same general pattern of circulation i.e. LAGOS - IBADAN - by train to ZARIA, KADUNA - train to ENUGU, NSUKKA, PORT HARCOURT. I suggest that Zaria - Kaduna, Enugu - Nsukka - Port Harcourt organizers get together now and arrange the timing and method of distribution locally⁹⁹.

The Ibadan Film Society continued playing a prominent role in film exhibition at Ibadan and in the distribution to other affiliated societies until 1967 when it declined at the exit of Axworthy.

Other sources include the British Film Institute, London; Contemporary Films Ltd., London; Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Lagos; Information Service of India; Royal Netherlands Embassy, Lagos etc.

Film services at Ibadan became so very popular with attendance sometimes beyond the capacity of the Arts Theatre⁶⁰. The anti-war demonstrations, labour unrest and imposition of curfews from 1967 to 1970 dealt a deadly blow on the Nigerian film culture from which it never recovered fully. The film Society maintained its enthusiasm with certain modifications. It discontinued the national network film distribution because indigenous companies had commenced selling both commercial and educational films. Furthermore, University population had increased and taste had become wide and insatiable. Objectives were therefore redefined and the society's name changed to the Film Club. The Club then concentrated on satisfying the dwindling movie patrons on campus. War had done irreparable damage and the services declined in quality, frequency and variety. Although Soyinka continued the film tradition of the Arts Theatre through the Film Club and special arrangements with

foreign embassies and cultural organizations, film culture never recouped its past vibrance.

An International Film Festival was organized from 10th to 14th March, 1974 to expose film audience to a variety of International film styles to rekindle interest in films. Films from Germany, Britain, United States of America, Argentina, France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland were featured without any gate fee. The Festival was organized in association with Goethe Institute and the Italian Cultural Institute. The repertoire of films shown include La Familia Unida Esperando La Llegada De Hallewyn (Argentina) directed by Miguel Bejo, Times for (England) directed by Dwoskin and starring Verity Bergale etc; David Holzmans's Diary (USA) directed by James Mc Bride; L'Enclos (France) directed by Armand Gatti, starring Hans Christian Blech etc.; Heute Wacht Oder Nie (Germany) directed by Daniel Schmid; La Moste a Venezia (Italy) etc. The minutes of the Department of Theatre Arts staff meeting of Sunday June 29, 1975, records the following:

Mr. Marmion reported that the club had had an encouraging six months showing 15 films to an average audience of 120. The British Council had been most helpful over the supply of films... The film club had raised and expended some N550.

This report indicates that film promotion was not trivially handled but as zealously pursued as was the live theatre though the audience has not improved much. The Department even had greater ambition for the future as the report reveals further: "Next year it hopes to increase the attendance of students and people from outside the university as well as to increase the number of films from other countries other than Britain or U.S...." But with the exit of Mr. Mamion in 1977, the club disintegrated and disappeared in the 80s. This notwithstanding, we can say that the club left important footprints in the development of a film culture in Ibadan.

The inauguration of the UPC in 1980 invigorated the film culture at the Arts Theatre by richly complementing the film services of the Department of Theatre Arts. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the UPC regularly hired the Arts Theatre for films. These films were often previewed to be certain they conformed with the standing policy. The film services of the Department of Theatre Arts have in recent years been limited to occasional classroom illustrations. But the Arts Theatre continues to accept film bookings from individual and corporate exhibitors.

CHAPTER 3

Notes and Bibliography

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6. Banks, R.A. Drama and Theatre Arts. (London: Hodder, 1985): 297.
7. We here adopt the translation given by Makaman Nupe, Alhaji Shehu Musa, C.F.R. in his paper titled Ibadan University and the Welfare of Nigeria being published text of the 40th Anniversary Lecture of the University of Ibadan, (Ibadan: IUP, 1988): 3.
8. Ajayi J.F.A. and Tamuno T.N. The University of Ibadan. 1948 - 73: 129.
9. Ahmed Yerimah. "Interview": 5.
10. Banham, Martin. "Drama at Ibadan: An Exciting Prospect for the Theatre in Africa". Printed Copy made available to the writer by Prof. Banham during a visit to Britain in 1986.

11. All organizational productions, student and private productions are not included. This is a deliberate attempt to break the monotony of a lengthy listing and also avoid distraction since they run into thousands. Collaborative works or jointly sponsored international packages are however included.
12. Axworthy, G. "A Theatre for a University" in Drama in Education 3 (The annual survey). Ed. J. Hodgson and M. Banham. (London: Atman, 1975): 139.
13. Axworthy, G. "A Theatre for a University": 139.
 - The Sherman Theatre programme is similar to the academic functions of the Ibadan Arts Theatre. The Sherman Theatre Complex has two stage forms. The bigger auditorium has a fan shaped auditorium with an unstressed proscenium like the Olivier Theatre at the National Theatre London. It also has a small compact arena theatre for experimental works. Axworthy avoided all the structural errors inherent in the Arts Theatre facility.
14. Akanji, Nasiru (Ed.) The Nigerian Stage. Vol. 1 No. 1, March 1990 (Ilorin: Innovation Theatre Study Series, 1990), 42.
15. Sonuga, Gbenga. "From the School of Drama to Department of Theatre Arts", 38.
16. Langley Stephen. Theatre Management in America: Principle and Practice. (New York: Drama Books, 1981), 164 - 5.
17. See Appendix 9.
18. The Comedy of Errors was particularly done in the accordance with the antics of the Ogunmola Travelling Theatre based at the Arts Theatre in 1963. See Yerimah Ahmed in Interview with Axworthy, page. 16.

19. See Appendix 6 - Interview with Aboaba.
20. See Plate 4.
21. Ferguson, J. "Ibadan 1956-1966" in Ibadan Voices, 114.
22. Axworthy, G. "Developments in the Nigerian Theatre 1957-67". Based on a talk given in April 1967 to the Annual Conference of the Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama in London.
23. See Appendix 1 under "Programme and Suggestions" for Nottingham Playhouse by G. Axworthy.
24. Evans, James R. London Theatre, 123.
25. Soyinka, Wole. "Towards a True Theatre", 64.
26. Yerimah, Ahmed. "Geoffrey Axworthy in Interview", 24.
27. See Production notes on Noah.
28. Yerimah, Ahmed. "Interview", 24.
29. Yerimah, Ahmed. "Interview", 24.
30. Adelugba, Dapo. "Nationalism and Theatre", 24-45.
31. See Plate 5.
32. See Appendix 6 and Plate 5.
33. See Plate 2.
34. Gibbs, James. Modern Dramatists: Wole Soyinka, 39.
35. See Plate 6.
36. Adelugba, Dapo. "Nationalism", 24.
37. Axworthy, G. "Developments in the Nigerian Theatre". Courtesy of Geoffrey Axworthy, Cardiff, 1986.

38. Ferguson, J. "Ibadan 1956-66", 114-115.
39. Nagler, A.M. A Source Book in Theatrical History. (N.Y: Dover Publ., 1952), 59-60.
40. Nicoll, Allardyce. The Development of Theatre, 68.
41. Akanji, A. (Ed). The Nigerian Stage, 36.
42. Reis H. Alvin. The Arts Management Handbook, (N.Y: Arts Pub, 1970), 479.
43. See Appendix 5 - Interview with Val. Olayemi
44. Ferguson, John. "Ibadan", 113.
45. See Plate 5.
46. Ferguson, John. "Ibadan", 113.
47. See Appendix 6-Interview with Fola Aboaba.
48. A careful study of plates 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 shows that meticulous attention was paid to standards in set design, costume, aesthetics, musical accompaniment but we cannot rule out occasional lapses.
49. Osofisan and Sowande crave for adaptable stage where they can always liberate their artistic vision and manipulate it in ^{any} direction. Their plays are written to be adaptable to any stage form.
50. Wickham Glynne. "Drama as Study" in The Uses of Drama: 166 - 180.
51. The present writer was posted to Renascent High School where he directed Olu Olagoke's Incorruptible Judge as a final year Diploma in Drama practical examination project in 1974.

52. Aboaba, Fola. "Fola Aboaba in Interview with Dapo Adelugba" Lace Occasional Publication (LOP) Ed. Dapo Adelugba Vol. 2 No. 5, July 20, 1985: 34. See Also Appendix 6.
53. Malomo, Jide. "Resident Theatre Companies": 480.
54. Adelugba, Dapo. "Nationalism": 24.
55. Yerimah, Ahmed. "Axworthy in Interview": 24.
56. Soyinka Wole, "Towards a True Theatre": 65-66.
57. Banham, Martin. "Drama at Ibadan: An Exciting Prospect for the Theatre in Africa". A printed copy given to the writer in Britain in 1986.
58. Soyinka's Kongi's Harvest was the first known Nigerian play to be filmed. The filming was undertaken by Francis Oladele's Calpeny Film Company, Ibadan; it was directed by Ossie Davis, a black American. Filming began in February, 1970.
59. From the correspondence captioned "1966/67 Film Season - Bookings" sent to all the Secretaries/Chairmen of all affiliated film Societies by Geoffrey Axworthy.
60. Evidence reveals that extra seats were brought into the theatre and members also sat on the gangways since the capacity of the Arts Theatre is 304. As a result of oversubscription, some alternative venue, usually the Education Lecture theatre, was sometimes used.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 IBADAN THEATRE MOVEMENTS:
CONCEPTS AND PARADIGMS IN PROFESSIONALISM

Between 1960 and 1985, the University of Ibadan Arts Theatre witnessed the emergence of five different theatrical movements epitomizing different concepts in theatrical professionalism. These were: The University Travelling Theatre (UTT) 1961, the School of Drama Acting Company, 1967, The University Theatre Arts Company (UTAC), 1970, The Unibadan Masques, 1974 and The Unibadan Performing Company (UPC), 1980. The concern for the development of a professional theatre probably predated its 1961 origin. The remarkable works of the ATPG, the UCIDS^{and} several amateur groups at the Arts Theatre seemed impressive somehow to encourage the ATMC to hanker for a resident professional theatre. The closure of the Arts Theatre to the public while it was undergoing physical alterations to rectify its inadequaciesⁱⁿ order to meet the professional demands on it, proved very auspicious to developments. The students out of sheer enthusiasm decided to take productions to their audiences wherever they might be. And of course, it was their halls of residence that immediately occurred to them.

Thus without much awareness of the implications of their action the UCIDS pioneered a travelling literary theatre tradition at Ibadan. The troupe later embarked on nation wide tours presenting mainly adaptations of classical plays.

4.1 The University Travelling Theatre

The emergence of U.T.T. was a notable milestone in the dissemination of theatre education and practice in Nigeria. It evolved in three phases as follows:

- (i) As UCIDS itinerant programme touring student halls and villages around Ibadan after the closure of the Arts Theatre (1960 - 61).
- (ii) As the University Travelling Theatre in collaboration with Axworthy supported by University grants and commercial firms prepared for Nation-wide tours (1961 - 1963).
- (iii) As University Travelling Theatre on wheels with mobile Elizabethan stage equipped with technical facilities prepared for national and international presentations. (1964 - 1966).

Phase (i) has been discussed under the Dramatic Society activities.

Phase (II) represents a period of growth in maturity and theatrical expertise. The management style changed and commercial organizations were wooed for financial aids. The first production of the UTT was That Scoundrel Suberu (1961 followed by The Taming of the Shrew (1962) and The Comedy of Errors (1963). The productions are essentially comedies targeted at school audiences and this accounted for their massive support from school children. Professor Sonny Oti, a major participant in the Travelling Theatre activities provide an excellent summary of events in his accounts:

... The Ibadan University Travelling Theatre was actively touring nationally with a repertoire of teaching aid plays. That rallied grammar school students in urban centres across the country during Easter short vacations. The repertoire usually comprised Shakespeare texts for schools or parallels which could make their study of dramatic literature texts less tedious. Thus between 1961 and 1964, the Travelling Theatre toured with That Scoundrel Suberu, The Taming of the Shrew, The Comedy of Errors, as well as excerpts from Julius Caesar, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream ... Henry IV, Twelfth Night, ... Merchant of Venice.

In 1965, it toured with Danda, an adaptation of Nkem Nwankwo's novel... The innovative Theatre-On-wheels on which the 1964 and 1965 productions were mounted, launched in a way, the establishment of professional and academic theatre studies at Ibadan University.¹

The sudden detour of the Travelling Theatre after That Scoundrel Suberu to the retention of the original titles of plays adapted or the complete shifting of interest to Shakespeare plays from 1962 to 1964 should not be seen as a betrayal of the earlier avowed commitment to the development of African drama. As earlier observed, theatre policy at Ibadan was not based on a watertight management creed, and since its evolution was prompted by accidental and circumstantial occurrences, it could not *but* be responsive and pliable to circumstances. That Scoundrel Suberu was popular because people believed it was a true Nigerian play.²

The successful outcome of the 1961 tours suggested a nation-wide tour with a popular dramatic literature text. Nigerian plays were yet to emerge to compete adequately with classic plays on school curriculum at the time. Axworthy felt that in the absence of popular³



PLATE 10 Cast of 1964 Shakespeare Festival by the University Travelling Theatre. Cast on the mobile stage of the Theatre-On-Wheels after performance in front of Trenchard Hall, University of Ibadan. Standing are Paul Worika, Business Manager, 5th from right in flowing white gown; Sonny Oti in grey coat, 8th from left; Wole Amele, 6th from left and Albert Egbe, 2nd from left, in black suit, among others.



PLATE II: Scene from Shakespeare's
Comedy of Errors by U.T.T., 1964

new Nigerian plays, European plays which were likely to appeal to general taste and yet retain academic viability should be kept on the repertory.

Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew was decided upon as it raises issues most relevant to Nigerian life.

Similar considerations were adduced for the choice of Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors in 1963.

At this time Ogunmola Theatre had come into residence at the Arts Theatre school of Drama and their techniques were being learnt by students. Axworthy explains that "We did Comedy of Errors in a very Nigerian folk opera way".⁴

A completely unique innovation known as 'Theatre-on-wheels' was introduced into the Travelling theatre practice in 1964. The 1964 production coincided with the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare. Axworthy approached the British Council which was organizing it and a festival of excerpts from Shakespeare's plays⁵ was mutually agreed upon to be taken round the country. It was decided that a travelling stage in the form of the Elizabethan stage be constructed to facilitate production mobility. The transportation of the stage brought the idea of a stage-on-wheels carried by a trailer. Brown credited this to Axworthy.⁶

The activities of the Travelling Theatre were enhanced through generous donations from the Shell Company of Nigeria, who gave a trailer and the United African Company (UAC) who gave money for building a stage on the trailer in the tradition of a Globe Theatre. The British Council, the University authorities and corporate organizations, the responsive audience and the enthusiasm and relentlessness of everyone connected with the production encouraged the theatre to bear its touring hazards and hardships to its glorious end. The production provided various opportunities

for all those involved, artistes, technicians and administrators alike.

But it was not only the excerpts from seven plays of Shakespeare that the Travelling Theatre-on-wheels was noted for. Another innovation was the adaptation of Danda by Nkem Nwankwo which we had mentioned earlier in this chapter. After the production of classics, the Travelling Theatre veered back to African plays. Danda was published in 1964 and was adapted in 1965, which means there was conscious monitoring of African writings. The neglect suffered by James Ene Henshaw's plays was redressed with the production of his Dinner for Promotion in 1966, Axworthy's last production in Ibadan. Danda as a play and novel is a spectacular cultural outfit but with no pungent intellectual message. Sonny Oti concluded his observations as follows:

Although the text of Danda was a trilingua of Igbo, pidgin and English, it was essentially an "Igbo Folk Opera". Its theme was as slight as a slapstick. Ironically, Danda became an "epilogue" from the travelling theatre because 1965 was the last national tour by Ibadan University's theatre-on-wheels ... In 1966, Danda was taken to the Dakar Festival by the troupe.⁷

In terms of inventiveness, artistic speculation and popularity, the University Travelling Theatre was a huge success. It toured Nigeria during vacations and represented Nigeria at the Dakar Festival, April 1 - 26, 1966. It was the only Acting Company with surpassing tradition in effective publicity, continuity of administration and corporate sponsorship a tradition that subsequent university troupes were to learn from.

