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Drama which is the most relevant on this study. Drama has been defined as a literary composition that tells a story usually representing human conflict by means of dialogue and action as portrayed by Wole Soyinka in "Trial of Brother Jero and The Lion and the Jewel".

Soyinka uses comic element to project and achieved his aim without jeopardizing the message intended to the audience. For instance "Trial of Brother Jero" where he portrayed the lust of Brother Jero for women, especially at the beach and the mocking of his followers prayer by referring to them speaking Jabber and in The Lion and the Jewel where Soyinka portrayed Baroka speaking both pidgin and English together like "guru m morin" and also mocking stance of Lakunle whom he portrayed to represent the western culture. For instance when Lakunle tries to carry a pale of water from Sidi head and which he eventually pour the water on his body.

Soyinka lets us know that Comic Is not only by oral but also by action, as we can see in Trial of Brother Jero and The Lion and the Jewel.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROND TO THE STUDY

The history of literature can be traced to the ancient civilization of Egypt. It began as representation of ideas on rocks, in caves, in motifs and other means of conveying ideas. But inspite of the diversity of communicating devices, they all talked about situations. This continued and evolved through the years to the broad category we now team "Literature".

Literature as mentioned is a vast but succinctly. We can view it as a body of writing by a people or by peoples using the same language. It has received different definitions from various writers.

Literature has been described as anything written as an interpretation of life. It has also been defined as the best word in the best order. Another definition see literature has an expression the temper of an age in terms of imaginative art.

Literature as terms emerged from the Latin word "Littera" which means letter of the alphabet. This of course means writing as an art, started with the Egyptians (Hieroglyphics) before it became adopted in other cultures like the Greek and French symbols were the initial forms of writing. Situations and activities were highlighted in caves in form of symbols. Paintings and line etching as means of communication and like literature of today, this means of communication was used to inform us and depict real life situations which is the essence of literature.

Over the years literature has continued to play this role effectively. To this effect it has been segmented into three major genres: Drama, Poetry and Prose of this three, drama is the most relevant to this paper.

Drama captures real life situations and displays them on stage for corrective purposes. A Greek term which means "action" drama can be described as a form of literature intend to be interpreted to an audience by actors who impersonate the characters, recite the speeches and perform the actions of the story.

Drama has been defined as a literary composition that tells a story usually representing human conflict by means of dialog and action to be performed upon the stage yet another description of drama is that it is the creative creation of authors, actors and audience.

Because drama is used to portray real situations, these are usually highlighted to an audience who are the

real people. The beginning and the end of the business from the author's point of view is the art of making the audience believe that real things are happening to real people (Bernard Shaw).

Drama was necessitated by the fact that it had a more potent impact on an audience. The earliest forms of drama were tragic because they portrayed the particular era in which they were performed and therefore were more relevant as tragic.

Two types of drama are generally acknowledging comedy which can briefly be described as any play which ends happily and tragedy which ends unhappily.

The drama seems to have originated in religious tribal dance such as existed among primitive peoples today. There is a controversy as to the origin of drama: Egypt or Greece. But the first crude drama, whether Egyptian or Greek, told stories and legends of some gods, having originated in rites of worship held in the god's honour.

Drama is a form of expression peculiar to no race or epoch. Some form of drama or the other is found in every society-primitive and civilized and has served wide variety of functions in the society.

The dramatic pieces capture a particular time-frame of human existence because they tend to document history a peculiar to a people. In achieving this, they employ different plays can satirize society, or they can gently illuminate of human weaknesses; they can define the greatness and the limitation of man in tragedy, or as in modern naturalistic playwriting probe man's mind.

In summary, drama is aimed at either one or more of entertainment ritual celebration and promulgation of an idea. Drama has the widest range of all arts. This is because it not only represents life but is also a way of seeing life. There are some common features in drama the play tells its tales by migration behavior a situation must be represented or the stage often play describes its style up which the mood quality of illusion degree of fantasy or realism are embedded. The languages of drama ranges from intensely theatrical to an almost exact reproduction of real life. Another major component of drama is conflict which is clash of ideas and will. The resolution of the conflict usually marks the ends of the plays.

The deeper and more important the conflict is to the spectators. The greater the worth of the drama. As a matter of fact, intensity through concentration is an absolute law of the stage. A good drama or play does three basic things: entertainment instruction and exultation.

As mentioned earlier there are two main categories of drama of which comedy is one. The other tragedy. Although tragedy is often used loosely to describe any sort of disaster or misfortune, it is actually a work of art that probes with high seriousness questions concerning the role of man in the universe. Tragedy deals with the rebellious spirit in man which resist the limitations of being human.

The history of tragedy can be traced to the Greek Dionysian festivals of the 5th century BC. In the Aristotelian view, tragedy imitates men who are better than the average and deals with personages of high estates and matters of great public importance. Tragedy on the whole deals with issues that affect man in a serious manner.

