

The Sociology of Political Crises in Soyinka's *A Play of Giants and Kongi's Harvest*

ABIODUN MINISTER OLOFINSAO

Elizade University

Ilara-Mokin

Ondo State, Nigeria

Email: abiodun.olofinsao@elizadeuniversity.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Crises have been married to our political system today. Most independent African states follow the politics handed over to them by the colonial masters, which is the politics of hatred, bitterness, dictatorship and oppression. African literature as well as African society is equally influenced. African creative writers have taken up the hazardous task of exposing the corrupt leaders and their draconic system of government. One of the leading voices in that vanguard is Wole Soyinka who has a lot of written texts to his credit. Thus, this paper analyses the sociology of political crises in Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest* and *A Play of Giants*. The paper equally explores how political crises have been established in the plays of African playwrights and in Soyinka's plays specifically. Hence, we shall adopt sociological approach in our analyses. The full understanding, interpretation as well as development of political crises in Soyinka's plays depend also on an inter-textual approach. This paper reveals the causes of political crises, the hypocritical nature and the corruption perpetuated by political leaders. The paper concludes by unmasking the effects of political crises on the society and the way out, suggested.

Keywords: Crises, Society, Politics, Leadership, Sociology, Aesthetics, Satire

INTRODUCTION

The society is the sole concern of sociology. A network of social relationships is called the society. The interaction or the relationship between the people makes up a society. That is why Umar (2004, p. 123) says that "sociology primarily concerns itself with social relationships ...the central concern of sociology is the social relationships of mankind." Sociology also uses scientific method in its study. Mankind must relate together socially and that relationship must be looked into to ascertain the kind of society we have. Umar (2004) posits further that:

Sociology is therefore a scientific study of human behaviour in groups, having for its aim the discovery of regularities and order in such behaviour and expressing these discoveries as theoretical propositions or generalizations that describe a wide variety of pattern of behaviour. (p. 123)

The pattern of behaviour of the citizens in the society is what literature portrays. The literary creative writers, in their texts, portray the behaviour of leaders and the citizens in the society. They study the formation and transformation of groups, the relationship of the groups and group members with one another, noting that where there are groups, there are tendencies for participation, cohesion and conflict. Politics exists in a society and it involves participation, cohesion and conflict.

Political crises arises when the few privileged ones, by the virtue of their positions, relate cruelly with the less privileged in the same society. Pushpa N. Perekh (1998, p. 440), in his own assessment of the genesis of political topsy-turvy in Nigeria and many African countries, concludes that the society has been devastated and badly affected by it. This necessitated the outspokenness of some playwrights in the society. He declares that "The political turbulence that started to devastate Nigeria and many other newly independent African states during the

1960s triggered Soyinka's uncompromising activism and outspokenness, in real life and creativity, against neo-colonialism, ethnic nepotism, political partisanship, and corruption.” Politics deals with political affairs. It is a means of winning and keeping absolute control. It is also an activity within a particular organization by which some try to gain an advantage over others. Most independent African states follow the politics handed over to them by the colonial masters, which is the politics of hatred, bitterness, dictatorship and oppression. African literature is equally influenced. No wonder some African writers clamour for the decolonization of African literature and its aesthetics. It is important to note that “African literature could not be decolonized,” According to Sam Ukala (2001, p. 30), “until the mind of the African creative writers is decolonized and that political independence could not be total without aesthetics independence.” He posits further that:

Since aesthetics independent cannot be sought at the hands of the long-departed colonial master, what seems required is for the African creative writer to engage in the politics of aesthetics so as to free the African mind with literature, the same tool by which it was, in part, shackled. (p. 30)

Due to the dictatorial attitude of our leaders in Africa, crises have been married to our political system. The people have been forced to take up arms against their insensitive leaders and vice versa. The oppression, corruption, and embezzlement of government money perpetuated by these dictators at the corridors of power gave birth to the political crises in Africa. Peter Ukpokodu (1996) succinctly paints the picture of politics, politicians, and their blind followers in Africa when he says that:

Politics... is indubitably a 'game'. It is a most violent game of life and death in which the winners are the survivors who reward themselves with abundant life, mostly in terms of materialistic surfeits, narcissism and megalomania, and are followed by a horde of nincompoops who think to live is to grovel at the master's feet and eat the saliva-enriched morsel that the master coughs out when he is almost choking. (pp. 38-39)

In this paper, the violent game of life and death in politics vis-a-vis the society is examined. The paper also looks at the offspring, the aftermath of such violent game which is crises. The voices of African playwrights- paramount among them is Soyinka- have spoken bitterly against the despotic nature of African leaders. David Cook (1994, pp. 127-128) confirms this when he says that Soyinka "is after all one of the most outspoken critics of man's inhumanity to man." Expansively, political crises have been established in the plays of African playwrights. The analyses of Foluke Ogunleye (2001, pp. 19-20) shows that the political plays of the Kenyan writer, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o give a picture of political crises in East Africa. Ngugi's *I Will Marry When I Want* and *Mother Sing for me* – the products of the Kamirith Community Theatre of the 1977-82, show the picture of wretchedness of the poor in one hand whose hope lies in the possibility of change, the exploitative character of the rich on another side. Blair and Fenton's *The Biko Inquest* provides a graphic representation of the political system in South Africa, and highlights racial discrimination, murder, and perversion of justice. Osofisan's *Morountodun*, based on the 1969 'Agbekoya' uprising in what was then the Western Region of Nigeria, focuses attention on Nigeria by dramatizing the confrontation of farmers and the state over taxation, harassment from corrupt officials, and the failure to provide infrastructure. Ola Rotimi's *Hopes of the Living Dead*, sub-titled "A Play of Struggle", shows the efforts of a group of lepers, led by Hercourt Whyte, to the recognition of their right to a decent life by those in authority. Rotimi uses leprosy as a dramatic metaphor for socio-political and psychological malaise. According to Saint Gbilekaa (1997, p. 165), he says that Rotimi, in this play, "stresses that this leprosy can be overcome through a workable praxis by the downtrodden who are their own best doctors-that is, if they are ready to take up arms to deliver themselves from the leprosarium of economic and psychological dominance."

Soyinka's *Opera Wonyosi*, provides a running political commentary, and is placed by James Gibbs (1986, p.128) among plays written when Soyinka has become 'increasingly concerned with the need to communicate political ideas to a mass audience'. The play makes specific references to political occurrences in the country, including the Igbeti Marble Affairs which leads to several unexplained deaths, and

the public execution of armed robbers in a carnival atmosphere. The positions of women, religion and politics were all scrutinized. Likewise, Rasaki Bakare (1994, p.54) says that "Bakare's *Drums of War* is dedicated to the victims of man's greatest expression of his bestiality, such as those who perished in Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia, Bosnia, Herzegoviana and Yugoslavia, Biafra-Nigeria and the tiny village of Zango-Kataf." This play shows the selfishness and senselessness that give birth to Ife/Modakeke war, the killings in Southern Kaduna and various bomb blast that killed many innocent lives, all in Nigeria. The Abacha regime took an ill-informed decision in 1997 to create new administrative units that led to boundary disputes in different parts of the country. While violence raged, the national administration kept quiet and continued looting the national treasury.

Since the seventies, Nigerian playwrights have shifted away from elevating the entertainment motive in their works. Instead, according to Saint Gbilekaa, (1997, p. v) "their overriding concern has been to express ideological positions and to condemn decadent socio-political practices." Femi Osofisan (1973, p. 97) comments about this change of focus in literary works. According to him "...the mood that colours contemporary theatre is one of commitment and even aggression."