An illuminating epilogue to the organizational ingenuity of the university Travelling Theatre could be culled from a correspondent report of April 2, 1966 on Danda in West Africa magazine, which reads:

The play was performed in almost all big towns of Southern Nigeria, including Lagos, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, Benin, Onisha, Owerri, Port Harcourt, Aba, Uyo, Calabar, and Enugu. When it was all over, Pierre Lagues, Nigeria Sales Manager of CFAO and Geoffrey Axworthy, Director of the School of Drama and originator of the Travelling Theatre, agreed that it had been a most stimulating and successful experiment. The Company which had already paid for the press advertising for the tour, presented a brand new Minimoke to the School, for use in developing its projects. This is not, of course, the first time the Travelling Theatre has attracted such patronage. The trailer on which the "Theatre on Wheels" is constructed was donated by

Shell B.P. for the All-Nigeria Shakespeare Festival tour of 1964. Other firms provided haulage, drivers, and fuel, and the British Council made an outright donation of £1000. The Electricity Corporation of Nigeria laid on electric power at all points at a nominal charge, while others lent tents for dressing rooms, buses for cast transport, and many other items. The university itself has been a generous sponsor - the whole project was financed in 1961/62 from research grant.⁸

The U.T.T. through its nation-wide tours, adaptation of plays to reflect ethnic diversity and unity, conveniently simulated a national troupe,⁹ and it has also been the main impetus for the inexorable quest for the establishment of a professional troupe that would serve as a model national theatre. The exit of Geoffrey Axworthy prematurely terminated the U.T.T., but fortunately, a solid foundation had been laid for future Acting Companies to build upon.

4.2 The School of Drama Acting Company

It was a most welcome gesture and an overt recognition of Wole Soyinka's theatrical preeminence when he was appointed the Director of the School of Drama in August 1967. It was anticipated that a well-guided, African-oriented cultural policy would emanate from the university

once Soyinka commenced his programmes. The UCIDS was most enthusiastic about the appointment, revelling in the hope of a more meaningful relationship with the School of Drama. Dapo Adelugba, the past president of UCIDS had also taken up appointment with the School. To Soyinka himself, it was a moment of great challenge to groom Nigerian literary theatre and offer a model professional troupe which he had attempted in his private experiments with the 1960 Masks and the Orisun Theatre.

But barely one month in office, and while he was yet writing the objectives of the School's Acting Company, the Federal Security agents arrested him during the long vacation of 1967 and clamped him into detention where he remained till October, 1969.

While Soyinka was in custody, Dexter Lyndersay deputized for him as Acting Director of the School of Drama and Dapo Adelugba took over the guidance of the Acting Company in 1967. Before his arrest, Soyinka had engaged Betty Okotie as a foundation member of the Acting Company and had also left instructions as to the modality of organizing the troupe with a mandate that "Mr. Adelugba is to organize the training scheme, assisted by Miss Sowunmi

and Betty Okotie".¹⁰

The absence of the substantive director affected the company adversely. The Acting Company could not function independently as the full-fledged professional company that it was supposed to be, due to a number of factors associated with the employment of actors and the funding of the programme. Instead of abandoning the project as a result of the invalidating effects of these factors, the operation shifted gear to a drastic, yet imaginative style by changing to a six-month training programme similar to the present Extra-Mural Theatre Workshop (ETW)¹¹ programme of the Department. Trainee actors/actresses participated in a number of stage, radio and television plays to sustain the company till Wole Soyinka was released in 1969.

Although its productions were not especially remarkable in terms of professionalism and nation-wide tours as those of the University Travelling Theatre, the Acting Company achieved unique artistic novelty in the ad hoc training scheme. It created a precedent which was difficult for subsequent Acting Companies to emulate. Adelugba, the director of the company narrated his experience as follows:

We started out with the aim of producing actors. What we did in fact produce was a corps of rounded theatre practitioners with a fair amount of knowledge and competence in the various departments of the arts of the theatre and an ability to perform not only on the stage but also on radio, television and eventually film. As planned, the trainees became a Repertory Company during the long vacation (July to September, 1968). The company played not only in Ibadan but also in other towns in the Western State of Nigeria and Lagos. A projected tour of the country had to be cancelled due to administrative and weather problems.¹²

Considering the amount of activities undertaken by the Acting Company as related to stage and media productions, a lot of energy must have been expended. Most of the television plays were adapted for stage. If the Acting Company under Adelugba seems to lack the glamour of Axworthy's U.T.T., it excelled in its indigenization of repertory and the nurturing of new African plays and playwrights, notable among whom is Wale Ogunyemi who wrote eight plays for the company. This gave Adelugba, as a past activist of UCIDS, the privilege of continuing the development of African theatre which had been started by

the UTT between 1961 and 1966.

When Soyinka was released in October 1969, he took over the Acting Company from Dapo Adelugba, who now assisted him. Soyinka re-examined the existing training programme, modified it where necessary and started a new Acting Company from the old and new entrants, called the University Theatre Arts Company (UTAC) to reflect the conversion of the School of Drama to the Department of Theatre Arts.

4.3 University Theatre Arts Company (UTAC)

On the 1st of October, 1970 the School of Drama obtained Senate approval for its conversion to a full academic department offering degree courses of Theatre Arts and related courses in Theatre, Architecture, Psychology and Drama, Aesthetics, Drama in Africa, Philosophy and Drama, Music, American Black Theatre etc.¹³ The former School of Drama Acting Company was changed to the University Theatre Arts Company to reflect the conversion to an academic Department.

The UTAC was inaugurated with Wole Soyinka's new play Madmen and Specialists. It was a matter of coincidence that soon after Soyinka was released from

detention he was invited to participate at the month-long conference of Playwrights at the Eugene O' Neill Theatre Centre, Waterford, Connecticut where he premiered Madmen and Specialists in 1970.

James Gibbs noted that: "The text (Madmen and Specialists) was completed from the drafts, some of which may have been made in Kaduna Prison."¹⁴ This no doubt illustrates the degree of determination that Soyinka brought into his work, that while he was yet in jail he was mirroring the society and scheming new trends in theatrical consciousness. Soyinka prepared the UTAC for the Waterford Conference, bringing the incipient troupe and the University into another international limelight after Nancy.

After its successful performance at Waterford, Soyinka explained that the troupe later performed at New York University Arts Centre, rounding off the tour in Harlem where the Company played to full capacity audience.¹⁵ As a result of this successful outing, the troupe was invited to return with a production for the opening of the Annenberg Creative Arts Centre at the University of Philadelphia in February, 1971. But this was not honoured. However,

on return home the UTAC performed a new version of Madmen at Ibadan and Ife in January and March, 1971.¹⁶

The life of UTAC was very short but very eventful. within that short period its repertoire included Madmen and Specialists by Soyinka, Esu Elegbara by Ogunyemi, Akara Oogun by Osanyin, The Jar by Pirandelo, the trilogy - Dutchman, The Fantastic and After this We Heard of Fire directed by Lyndersay. All the groups involved utilized the technical assistance and management facilities of the Department of Theatre Arts. Wole Soyinka informs us that the staff participated in the artistic side of a number of productions and in some cases actually directed the plays. Soyinka did not monopolize the opportunities that his position afforded him but encouraged others to develop in their own different theatrical directions. As a result, works of younger playwrights were given a trial at the Arts Theatre. The Acting Company (UTAC) was disbanded in April 1971 due to what Adelugba described as "administrative and financial difficulties".¹⁷ after a seven-month operation.

Soyinka resigned his appointment as Head of the toddling Department of Theatre Arts in October, 1971

leaving a temporary vacuum in the development of African drama in Ibadan.

4.4 Unibadan Masques

For three and a half years after the demise of UTAC, the Department of Theatre Arts was without an Acting Company. Adedeji was busy putting the Department on a sound academic footing and making special cases for additional staff. In October, 1974, the last batch of Diploma in Drama students graduated¹⁸ and a new Diploma in Theatre Arts programme was introduced. The aim was to produce all-round professionals in theatre, film, television and radio who would go out to practice privately, work in media houses and teach in schools, thereby boosting the future of the theatre in various spheres. To achieve this, Adedeji saw the need to raise a professional or semi-professional troupe. Whatever the case may be, the 1974/75 session witnessed a new dimension in professional theatre development at Ibadan. The Unibadan Masques was founded by Adedeji with Dexter Lyndersay as the director. Adedeji's concern was to build a virile Acting Company for the promotion of African plays on a more enduring framework than in the past.

For Nigerian literary theatre to thrive, Adedeji contended that there must be a troupe and a regular performance venue where writers could experiment and blossom without any hindrance.

The main aim of the Unibadan Masques, as Lyndersay put it was the projection of "the African personality (and concerns) - in tradition, in present-day life and in aspiration for the future - in particular the Nigerian and including those members of the 'Black Diaspora' (Black Americans, West Indians etc.) by use of performing and other arts and skills".¹⁹ This was much in accord with most proposals put forward by members of staff since 1974 and which were periodically reviewed. The means of achieving this aim was through employment of the best personnel - artistic and administrative, - who would be paid according to their expertise and the conditions operative generally in the labour market.

For ease of management, and transportation, the company was to be limited to 25 in number. It was therefore imperative for actors to be multitalented in writing, acting, music, design, directing and to also

be prepared to be trained in all aspects of stagecraft. In addition, it was proposed that five persons should be employed to serve on the administrative side as stage manager, production Manager/Technician, Publicity/ Tour-Booking Manager, Box Office Assistant and typist. It was estimated that ₦22,000 (Twenty two thousand naira) should take care of all these annually.

The frequency of production was fixed at 9 plays per season with an average of one production per month. It was considered ideal to have at least 6 plays in repertory. The programme time-table was made as flexible as possible. The Long Vacation period was spent preparing and rehearsing plays for the following season, training actors, taking productions on tours etc.²⁰

The Unibadan Masques was unique in the sense that it was better organized and coordinated than the previous companies. Actors were real professionals who were not subjected to classroom teaching and frustrating monthly stipends. They were paid employees and the troupe had an identifiable administrative set up. Interaction with students, and involvement of people from University and town communities were encouraged.

Lyndersay directed the Masques from 1974 to 1976 and Adedeji, assisted by Yemi Ajibade, the Artist-in-Residence, took over direction from 1976 to 1979. Laolu Ogunniyi was appointed Production Manager and also doubled as Touring Advance Manager.

The Unibadan Masques as a matter of fact nurtured Femi Osofisan and provided opportunities for the established and aspirant playwrights to put their work to test in the amount of new writings collected for production.

As an academic professional theatre, the Unibadan Masques boosted its popularity by adopting the "total theatre" experience of the Yoruba Travelling Theatre, from which Osofisan's The Chattering and The Song and Kolera Kolej evolved. Dexter Lyndersay explains his preference:

When I was director of Unibadan Masques, I looked first for plays by Nigerian authors. And my first consideration was for writers in and around the Department Simultaneously, we looked for African and Afro-American plays ... Our primary concern was to do plays that would be stimulating to the campus community; also from which the participating students could gain some practical experience and the

students could gain some practical experience and the student spectators some inspiring demonstrations of the arts of the theatre.²¹

The creative interjection of familiar local tunes and dexterous manipulation of cultural idioms and values made Ogunyemi, Osofisan and Ajibade especially favourites of the Unibadan Masques. This is much in conformity with the production aims of giving expression to "the African Personality." The Unibadan Masques served as the professional unit of the Department of Theatre Arts the students could look up to for inspiration and emulation. It complemented the curricular programmes and provided opportunities for both academic and professionally-oriented staff to share experiences of production and finally, it provided a link between town and gown.

The Masques productions were popular, socially relevant African plays which included Femi Osofisan's Kolera Kolej (1975), Emman Avbiorokoma's The Child Factor (1976), Wole Soyinka's The Lion and the Jewel (1977) and Yemi Ajibade's Mokai (1978). The greatest achievements of the Masques lie in its promotion of African

and plays, the establishment of theatre in English as a viable professional venture in Ibadan.

The Unibadan Masques was somehow more successful than other Acting companies for several reasons. Artistically, it had a focus which it kept constantly in view. Members of the organization contributed the bulk of its creative materials. Writers like Wale Ogunyemi, Emman Avbiorokoma, Femi Osofisan, Bode Osanyin, Yemi Ajibade and Kole Omotoso were within the university community and of course many of them were part of the Masques organization. They were readily available to respond to the artistic and experimental perception of the project. The university was fiscally supportive in that the authorities provided vehicles to facilitate touring, office accommodation to ease administration, and incentives to sustain artistic enthusiasm. The actors were themselves committed practitioners who put the interest of the arts above all pecuniary considerations.

Adedeji maintained a consistent view of the viability of theatre as a business venture. The success of the Masques seemed to justify his hope for theatre

as business. He made a proposal to the university authority for the establishment of a professional revenue generating troupe that would be independent of the Department of Theatre Arts. The proposal was accepted and the Unibadan Performing Company was constituted in July, 1980.

4.5 Unibadan Performing Company (UPC)

It was the ultimate goal of Adedeji to see that what Axworthy pioneered and Soyinka nurtured was realized by him. The success of the Unibadan Masques precipitated the birth of the UPC in 1980 with the great hope that it would attain preeminence in style and quality over all pre-existing troupes, and serve as model for all other extant troupes in English and the vernacular.

For this reason it was placed under the management of vastly experienced artists, theatre scholars, media experts and dynamic administrators to ensure its stability and success. The Board of Management consisted of Messrs Ayo Ogunlade (Chairman), Peter Olagoke, Dr. N.O. Kayode, Dr. Victoria Ezeokoli, Dr. (Mrs.) Zulu Sofola, Mr. Dapo Adelugba (now a Professor), Professor Olumuyiwa Awe, Mr. Bayo Oduneye, Mr. Emman Avbiorokoma, and Mr. (Now Dr.) Jide Malomo as Secretary.

The Board of Management had the following stated functions to perform:

- (i) The Board shall be charged with the overall responsibility for the management of the Unibadan Performing Company. However, it will concern itself mainly with policy matters. The operative matters shall be the major concern of the Managing Director who will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the company.
- (ii) The Board shall be responsible to Council through the Vice-Chancellor.
- (iii) The Board shall determine the general conditions of service of the Unibadan Performing Company.
- (iv) The Board shall receive an annual report which shall be forwarded to Council through the Vice-Chancellor.
- (v) Without prejudice to the foregoing, the Board shall have power to consider any matter that it considers of interest and that is related to the operation of the Performing Company.²²

For the day-to-day operation, Mr. Bayo Oduneye and Mr. Jide Malomo were appointed Artistic Director and Business Manager respectively. The staff of the Company²³ were recruited through newspaper advertisements and employed after necessary screening by a panel of interviewers comprising Messrs Emman Avbiorokoma, Bayo Oduneye, Dapo Adelugba, Jide Malomo, Sunbo Marinho, Sola Aborisade and Tunji Oyelana in May, 1980. On July first, 1980, the Company commenced operation with a capital of ₦81,000, four vehicles (i.e. one station wagon peogot 504 G.L., one Toyota Coastal Bus (26 Seater), one V/W Kombi Bus, and one 7 ton Austin Larry) which were in various states of disrepair and an office block formerly used by the Unibadan Masques. The UPC took over all the assets of the Masques to begin its own professional career.

A troupe of 14 actors and actresses of varying grades and expertise were employed. An Assistant Business Manager, 2 Theatre Technicians, 2 drivers, 1 typist, 1 messenger/cleaner, 1 Accounting Officer plus the Artistic Director and Business Manager served on the administrative side. Four of the crew members

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were on secondment. There were twenty four members all together on the staff of UPC as at March, 1981.

The Arts Theatre (supplemented by Trenchard Hall) was to be used mainly for the UPC stage productions and film exhibitions. The Artistic projection of the UPC was to produce excellent works of Nigerian playwrights that had box office (financial) potential. As in the Masques, the artists were multitalented, which accounted for the fewness of their number. This also suggested that the plays on repertory must be limited in the number of characters for easy touring and effective administration.

As a professional theatre, the UPC falls within the category of a commercial theatre like the Yoruba Travelling Theatre, New York Broadway and London Westend theatres. The choice of plays was guided by the popularity of the plays or the playwrights. The UPC repertory 1980 - 1985 consisted of only six plays - The Divorce by Wale Ogunyemi, Our Husband has Gone Mad Again by Ola Rotimi, The Wind by Obi Egbuna, Birthdays Are not for Dying by Femi Osofisan and The Lion and Jewel by Wole Soyinka.

The effect of the popularity of the UPC productions on the Arts Theatre was rather immeasurable considering the number and type of audiences it attracted to the theatre e.g. societies and high government officials. The repertoire augmented the patronage of the academic and general productions of the Department of Theatre Arts which had regular but almost inelastic audience. The volume of activities in the Arts Theatre swelled and the patrons were pleased with the programme diversity. The UPC radio and television drama series in Oyo, Ogun, Bendel and Kwara States also broadened its influence and stimulated public awareness of theatrical activities at Ibadan.

In spite of its meticulous planning and commitment, the UPC could not achieve its financial goals. The Managing Director explains the reason for this as follows:

The major infrastructural problem which hampered the performance of the Unibadan Performing Company was the lack of performance venue. The University Arts Theatre, which is the only venue for theatrical performances on the campus, was used mainly and almost exclusively as a laboratory of Theatre Arts Department... 25

Apart from the variety of factors responsible for the collapse of UPC, it is also noteworthy that overdependence on University subsidy and the treatment of performers as civil servants and not as professional artistes ruined the enterprise. Since its decline, in 1985, the University has not been able to raise another troupe.

