

**GREEN DRAMA AS A TOOL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:
STUDY OF GREG MBAJIOGU'S *WOTA NA WOTA* AND *WAKE UP EVERYONE***

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Abstract

*Argument on the eroding environmental degradation by modern industrial society has been rife in most critical works of the modern period. Man's quest for civilization and its accompanied industrialization are often seen as reasons for destruction of natural environment. Despite the facts that water covers about seventy percent of the earth surface, availability and accessibility of water has remained a great challenge to human development. Acute water shortage for human consumption is a course for worry in the face of alarming industrial pollution. Little wonders that eco-critics and eco-dramatics are upset by degenerating human environment. Greg Mbajiorgu is one of them. He has written extensively on water as important abiotic resource. In his collection of poems title *Water testament* and a dramatic text, *Wota na Wota*, he explored various themes on the usefulness of water to man. He asserts that search for drinkable water in most local communities can create anarchy as a result of its scarcity. This research explores these themes and attributes of water as illustrated in the poems and the drama. The basic assumption of this research is that water is a necessity for sustenance of life and a component of natural resources. Consequently, great effort must be geared towards its preservation.*

Keywords: Green Drama, Environmental Sustainability

Introduction

Theresa J. May of Humboldt State University contends that in the past three decades, ecology has lit a greening fire across disciplines, from environmental history to environmental management, from eco feminism to green economics. Greening artistic

values have spawned land-art, site-specific dance, nature writing and music with whales. Even though literary scholarship has developed diverse discourses in eco-criticism, theatre artists and scholars appear to be unconcerned. Robert Butler's recent study on this, clearly outlined the main reasons why so many playwrights have not quite focused their artistic and creative energy on climate change and its related issues.

According to Butler, climate change is a complex science and a tricky subject for the stage because it is difficult for dramatists to expressly show the link between its cause and effect. To transport science to the stage, a playwright must not only clarify complicated ideas for laymen, but also evoke the tension of cause and effect. The problem with climate change is that what happens in one place often ends up affecting people in another entirely different environment...maybe even at a remote time.

In 1994 issue of *Theatre*, Erika Munk reported that "our playwrights' silence on environment as a political issue and our critic's neglect of the ecological implications of theatrical form are rather astonishing"(5).

As to the reason why theatre appears to be absent in the environmental movement, some scholars believe that the answer can be found partly in the tradition of the theatre which is humanist in origin consequently 'anti ecological'. Contemporary theatre artists working with ecological themes have been challenged by a theatre tradition that defines drama as conflict between and about human beings. Una Chaudhuri observes that even plays that "manage to bring an ecological issue to centre stage "must"exist within a theatre aesthetic and ideology (namely nineteenth-century humanism)... that is programmatically anti-ecological". However Downing Cless points out that western theatre history is rife with works in which nature plays a significant role- from the earthly goings-on in Shakespeare's *Mid-summer Night's Dream*, to Anton Chekov's endangered *Cherry Orchard* to Samuel Beckett's barren post-apocalyptic landscape in *Waiting for Godot*. Ecology is about people too. Once thinking, both about theatre and about ecology shifts, such that artifice is not proof of independence from, but evidence of interconnection with the natural world, then we meet a vast open field for exploration. An open space where man can negotiate and generate relationships to their environment be they wild, cultivated, industrial or virtual.

In a 1999 conversation about green theatre, Molly Smith, Artistic Director of the Arena Stage, Washington D.C. exclaimed, "I'd love to produce pieces about ecology, but where are they? (Smith, 1999). In "Eco Theatre, USA: The Grassroots Is Greener", Downing Cless notes that the greening of American theatre, when it has occurred, has taken place at the grassroots where local artists respond to regional environmental issues for an audience that shares an ecological relatedness ("Eco-Theatre" 79-102). Community-based

environmental issues including environmental justice concerns- have found theatre a viable tool through which to promote social change, open dialogue, or protect the status quo. If eco drama is to participate in the mainstream, it will require both new critical framing by scholars and increased imaginative courage by playwrights and directors. In a 1991 Conference in Seattle, entitled "Theatre in an Ecological Age", playwright Robert Schenkkan (whose play *The Kentucky Cycle* won the 1992 Pulitzer Prize) charged playwrights to become "makers of new myths" (5). As Una Chaudhuri has done, theorists can empower playwrights by illuminating those dramaturgical strategies that move toward an ecological theatre-the theatrical styles, devices, characterizations, settings and stories that tell the human story within the ecological story. Chaudhuri's proposition is further reinforced because, "if you use eco criticism to analyse a text, you'll discover just how much nature is looking back at you while you read"(In a Nutshell) Hence in nature's stare at us, we find answers to the causes of climate change, its consequences and possible solutions on how natural disasters can, if not totally eradicated, be minimized to the lowest level. Though natural disasters may be presumed to be unavoidable, uncontrollable and therefore must come whenever they will, a critical look at the environment and the way and manner these events take place may raise a contrary opinion. According to Donald Worster, "Nature should be regarded as a landscape of patches of all sizes, textures and colours, changing continually through time and space, responding to an unceasing barrage of perturbations. (73) The sophistication that comes with time, as well as the activities of man on earth appear to be the paramount factors that green dramatists and theorists must contend with in their thematic fixations and theorizations. This assertion stem from the truism that climate change is not the reflection of the anger of God or gods or mere natural occurrence as championed by opponents of Worster. Furthermore, Joseph L. Bast in his *Seven Theories of Climate Change* gives credence to the cause and effect propositions. According to Bast:

...theory holds that man-made greenhouse gasses, primarily carbon dioxide (Co₂) are the predominant cause of the global warming that occurred during the past 50 years (2)

Greenhouse gasses are not alone in causing environmental hazards, Bast maintains. The fourth theory of climate change according to Bast reveals that

....mankind's greatest influence on climate is not its greenhouse gas emissions, but its transformation of Earth's surface by clearing forests, irrigating deserts and building cities.(8)

Before a rich green dramaturgy can emerge, playwrights must educate themselves about theories, ecological issues, and particularly about the ecology of their own places, so that their work can grow from experiences from their environment. After all ecology is not

merely expressed in sentiments, it is a science. Green playwrights do well to seek out environmental scientists and educators, link up with experts in county and state departments of ecology and hazardous waste, with wildlife biologists, fish and game personnel, citizen groups and environmental justice activists. Rich resources for stories exist in what we can learn from those who work in trenches of the "environmental crisis" where our communities must solve every complex ecological problems. Seattle playwright Todd Moore immersed himself in the heated logging debate in the Pacific Northwest, and his *In the Heart of the Woods* (1994) was shaped from interviews with loggers, environmentalists and community members. The result steers clear of environmental prop while it explores the multi-faceted relationship between people and the trees that have shaped their lives. In performance, Moore himself plays multiple roles, illuminating how the form of a drama carries meanings above and beyond its written text. Employing each of the voices he created, his body becomes the site of common ground. The reflexivity of the performance in turn implicates spectators who are invited to examine their own relatedness to workers and forests in a post-performance discussion.

A story is the product of connection that maintains a field of contact not only among people but also between people and place. To be part of a community is to be part of its story and if the land is filled with ancestral stories, then "community" includes the rocks, trees, streams, pathways and animals of that place. Stories create a matrix of belonging, a living tissue between past and present and between human and non-human communities. In *Staging Place: The Geography of Modern Drama*, Una Chaudhri writes about "the mutually constructive relations between people and place. Who one is and who one can be are... a function of where one is and how one experiences that place. Place and person are permeable. Playwrights often underestimate and under-explore the power of theatre's place-fulness. In eco drama, the representation of a place on stage can be more than the backdrop against which human action is played out. Place can drive the action; sometimes it becomes a kind of character with its own agency. In Lanford Wilson's *Angels Fall* (1983) the land holds outsiders captive when an accident at a uranium mine causes highway closures in a remote New Mexico town. The probability of radiation exposure gives the land its own kind of agency while the boundaries of identity inscribed by human skin are suddenly vulnerable, permeable. Lanford's *Angel's Fall* calls attention to the impact of uranium mining on Navaho lands ,such as the 1979 radioactive tailings spill at Ric Puerco (Gottlieb 251-53) .

Despite the complexities surrounding natural disasters, they are still controllable and could also be averted through precautionary measures. These are some of the propositions of the Nigerian green dramatist Greg Mbajigou in the two plays selected for study.

Synopsis of *Wota Na Wota* and *Wakeup Everyone*

Wota na Wota is essentially centred on the importance of good drinking water and the enormous politics that sometimes surround its provision, procurement, the attendant lack of which causes health and environmental hazards and economic drawbacks.

The play divided in Streams instead of Acts chronicles the attempt by a foreign organisation to provide heavy water installations to upgrade the physical, economic and environmental wellbeing of Ebenano and Ebenato communities. This laudable initiative attracted by the Ebenato Catholic Diocese represented by Rev. Ignatius and funded by German Development Agency represented by Harmen the hydrologist suffers a serious setback at 80% project completion due to the intrigues of Nicholas, their first Social Mobilizer (Agent) who, in the execution of the project aligned completely with the Ebenato Catholic Church community to the detriment of the Anglican dominated Ebenabo community on whose land the project was sited simply because he was Catholic.

Initially, the host community Ebenabo, were not interested in the project and therefore happily donated their evil forest only to turn full circle towards the end of the project on realization that they had short changed themselves and cheated in return by Nicholas and Ebenato people. Even though- they gave them the evil forest -site for the project, they ultimately realised that the credit for the project and the wealth thereof in terms of employment, all went to the Ebenato people.

At the heat of their opposition (the beginning of the play) Rev. Fr. Ignatius and Harmen realises their mistake in trusting the dubious Nicholas and began moves to immediately replace him with an unbiased and more pragmatic person. Ikechukwu an unemployed graduate who becomes the new Social Mobilizer will devise, through the help of Harmen and Fr Ignatius, a workable strategy that will bring the two warring communities together and ensure their peaceful union and agreement to see the water project to a successful completion.