Soyinka's plays are coloured with political crises. The beginning of years of intense political instability and the ones following generated from Soyinka a profusion of creative productivity in a profound effort to give expression to the corruptive power of post-colonial leadership. *The Detainee*, a radio play was produced in 1965 to portray his detention experiences. Also within that year was published his first full-length play since *A Dance of the Forest*, *Kongi's Harvest*, which climaxed his satiric sketches and began his series of plays on corrupt power. Inevitably, that productive period was also one of the years Soyinka gained international recognition as an African writer of note. His strong political views were read and heard on media in Europe and the United State. His autobiographical documentary *The Man Died*, is a product of political crises in Nigeria, especially the Nigeria civil war. *Madmen and Specialists* pessimistically dramatizes the pervasive corruption in the structure of power.

From Zia With Love, which premiered in Siena, Italy, and *A Scourge of Hyacinths* are plays where Soyinka uses the now-added epidemic, the drug mafia, to address the parallel perennial problem of Africa's stagnant development, that is, the tyranny and political deadlock since independence was gotten from colonial masters. Soyinka's feeling and reaction to the terribly horrifying expulsion by the military government in Nigeria, especially the military regime of a Lagos shanty community is portrayed in his play, *The Beatification of Area Boy*. This play was published in 1995 at a time military dictatorship with its attendant atrocities was rife and at its pick in the country. The society was under siege as the military boys went berserk and took full charge of the whole society. Justice was denied while unlawful gains and illegal wealth were the order of the day. The society was absurd and abnormal. No wonder Adeyeye (2000, p.5) says that "The play is a reflection of the real situation in the country then. It is a biting satire on the military government of the time... the masses suffer injustice in the society."

Madmen and Specialists (1970), fulfills satiric intensity and the playwright's objective to dissect, diagnose, and uncompromisingly indict African leadership and its effects on cultural survival- hence Soyinka's own admission of it as his most pessimistic play. Correctly so, the background of the play identifies and recalls the crimes of the Nigerian civil war and its devastating effects on culture. Thus, the play presents two potentially creative leaders of an African state who, however, have been insanely intoxicated with their attributes, one corrupted by his psychoanalytic restorative philosophy, the other by sociopolitical imperatives that now engage him to proscribe victims of his militaristic espionage as opposed to prescribing curative medicine as a leading researcher and medical doctor. The mendicants, who could be regarded as the end product of war, counter point this serious indictment with sardonic ridicule.

Considering this general overview of political crises in plays of some African playwrights and in Soyinka's plays specifically, we can affirm that political crisis is established in Soyinka's plays. According to David Cook (1994, p. 128) "Soyinka coined the concept that cannibalism is an activity fundamental to present-day society here and

now. People are eating each other spiritually; indeed, they are eating each other materially. Even as they are not boiling human flesh in pots and eating it through their mouths, as is metaphorically dramatized through certain characters in *Madmen and Specialists*, they are more profoundly eating their fellow men both body and soul". In his plays, Soyinka accuses the destroyers who pulverize people's lives; exposes the true nature of cynical corruption and dehumanized greed and lust for self- aggrandizement in our society and subtly suggests solutions.

CAUSALITY OF POLITICAL CRISES

Causality deals with the relationship between a cause and its effect. This is a principle that states that events must have causes. Political crises cannot just emerge from the blues without a critical examination of the causes of those conflicts and crises being experienced in the political system today in Africa. Soyinka's *A Play of Giants* will be our guide to explicate the causality of political crises in his plays and the effects on the society.