A true appraisal of the various attempts at evolving a professional literary theatre troupe at Ibadan may be difficult to undertake without a thorough appreciation of the prevailing circumstances, vision and operation techniques that characterized each troupe. It can be justifiably said that the troupes didn't achieve equal success due to variable factors like the philosophy of operation, nature of funding, degree of personal commitment managers and troupe members brought into the project, quality of production equipments, availability of performance venue and their effectiveness in promoting theatre profession.

4.6 International Productions

The first international exposure that the Ibadan theatre troupe had was 1966 when it presented Danda at the first World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture held in Dakar, Senegal. The advantage

of an international exposure is that it made the theatrical activities emanating from the Arts Theatre known by the world. This instantly attracted recognition for any excellent work done and prestige for the institution it came from.

In 1967, the School of Drama Acting Company participated at the World Festival of University Drama, held in Nancy, France and won third position among the twenty six competing universities from the major countries of the world, beaten only by Finland and Britain. Wole Soyinka attended the National Playwrights' Conference at the prestigious Eugene O'Neil Theater Center, Waterford, Connecticut, July - August, 1970 where he premiered his Madmen and Specialists on August 1 and 2 with the University Theatre Arts Company. The group later performed at New York University, black communities in Hartford, Waterbury, New Haven and Bridgeport.

The trip was highly successful. In the Bridgeport, Post of July 28, 1970, under the caption "Nigeria's Play Gives Insight Into African Drama Culture" Lynda Herskowitz wrote:

A brief insight into African drama and culture was gained yesterday by residents of Bridgeport who witnessed a play entitled "Madmen and Specialists", by Wole Soyinka, a leading African playwright, in the Harding High School auditorium.

It was the first public performance of this new play, performed by members of the University of Ibadan Theatre Arts Company of Nigeria ... and they are to be commended for the worth while exposure to African drama and culture.

So wide was the publicity this production attracted in America that not only the reputation of the playwright increased but the university and Africa also enjoyed a corresponding boost ⁱⁿ image. Through this production the American society was introduced to dimensions in African drama, culture and the prevalent social realities in Nigeria.

Ten years after Waterford, Adedeji opened a new kind of cultural exchange programme known as the Nigerian Showcase Ensemble in 1980/81. The Showcase, conceived as a tolerable substitute for a resident Acting Company was an ad hoc troupe of staff, students and practitioners. It was a collection of virtuoso artists who pulled their resources together for the creation of an excellent unscripted medley of history, folklore, dance, drama, and music, combining colour, and spectacle.

The first production of the Showcase was Daybreak in Jebana, which toured six American cities in 1980 and participated at the American Theatre Arts Festival, Valhalla, New York, on April 24, 1981. The production and travelling expenses were borne by Mobil producing, Nigeria, with assistance from the Nigerian Airways and Concord Press of Nigeria. The second Showcase production to America, A Flash in the Sun (1982) was particularly remarkable because it represented Nigeria in the United States of America at a Festival organized in commemoration of 2000 years of the Treasures of Ancient Nigeria at the Philadelphia Museum of Arts. The ensemble toured the United States for one month from March 22 to April 22, 1982, and performed to a capacity audience of 55,000 in Philadelphia and Washington D.C. According to Rubicon publication, "The dance drama was watched by about 150,000 in eight performances which included 24,000 at one show at the end of which reviewers noted it was a record breaking attendance"²⁵ (Sic) It received an excellent citation from the City Council of Philadelphia. Chief A.Y. Eke, Nigerian Ambassador in the United States of America wrote to Adedeji on the production:

I write to commend you on the excellent performance last night by the University of Ibadan Dance Ensemble in the National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. It was a splendid occasion, and the audience was fully appreciative of the performance. Two standing ovations are unusual in a single performance. Nonetheless it was the sort of appreciation accorded your group. It richly deserved it.

By this performance the University of Ibadan Dance Ensemble has rendered an invaluable service to our country.²⁶ (Emphasis Mine)

The 1985 season ended with Bode Sowande's Circus of Freedom Square, November 17-20, 1985. The play had earlier in the year been premiered at the L'Aquila International Theatre Festival, Italy on June 3rd, 1985. It was specifically produced for this festival and was equally successful as all other international productions.

4.7 Foreign Visiting Artists/Production Workshops

While troupes from the Arts Theatre have represented Nigeria in other countries of the world, foreign troupes representing their countries have also been hosted at the Arts Theatre over the years. This has exposed students practically to a variety of world entertainments and theatrical styles. Theatre luminaries from Britain, United State of America, Germany, France, Australia, India and African countries have therefore been

encountered as first hand experiences.

Among the international troupes, actors, directors that performed or conducted workshops at the Arts Theatre within the period under consideration are:²⁷

1. Hornsteiner Puppet Theatre from Western Germany, Nov. 1965.
2. One Man in His Time, One Man show, by James Caincross, Nov. 1968, sponsored by the British Council,
3. Royal Lyceum Theatre Company of Edinburgh, British Council, Mar. 14-17, 1969.
4. Pepusch, the German Mime Oct/Nov. 1972.
5. Theatre De La Mandragore, Pantomime from Paris, April, 1973.
6. Didjeridoo, Australian Aboriginal Music, April, 1973.
7. Peter Brook and others, Workshop/ Performances, sponsored by British Council, 1973.
8. Julian Mitchell, Seminar on Drama, British Council, April 9, 1973.
9. Ipi Tombi from South Africa, Nov., 1976.
10. A classic Dance Drama by Swapnasundari and Shastri Sisters from India, 1982.

11. Dramatic Reading from African and Afro American Literature by Cicely Tyson from U.S.A., 1982.
12. Odehe Folkloric Troupe from Ghana, 1982.
13. Ellen Stewart, Founder and Managing Director, La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, New York City, Sponsored by the United States Information Service USIS, 1983.
14. American National Theatre Express, Except performances and workshops, by Jack Cantwell, Katherine Ferrand and Allen Nause 1985.
15. Peter Brook, Film Recruitment Drive to Ibadan, 1985.

From the above, it can be seen that the Arts Theatre and the Ibadan Theatre Arts students have been able to interact with international artistes and explore their professional advantages to enhance competence. It can therefore be concluded from all these activities, that the Arts Theatre was the enviable goal of all troupes,

amateur or professional, in the 1960s and 70s for Ibadan was their Stratford-Upon-Avon and the Arts Theatre was their Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in terms of excellence and inspiration.

1. Wole Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero Premiered by UCIDS in 1965 was considered popular in the South, its Christian orientation had not been an attraction to the Islamic North.
2. Standard and Pidgin English and was so hilarious that the Eastern Nigeria Television, Enugu, telecast it. But the play did not go to Eastern Nigeria.
3. Wole Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero Premiered by UCIDS in 1965 was considered popular in the South, its Christian orientation had not been an attraction to the Islamic North.
4. Yerimah Ahmed, 15
5. See Plates 6 and 7
6. Brown T. Williams: "Shakespeare-on-wheels": 36
Brown noted that the idea of a Travelling Stage originated from a casual comment made by Awoyemi.
7. Oti, Sonny. "Nigeria Theatre" : 31
8. West African Magazine. April 2, 1965 : 172.
9. The idea of U.T.T. inspired Adelugba's dissertation. See Adelugba, Dapo. "Nationalism and the Awakening National Theatre of Nigeria."
10. Adelugba, Dapo. "The Professional and Academic Theatre" : 343
11. In fact all Acting Company activities from UCIDS to Unibadan Marquee were recorded as integral members of STN. See Appendix B.

CHAPTER 4

Notes and Bibliography

1. Oti, Sonny, "Nigeria Theatre Toady" in Nigeria Magazine. Vol. 53, No. 2: 31.
2. Yerimah, Ahmed. "Axworthy in Interview" 18-19. The Play was written in standard and Pidgin English and was so hilarious that the Eastern Nigeria Television, Enugu, televised it. But the play did not go beyond Eastern Nigeria.
3. Wole Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero Premiered by UCIDS in 1960, was considered popular in the South, but its Christian orientation had not much attraction to the Islamic North.
4. Yerimah Ahmed, 15
5. See Plates 6 and 7
6. Brown T. William: "Shakespeare-on-Wheels": 36
Brown noted that the idea of a Travelling Stage germinated from a casual comment made by Axworthy.
7. Oti, Sonny. "Nigeria Theatre" : 31
8. West Africa Magazine. April 2, 1966 :372.
9. The works of U.T.T. inspired Adelugba's dissertation. See Adelugba, Dapo. "Nationalism and the Awakening National Theatre of Nigeria."
10. Adelugba, Dapo, "The Professional and Academic Theatre" :343
11. In fact all Acting Company activities from UCIDS to Unibadan Masques were regarded as integral members of ETW. See Appendix 8.

12. Adelugba, Dapo. "The Professional and Academic Theatre"; 346.
13. See Department of Theatre Arts Annual Report 1970/71 by Wole Soyinka.
14. Gibbs, James. Modern Dramatists :99
15. Theatre Arts Annual Report 1970/71.
16. Adelugba Dapo. "The Professional and Academic Theatre" : 347.
17. Adelugba, Dapo. "The Professional and Academic Theatre" : 347
18. The present researcher was a member of that class. Although the class started the Diploma in Theatre Arts Programme it was awarded "Diploma in Drama' Certificate.
19. Cited from "Aims of the Performing Company of the Department of Theatre Arts: Internal memo to Dr. J.A. Adedeji dated 29/10/75
20. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 29/6/75 inform us that the Company was founded with a grant of ₦6,000 and staff employed at a post-Udoji Salary.
21. Malomo, Jide. "Resident Theatre Companies in Nigerian Universities: A Study in Development and Management". Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1986: 500-501.
22. U.P.C. First Annual Report and Accounts 1980/81 :2.
23. See Unibadan Performing Company Staff List as of March, 1981. Cited from UPC Annual Report, March, 1981 :7.

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24. The Artistic Director, Business Manager and a driver were seconded from the Department of Theatre Arts while the Accounting Officer was from the Bursary Department.
25. Rubicon. Nigeria Showcase Ensemble for Olympics '84 (Lagos: Rubicon Advertiding Co., 1984): 5.
26. Cited from the Nigerian Tribune Reviews of A Flash in the Sun. Wed. May 5, 1982 edition, page 7.
27. The present researcher compiled the list from the Business Manager Records. This is one of the privileges our position as Business Manager afforded us. There are no posters or programme notes for many of these performances.

The opinion of Plato in his book The Republic did not favour the stage of theatre, and his was a reflection of the enduring prejudices in the society. Therefore he opposed the uneasy process of integrating theatre into the University curriculum from the time when Carnegie Institute of Technology Pittsburgh pioneered a four year degree programme in 1914. The theatre became accepted as a visible means of teaching good speech, oratory and declamation. Britain established her own

CHAPTER 5

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Fields Covered

We began by investigating the social status of the theatre and its practitioners from the ancient classical Greek period to the present time. The review of relevant literature revealed that Dionysiac artists were doted upon, subsidized by the community and were a little lower than the monarchy in social recognition. Theatre declined in prestige after the conquest of Greece by Rome and not until England knighted Henry Irving in 1895 did theatre recover its importance in society.

The opinion of Plato in his book The Republic did not favour the image of theatre, and his was a reflection of long enduring prejudices in the society. Therefore we studied the uneasy process of integrating theatre into the University curriculum from the time when Carnegie Institute of Technology Pittsburgh pioneered a four year degree programme in 1914. The theatre became accepted as a viable means of teaching good speech, oratory and declamation. Britain established her own

first Drama Department at Bristol University in 1946. Except for Yale University which used its theatre exclusively for staff and student productions, the majority of the University playhouses in America and Britain extended their theatre facilities to the community at large. This also became the tradition at Ibadan.

Three famous Arts Theatres, the Moscow Art Theatre (MAT), the Cambridge Arts Theatre (CAT) and the Arts Theatre Club, London were studied and compared with Ibadan Arts Theatre. All the three foreign theatres served at one time or the other as national theatres of their countries because of their high standards and leadership roles. The Arts Theatre in Ibadan has played a similar role, as our investigations revealed.

The origin of the Arts Theatre was related to the origin and purpose of the University College, Ibadan which was to promote learning and culture in manners that enhanced African identity and development. We scrutinized the early dramatic activities of Randall Hogarth (1948-50) and saw their relevance to academic

projections and particularly the Italian Teatro Olimpico 1585 the first known academic theatre of Italian renaissance. Teatro Olimpico was opened with Sophocles' Oedipus Rex which Randall Hogarth also produced in 1949/50 session as first notable dramatic presentation at Ibadan.

Randall Hogarth's activities we suspected must have among other reasons influenced the changing of the Open Air Theatre designed for U.C.I. to the Arts Theatre. Kenneth Mellanby, the first Principal of UCI paid eloquent tribute to Hogarth's Oedipus Rex. He also informed us about frequent changes made in the University buildings and their locations which probably also affected the size and location of the Arts Theatre. We studied theatre forms and highlighted their advantages and disadvantages in order to determine why proscenium stage theatre was built at Ibadan. Our research revealed that all the famous Arts Theatres studied had proscenium stages, and that naturalistic staging was fashionable in the 1950s. Theatre designers and architects like Richard and Helen Leacroft, Ivor Prinsloo, Burris-Meyer and

C. Cole described proscenium stage as a most ideal structure for presentation of drama, concerts and lectures which are the fundamental purposes for which an educational theatre like Ibadan Arts Theatre was required.

The establishment of the Arts Theatre Management Committee which unshered in structural and artistic developments at the Arts Theatre was also considered. This was an area where Axworthy demonstrated the greatest zeal and imagination. Further developments to the Arts Theatre through the contributions of Soyinka and Adedeji were discussed and evaluated. We discovered that the physical presence of the Arts Theatre at Ibadan inspired the establishment of the School of Drama in the Arts Theatre in 1963 which eventually became the Department of Theatre Arts in 1970. We also reviewed the struggle of the Department to secure the management of the Arts Theatre from the ATMC in order to facilitate its programmes.

Theatrical productions constituted the main channels through which the Arts Theatre promoted theatre practice througout Nigeria and overseas. These

productions were mounted by various resident Arts Theatre troupes such as the UCIDS, ATPG, University Travelling Theatre, Unibadan Masques, School of Drama Acting Company, UTAC and UPC. All these exposed theatre culture and taste in various forms on stage, radio, television; and some of them went on national and international tours popularizing Nigerian theatre and winning prizes and commendations. Various other amateur troupes emerged to use the facilities of the Arts Theatre. Through their activities, press coverages and many other contributions they increased the fame of theatre profession and made it the respectable vocation and academic discipline that it is today.

Extra-mural productions which included theatre workshops, children's theatre, film exhibitions, and visiting foreign artists, and secondary Schools drama projects, all these too contributed to the success of the Arts Theatre as a functional theatre centre in an African University. In spite of all its inadequacies Geoffrey Axworthy, Joel Adedeji, Dapo Adelugba have attested in their writings to the contribution of the Arts Theatre.

The various productions embarked upon by various troupes to satisfy diverse aesthetic tastes introduced us to the essence and the phenomenology of 'style' in theatrical producing. This dimension obviously strengthened the urge to experiment with different stage forms in order to maximize audience enjoyment in a theatrical experience.

The central role of a playhouse in the fostering of theatre arts was also given prominence. We established that without theatre halls, artistic explosion would be hindered if not made impossible. Conclusively, we came to the understanding that it isn't the commodiousness of a physical structure that matters in theatrical functionality but rather it is the ingenuity and finesse the artists bring into it and Peter Brook¹, Margo Jones etc. underscore this point of view in their various discourses. This work believes in Lovelace's aphorism:

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage².

In the process of our research we discovered that the Arts Theatre represented no colonial outlook but was built to fulfil basic academic and cultural needs of the University. However, the enthusiasm of those charged with the management expanded the scope of its potential to embrace professional development of theatre and serious academic projection. We realized that its name had correlation with the hope and aspirations of the world famous Arts Theatres and was vital centre for the promotion of the African theatre, and playwrights. And finally our research indicated that age is no barrier to the Arts Theatre's functionality; and that if it could be refurbished and maintained properly, it would be able to play more vital roles in the promotion of African theatre in the future.

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Appendix I

Dimensions and Facilities of the Arts Theatre, Programme
and Suggestions

Prepared by Geoffrey Axworthy for the visit of Nottingham
Playhouse 1959

- AUDITORIUM: 301 tip-up seats on raked floor.
- STAGE: 30' x 14'6" high proscenium. 25 feet
depth to permanent curved cyclorama.
12' clear wing space each side. 6' - 8'
of apron.
12 sets of pulleys at 18" centres (except
for places taken by battens) permit flying
of objects of limited height (10' or so)
anywhere from 6' back of curtain line.
- CURTAINS: Two sets (grey and black), borders,
trayerses, and wing curtains. Four 35
Hall medium tracks cord operated.
- LIGHTING: Strand Electric 18-dimmer board in glass-
panelled control room back of auditorium,
Telephone, monitor, and cue-light links
with promptside (L).
Footlights, and three top battens. 6-patt
23 spots (500) 4-patt 123 Fresnel spots
(500w) 4-patt 243 1/2000 Fresnel spots;

4 patt 49A- Wing Floods (1000), 4-500w wing floods, 4-patt 52 Effects projector spots, with 3" projection assemblies.