1.1 COMEDY

Eons ago comedy was merely an art form for entertainment coined from the Greek word komoidia which means merry making. According to modern tradition, comedy was type of drama whose chief objective was to amuse. But in the midst of laughter comedy can raise surprisingly serious questions. We see therefore, that comedy can be both critical and playful.

The term comedy has passed through various shades of meaning. In the middle ages, it simply meant a

story with a happy ending; subsequently, the term was applied to mystery plays with a happy ending. Comedy has been defined as many comic or ludicrous incident or series of incident of a form of dram that deals with humorous or ridiculous aspects of human behavior of a dramatic piece of pleasant or humorous character a story with a happy ending an incident suggesting comic treatment.

Deeper definitions of comedy have however produced statements describing comedy as vehicle of corrective satire.

Comedy (says Aristotle) is an imitation of the worst sort of people in respect to their manners. They must be exposed after a ridiculous manner. For men are to be laugh out of their vices in comedy.

The business of comedy, according to Sir Richard is to render vice ridiculous, to expose it to public decision and contempt, and to make men ashamed of vile and sordid actions. James Drake also agrees that the business of comedy is to recommend virtue and discountenance vice.

The origin of comedy date back to the rituals in honour of the Greek god of vegetation. Dionysius' Comus ode' which was the term used to refer to the songs sung during the festivals was what was later called comedy. The term then became applied to the satire plays of Aristophanes and writes like Plautus and Terence.

Comedy as a word can be concerned by derivation to the Greek verb meaning to revel which enable as to bind up the origin of comedy with vegetation rituals.

As an art form however, comedy has a lot of devices as its disposal to achieve effectiveness in exploring the concept of didacticism because there is always a moral behind all the laughter.

Some views of the aims of comedy claim that comedy criticizes the finite for not being infinite. Comedy provoked laughter at the world which man has made himself in his conscious activity. Hegel Comedy consists of the indirect affirmation of the ideal logical order by means of derogation of the limited orders of actuality.

Chief among these device for didacticism are comic effects and "epigrams" which are comic situations in the actions of the dramatists and witty remarks in their speeches respectively. These devices make it distinct.

Though comedy's message is usually subliminal, that is not easily seen on the surface level because its comical effects temporarily hide it, it is one of the most powerful literary tools didacticism today.

Comedy has been associated with laughter but the Idea behind all the laughter varies according to the attitude of the author. The author's attitude towards the subject of discussion can be for different purposes to ridicule a person, satirise a society or conventional way of doing things; it can be on love or romance and so on. Laughter as a common criterion in comedy is therefore just a means to an end. The aim of most writers of comedy is to present situations concepts and lines apt to excite their audience's facility of laughter.

Sir Philip Sidney observed that in higher forms of the comic there is more delight than laughter.

The comic artist's purpose is mirror the society's follies and vices hoping that they will, as a result be mended. The comic drama takes on the features of satire as it fixes on professions of virtue and practice that contradict them. Satiric comedy dramatizes the discrepancy between the ideal and the reality the pretensions that would mask reality's hollowness and viciousness.

The most important English renaissance statement concerning comedy is that of Sir Philip Sidney in The defense of posies (1595)

Comedy is an imitation of common errors of our life, which (the comic dramatist) represents in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be so as it is impossible that any beholder can be content to such a

one.

Comedy in Africa began a while ago as a ritualistic and royalty tool.

In ancient African civilization, festivals, fiestas and yearly rituals to gods took place. Processions were also a part of the lives of these people. The activities were spiced with dance, music and folklore. Mime was also an important part the festivals. Mimesis was meant to be a span of bout five to ten minutes or more showing life in a light way. Because it is a silent act, it depends on rhythmic body movement and gesture to give information and messages. It was from this mimetic form that comedy sprang up as a form of drama.

Today comedy in African context as with the past reflects the peculiar aspects of a society. It looks at the society through an intellectual microscope, discerns its ills and puts it forward in a laughable manner.

There are different media of comedy, mimesis as earlier mentioned is one of such it parodies the good or bad events in the society, highlighting them to an audience. It is mainly silent and more descriptive. It ushered in theatre groups and itinerant entertainers.

Comedy could also be written for performance on stage. Here action is combined with speech. Some plays are also published by notable authors the satire work parade themes ranging from good to evil. Some note worthy authors in this include Ola Rotimi, Femi Osofisan and Wole Soyinka.

The establishment, in 1948, of University colleges at Accra (Ghana) and Ibadan (Nigeria) gave impetus to poetry, the novel and drama in the 1950's and 60's. The most intense activity was in Nigeria, the Igbo proving particularly profile with writers like Cyprian Ekwensi- Jagua Nana (1961). Onuora Nzekwu with Wand of Noble wood, (1961) and Nkem Nwankwo -Danda (1964) Wole Soyinka is however the main playwright for this paper.

Akinwande Oluwole Soyinka was born on the 13th of July 1934 In Abeokuta, Nigeria. He is a playwright, poet, novelist and critic. He received the Noble prize for literature in 1986 (the first African to win it). Soyinka attended Government College and University College in Ibadan before graduating in English in 1958 from the University of Leeds in England.

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