The play that has been described by the author himself as a 'fantasia on Aminian theme' is written to satirize the political leaders in African states. This is a play that presents a savage portrait of a group of dictatorial African leaders in an embassy in New York, where they are gathered to attend the meeting of the United Nations. This forum is used by these leaders to seek for loans from World Bank; promote their own self-images through various sculptures to be placed conspicuously at the entrance to the United Nation's Building; brutalize their own subjects; keep the foreigners hostage; and finally take up arms against their own people in the face of rebellion that wants to overturn their draconic and dictatorial government. According to Patrick Ebewo (1993):

Soyinka's socio-political satires echo much the same views as those expressed by other satirists in Africa. He is very skeptical of the political leadership generally, and in Nigeria in particular. His satires ridicule, mock and laugh at those who call themselves leaders but lack the qualities of sincere leadership. (p. 82)

The play opens with the Introduction where the brain behind political crises is revealed, that is the lust for power. The political leaders are in the habit of holding on to political power by all means. Power calls to power, and vicarious power, the one enjoyed by the politically impotent leaders, responds obsequiously to the real thing. Thus, Soyinka compares the desire and lust for power by political leaders, in this play, as: “...the monkey in the folktale, some would rather hold on to the booty of power through the gourd's narrow neck than unclench the first and save themselves.” This means that, these dictators are not ready to relinquish or surrender power to others. They are prepared to cling to power even in the face of imminent danger or death, this is reflected through Kamini who holds on to power in the face of rebellion. Knowing that a coup has been staged in his country – Bugara, and he, removed from office, yet he keeps both his people and foreigners hostage with a determination to blow off the UN Building and Bugaria embassy if the situation is not reversed. He determines to possibly die in the revolt rather than surrender power. This confirms the popular saying that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

As the play opens with the three leaders of various African states jesting and talking about the kind of oppressive power they possess over their various country. These leaders are Kamini, Kasco and Gunema. According to Perekh (1998, p.446) "Kamini...is also such a power drunk destructive character in a play that is also oppressively pessimistic." Kamini says "we have the power, not him...power is we" (p.10). From their conversation, selfishness and self-centeredness is portrayed. Kamini sends the Chairman of Bugara Central Bank to the World Bank to ask for loan. The chairman informs Kamini that their offer has been turned down and that the loan can only be granted based on some certain conditions. Instantly Kamini orders the Chairman to agree to any condition even when the Chairman tells him that the condition will mortgage Bugara body and soul. Kamini says: “What I care about conditions? Agree to any conditions just get the loan, Isay what I care about body and soul? If they can loan Bugara the two hundred million dollars, I give them body and soul” (p. 5).

The selfishness in leadership is portrayed here through Kamini who does not care for the welfare of the country. His major concern is getting the loan and spending it for himself, not considering the effects on the economy of the country and the society at large. He further tells the Chairman to agree to any percentage of interest on the loan: "what I care about rotten interest? Bugara promised to pay everything all at once, in five years" (p. 6). He orders the Chairman to go back to the country and print more Bugara bank notes, when there is nothing to back the new currency with. In the process, Chairman offends him by comparing their national currency with toilet paper, he pays dearly for that, his head is forced inside toilet bowl and the toilet emptied on his head. Another problem of leadership as seen in the play is the lack of leadership qualities that result from immaturity. Most of them got to power too early. They lack some basic knowledge they ought to possess as leaders. No wonder they mess up the post and stay in power longer than usual. They always fail to wait patiently and learn. This is seen in Kamini who takes pride in killing a lion at seven years old while others do same at thirteen years old.

Even our lives are very similar. I too, I kill my first lion at seven years old, with a spear. It is part of our tradition. The test of manhood...Yes, at seven. Others thirteen, but me, I could not wait. Like Chaka, I could not wait. (p. 12)

Senseless killing of perceived enemies is another major cause of political crises in the play which is detrimental to the society today. Any individual, foreigner or indigene, the leaders perceive of plotting against them is executed immediately. They kill these opponents without just reasons. Kamini, for example, even boasts of such act: "You plan coup but Kamini move fast. Round up your stooges and shoot them. Take ring leaders to their villages and hang them there, then liquidate their regiment in prison" (p. 67). "Perhaps I will shoot him...we have to teach all these super-powers that they cannot be sending their spies to be committing espionage with impunity. This is Bugaran sovereign soil. I will not allow foreign spies to get away scot-free..." (p. 41).