2 old-type 500w spots. 3-phase 230-volt supply - standard British fittings.

6-units may be located in light trap in roof of auditorium 15 feet from front of stage.

Other units on front batten, and lighting platforms in wings, or as required in auditorium. A lighting catwalk is to be constructed shortly in place of front batten, which will then be replaced by area lamps.

SOUND EQUIPMENT: Leak 25 watt amplifier, with gram and tape (all speeds)

DRESSING ROOM: Only three available at present (2 about 15' x 10', largest adjacent to prompt side, about 28' x 14'. All with make-up lights and fixed mirrors. Only one toilet and one wash-basin in dressing rooms, but more in adjacent Arts Block.

STORAGE AND WORKSHOP SPACE: 1400 sq. feet floor space immediately behind stage. Equal space below stage. 22' feet high paint frames

(2) with hoists and floor slots. Loading ramp.
SCENERY: 3 sets standard flats from 1' increasing by
6" intervals to 6', each with single door,
double door (2) and French Window (2) flats
26 rostra units, 16" high, in various shapes,
boxes, steps etc.

GENERAL: The theatre has excellent acoustics, and
visibility is good from all seats. Design
is by Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, 63,
Gloucester Place, London, W.I. from whom
detailed drawings could no doubt be borrowed
if further details are required.

The theatre has a permanent stage manager,
Mr. Geoffrey Axworthy, and electrician,
Mr. Frank Speed, who will give all technical
assistance required by the Company. The
University Maintenance Department will provide
any labour required for unloading and setting
up of equipment. Staff and student assistance
would be available for front-of-house, sale
of tickets, and publicity.

The University Press has rataprint equipment capable of producing posters and programmes cheaply by photocopying and typesetting methods. About two weeks required.

The theatre is located in the college grounds. The student population is about 1200, with a staff of about 300.

Ibadan, the largest city in West Africa, (Population, nearing 750,000) is ten minutes away by the road. There is no doubt that a professional company with a varied repertoire of first-class popular plays would draw larger audiences than could be seated.

PROGRAMME AND SUGGESTIONS: African audiences appreciate

most plays with clear plots and well-defined characters, preferably with a moral or argumentative flavour. Shaw is a best-seller throughout Africa.

The classics, particularly school texts, have a great drawing power - e.g.

The Rivals, School for Scandal, She Stoops to Conquer. Costume plays are preferred to modern dress. Ibsen is possible.

Plays dependent on subtle mannerisms and

dialect are not very suitable, but colourful language, such as Fry's The Lady's not for Burning, A Phoenix too Frequent) is appreciated at top cultural levels. Plays of action are likely to be more successful than wordy plays. Wilde is much admired, though difficult. The Importance of being Earnest is possible. Religious plays draw the largest audiences. Murder in the Cathedral Tobias and the Angel would both be appreciated. The European community, numbering many thousands, is largely lowbrow, but would rise to Christie, Sayers, Priestley etc. A broad farce, like Pinero's Magistrate would probably span both audiences.

PLAYS PERFORMED by amateur companies in the theatre in recent times include the following:

Obey's Noah

Merchant of Venice

The Government Inspector

THE GENTLE PEOPLE (Irwin Shaw)

No.	Date of Performance	Title	Author	Director
		<u>Arms and the Man</u>		
1.	April 15-18, 1957	<u>Androcles and the Lion</u>	Arnold Gwynne	William Barry
		<u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>	William	
2.	1957 (2nd Production)	<u>Antigone</u> (Sophocles and Anouilh versions)		
3.	Feb. 20-23, 1958	<u>Ring Round the Moon</u>		Peter Kampton (Conductor)
		<u>The Miser</u>		
4.	Dec. 16, 1958	<u>Coriolanus.</u>		G. Anworthy
5.	1958	THE SWAMP BELL- LENS AND THE LION AND THE JEWEL	M. Boylston	
6.	1959	AN ENEMY FRIEND	William	G. Anworthy
7.	April 15-18, 1959	A. MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	William Shakespeare	G. Anworthy
8.	Dec., 1960	COROLANUS		
9.	Feb. 3-4, 1961	BEST SCOUNDREL SUBMIT	An adaptation of LEZ FOURRIES SCAVIN by Moliere	Baro Adolphus

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APPENDIX 2

ARTS THEATRE PRODUCTIONS FROM 1955 - 1985

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
1.	April 16-18, 1957	NOAH	Andre Obey	Geoffrey Axworthy
2.	1957 (2nd Production)	THE MERCHANT OF VENICE	William Shakespeare	" "
3.	Feb. 20-22 1958	THE MAGIC FLUTE	Nozart	Peter Kenstam (Conductor)
4.	Dec. 16, 1958	ANTIGONE (2 Versions)	1. Sophocles 2. J. Anouilh	G. Axworthy
5.	1958	THE SWAMP DWELLERS AND THE LION AND THE JEWEL	W. Soyinka	" "
6.	1959	AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE	H. Ibsen	G. Axworthy
7.	April 15-18, 1959	A. MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM	William Shakespeare	G. Axworthy.
8.	Dec., 1960	CORIOLANUS	" "	" "
9.	Feb. 3-4, 1961	THAT SCOUNDREL SUBERU	An Adaptation of LES FOUBERIES SCAPIN by Moliere	Dapo Adelugba
		THE WINDS		
		THE GOLD WOMAN OF SEBUAN		

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
10.	May, 1962	THE MAGISTRATE	Sir Arthur W. Pinero	Geoffrey Axworthy
11.	1962	THE TAMING OF THE SHREW	William Shakespeare	" "
12.	1962	CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE	Bertold Brecht	" "
13.	May, 1963	THE PALM WINE DRINKARD	Amos Tutuola	Kola Ogunmola
14.	1963	COMEDY OF ERRORS	William Shakespeare	G. Axworthy
15.	Mar., 4-7, 1964	MEASURE FOR MEASURE	"	Martin Banham
16.	Nov. 28-30, 19.....	OBA KOSO	Duro Ladipo	Duro Ladipo Arts Theatre, U.I.
17.	Mar. 1964	THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD	T.M. Synge	U.I.D.S.
18.		REPUBLICAN (Satirical Revue)	Soyinka W.	1960 Masks
19.	Dec. 1964	THE MIKADO	gir William Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan	(IOS)
20.	1960	THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN	Bertold Brecht	Geoffrey Axworthy own

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Arthur	Director
21.	1964	SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL	Plays by Shakespeare	Geoffrey Axworthy
		i. Richard II	"	
		ii. Henry IV	"	
		iii. Julius Caesar	"	
		iv. A Midsummer Night's Dream	"	
		v. The Taming of the Shrew	"	
		vi. Twelfth Night	"	
		vii. The Tragedy of Hamlet	"	
22.	May 21-23, 1964	THE DOCK BRIEF)	John Mortimer	Robbert Moulthrop
23.	"	THE FIRERAIERS)	Max Prisch	Geoffrey Axworthy
24.	March 2 - 6 1965	THE ALCHEMIST	Ben Johnson	Martin Barham
25.	Jan. 8, 1966	ADUFE (Extra Mural T.W.P.)	Improvised Folktale	Peggy Harper
26.	Nov. 1965	HORNSTEINER PUPPET THEATRE	-	German Cultural Institute and School of Drama
27.	Dec. 1965	DANDA	Nke Nwankwo	G. Axworthy
28.	Dec. 1965	THE VISIT	Friedrich Durrenmatt	Geoffrey Axworthy
29.	1965	RUMPLESTILSKIN	Alfred Brown	Alfred Brown

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
30.	1965	FREE AS AIR	Dorothy Renolds and Julian Slade	Dorothy Renolds & Julian Slade
31.	Nov. 24-26, 1966	THE MEASURES TAKEN	Bertolt	Errol Hill
		ACT WITHOUT WORDS	S. Beckett	Betty Okotie
32.	1966	THE WOOD CARVER AND THE IROKO MAN	D. Ologoke	-
33.	1966	PUPPET PLAY	K. Omotoso	Dolores Viola
34.	1966	SANYA AND THE SKY ABOVE	K. Omotoso	Dolores Viola
35.	"	THE TELEPHONE	Gian-Carlo Menotti	Geoffrey Axworthy
36.	Nov. 23-26, 1966	DINNER FOR PROMOTION	J. Ene Henshaw	G. Axworthy
37.	Nov. 24-26, 1966	BASTIEN AND BASTIENNE	W.A.Mozart	James Iroha
38.	Nov. 29, Dec. 2, 1967	THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS	Carlo Goldori	Uriel Worika
39.	March 9 - 11, 1967	THE ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN	Peter Shaffer	Geoffrey Axworthy
40.	1967	HENSEL AND GRETEL	-	Monica Sharraocks
41.	Dec. 14-16, 1967	THE BLACK JACOBINS	G.L.R. James	Dexter Lyndersay
42.	Feb. 28, 29 & Marc. 1, 2, 1968	THE DIARY OF ANN FRANK	Frances Goodrich & Albert Hackett	Joel Adedeji

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
43.	Dec. 11-16, 1968	THE GOOD WOMAN OF SEZUAN	Bertold Brecht	School of Drama Acting Company
44.	Feb., 1967	ADITU OLODUMARE	Kola Ogunmola Travelling Theatre	Kola Ogunmola
45.	Nov. 20-23, 1968	TWO MASKS-ZINGAY	Freddie Kisson	Dexter Lyndersay
		ARE - AKOGUN	Wale Ogunyemi	Wale Ogunyemi
46.	1967/68	ONE MAN IN HIS TIME (One Man Show)	James Caincross	British Council/ School of Drama
47.	1967/68	THE LION AND THE JEWEL	Wole Soyinka	Dapo Adelugba
48.	1967/68	TO EVERY MAN A WOMAN	Wale Ogunyemi	Dapo Adelugba
49.	Nov. 6-9, 1968 VIDS	ODUDUWA DON'T GO	Femi Osofisan	Femi Osofisan
50.	"	The Informer	Bertolt Brecht	" "
51.	"	A Pound on Demand	Sean Ocasey	" "
52.	May 21-25, 1968	THE BALD SOPRANO	Lugene Ionesco	Ted Freeman,*
53.	May 21-25, 1968	THE AMERICAN DREAM	Edward Albee	Dexter Lyndersay
54.	"	POOR LITTLE BIRD	Wale Ogunyemi	School of Drama
55.	"	OBATALA AND OJIYA	Wale Ogunyemi	Acting Company
			A Sullivan, A.	George Jackson
	Feb. 4-7, 1970	AFFAIRS OF STATE	Yarnell	Ayo Ogunlade

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
56.	1968/69	BE MIGHT BENMINE (Three Plays)	Wale Ogunyemi	School of Drama Acting Company
57.	"	THE GREED OF MAN	"	"
58	1968/69	THE SWAMP DWELLERS	Wole Soyinka	Dapo Adelugba
59	"	IGHOR	Gevin Bantock	Dexter Lyndersay
60.	Feb.19-26, 1969	LUTHER	John Osborne	Uriel Worika
61.	May 14-17, 1969	THE CARETAKER	Harold Pinter	Lynn Leonard
62.	July 1968/ Mar., 1969	THE MASQUERADE (MBARI THEATRE)	J.P. Clark	Demas Nwoko
63.	Mar. 11-15, 1969 ATPG	LOVE FOR LOVE	Arts Theatre Production Group	Geoffrey Axworthy.
64.	Dec. 1969	DOCTOR FAUST	Christopher Marlowe	Micheal Carre
65.	Dec. 2-6 1969 ATPG	HADRIAN VII	Peter Luke	George Jackson
66.	Mar. 11-16, 1968	OTHELLO	Shakespeare	Derek Bullock
67.	Nov.19-22, 1969	KONGI'S HARVEST	Wole Soyinka	Wole Soyinka
68.	Dec. 16-19, 1970	THE SORCERER	Gilbert, W.S. & Sullivan, A.	George Jackson
69.	Feb. 4-7, 1970	AFFAIRS OF STATE	Louis Verneil	Ayo Ogunlade

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
70.	1970	TIGER AT THE GATES	Jean Giraudoux	Oyin Ogunba
71.	1970	SPACE TREK	Deny and D. Lyndersay	Deny and Dexter Lyndersay
72.	Mar. 28, 1970	A RESTLESS RUN OF LOCUSTS	Femi Osofisan	Uriel Worika
73.	Dec. 2-5, 1970	TANGO	Slavmir Mrozek	Arts Theatre Fr. Group.
74.	Dec. 6, 1970	CHAKA THE ZULU MARRIOR)	Leopold Senghor	Akin Euba
75.	Jan. 20-23, 1971	MADMIEN MADEN AND SPECIALISTS	Wole Soyinka	Wole Soyinka
76.	Mar. 12-15, 1971	VOICES AND ECHOES	Gevin Bantock	Dexter Lyndersay
77.	Mar. 10-13, 1971	MR. THREE AND ALLIAS BLACK MAGIC	William Butler	Dexter Lyndersay
78.	Feb. 27, 1971	VOICES CONTACT	Seve Rhodes	Steve Rhodes
79.	June 23-26, 1971	TRIAL BY JURY and CAMPENEILO	W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan	Barbara Cox
80.	1971	KIRIJI	Wale Ogunyemi	Dapo Adelugba

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
81.	Oct. 27-30, 1971	THE SHADOW OF THE GLEN AND THE TINKERS WEDDING	John Millington Synge	Dapo Adelugba
82.	1971	THE HOBBIT	J.R.R.Tolkien	Deny Lyndersay
83.	Dec. 16,1973	MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL	T.S. Elliot	Ezenta Eze
84.		THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING	Christopher Fry	Peggy Cruikshank
85.	Nov.30 to Dec.4,1971	THE DOCHESS OF MALFI	John Webster	Arts Theatre Production Group
86.	May 20-22, 1971	KING EMENE	Zulu Sofola	Zulu Sofola
87.	March 1-4, 1972	AFTER ONE	Dexter Lyndersay	Dexter Lyndersay
88.	1972	THE WIZARD OF OZ	L.Frank Baum	Dany Lyndersay
89.	May 17-20, 1972	THE HOSTAGE	Brendanbeham	Steve Daniels
90.	April 12-14, 1972	OMO ODO	Bode Osoyin	Femi Joshua
91.	1972	Hassan	Elroy Flecker	Eayo Oduneye
92.	Oct.31 & Nov. 1, 1972	PEPUSCH (The German Mime)		German Embassy
93.	Nov. 21-24, 1973	THE THIRD WOMAN	J.B. Banquah	J.A. Adedeji

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
94.	Mar. 1-4, 1974	A THEME FOR LINDA	Ron Milner	Regge Life
95.	Mar. 23, 1973	CHILD'S PLAY	Barbara Hardaway	Barbara H Hardaway
96.	1973	THEATRE DE LA MANDEGGUE (Fantomime from Paris)	-	French Embassy
97.	1973	DIDJERIDOO (Australian Aboriginal Music)	-	George Winungu David Mindabal
98.	April 17, 1973	THE TRIAL OF BROTHER JERO CHILD INTERNATIONAL	Wole Soyinka	-
99.			"	
99.	Sept. 15, 1973	FOURSOME		Bayo Oduneye
100.	Nov. 12, 1973	ESAN	Kola Ogunmola	J.A. Adedeji
101.	Oct. 13, 1973	YORUBA RONU	H. Ogunde	Ogunde H, and J.A. Adedeji
102.	May 10-12, 1973	MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	William Shakespeare	Micheal Gregory
103.	April 17-19, 1974	OLD WINES ARE TASTY	Zulu Sofola	Zulu Sofola
104.	Nov. 21-23, 1974	Langbodo	Wale Ogunyemi	Bayo Oduneye
105.	Jan. 26-27, 1974	OGUN ONIRE	Peggy Harper	Peggy Harper

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
106.	March 20-23, 1975	DAY OF DEITIES	Jimmy Solanke and Wale Ogunyemi	Wale Ogunyemi
107.	Mar. 10-14, 1974	INTERNATIONAL FILMS	-	Organised by the Dept. of Th. Arts.
108.	1975	KOLERA KOLEJ	Femi Osofisan	Dexter Lyndersay
109.	-	LQOT	Joe Arton	Ian Pawley
110.	-	THE ROSEX THE KING	W.M. Thachersay	Christians Heath
111.	April 30 and May 3, 1975	THE SWEET TRAP	Zulu Sofola	Zulu Sofola
112.	1975	THE CHILD FACTOR	Emmanuel Awbiorokoma	Emmanuel Awbiorokoma
113.	Dept. 12-13, 1976	WORKSHOP ON THE NIGERIAN TRAVELLING THEATRE.	Organised by Goethe Inst. Lagos & Dept. of Theatre Arts, U.I.	
	Sept. 12, 1976	AREMO AYIBI (Cultural Drama in Yoruba)	Osumare Theatre	Osumare Theatre.
114.	Sept. 13, 1976	THE GODS ARE NOT TO BLAME	Ola Rotimi	Unife Theatre
115.	Sept. 14, 1976	EFUNSETAN ANIWURA (Yoruba Drama)	Isola Ogunsola	Isola Ogunsola Theatre.
116.	Sept. 15, 1976	FOPAWON by Alawada (International) Group Limited	Moses Olaiya	Moses Olaiya.