Tubum, a leader of another African state, boasts of opposing all foreign opponents against his government. He claims that he has started a vigorous campaign to eliminate all foreign influences from our people...It is finished. Crushed. All the ring leaders ..." (p. 18). Another instance is about president Gunema who senselessly kills the captain of the Palace Brigade of Guards for the mere reason that the captain visited him at home when he had just finished a meal with his family. That night, he had had a dream concerning the captain about planning coup against him and the following day he executes the captain: "We finish eating... that very night, I dream he plan d'etat against me. I arrest him in the morning and the tribunal find him guilty. I gave him firing squad" (p. 37).

Another instance is when Gunema sentences a man to death for unfounded suspicion of plotting against him. While he is still in prison, the condemned man's wife comes for pleading. Rather than heeding to the plea of the woman, he takes her to bed and kills the husband on the appointed day. As if that is not enough, he finally garrotes the woman: "Not for very long. After the taste was gone...I begin to fear she is plotting to take revenge for her husband's death. I ask, why does she still remain my mistress? I had her garroted. It was better" (p. 59).

Militancy, rebellion or political crises will not just start, the seed must be planted. The seeds of wickedness, selfishness, lust for power and its abuse, dictatorship and senseless killing have been planted and the fruits of political crises must blossom since the seeds have been watered by the blood of helpless and innocent citizens. The era of round table dialogue has gone, it has come to the realm of arms for arms. This situation of transition from non- violent politics to militant politics is expressed clearly by Nelson Mandela (1989) when he comments that:

During the last ten years the African people have fought many freedom battles... in all these campaigns we repeatedly stressed the importance of discipline, peaceful and non-violent struggle and we sincerely worked for peaceful change... But the situation is now radically altered... All opportunities for peaceful agitation and struggle have been closed. (p. 93)

While Kamini and his colleagues are still boasting of their power, suddenly the bombshell- Kamini's regime has been toppled. Those who have been working for him run away including his ministers, ambassador and embassy staff, all of them "desert the sinking ship" (p. 54). The political crises start and the people voice out the need to sweep the land clean and get their rights and privileges restored. This they express in their speech to Kamini: "You slave... this land is ours, we shall retrieve it. The wealth is the people's, we shall restore it. And dignity, the dignity that is born to every man, woman, and child, we shall enshrine it. The invader is driven out..." (p. 53). The protestants invade the embassy and call Kamini many unprintable names, as rightly put by the playwright: "The chant however is clarifying into a chant of 'out, out, out, Kamini, out, out, out, Kamini,' interspersed with screams..." (p. 69). This kind of revolutionary change is what African society is in need of to stop these senseless killings and corruption.

As the play gradually comes to a close with this rebellion, Kamini could not stomach it. The pride, the violent game of politics of do-or-die, the desire to hold on to power at all cost, all these make him to take up arms against his own people. He holds both the Russian Delegates, the US Delegates, the UN Secretary General and surprisingly, or rather, embarrassingly, other three Heads of State hostage, with a resolution to bomb both the embassy and the UN Building if the political crises and the fire against him are not quenched. At that moment, the Bugarian refugees surround the embassy with their banner titled 'BUGARIAN EXILES FOR TOTAL LIBERATION'. They start throwing heavy objects and Kamini orders his boys: Fire! Fire! Shoot! Shoot! Guns and rocket launchers open up everywhere...screams and panic. The sound of the crowd in pinched retreat... Kamini swings back into the room, his gun aimed directly at the HOSTAGES. Their horror-stricken faces in various postures-freeze. The SCULPTOR works on in slow motion
Slow fade (p. 69)

POLITICAL CRISES AND THE SOCIETY

Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest* is employed here to explicate the effects of political crises on the society. "Politics", according to Olumuyiwa Awe (1987, p. 83), "for Wole has always consisted of fighting

institutionalized injustice and inhumanity.” This is what is portrayed in this play as the seemingly weak people and a 'de-robed' king strive secretly and quietly to oppose the dictator they have as their national leader. According to Piniel Shava (1989, p.71), he asserts that the literary works of African writers are "very direct statements of political anger and pain". In that case, the mode of expressing this political anger and pain should be seriously considered. He further states that:

These writers realized that, for the -anticipated literary revival to succeed, they had to adopt a non-militant style that would protect them from banning while at the same time allow them to criticize the injustices of the system. (p. 71)

But can we say that this 'non-militant style' is prominently or subtly pronounced in Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest*? This play, as earlier said, climaxed his satiric sketches and it began his series of plays on corrupt leaders in power. When this play was premiered in Nigeria, according to Pushpa Perekh (1998, p. 440): “This play was premiered in Nigeria in front of political dignitaries to apparent satiric effect, especially through an embarrassment he created with the national-anthem-like opening glee of the play.”

The play opens on Oba Danlola who has been under preventive detention by president Kongi. Kongi is very anxious that Danlola should be seen by the people at the festival bringing the new yam to him submissively as a sign of total victory and control over the people and his perceived enemies. Despite that Danlola has been put in detention, Kongi still sends his emissaries to Danlola to coerce and convince him to surrender power to him completely and publicly. With these two characters at the peak, they both engage in image building and none is willing to surrender power to the other. Joel Adedeji (1987, p. 123) paints the pictures of these characters thus: “Kongi, the contemporary African politician as well as in that of Oba Danlola, the traditional natural ruler.”

When two elephants fight, grasses suffer. The speculative result of these two leaders that lock horns is political crises as portrayed in the play. When crisis rages, the society suffers. The might of Danlola is emphasized here by the Drummer that though:

The king's umbrella gives no more shade
But we summon no dirge-master,
The tunnel passes through The hill's belly
But we cry no defilement
A new-dug path may lead
To the secret heart of being,
Ogun is still a god
Even without his navel... (p. 9)

This tells us that despite Danlola's detention and apparent humiliation, he is still their respected leader. Kongi wants total submission from Oba Danlola and Danlola is unwilling to do so. The members of Refined Aweri Fraternity have been coerced to dispute and plan on how to give Kongi "Total Harmony." The Fourth Aweri says that "Kongi must have his submission in full view of the people... Kongi achieves all...K.ongi must prevail" (pp. 19-20). The Fifth Aweri suggests to the Secretary to persuade Kongi to grant a reprieve to the men condemned to death and then informs Danlola of that last-minute reprieve. "Through that, Kongi will be able to demonstrate his power over life and death. ... he can kill them later in detention. Have them shot trying to escape or something" (p. 30). This is to be a secret plan between Kongi and the Secretary alone. The Secretary informs Daodu to persuade Danlola to bring the yam to Kongi with the condition of the reprieve for the condemned men. Daodu prevails on Danlola for the public act of submission though they have their own secret plan on how to make the festival catastrophic. Playwrights are like prophets that predict what happens later. That is why literature mirrors life. The suggestion of the Fifth Aweri on the last-minute reprieve is a topical issue in our society today. The leaders at the corridor of power are now implementing amnesty and post amnesty program for the Niger Delta militants caught by the federal troop. Some are equally proposing same for the killer Fulani herdsmen. Kongi's cabinet thinks that reprieve is the sole solution to the public humiliation of Danlola and a strategy to show Kongi's superiority over Danlola. Such thought may be wrong and the effects on the society may be devastating. Our society believes that amnesty will nip youthful restlessness, kidnapping, bombing of oil pipelines and killing by the terrorists cum herdsmen in the bud, but we can see now that, such gesture cannot be the sole solution to political crises in the society. Once there is problem, the society experiences crises. The Secretary is taken hostage by Segi and her gang, but it takes Daodu's firm stand before the Secretary could be released. Segi becomes happy later when she learns that her father- one of the