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
117.	Sept. 16, 1976	MOREMI by Duro Ladipo Cultural Theatre	Duro Ladipo	Duro Ladipo
118.	Sept. 17, 1976	THE CHATTERING AND THE SONG by Unibadan Masques	Femi Osofisan	Remi Osofisan
119.	Sept. 18, 1976	SERANKO S'ENIA by Ogunde Dance Theatre	Hubert Ogunde	Hubert Ogunde
120.	Nov. 1976	KING EMENE	Zulu Sofola	Zulu Sofola
121.	1976	THE DIVORCE	Wale Ogunyemi	Wale Ogunyemi & Bayo Oduneye
122.	1976	IJAYE WAR	Wale Ogunyemi	Bayo Oduneye
123.	1976	ONUGBO NLOKO	Samson Amali	Odukwe Sackeyfio & D. Lyndersay
124.	Nov. 4-6, 1976	IPI-TOMBI	Bertha Egnos	U.A.P. Worika
125.	1976	SIZWE BANZI IS DEAD	Athol Fugard	Biodun Jeyifo
126.	Mar. 16-19, 1977	BEHIND THE MOUNTAINS	Yemi Ajibade	Yemi Ajibade
127.	1977	BETRAYAL IN THE CITY	Francis Imbuga	J.A. Adedeji
128.	1977	REVENGE	Odukwe Sackeyfio	Odukwe Sackeyfio

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
129.	1977	KINJEKETILE	Ebrahim Hussein	Yemi Ajibade
130.	1978	DOMESTIC STRIFE	Emmanuel Awbiorokoma	Emmanuel Awbiorokoma
131.	1979	EMPEROR JONES	Eugene O'Neil	Esi Kini-Olusanyin
132.	1979	THE GREENER GRASS	Rasheed Ghadamosi	Bayo Oduneye
133.	1978	MONYELUM	Fidelma Okwesa	Fidelma Okwesa
134.	Mar., 1979	THE SHATTERED BRIDGE	Bode Osanyi	J.A. Adedeji
135.	May 8-11, 1979	MOKAI	Yemi Ajibade	Yemi Ajibade
136.	1979	WHO'S AFRAID OF SOLARIN?	Femi Osofisan	Femi Osofisan
137.	1979	MONKELUM	Fidelma Okwesa	Fidelma Okwesa
138.	1979	KALAKUTA CROSS CURRENT	BODE Sowande	Bode Sowande
139.	Dec. 8, 1980	OUR SURVIVAL	Nasiru Akanji	Akanji Nasiru
140.	1980	BARABBAS AND THE MASTER JESUS	Bode Sowande	Bode Sowande

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
141.	1980	OUR HUSBAND HAS GONE MADE AGAIN	Ola Rotimi	Bayo Oduneye
142.	1980	THE FATED HUNTER	Esi Kinni-Olusanyi	Esi Kinni-Olusanyi
143.	1980	MADAM TINJBU	Akin Isola	Femi Euba
144.	Jan. 9-12, 1980	PULSE	Alem Mezgebe	Bayo Oduneye
145.	May 13-14, 1980	THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALEA	Gracia Lorca	Lola Fanikayode
146.	June 24-27, 1981	THE WIND	Obi Egbuna	Kunle Famoriyo
147.	June 11-14, 1981	LUCIFER AND THE LORD	Jean Paul Sartre	Carrol Dawes
148.	June 25, 1981	AN IDEAL HUSBAND	Oscar Wilde	A.Y.O. Taiwo
149.	1981	THE BEAR	Anton Chekhov	-
150.	1981	THE SURVIVAL	Tar Anura	-
151.	1981	HUNTER KING	Martin Owusu	-
152.	1981	ASYLUM	Ahmed Yerima	Ahmed Yerimah
153.	1981	THE MARRIAGE OF ANANSEWA	Efua T. Sutherland	Tunde Laniyan & Kunle Adeyemo
154.	1981 April	DAYBREAK IN JEBANA	Showcase	J.A. Adedeji
155.	1982	A CLASSICAL DANCE DRAMA (Indian)	Swappresondari & Shastri Sisters	Swapnasundari & Shastri Sisters

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
156.	May 7-9, 1982	A FLASH IN THE SUN	Showcase by J.A.Adedeji	J.A.Adedeji
157.	June 24-26, 1982	DON GIOVANNI	Wolfgang Amadeus	Moloye Bateye
158.	June 3-5, 1982	FLAMINGO AND THE NIGHT BEFORE	Bode Sowande	Bode Sowande
159.	Jan. 26, 1982	DRAMATIC READING FROM AFRICAN AND AFRO AMERICAN LITERATURE.	Cicely Tyson	Cicely Tyson
160.	May 29, 1982	CONCERT OF MUSIC	Rosemary Clark	Rosemary Clark.
161.	July 31, 1982	ODEHE FOLKLORIC TROUPE FROM GHANA	-	-
162.	1982	NIGHT OF THE MYSTI- CAL BEAST	Olu- Obafemi	Olu-Obafemi
163.	Aug. 28, 1982	FLAMINGO, THE NIGHT BEFORE.	Bode Sowande	Bode Sowande
164.	July 27-30, 1983	THE GOOD IDEOLOGY FOR NAIRA REPUBLIK	Sola Aborisade	Sola Aborisade
165.	1983	THE ISLAND CHILD INTERNATIONALE	Athol Fugard Wole Soyinka	Phillip Igatei Abimbola Bakare
166.	Dec. 4, 1983	THE SLAVE	Leroy Jones	Segun Ojewuyi
167.	1984	PEPPER SOUP	Elechi Amadi	Wale Ige
168.	1984	GLASS MENAGERTE	Eugene O'Neill	Dapo Adelugba
169.	Nov. 15-17, 1984	LAGOON DE COME	Isi Agboaye	A. Oyesoro

No.	Date of Performance	Production Title	Author	Director
170.	Feb. 13-17, 1985	THE MAN WHO NEVER DIED	Barrie Stavis	Yinka Adedeji
171.	Mar. 14-15, 1985	RECITALS IN SONGS AND DANCE	Sam Ayivie and Dos Santos	Sam Ayivie and Dos Santos
172.	April 10-14, 1985	THE MAN WHO NEVER DIED	Barrie Stavis	Yinka Adedeji
173.	Oct. 22, 1985	AMERICAN NATIONAL THEATRE EXPRESS (Excerpt Performances and Workshop)	O'Neil & Twain	(Jack Cantwell (Katherine Ferrand (Allen Neuse)
174.	Nov. 17-20, 1985	CIRCUS OF FREEDOM) SQUARE	Bode Sowande	Bode Sowande

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APPENDIX 3

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF WALE OGUNYEMI J.P. MON
IN HIS OFFICE AT THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN ON JULY 7, 1989 AT 9. A.M.

Adedokun: Good morning Chief Ogunyemi and thank you for granting this interview.

Chief Ogunyemi: You are welcome.

Adedokun: My investigations into the history of the Arts Theatre and theatre development reveal that you were an active participant in the Arts Theatre programmes in the 1960s. Can you tell me what theatrical life was like ~~at the~~ at the Arts Theatre in those days?

Chief Ogunyemi: Well, it seems you want a comprehensive detail of what happened in the sixties which I am afraid time is not enough to cover. So many things happened involving so many people in the passage of times that one had better be brief to really cover the length of time.

Adedokun: Please limit yourself to the extent that the Arts Theatre has been instrumental in your artistic pursuits as playwright and actor.

Chief Ogunyemi: That is right: The Arts Theatre that we have today, sad to observe, is the shadow of its former self. In the sixties, particularly when the School of Drama was established, the Arts Theatre was a hive of cultural activities. Various societies rehearsing one play or the other at various times. Artists fluttered all about in contagious excitement just as it is now existing at the National Arts Theatre, Lagos, today.

Adedeokun: Are you saying the Arts Theatre was so full of activities as to compare favourably with the National Arts Theatre?

Chief Ogunyemi: Yes it was. There was no other modern theatre in Nigeria beside it ... and the fact that it was located in the Nigerian Premier University made it so preeminent. And with regard to my playwriting - the Arts Theatre - as a venue, was my main inspiration. One cannot adequately describe the excitement of having a new and beautiful theatre like that with all the great artistic talents that the University community and the School of Drama could afford!

Adedokun: But how particularly has it inspired you, realizing it is a proscenium stage theatre with certain limitations?

Chief Ogunyemi: I never consider the proscenium as of any hinderance so long the directors of my plays could make meanings out of them and audience respond adequately ... Although people were talking about its inhibitions but I was more concerned about my writing and getting my plays staged. It gave me inspiration. It gave me opportunity to grow, mature and maintain stable consistency in my work.

Adedokun: And was it in recognition of these cultural contributions you were honoured with a chieftaincy title and a national honour of the Member of the Order of the Niger?

Chief Ogunyemi (Laughs) Yes, you are correct ... and the Justice of Peace (J.P.) too ... So if the Arts Theatre has helped my development it could help any other writer as well... after all the resources are still there in terms of material and human, it is only

that the quality has changed. Everything is a question of style. Maybe I write for proscenium stage and I couldn't have done otherwise because it is the only available medium which I have learnt to master. Most of my plays like Kiriji, Ijaye War, Langbodo, To Everyman a Woman, Poor Little Bird, Obatala and Ojiya, Be Mighty Be Mine, Enia, The Greed of Man, The Divorce, and many others have all been successfully staged at the Arts Theatre.

Adedokun: Are you saying that theatre form or rather the shape of the stage and the auditorium in relationship to each other does not affect drama and audience perception and enjoyment?

Chief Ogunyemi: Definitely people argued about stage forms and need to experiment as done overseas, but I have never bothered about them since they were not available. I believe I can write for any stage... With them I might probably not have achieved as much as I have. I am not being pessimistic and I am not against other stage forms as long as they allow creative development.

Adedokun: Now, that the Arts Theatre is old and depreciated in standards, as a beneficiary of its largess, what is your suggestion for its future development? Do you want the present structure demolished and a new one built there?

Chief Ogunyemi: No. Never. Even if the University is going to build one thousand theatres for the University, it should preserve the Arts Theatre as historical relic. Do you really know what the Arts Theatre means to some of us? You really cannot. But let me give you an illustration of what I mean. Sometimes in 1967 or so, Matt Imerion, a product of the School of Drama and a very gifted actor and an active participant in our Arts Theatre productions of those years, but now working

with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Benin City, came to Ibadan. He sat in front of the Arts Theatre for so long that I asked him why he was doing that. You know what he said? He said the Arts Theatre was the greatest thing he cherished in his life and his staying in Benin had deprived him of his greatest pleasure and source of inspiration! Likewise me. In those days if I have not been to the theatre in any day, I really would not feel happy. I acquire my inspiration at the Arts Theatre, do my writing at the Institute and also practice my arts of play production and performance at the Arts Theatre.

Adedokun: It's good to hear that.....

Chief Ogunyemi: After all what is a play without a place to perform it? The question of demolition does not arise at all. No one should demolish the Arts Theatre - It is a history by itself. It should be our archive. After all there are two theatres at Ife... the Pit Theatre and Oduduwa Hall. A new theatre may be built elsewhere on campus, but the old jewel must be retained.

Adedokun: But one wonders if the chief knows that the theatre is leaking badly and is also lacking in lighting equipments and some other infrastructural facilities?

Chief Ogunyemi: You are telling me? I know all the problems of the Arts Theatre.

Adedokun: What then do you propose as solutions?

Chief Ogunyemi: Repair the theatre and put it under a management like it used to be under Geoffrey Axworthy.

Adedokun: Sir what would you say was responsible for the vibrance of the theatre in the sixties?

Chief Ogunyemi: Commitment. Devotion to theatre, opportunities and talents. People were really devoted in those days. They did theatre for the love of it and not for any material gain. People like Professor Wole Soyinka, Chief Bayo Akinnola, Femi Johnson, Segun Olusola, Aiyegbusi and a lot more. Troupes like Wole Soyinka's 1960 Masks, Orisun Theatre, Players of the Dawn, Mbari Theatre, etc. Theatrical life was really active and interesting as the British Council hall at Dugbe, Mbari Club at Adamaingba, Obisesan Hall and the Arts Theatre were filled with various theatrical activities. Such enthusiasm and devotion are no more nowadays... although there exist abundant opportunities for development.

Adedokun: What is your opinion about the Arts Theatre and its programmes?

Chief Ogunyemi: Update the Arts Theatre, get eminent people interested in financing it and make its programmes as attractive as possible to playwrights, artists and audience.

Adedokun: How about a resident troupe?

Chief Ogunyemi: It is a must.

Adedokun: What form should it take?

Chief Ogunyemi: Like the Unibadan Performing Company.

Adedokun: But the experience of its predicament is still fresh to do it that way all over again. Is it not possible for it to be run as professional unit of the Arts Theatre having its own administrative staff and independent operations?

Chief Ogunyemi: Any way that will best serve the interest of theatre development. The tradition of the Unibadan Masques seems fascinating if the management can give it a thought.

Adedokun: In what ways in your opinion has the Arts Theatre contributed to theatre development in Nigeria?

Chief Ogunyemi: In several ways. All those who have been trained in Theatre Arts at Ibadan now fill key positions in theatre professions, in Universities, media houses, civil service, and private sectors and are promoting theatre in different ways. That is it.

Adedokun: Thank you for sparing the time for this interview. But, as a building that has made so great contribution, don't you think the Arts Theatre deserves a merit award?

Chief Ogunyemi: (Long hearty laugh.... joined by the writer) Yes, You are right (laugh....)

Adedokun: Thank you Chief Ogunyemi. I wish you further success and good health.

Chief Ogunyemi: Thank you.

APPENDIX 4

A RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR FEMI OSOFISAN BY
REMI ADEDOKUN IN HIS OFFICE (AS HEAD OF DEPARTMENT),
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS ON AUGUST 9, 1990 AT
10.00 A.M.

Adedokun: Good morning Professor Femi Osofisan. I am very glad to find you on seat today August 9, 1990 and interview you on a few things about what you've been able to do for the theatre, and in the Arts Theatre in particular over the years. Please sir, reflecting on your past experience as playwright and possibly as director and producer, do you think the Arts Theatre has played any significant role in the development of theatre in Nigeria?

Osofisan: Oh yes. The Arts Theatre was for a long time the only modern theatre available in Nigeria and the School of Drama was the only place where drama was studied in the University. And the Department of Drama also was unique. Now, without the institution like the University and the School of Drama it is very difficult to talk of the development of literary drama. So because the Arts Theatre was built long ago and there was a Department of Drama located here obviously the Arts Theatre has then come to have that kind of central role in the development of modern drama. That means that in fact most of the playwrights and directors, actors and so on have

grouped round the Arts Theatre because that's been the only place, in fact, which groomed such people and in which they could operate.

Adedokun: Can you tell us sir, the nature of interaction between your plays and the Arts Theatre over the years. And possibly tell us when you started either writing or producing your Plays at the Arts Theatre.

Osofisan: I was a student here and also I studied at the Arts Theatre. So, I have that opportunity of working here. In my student days I was also the President of the Student Dramatic Society.

Adedokun: When was that?

Osofisan: Well, I am rather bad about dates.

Adedokun: May be around 1969 because your play Oduduwa Don't Go was performed in the Arts Theatre that year.

Osofisan: Yes certainly around 1968 - Oduduwa Don't Go but then there were quite a number of others - the playlets for the welcome weeks. We used to have welcome week for freshers and we acted all those 'Minor' scripts.

Adedokun: Are all these still available or they are lost?

Osofisan: These were not scripts that one tries to keep at all. I don't know where they are now and I can't

even remember some of the titles. These were juvenile works. Well you know I have had a long relationship with the Arts Theatre then. And then I came back to do postgraduate here and also to teach here. That means in fact that em ... I have not needed to look elsewhere to work or write my plays.

Adedokun: Sir, if I may ask, have you been writing plays before you came to the University of Ibadan.

Osofisan: Oh yes. I wrote plays in Secondary School for entertainment. Having come from a School with a very strong drama tradition - I wrote a couple of plays, not many. But certainly being close to the Arts Theatre has provided an opportunity to continue that kind of work and then since I studied drama, well the Arts Theatre has been available to do my work. But I have written for the Arts Theatre, the fact there is that most of my plays are against the Arts Theatre in the sense that I have written deliberately to break the proscenium stage style which the Arts Theatre provided. So that you know its been good to have the Arts Theatre, then you know that you don't want, what to write against to break that proscenium tradition. But you see it has meant that, well you know, that the plays I do can be done in a proscenium form but

can also be done outside the proscenium.

Adedokun: That is another interesting area - the proscenium stage form. Artistes and scholars alike have complained bitterly about the proscenium. I remember in 1973, while I was a student here, Professor Adedeji restructured the proscenium drastically by giving it the extended sides which it has now. But how has it affected you, now that you are not writing for a strict proscenium as such? Has the present shape affected your productions in any way that you wouldn't like?

Osofisan: Definitely it hasn't affected the way I don't like in the sense that since I am in charge, I can dictate what I want. What am saying is that if I was going to write strictly in respect of what the Arts Theatre provides, then my plays will be totally different. I would write totally different plays. But you know, when I write, I think of the Arts Theatre as only one of the possible places in which I can do my plays.

Adedokun: Do you keep the structural picture in your mind while you are writing?

Osofisan: Yes. The Arts Theatre is there, but so you can think of what you don't want. You know that an influence can be two-way either you write consciously for the Arts Theatre or you write consciously knowing the limitations of the Arts Theatre and write against those limitations. But ideologically, the Arts Theatre doesn't provide the kind of things I want. I do not want a kind of 'fourth wall' mentality which the proscenium provides. I want a theatre that would rather prepare a theatre - in - the round - where the audience can participate. The problem with the proscenium is that it separates the audience from the stage. We want a situation in which the audience can be very much involved and participate and so on. I have in fact tried to rearrange the Arts Theatre myself a number of times and I gave up when I finally realized its limitations. But you see that when I do my plays finally there are plays which I write for the proscenium and they are usually comedies, the plays like Midnight Hotel, Who's Afraid of Solarin. I write some plays conscious of the proscenium stage but the one I consider the very serious plays where I am trying to come nearer to the African tradition

are written more for 'the round'. These are the moments when they are best realized - that is when we take those plays out of the Arts Theatre and do them elsewhere where we can have them done in the round. That is when we achieve our best effects.

Adedokun: All the same sir, the Arts Theatre has remained very inspiring to you, encouraging you to write because it is physically there all the time. Will you say that because of its limitations it cannot inspire new and younger writers?

Osofisan: Why not? Writers will take their inspirations from various sources. The fact that it is there, it's got all the facilities you need, ensures that people would always work there. But, developing a theatre - in - the - round, particularly at the open courtyard of the Institute of African Studies would provide a good alternative. I mean there are plays which are good for the proscenium. As I said I have written some - Midnight Hotel, Who's Afraid of Solarin Birthdays are not for Dying. Certainly there will be plays which are good for the proscenium, but it isn't sufficient. And if we had had the means of developing a courtyard, that would be a different something.

We need a theatre that is more flexible. In fact what I am trying to say is that we need a theatre that can be rearranged. I have gone abroad to various places and studied some of these theatres. I have seen all kinds of aesthetics. Nobody builds this kind of theatre nowadays. What you build is a theatre that is flexible....

Adedokun: So in short you would prefer a theatre-in-the-round to earthryst stage theatre?

Osofisan: Certainly, I prefer a theatre that is flexible.

Adedokun: A multiform theatre where you can achieve any stage forms.

Osofisan: Yes. I have seen so many examples in Britain and America. These are the results of the modern contemporary movements in the theatre... This architecture was built following the old models...

Adedokun: Will you then recommend that the Arts Theatre be demolished and replaced by your dream theatre at the present location?

Osofisan: Not a matter of demolishing. The amount you spend demolishing and then rebuild is stupid. In any case, you need a different location now...

Adedokun: What is your impression about the present form of stage (extended stage) which is not completely a proscenium? Is there any noticeable difference?

Osofisan: Yes. This is what I mean by when you notice the fault or incongruities, you rectify them... What you have now is an attempt to deal with the shortcomings that you have. So now people can enter from the aisles, then there is an apron and all that. Obviously these are attempts to make the stage a bit more flexible. Now you can have illusion of audience involvement when actors come through the aisles. They come through the aisles and go out through the aisles and the audience. The changes we have here are quite intelligent and they have to be used that way...

Adedokun: Sir, let us now look at your approach to playwriting. Really I see a lot of socialist intonation, overtone or undertone in some of your plays. Particularly when it comes to the hero or heroism. Let's take Yunqba Yunqba and the Dance Contest for instance. Ayoka is just an ordinary woman in the community and yet she rose to challenge the leadership. I want to ask whether you are more on the Marxist or Brechtian ideology or trying to

evolve a class of your own. This is simply because most of your plays are highly dialectical, urging people to think, encouraging them to discuss some national issues and arrive at their own conclusions.

Osofisan: When you started with socialist things I was a bit worried. But then you have clarified it. If that is what you mean by 'socialist', yes. I believe in materialist reordering of society, giving cause to social justice or levelling of classes.

Adedokun: The rise of common man.

Osofisan: But without being doctrinaire or without being extremist as they say, I hate labels. When you put a label, then you are dealing with prejudice. Because when you say socialist, in fact, you say socialist and three of us can be saying socialist and we mean three different things.

Adedokun: Surely.

Osofisan: You see, that's the problem. So when there are labels for instance "Marxist", in fact, three, four of us can claim we are Marxists and we are not even doing the same thing. So, this is the problem with labels. But if we begin to talk of values, what do we believe in, this is what and what I believe, and then we begin to see that labels are not necessary at all.

Adedokun: Maybe labels are not necessary, but writers grow out of social backgrounds with which they are associated and to which they respond.

Osofisan: Yes but I don't want to be labelled. They are dangerous.

Adedokun: But you give the common man a voice, to rise and to challenge the oppressor. If one looks at your work from that perspective and compares it with Brecht's one sees areas of similarity.

Osofisan: Oh, yes, certainly your mentioning of Brecht is very relevant. Except that I hope you don't get into the trap like some of these critics tend to get into, because Brecht has become the easiest way out. When they just say Brecht, they think they've done all their work. It's true that I started off being influenced by Brecht. Brecht is my favourite playwright. But it amuses me sometime when people talk of Brecht, Brecht all the time and in fact as if all I do is just to reproduce Brecht.

Adedokun: No, not like that...

Osofisan: No, this is the most of the criticism. There are ways in which I have in fact surpassed Brecht.

Adedokun: It's true there are many many ways but one can only say that writers giving voice to the rise of

the poor masses believe in socialist or Brechtian philosophies.

Osofisan: But there are lot of socialists.

Adedokun: But your plays are more political than historical...

Osofisan: Well, yes, that's what I say, well its true.

Brecht and I share a lot in common, but it would be too simplistic to say Brecht, Brecht.

Adedokun: Brecht and Aristotle are about the most prominent drama theorists that form the foundation of theatrical criticism...

Osofisan: Yes, its true but I have been equally influenced by Soyinka for instance.

Adedokun: But Soyinka himself also claimed being influenced by Brecht. No doubt one can say there are eclectic borrowings from his style.

Osofisan: Yes infact Brecht infact keeps asking himself what is plagiarism. Without plagiarism, you can't write.

Adedokun: No writer can be isolated from the society.

Osofisan: Yes, we are all plagiasts.

Adedokun: Terry Eagleton in his book Literary Theory

stresses the fact that it is quite impossible for a writer to say that his work is completely his; for there would be some borrowings here and there to complete his own theme. The writer would have been influenced one way or the other and that might have sunk into his subconscious, that when he is manifesting it, may be a long long time later, it can still be quite relevant to the society and to the people of the time.

Osofisan: Quite so.

Adedokun: Thank you sir for the great insight into your work and the wealth of your theatrical involvements. Brecht is very relevant to the third world realities, although ideologically Brecht's Germany or Europe and Nigeria or the third world in general may be poles apart in politico-cultural ideals.

Osofisan: Quite relevant.

Adedokun: His writing style that urge on the poor masses on the paths to progress, self realization, communal reorientation and social stability as exhibited in The Goodwoman of Setzuan, Caucasian Chalk Circle, and Mother Courage are useful works

from which the third world could borrow ideals.

These are even much more useful to the development of African creative writing - the Brechtian complex social problem and dialectical solutions. Development of heroism from common humanity as opposed to Aristotelian nobility of birth are instances that can lead the third world to new socio-political evolution.

Thank you sir, for sparing the time for this interview and providing this useful information. Have a nice day.

Osofisan: Same to you also.

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APPENDIX 5

A TRANSCRIPTION OF THE TAPE-RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH MR. VAL. OLAYEMI BY REMI ADEKUN IN MR. ADEKUN'S OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN ON MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 1990 AT 9.a.m.

Mr. Adedokun: Good morning Mr. Val. Olayemi. Thank you for making yourself available inspite of your tight schedules. Sir, I wish you share with us your artistic experience with the Arts Theatre ... that is, what the Arts Theatre has been to the development of theatre, Nigerian artists, playwrights, and so on. And of course, looking through the Arts Theatre Box Office records, one discovers your name occurs frequently in productions, particularly the production of The Ibadan Players. Sir can you tell us what The Ibadan Players is all about, its activities, how it was founded, its productions, and when it finally sank into oblivion?

Mr. Olayemi: Let me first comment on the first part of your inquiry. The Arts Theatre, University of Ibadan, has been of tremendous importance in theatre development in Nigeria. It can even be said that the Arts Theatre is a fountain from which flows so many good

things, for actors, for directors, for producers, for even property managers and everybody down the line as far as carpenters and painters. The Arts Theatre has inspired very many people and it is going to be difficult for us to quantify the amount of influence it had done in Nigeria. But taking the second part of your statement which has to do with the Ibadan Players, I want to say that this group was formed as a result of residents of Ibadan feeling that a group that could weld the University together with the Ibadan Community was desirable. And so people from the University like Dapo Adelugba, Dexter Lyndersay, and a few others, came together with people from the Television House at the time known as WNES/WNTV. People like Ayo Ogunlade, Sam Adegbe, and Mrs. Anike Agbaje-Williams. And then people from other sectors of the community, bankers, school teachers, private businessmen and even students. All these people came together to form Ibadan Players. And as I said it was intended to act as a kind of bridge between the University and the larger community of Ibadan.

Adedokun: Since there were other community oriented groups at the time, I wonder what other factors inspired the

formation of this group.

Mr. Olayemi: The prime movers were outside the University.

And this was because the groups in existence then such as the Arts Theatre Production Group, The Music Circle, the Operatic Society consisted heavily of University of Ibadan oriented people. So there was the feeling that there ought to be a greater Ibadan Community kind of theatre group.

Adedokun: What then can you say guide your selection of plays?

Olayemi: For the most part, people in the group tended to go for plays they enjoyed very well or plays they had produced before in terms of the resources of the group. There was also a second consideration. That of trying to balance the plays, having English or American plays side by side with Nigerian plays. That is to say if you act an English or American play this time, the next production should be Nigerian. But I don't think the group ever achieved that kind of balance. But it was the ideals the group set itself.

Adedokun: But did you study other groups' repertory to know the plays they will be producing before you chose your own plays?

Olayemi: It wasn't possible to sound anybody's opinion

about what was happening in other groups. The general feeling was that there were so many plays around that one did not in fact have to worry that there was going to be a clash. There was never a clash.

Adedokun: To what extent did you use the Arts Theatre?

Was it for performance, rehearsal ... one would like to know how influential it was on your productions.

Olayemi: From about 1969 when the group was very active with its first production Dial M for Murder until about 1973 or so when it acted its last production, the Arts Theatre was the centre of our activities for rehearsals and performance, everything was built around the Arts Theatre.

Adedokun: 1970s were vital years for new concepts in African theatrical development initiated by various amateur groups. Why in your opinion did The Ibadan Players die at this crucial time?

Olayemi: The group died because the key members were either transferred as it happened in the case of the Treasurer Mrs. Olutayo. She was a moving force. She was then working with what was known as Barclays Bank now called Union Bank. And when she was transferred not many members had the amount of energy which this woman had. A few people made efforts like

Sam Adegbie of WNBS/WNTV fame but he was a top Executive in that company and could not afford much time. Of course top there was Zulu Sofola of the University and Dapo Adelugba. These two people were very busy and it was difficult for them to have as much time as they needed for getting that kind of Group together. Because it was not based in one place, you had to write letters, you needed an active Secretary, and we were fortunate enough to have a good Secretary for a number of years who happened to be Hannah Ikime who was working in the same place with the treasurer - that is Union Bank. But I must say that when Mrs. Olutayo was transferred or resigned or retired, I am not too sure, she moved from Ibadan. And Ayo Ogunlade also had other interests, I am not sure whether this time coincided with when he became Federal Commissioner for Information. But people moved into various things. Sam Adegbie began to operate from the Rational Building at that time he left the WNBS/WNTV, so, the key people were no longer in the group that they were before, and this made things difficult for them theatrewise.

Adedokun: The Arts Theatre as a structure has been viewed with great skepticism by theatre scholars and practitioners alike. Some believe it is too small for its present need and because of its proscenium stage it is irrelevant to African cultural development and should be replaced. What is your reaction to this?

Olayemi: I don't know why we seem to like to destroy our monuments in this country. The Arts Theatre as it is in my opinion should be left for generation yet unborn to see and study and admire. That does not mean it cannot be refurbished. It does not mean that technical development cannot take place within it. But essentially it ought to be left as it is. What the University Community needs in my opinion is another theatre. A bigger theatre far away from the present noise which disturbs the Arts Theatre programmes. Also I will like a new theatre with a much larger sitting capacity and it should be sited in a place which is far from the "madding crowd" to borrow an expression from Hardy. So that it can be properly enclosed where one can go and relax and not bother about the noise of passing traffic or sounds of "Give Peace a Chance" from student demons-

trators and so on.

Adedokun: Now that you have suggested building a new theatre, what in your opinion should be the sitting capacity?

Olayemi: I think for this size of community and community here is not just limited to the University of Ibadan and its environment. We need a theatre which has a sitting capacity of at least one thousand. That in my opinion is what will do justice to what is happening in the University, in the theatre circle in the University. This theatre was built at a time when the numbers were small. The University will become even bigger in the future.

Adedokun: What advice do you have for the Arts Theatre towards the development of African drama and play writings?

Olayemi: I still find it a little difficult to assimilate when people continue to prefer say that plays by Ibsen, Shakespeare, Fry and so on when we have had a long history of these kind of productions on this stage. I believe now the emphasis should be shifting more and more to African works. And by African works I don't mean Nigerian works only but works from the entire continent of Africa. And there

are very talented playwrights right through Africa. This way, I think we will be encouraging more people to write. When you see a good African play, it triggers off something in you and you say of course I have that material but why am I sitting on my bottom? Let me now do something tangible. There are people who have plays in their wardrobes or in their drawers but are ashamed as it were to bring these things out - but they don't know whether it will fit into the conventional theatre. But if they see something similar to it, of course they will come out with will be bright gems. This is something which we discovered in Publishing. That there are some people who are so shy of their materials and they may be sitting on pots of gold.

Adedokun: Thank you Mr. Val. Olayemi. I would have wished you tell us about your publishing career but for now it may be out of our present focus. However, we appreciate your sparing the time for this lengthy interview which is well studded with nourishing information about your theatrical involvements, the Arts Theatre, theatre people and theatre development in Nigeria. Thank you greatly and have a nice drive home.

Olayemi: Thank you.

APPENDIX - 6

RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR POLA ABOABA AT HIS
SANKORE RESIDENCE BY REMI ADEDOKUN ON SATURDAY OCTOBER
27, 1990 AT 10.00 A.M.

Adedokun: Good morning Professor Aboaba.

Aboaba: Good morning.

Adedokun: Thank you for sparing the time for this
interview. Precisely sir, we would like to share
from your experience in theatre production at the
University of Ibadan beginning possibly from when
you were a student here and your activities in the
University Dramatic Society, other production groups
and so on. The period of your interview covers 1955
to 1985 and we are examining specifically the
significance of the Arts Theatre to theatre
development in Nigeria. Thank you for welcoming me
into your house.

Aboaba: Well, thank you very much for coming to interview
me, I hope I will be able to answer your questions.
If I don't remember some dates or names you will
forgive me. If I find them I will let you know
later on.

Adedokun: Sir, can we begin from 1955 or when you came into the University of Ibadan? What was theatrical life or dramatic life was at the Arts Theatre or at the University itself?

Aboaba: Well, at that time the Arts Theatre had just been built not too long before then. Before then I was in Ibadan. Of course I was in the British Council Singing Group together with Yinka Adededeji who later on became head of Department of Theatre Arts at Ibadan. I remember on one or two occasions we came to sing at the Arts Theatre, it was a concert and we had people like Francesca Perera later on Francesca Emmanuel, retired Federal Permanent Secretary for Establishment, we had people like Christian Clinton, now Christian Gomaelo, Patience Ogunnaike and so on. Ekong Donard Ekong, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Calabar. They sang and we sang and that was it. As far as I know that was what was happening ...

Adedokun: Was it only singing alone? No dramatic performances - British plays, American or European plays?