condemned men, had escaped from Kongi's prison. Part of their plan and that of Danlola is to confront conflict with conflict, "torrent for torrent", but Segi prevails on him "to preach life and peace ...only life is worth preaching my prince" (p. 45). Surprisingly, when Kongi learns that one person has escaped, he becomes furious and calls off the amnesty and the reprieve. On the festival day, the political crises get to the climax. Being the winner of the new yam competition, Daodu attacks Kongi in his speech by calling him "the Jesus of Isma,...messiah; accept from my farming settlement this gift of soil and remember that a human life once buried cannot, like this yam, sprout anew, let him take from the palm only its wine and not crucify lives upon it" (p..79). Daodu hands the yam over to Danlola and the latter gives it to Kongi for his benediction. Suddenly, there is a burst of gunfire which paralyzes everyone. Segi's father that has been on the run suddenly appears at the venue of the ceremony, he is caught and shot dead immediately. That does not alter the rebellious plan of the rebels, though it brings some measure of set back to their plan. Despite that, it gets to the climax of the crises when Segi presents 'the head of an old man' in a copper salver to Kongi instead of pounded yam. The atmosphere becomes tensed, insecurity, chaos and disaster prevails in the society: "In the ensuing scramble, no one is left but Kongi and the head, Kongi's mouth wide open in speechless terror. A sudden blackout on both" (p. 84).

The political crises between the two parties come to a climax. Kongi's brigade men comb everywhere for the perpetrators of the crises while Danlola and Sarumi, with the help of twelve volunteers look for how to make Daodu and Segi escape from the country and go on exile. Kongi ignorantly thinks no one could challenge him. Pushpa Perekh (1998) states that:

Kongi, a tyrant dictator type, short of being toppled by the powerless indigenes, figureheads and the confused, unorganized reforming factions, is nevertheless shocked out of his senses by a victim of his own tyranny. (p. 447)

Summarily, it is seen that the state of political system dictates the state of the society. The effect of political crises is societal insecurity.

Political crises are climaxed in rebellion as seen in the play, but the real confrontation is not that total and Kongi still prevails at the end by imprisoning the rioters. Nonetheless, the play suggest a bit of revolution or confrontation as the way out of political crises in our society. Every literature that will portray the societal injustice must reflect that societal hatred. The playwright, Soyinka (1987), puts it more clearly:

It is logical, however that we expect that all literature which sets out to depict the realities of such a revolutionary situation cannot help but reflect that social hatred in its revolution which, after all, is central to the dynamics of the very situation. (pp. 15-20)

CONCLUSION

It could be observed from the selected plays considered that political crises arise in the society as a result of the injustice and oppression by the political leaders on the innocent citizens. Rebellion, crises or confrontation are always the fruits of societal injustice. The playwright warns those despotic leaders that the seemingly weak subjects of today, once organized, will one day take laws into their hands, and confront the corrupt leaders. The plays only suggest the possible taking over of the realm of government, but none of the plays actually portrays that total revolution. Pushpa Perekh (1998, p. 449) says: "As with most of Soyinka's politically motivated works, the possible closure action is only suggested, but its effectiveness is left hanging, and perhaps justly so, since the future in real life is also harrowingly hanging and seemingly hopeless."

Thus, we conclude that this paper reveals the sociology of political crises in Soyinka's plays. The playwright portrays the true state of African society in the plays. This paper shows that the playwright believes that total and sudden over hauling of the society may not be that easy, but little confrontation is needed to combat oppression in the society. The general and societal awareness must be created because the effect of political crises on the society is chaos, insecurity and political unrest. The crises are to arouse the awareness of the people to agitate for freedom that will bring a lasting peace to the society. This awareness is the corner stone of the politics of aesthetics required to

totally free the masses from political shackles, oppression and crises we found ourselves. This, is a medium for change, “I believe implicitly that any work of art which opens out the horizon of human mind, the human intellect, is by its very nature a force for change, a medium for change” (Soyinka, 1975, p. 86). Therefore, let us begin to tend the tree of commencement, that is where the real societal change is.

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