Aboaba: Not really. I think there was a group a play-reading group on campus, made up mostly of expatriate lecturers. They would go to each other's

houses on Sunday evenings and read plays and have
fun generally. I remember in 1955 there was a play
by the University College Ibadan Dramatic Society
(UCIDS), a student body. I have forgotten the play
but people like late Deolu Lawson...

Adedokun: Is it Outward Bound?

Aboaba: No. Not Outward Bound

Adedokun: Records show Outward Bound as the first
production of the UCIDS.

Aboaba: That was the first production I think that the
staff actively participated in the production.
People like Martin Banham, a lecturer in English
at the University; Ben Driver produced Outward
Bound. Ben Driver was an Administrative Officer in
the Civil Service and he was a very good actor. And
infact he was a lead actor in Mikado - he played
the part of Koko. Mikado was the first opera staged
by the Ibadan Operatic Society in 1956/57 session.
And he was so good the students felt he should
produce our next play. He chose Outward Bound
himself, because he really liked it. Martin Banham
also assisted him in the production - but he finally
ended up producing it. This was followed by

The Gentle People produced by Ben Driver. By this time Ben Driver had become an Assistant Registrar in the University College.

Adedokun: Sir, looking through the Box Office records one sees your name occurring in several productions by various groups, particularly it is thrilling to see your name in the first production of the Arts Theatre Production Group - Noah. Can you tell us how you got to be cast into that production?

Aboaba: Well, what happened was, Geoffrey Axworthy, I think was a Senior Lecturer then in English. Martin Benham, few people felt there was a need for a dramatic society to cater for the needs of both staff and students - because hitherto there was the Dramatic Society of the student body and there was a play - reading group for staff. And that was it. So the Arts Theatre Production Group (ATPG) was started and some of us were invited to participate. People like Ralph Opara, myself, Pisu Olley, Frank Aig-Umuokhuede, who is now Director of the National Theatre, Lagos. So we held all those first meetings and then what they did at that time was to cast the staff, and asked us (students) to be understudies. I was understudy to Noah. But in

addition to that, I played the part of the monkey also. Being an understudy to somebody like Ben Driver really really helped me a lot.

Adedokun: Was Gordon Umuigore also in the cast a Nigerian?

Aboaba: Yes.

Adedokun: Nigerians must have been very few in that production.

Aboaba: Yes. Very few. With Frank Aig - Imoukhuede we were three perhaps.

Adedokun: You must have been very talented otherwise they wouldn't have invited you there.

Aboaba: I think they invited me after Outward Bound. I played one of the lead roles in the Outward Bound. And Ben Driver and Axworthy felt that I had some talent.

Adedokun: I am wondering what your size was physically at that time to be understudying Ben Driver because Ben Driver was Noah as shown by the Programme notes I am now holding before me. And for you to be understudying him, what do you think the organizers were trying to achieve? Were they trying to encourage Africans or Nigerians to ...

Aboaba: Yes. I think that was what they were doing to make sure that Africans or Nigerians could step into their shoes when they left. Because Ben Driver was about the best actor around at that time...

Adedokun: Sir can you tell us about your background in theatre which equipped you with such a skill that gave you entrance into The ATPG's Noah. Have you been acting before coming to the University?

Aboaba: Before coming to the University, I had done a few plays in school many years ago when I was just entering Secondary School. I remember playing the part of Adolf Hitler. I remember one or two little plays in the Grammar School also. That was it before coming to the University.

Adedokun: Can you tell us something about Noah? What is actually theatrical in it that recommended it to the group? Or was it not discussed in your meetings?

Aboaba: Yes, Noah was a very profound play. It enabled people with talent to act different parts because there were different parts that were for the part of Noah himself who was a serious old man. And here was Ben Driver who had always played the part of a comic. He was cast in this part and you could see the versatility of the man-somebody who anytime he came

on stage you were expected to laugh, playing this very serious role. And then there was Martin Benham who played the part, I think of Ham, who was one of the naughty sons of Noah. Then there was the opportunity to make costumes for animals. We didn't bother much for the costumes for the principal actors but the backstage boys and women had a field-day building costumes for the lion, for the monkey, for the cow, for the birds and so on. It was a challenge, Then building the ark itself, that was also a challenge. Well, it was something new and we all felt happy about it because an opportunity for different areas of the Theatre to exhibit talent.

Adedokun: Did it have any academic or cultural relevance to the society before you decided on the choice?

Aboaba. No. We just felt it was fun, that people would love it. We didn't think of the culture of the people. We just wanted a play that would lift people's spirit.

Adedokun: And might be because of its religious...

Aboaba: No, in fact there is very little christianity in it.

Adedokun: Very little christianity in it?

Aboaba: Well, well, as I said, when Noah talked to God, God replied but we didn't see the face of God. But then that was it, the others was fun.

Adedokun: A careful look at the background of Axworthy who was coming from Baghdad, a muslim country where drama was nonexistent, one felt by coming here and realizing that people were christians, he could introduce drama through religious plays.

Aboaba: No, no, not at all.

Adedokun: Can you tell us about the dramatic society, the choice of plays, where regularly you performed or at the Arts Theatre.

Aboaba: It is interesting that when I was a student all the plays we performed were written by expatriates. There was no indigenous play. I mean no play written by an indigenous writer. Until later when people started producing Wole Soyinka's plays. I remember before I left University there was a production of The Lion and the Jewel in 1958 in which Olusanya featured. Olusanya is the present director of Nigerian Institute for International Affairs, Lagos. Mrs. Soyinka, Laide Idowu then. She is now the Librarian of the Ogun State University, Ago - Iwoye,

Mrs. Omidade - they were all in it. Basically we started off by producing either Shakespeare or something from Bernard Shaw or something expatriate.

Adedokun: Why?

Aboaba: I think mostly because one, the producers were mostly expatriates to begin with. And there was nobody studying theatre as such. So that all we knew was plays we have read, plays we did in school or popular plays or popular authors. But later on when people started studying drama and theatre, I think they started with em ... they were studying what do you call it - contemporary authors? And so they started looking into the Nigerian authors. And Wole Soyinka quickly came to mind.

Adedokun: You graduated 1959, you must have been a part of most of the performing groups i.e. Arts Theatre Production Group, Ibadan, Operatic Society, Music Circle and so on. Can you tell us about the inter-relationship of these organizations. Also we see your name in most of the productions of all these groups, were you a member of all of them?

Aboaba: No. I was a member of the Arts Theatre Production Group and the Dramatic Society. But I was invited by the Operatic Society. I had a lecturer who was very

keen on operas. Later on he came into plays - that is Professor Desmond Hill (now retired). And he invited me to take part in The White Horse Inn.

It was an operatta in 1957/58. That was my first operatta and I must say I like singing. I didn't take part in any other operatta until after I had graduated and gone for my postgraduate overseas.

When I came back, the same Professor Hill invited me to come and join the Operatic Society. And I was able to take part in Ahmal and the Night Visitors.

But then there was also the late Professor Ferguson. He also encouraged me to take part in straight drama. Later on he himself took part in some operas with us. So there was a lot of interrelationship.

Adedokun: Is it because they invited you or you were naturally interested in opera? And what is the cultural relevance of opera to Nigerian or African society?

Aboaba: I was interested in music and opera in those days we felt was reserved for staff. So I felt it was an honour when I was invited to take part in an opera

(Aboaba & Adedokun (Laugh))

Adedokun: But you must have had a good voice

Aboaba: Sort of (Laugh)

Adedokun: We learnt you even became the Chairman of the Music Circle.

Aboaba: I was Secretary of the Operatic Society and then later on we merged the two (Operatic Society and the Music Circle).

Adedokun: When was that?

Aboaba: I think it was in 1971 or 1972.

Adedokun: What was responsible for the merger?

Aboaba: We found there was a lot of duplication of efforts and the Music Circle was doing more or less what the Operatic Society was doing. And then we found that many of the people who were taking part in these operas and so on were going because they were expatriates. A few of us who were Nigerians felt well, let's get together. Some of us opposed the merger in that we wanted autonomy for the Operatic Society. Eventually we merged and jointly put up one or two productions.

Adedokun: Every session?

Aboaba: Every session we had at least one or two productions.

Adedokun: How did you finance these productions?

Aboaba: From the takings.

Adedokun: Did the University subsidize you.

Aboaba: No, no no.

Adedokun: But it is a University based group:

Aboaba: It is, but the University didn't have anything to do with it.

Adedokun: When were you President of the Music Circle?
And for how many years?

Aboaba: I was President of the Music Circle from about 1980/81 till 1988 - about eight years. Then I was Secretary of the Operatic Society from 1964/65 till 1969.

Adedokun: Who succeeded you?

Aboaba: As Secretary? Margaret Webster. She was an expatriate gone now. Late Femi Johnson was President for sometime too. Desmond Hill, Ferguson. Ah! We interacted with a lot of people that time they started the International School with a lot of expatriate staff. And they came. John Gillespy was one of the fantastic actors. His own was straight drama. Harry Potts was in Operas, both of them were at the International School. People also from the Civil Service. Christopher Kolade, when he was here took part in a number of operas, produced one or two himself. Christopher Oyesiku, before he eventually

came to the University was in Ahmal and the Night Visitors. He sang.

Adedokun: Were you performing at the Arts Theatre exclusively or you had other places?

Aboaba: Well, mostly in the Arts Theatre. Occasionally we went out. There was one play we took to the British Council - I think it was the Arms and the Man; and then we went on the television. Then, Don Giovanni was taken to University of Lagos, just for one performance. But most of the plays and operas were done at the Arts Theatre.

Adedokun: Do you think these your efforts had any impact on the generality of Nigerians? I mean, do people who graduated here go out to do similar things in places they went to work?

Aboaba: Yes

Adedokun: And can you name some of them?

Aboaba: Somebody like John Ekwere, went to the East.

Started some groups there. He was working with the Broadcasting Corporation. Ralph Opara, of course, and still active. He is now the head of MAMSER (Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery) in the East. He went into radio. Frank Aig-Imoukhuede, now the Director of the National Theatre, Lagos.

Some who went into Secondary Schools as Principal and teachers started drama groups there immediately. Somebody like Yetunde Esan, later on Yetunde Omisade became Principal of Yejide Girls Grammar School and started a drama group there. And so on.

Adedokun: In your opinion sir, what can you say has been the major contribution of the Arts Theatre to theatre development in Nigeria?

Aboaba: Arts Theatre for example was about the first theatre in Nigeria that had everything that modern theatre should have. The lights were excellent. The stage was built in such a way that it could bounce sound up the roof. All the gadgets there, the curtains and the accoustics - the make ups, the costumes were things that were eye openers to many people in Nigeria. Later on all these things were duplicated in many of the theatres round the country.

Adedokun: Were you a member of the 1961/62 University Travelling Theatre?

Aboaba: No. I was in Egglannd for my postgraduate work.

Adedokun: When did you come back?

Aboaba: I came back in 1962.

Adedokun: As a lecturer in the...

Aboaba: No, I was in the Civil Service.

Adedokun: But when did you come back to the University?

Aboaba: 1964 December - because I had to go and serve my bond with the government.

Adedokun: As a government scholar?

Aboaba: Yes.

Adedokun: In the intellectual circles there exists divergent opinions about the status, physical structure and cultural relevance of the Arts Theatre. Some people feel the Arts Theatre is too small for the present demands on it. Others feel it is colonial in outlook and structure and as such should be demolished to be replaced by a bigger one. Sir, what do you think of such a situation?

Aboaba: First, the place is old and it looks old right now. It is disheartening to see tartared chairs, the lights not functioning properly. It is a sign of I don't know what to call it SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) or decadence. Things have gone really poorly with the Arts Theatre. That apart, the size is too small for present day theatre. I don't think it should be demolished. It should have its own uses for concerts and things like that. But we could build

a bigger one without destroying this one. There's still land around and we can build a bigger theatre. Look at the one in Unilag (University of Lagos) it is quite big. Or we need one that could be even more modern, this one is no longer modern. Most of the things are manually operated. You have to climb up to the roof to adjust lamps and so on.

Adedokun: Being a witness and participant in the colonial day productions in the Arts Theatre, one is tempted to ask about your impression of the African plays that now fill the Arts Theatre. Is the Arts Theatre as interesting as in those days?

Aboaba: No. No. No. No longer as interesting as it used to be.

Adedokun: What is responsible for the difference?

Aboaba: First of all I think people who are not professionals or people who are not aspiring to be professionals should be given a chance to use the Arts Theatre. Nowadays, the Arts Theatre is so busy that amateurs don't have any time to use it. Or if you want to use it, you find that you probably have two days before the production to familiarize yourself with the Arts Theatre. It doesn't make for

good production. Also you find a lot of people who are talented and amateurs are loosing interest, because of the reason I have given you and because nobody is really interested anymore in promoting drama for the amateur. For instance, the Arts Theatre Production Group, what was their last performance? Are they still functioning?

Adedokun: Now that it is impossible for us to have foreign initiative because the expatriates are gone, who do you think will be able to make this balance possible?

Aboaba: People in the English Department, people in Theatre Arts, I am sure they study comparative theatre.

Adedokun: Yes. Occasionally we do that, for instance Barrie Stavis. The Man Who Never Died was ...

Aboaba: But you should invite people from outside the Department. I am sure the cast was all your students.

Adedokun: Yes

Aboaba: Ah ha ...

Adedokun: O.K. if that is what you mean ... involving people. But if they don't signify or indicate interest ...

Aboaba: You have to initiate the resurgence of the Arts Theatre Production. Somebody has to, you cannot let Arts Theatre Production Group die, because it performs a certain function in the society.

Adedokun: Might be the emergence of the Unibadan Masques and later the Unibadan Performing Company negated such initiative.

Aboaba: Those were exclusive. They became exclusive preserves of Nigerians. Why can't we have expatriates also taking part in some of our productions? You see, there's a place for Nigerian plays, but there's also a place for classical plays.

Adedokun: So this is what you would like to see in the Arts Theatre to really encourage people to come in there.

Aboaba: You know we performed Greek plays there before. We had the two Antigones in one night.

Adedokun: But Societies like Hoi Phrontistai, Cerce Francais, they are still there but not functional ... So is it the responsibility of the Arts Theatre Management to make them functional?

Aboaba: Not really, But if the professionals are there, they could initiate these things.

Adedokun: Maybe financial limitation is the great hindrance.

Aboaba: Interest is the major hindrance.

Adedokun: You mean people are no longer committed.

Aboaba: Yes. People are busy looking for other things.

Adedokun: You said the Arts Theatre should be left as it is and could be refurbished. Will you suggest building a bigger one?

Aboaba: Yes, yes.

Adedokun: Where could it be that would not be too far from students now?

Aboaba: We could have one near the student village.

Adedokun: You think audience would go there?

Aboaba: People will get there. Buses are provided and cars can get there. That is the only area I can see some available land right now. There is no land around the Arts Theatre anymore except you want to demolish the old NISER (Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research). Since NISER has some land you can rebuild that area to be theatre. And the Car Park is already there.

Adedokun: That is an advantage. But sir, how did you blend Agriculture which is your own discipline with

your theatrical activities?

Aboaba: I find theatre very relaxing. It gets me out of the academics and enable me relax in the evenings.

Adedokun: How often do you go to theatre nowadays?

Aboaba: Nowadays? Not too much. I still go to some concerts on campus.

Adedokun: When last did you see a show in the Arts Theatre?

Aboaba: At the Arts Theatre? About two years now.

Adedokun: What type of play do you think can attract you there since there are no longer operas and the Music concerts are occasional?

Aboaba: Even the concerts are mostly held in Trenchard Hall nowadays. Hun hun hun ... maybe an international play or a good Nigerian play.

Adedokun: Sir, are you satisfied with the present dramatic development in Nigeria?

Aboaba: Yes. It is coming on fine. Doing very well and there is a lot of Nigerianization - the plays and the actors. But then again as it is done everywhere in the world there must be a sort of balance.

Adedokun: You are insisting on this balance -

Aboaba: Otherwise people get too Nigerian orientation and you don't know what is going on in the world. Why do we still have people studying English Literature? You can't beat something like a good Shakespearean play once in a while. You see, it is educating to learn about the culture of some other people. Shakespeare did not confine himself to England. Some of his plays have Roman background.

Adedokun: Othello for example

Aboaba: Right. You see, I don't like a play where there must be an oba (king), there must be his wife, there must be an babalawo (ifa priest) (Both Laugh).

Adedokun: In Yoruba or in English or in both?

Aboaba: In both. It is like a formula now. Some of the plays you see on television - there is the oba, his wife, a babalawo et cetera.

Adedokun: Perhaps because these are our daily experiences in our culture.

Aboaba: Every play ... (Laugh)

Adedokun: So they are natural turn off for you?

Aboaba: Yes. You watch it and eventually somebody comes and overreacts. Everybody talking at the same time not giving themselves room to talk. It is like they

are ad libbing - no script.

Adedokun: Yes that is so common. They depend on improvisation. But do you know why we no longer have anything like the Dramatic Society on campus? Do you think the existence of the Department of Theatre Arts has anything to do with non resurrection?

Aboaba: The Department of Theatre Arts more or less killed the amateur theatre on this campus. Let us look at it this way. - The people who eventually started the Theatre Arts Department were the ones who encouraged amateur theatre. The baby that they started (Theatre Department) eventually was the one that killed amateur productions.

Adedokun: But don't you think amateur productions encourage haphazardness ...

Aboaba: No. Amateur production for example keeps students busy. There are some students now who don't know what to do with their time. They then do all sorts of wild things. There are some of them who are talented and they want to relax with amateur production. You see, same thing with staff, they want to relax.

Adedokun. What advice do you have for the Arts Theatre to help its promotion of African drama?

Aboaba: The Management should look for fund outside the University to help in refurbishing the Arts Theatre. I was shocked the other day I was beaten by the rain in the Arts Theatre. We were watching a play and it was raining outside and the rain was coming in. I could not believe it. I was almost in tears. So look for fund outside. I don't think the University can afford needed capital from the little money that is given to the University.

Adedokun: It is a pity we didn't talk about the School of Drama and its international contributions; but all the same one would like to know your opinion...

Aboaba: School of Drama? It was a good move. That was a good smart move. A lot of people being turned out from the School of Drama are now teaching drama in Schools, in the society, and everywhere in Nigeria. And they are projecting the image of Nigeria through drama. It was a good move to have started the School of Drama.

Adedokun: And realizing that everything started from the Arts Theatre, what then is your conclusion about the contribution. -

Aboaba: That the Arts Theatre has done a lot for this country. Has produced talents that helped some people keep their sanity because coming to watch plays relaxes your brain. And it has provided a sort of leadership for the theatre in Nigeria, indeed all of black Africa.

Adedokun: Are you withdrawing from theatrical productions because of advancing age, or lack of interest or because of all those circumstances you have quoted...?

Aboaba: No, no no, but due to more commitments. I haven't withdrawn totally. But as you grow older you have more commitments, family commitments, societal commitments, then academic commitments, research commitments, national commitments. So all these things are piling and you find that the energy cannot cope with all these things. I still want to do one or two operas and plays before I finally retire (both laugh).

Adedokun: It is our prayer that you do that, to remind people of the glorious past. But before we round up this interview sir, can you enlighten us briefly on how consciously the foreigners promoted African culture through their productions? There were no African plays to which one can point to from 1955

to 1958/59 when Soyinka's plays were first performed in the Arts Theatre. Are there any means by which they consciously promoted African culture?

Aboaba: Not between 1955 and 1958. There was no conscious effort. The only thing they did was to slot in Nigerian names or places in place of some of the English ones in some of the operas. Like there was a play in which somebody was mad and there was an English word that they used to bring sanity to that person. So they changed that word to Abeokuta (You know Aro). So it was Abeokuta and the person would come back to his senses. That was the only effort I could see. After that, gradually, sometimes in the costumes, they tried to bring in local dresses occasionally. But there was this lady Peggy Kruchang. She was headmistress of the junior section of the Staff School. She adapted a number of operas and substituted Nigerian names, Nigerian places and we used some occasional Nigerian costumes. Those were the only efforts they made. They didn't pretend to understand our culture. So they didn't want to make a mockery of it.

Adedokun: Thank you Professor Aboaba, for sparing the time and for this opportunity to share your experience from 1955 up to the present. May God continue to be with you and grant you good health, successes in your endeavours and happiness.

Aboaba: Amen. Thank you very much.

1.	1957	ADM	Book
2.	1957	THE MERCHANT OF VENICE	Book
3.	"	THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR	Book
4.	1958	A MERCHANT-NIGHT'S DREAM	Shakespeare
5.	"	KING LEAR AND THE POET	Book/Play
6.	1958	ANTIGONE (with U.S.A.)	Play
7.	1958	ANTIGONE	Play
8.	1958	AMERICAN	Play
9.	"	ALL ABOUT THE POET	Book
10.	1961	THE POET	Book
11.	"	THE POET TOO FERGUSON	Play
12.	1962	THE MERCHANT	Play
13.	"	THE CHURCH	Play
14.	"	KING LEAR (with music circle)	Play/Book
15.	1963	PERVALDIN	Play
16.	"	PERVALDIN	Play

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

APPENDIX 7

ARTS THEATRE PRODUCTION GROUP
PRODUCTIONS 1957 - 1973

No.	YEAR	PLAY	AUTHOR
1.	1957	NOAH	Andre And Chey
2.	1957	THE MERCHANT OF VENICE	Shakespeare
3.	"	THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR	Gogol
4.	1959	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Shakespeare
5.	"	RING ROUND THE MOON	Anouilh/Fry Anouilh
6.	1958	ANTIGONE (with U.I.D.S.)	Sophocles
7.	1958	ANTIGONE	Anouilh
8.	1960	CORIOLANUS	Shakespeare
9.	"	AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE	Ibsen
10.	1961	LYSISTRATA	Aristophanes
11.	"	A PHOENIX TOO FREQUENT	Fry
12.	1962	THE MAGISTRATE	Finero
13.	"	THE CRUCIBLE	Miller
14.	"	KING ARTHUR (with Music circle)	Dryden/Purcell
15.	1963	PYGMALION	Shaw
16.	"	PEER GYNT	

NO.	YEAR	PLAY	AUTHOR
17.	1964	MEASURE FOR MEASURE	Shakespeare
18.	1964	THE FIRE RAISERS	Frisch
19.	1964	THE DOCK BRIEF	Mortimer
20.	"	THE MATCHMAKER	Wilder
21.	1965	THE ALCHEMIST	Johnson Ben
22.		AN EVENING WITH W.B. YEATS	Yeats
23.	1965	THE VISIT	Duerrenmatt
24.	"	UNCLE VANYA	Chekhov
25.	"	YOU NEVER CAN TELL	Shaw
26.	1966	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST	Oscar Wilde
27.	1967	THE ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN	Shaffer
28.	"	WAITING FOR GODOT	Beckett
29.	1967	THE BLACK JACOBINS	James
30.	1968	OTHELLO	Shakespeare
31.	1968	THE BALD SOPRANO	Ionesco
32.	1968	THE AMERICAN DREAM	Albee
33.	1964	THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN	Brecht
34.	1969	LOVE OF LOVE	Congreve
35.	1969	THE CARETAKER	Pinter
36.	1969	HADRIAN VII	Luke

NO.	YEAR	PLAY	AUTHOR
37.	1969	TARTUFFE	Moliere
38.	"	RASHOMON	KARIN
39.	1970	TANGO	Mrosek
40.	1971	MR THREE	Butler (adopted by Lyndersay)
41.	1971	THE DUCHESS OF MALFI	John Webster
42.	1972	HOSTAGE	Brendan Behan
43.	1971	THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING	Fry
44.	1973	THE WATERS OF BABYLON	John Arden

- Compiled from programme notes for THE WATERS OF BABYLON by John Arden and Directed by Peggy Cruickshank.

NOTE

Acknowledgements in the Programme of THE WATERS OF BABYLON read:

- The Staff School U.I. for Rehearsal Facilities
The Department of Theatre Arts for their
co-operation.

APPENDIX 8

EXTRA-MURAL THEATRE WORKSHOP HANDBOOK
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

EXTRA-MURAL THEATRE WORKSHOP HANDBOOK

Introduction:

The Extra-Mural Theatre Workshop is a six month practical training Scheme in Theatre Arts with special focus on Acting, Music, Dance, Speech Practice, Theatre Management, Playwriting, Radio/ Television Production, Technical Theatre, Rehearsal and Performance. The Course is designed for theatre enthusiasts.

The Workshop is an evening programme. A three intensive hours of contact (4 p.m. - 7 p.m.) on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and on Sundays (3 - 7). This is subject to change as need arises.

Workshop activities include Improvisation, Ensemble technique, stagecraft, Playmaking, Singing and Music composition, Speech work, Television and Radio recording, Dance and Choreography, Performance practice and Publicity.

The programme of the course is designed to develop latent creative gifts and broaden the scope of intellectual possibilities through a variety of activities and programmed study.

COURSE BREAKDOWN -

ACTING:

- (a) Actor: Body dynamics and drill
- (b) Acting technique and Role - playing
- (c) Eurhythmics for the Actor
- (d) Motivation/Reflexes and improvisational exercises.

DIRECTING

- (a) The arts of a director
- (b) Selecting play/audition and casting
- (c) Creative Interpretation of playscript
- (d) Blocking and characterization
- (e) Rehearsals/Performance.

MUSIC

- (a) Music: Thought and organization
- (b) Vocal/Choral Music
- (c) Musical Instruments; uses
- (d) Music composition/Performance
- (e) Contemporary Music and Electronic Production.

DANCE:

- (a) Anatomy for Dancers
- (b) Choreography and Dance Composition
- (c) Rhythm in music and movement
- (d) Dance as a theatre Art/Dance project

VOICE - SPEECH AND SONG

- (a) The vocal chords and Voice production
- (b) Speech Art and Public Speaking
- (c) Speech Drills
- (d) Singing

PLAYWRITING:

- (a) Theme and idea development
- (b) Plot/Scenarios sketching
- (c) Thought/Language/Play form and creative writing exercises
- (d) Workshop play project/Rehearsal/Performance

THEATRE MANAGEMENT

- (a) The Business of the Arts
- (b) Theatre Organisation: Types
- (c) Publicity/Box office practice
- (d) Theatre Management in Nigeria; Appraisal

STAGECRAFT

- (a) Functions of Stage Manager
- (b) Set, Props and the Stage: Appraisal
- (c) Rehearsal, Call-board and Discipline
- (d) Performance/Relationship with production crew.

RADIO/TELEVISION PRODUCTION

- (a) Media drama: impact
- (b) Telescript: writing
- (c) Styles and Techniques of Radio/TV production

REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE

- (a) Rehearsal Organization
- (b) Technical/Dress Rehearsal
- (c) Performance

DESIGN

- (a) Basic costume and set design assignments
- (b) Designing for workshop Production

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AGE LIMIT

No. age limit and no sex preference.

QUALIFICATIONS

The Department recognizes the fact that intelligence and creative ability could be expressed in different ways and therefore would look beyond the traditional academic criteria in assessing the applicants.

Talent, aptitude and previous participation in theatrical activities are the entry qualifications. It is essential that applicant be proficient in English which is the medium of communication.

ADMISSION

Applicants would be auditioned and interviewed at a stipulated date as may be advertised in Newspapers. Successful candidates would be registered on the payment of the prescribed registration fee. The

day of registration marks the beginning of the 6 - month workshop.

NOTE: Any student absent from class for 30 hours would either forfeit the certificate of attendance or pay a fine of ₦50.00 with a promise to cover lost grounds through extra work.

DEFERMENT:

If illness or temporary transfer from place of work prevents a candidate from completing his/her course, such individual should write to the coordinator requesting for the deferment of his/her admission till the next session. The participant would pay 50% of the required charges the following year.

LECTURERS

The workshop lecturers would be drawn from the regular intra-mural lecturers, postgraduate students and professionals from outside the campus. The mutual interaction between the practising artistes and the academic professionals would provide participants a unique experience in Theatre practice.

ENSEMBLE PRODUCTION

The workshop ensemble is expected to present a final graduation play at the completion of the course. This production is the outcome of the systematic training received within the six months. This project would be judged according to the input and impact made by each unit of the workshop programme. Candidates would face a panel of judges at a viva after

a performance during which they would answer questions regarding artistic depth and individual contributions to the production.

CERTIFICATE

A certificate of attendance would be awarded candidates who successfully complete the 6 - month training. The certificate that would be awarded from 1984 is a high quality one which the owner would cherish all his life.

CHARGE:

From 1984 workshop session new rates would be as follow:

	N	K
Application form	10	00
Extra-Mural Handbook	5	00
Registration fee	100	00
Certificate	10	00
Transport	10	00
Production expenses	20	00

PROSPECTS

The University of Ibadan has the pride of place as the first University to start Professional Diploma and Degree courses in Theatre Arts, Broadcasting and Film. The Department of Theatre Arts has produced eminent scholars, theatre practitioners, broadcasters, technicians and public servants since its inception.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS, (FORMERLY SCHOOL OF DRAMA)
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IS 21 YEARS OLD IN 1984.

THE EXTRA - MURAL THEATRE WORKSHOP WISHES HER MANY HAPPY
RETURNS OF THE DAY AND MANY YEARS OF USEFUL SERVICE TO HUMANITY.

HURRAH YOU ARE OF AGE!

HURRAH YOU ARE 21 !!

REMI ADIMOLA ADEDOKUN
Workshop Coordinator

PROFESSOR J.A. ADEDEJI
Head, Dept. of Theatre Arts.

MON	PLANNING
TUE	MUSIC & DANCE
WED	THEATRE/WORKSHOP
THUR	THEATRE/WORKSHOP
FRI	THEATRE/WORKSHOP
SAT	THEATRE/WORKSHOP
SUN	THEATRE/WORKSHOP

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

(A) SCHEME OF TRAINING PROGRAM

DAY	TIME	COURSE TITLE	LECTURERS	COURSE LEVEL (ORDINARY/ ADVANCE)
SUNDAYS	3 - 4 p.m.	Radio Production	AYO AKINWALE	O & AL
SUNDAYS	4 - 5 "	Stage Management) & Technical Theatre)	KUNLE ADEYEMO	O & AL
SUNDAYS	5 - 6 "	Playwriting & Creative Dramatics	ISI AGBOYI	"
SUNDAYS	6 - 7 "	Directing	ONYONYOR T.O. OYESORO S., MISS TAIWO AWOYEMI & PHILIP IGHTEI	OL
MONDAY	5 - 6 "	Theatre Management	D. OMATOLA & CHICO SALEH	O & AL
MONDAY	6 - 7 "	Music	ADIGWE J.P.O.	OL
MONDAY	7 - 8 "	Music	S. AYIVIE	AL
WED.	5 - 6 "	Costume/Make up/ Design	NDIDI MORDI & JENNIFER OBATA	OL
WED.	6 - 7 "	Acting	ANIGALA E.A.	OL
THUR.	5 - 6 "	Speech Practice	MRS. C.F. AJAYI	O & AL
THUR.	6 - 7 "	Acting	MRS. C.E. AJAYI	AL
THUR.	6 - 7 "	(Children's Theatre Creative Dramatics)	JOHN EJEMAI	OL
"	7 - 8 "	Directing	MISS TAIWO AWOYEMI	
FRIDAY	4 - 6 "	Dance	MISS DOS SANTOS	O & AL
FRIDAY	6 - 7 "	Television Production	OHIRI I.C.	OL

(B) -

PRODUCTION WORKSHOP
JULY - OCTOBER, 1984

MON.	PLAYMAKING
WED.	MUSIC & DANCE
FRIDAY	ENSEMBLE/THEATRE GAMES
SUNDAYS	REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE

VENUES: ARTS THEATRE and PRACTICAL THEATRE.

Remi Adedokun

APPENDIX 9

Mini Festival at the Arts Theatre

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

12TH—18TH SEPTEMBER 1976

THE WORKSHOP ON THE NIGERIA TRAVELLING THEATRE

Jointly Organised by the department of Theatre Arts University of
Ibadan and the Goethe Institute in Lagos

PROUDLY PRESENTS

The following Nigerian Travelling Theatre Troupes at the Arts Theatre
University of Ibadan

- Sunday 12th Sept. **The Osumare Theatre from Lagos**
IN "AREMO AYIBI," (Cultural drama in Yoruba)
Time: 9.00 p.m. Admission:- Tickets N1; 50k
- Monday 13th Sept. **The University of Ife Theatre**
IN "GODS ARE NOT TO BLAME" by Ola Rotimi
Time: 9.00 p.m. Tickets N1.50; N1.00
- Tuesday 14th Sept. **Isola Ogunsola Theatre**
IN "EFUNSETAN ANIWURA" (Yoruba drama)
Time: 9.00 p.m. Tickets N1.00; 50K
- Wednesday 15th Sept. **Alawada (International) Group Ltd.**
IN "FOPAWON" by Moses Olaiya (Baba Sala)
Time: 9.00 p.m. Tickets N1.50; N1.00
- Thursday 16th Sept. **The Duro Ladipo Cultural Theatre**
IN MOREMI by Duro Ladipo
Time: 9.00 p.m. Tickets N1.50; N1.00
- Friday 17th Sept. **Unibadan Masques**
IN "The Chattering and the Song" (by Femi Osofisan)
Time: 9.00 p.m. Tickets 50k; N1.00
- Saturday 18th Sept. **Ogunde Dance Theatre**
IN "S'ERANKO S'ENIA"
Time: 9.00 Tickets N1.50; N1.00

ITS A REAL PACKAGE

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE ARTS THEATRE BOX
OFFICE AND AT THE UNIVERSITY BOOKSHOP U. I

For any further information contact Jide Malomo 62550 Ext 1020 or Ext 1292