Wake Up Everyone is the story of the struggles of an environmental activist, Prof. Aladinma, a retired Professor of Agricultural Extension whose tripartite love for his country, his Ndoli community and theatre forced to stay back in Nigeria to establish an experimental drama troupe known as Green Theatre. A justified motivation for Desmond Orji, a PhD student of the University of Manchester, North-East England to choose to carry out a field work on Drama and the War Against Climate Change in Africa by using his latest play, "A New Dawn" as one of the case studies for his PhD thesis.

Combining his exposure, experience and learning, Professor Aladinma not only forms a theatre group but also a Farmers' Co-operative Society using both avenues to carry out

extensive enlightenment programmes against destruction of the forest, climate change adaptation to farmers, villagers and so on which empowers the villagers into acquisition of requisite knowledge and practise of new behaviours that mitigate the harmful consequences of degrading their land and crop harvest and consequently the environment. He goes a step further to provide new improved seedlings for farmers, teaching them new and safer ways of producing and using fertilizers. He had become too popular and powerful among the villagers who benefit from his wisdom and guidance so much so that his courage and selfless service is feared by both his enemies and politicians. (2). He was never one to get tired of declamations on his lifelong passion and commitment to green environment. In the end, a riot breaks out as their river is over flooded and the recalcitrant L.G. Chairman is declared enemy No 1 due for pay-back.

Greg Mbajiogu's *Wota Na Wota* and *Wake Up Everyone* As Instruments For Environmental Sustainability

The playwright of *Wota Na Wota* and *Wake Up Everyone* appears to be influenced by Donald Worster's theory and other climate theorists who believe that there is a cause to climate change. The playwright does this in *Wake Up Everyone* through Prof. Madukwe Aladinma who in no uncertain term confronts the Chairman of the local government and informs him that the hazardous climatic conditions are triggered off by man's mindless activities on earth;

What we are witnessing now is nothing else but planetary reactions to man's mindless activities, period. Our soil and rivers have become unproductive because of chemicals and oil spillages. The floods and erosions we experience are caused by senseless attempts to reclaim wetlands. What about the carbon monoxides from power generators and poorly maintained automobiles, and the unfriendly substances flared up into the air by oil companies on daily basis? The problems of our world today are caused by us and yet we are reluctant to find solutions to them. (13)

Apart from verbally throwing light on the mindless activities of man that cause climate change during inter-personal conversations, Prof. Aladima also uses his experimental drama group to sensitize the people to be mindful of their activities in the environment because it has dire consequences as we hear from Obioma, one of his actors while interacting with the other actors- Adaora, Ekene and Nweke. "What have you done? Biodiversity minimization and emission of harmful and dangerous substances into the atmosphere of course and you know the adverse effects?" (39) When they respond negatively, he begins to reel out some of the adverse effects

Increase in global atmospheric temperature, melting of polar ice, rising sea temperatures, sea level rise, appearance of radiation-related cancers, change in the pattern of precipitation, change in agricultural yield, proliferation of a thousand other diseases and health problems, even diseases that we thought had gone away in some countries are coming back in full bang. (39)

The actor ends up, asking his imaginary audience (since it was a rehearsal) "Why? Why? Why are we so destructive?" He also emphasizes the need for solutions that reduce natural disasters. For instance, oil companies operating in the Niger delta flare gas because it is not their country and they probably think that the price of gas is not as high as petrol or diesel. Moreover, they close their eyes to oil spillages and abandon the affected communities to their fate. Elsewhere, the same actor Obioma in the play- in- a play as Edwin Ochonkeya, the LG Chairman during his electoral campaign complains

I was a farmer before oil spillage, and pollution robbed me of my farmland just as the changing climate has denied many of you, your sources of livelihood. You see, before this plague of climate change, the oil companies had milked our land dry, but have given nothing to nourish it. Am I not speaking the truth? (69)

The neglect of these multi -national companies is sickening to any right thinking person with a conscience and the matter is aggravated when they indulge further in the dirty politics of bribing and pitching the leaders of these affected communities against their own poor people who ends up bearing the brunt of diseases, poverty and untimely deaths. The conversation between the L.G. Chairman and his former partner -in-crime, Jango gives a little insight into this conspiracy syndrome, thus:

I saw in the oil spillage incident, a grand opportunity to get back at the multinational oil companies. When the event occurred, I got a fiery lawyer that has been at the vanguard of environmental issues to institute a legal action against the oil companies. When they perceived the legal consequences and the attendant damages likely to result from it, they resolved to invite me, as the plaintiff, for alternative dispute resolution. (11)

When curiosity drives Jango to ask how the matter was concluded, the Chairman reveals that he got three hundred million naira from the oil Companies.

Yes, three hundred million naira cash, and in addition, they agreed to bankroll my political bid to be the Chairman of Ndoli Local Government Area, on the condition that I don't make any further case on behalf of the other affected farmers. (12)

Underling the greed and meanness of these tribal/community leaders whom the LG Chairman represents as the major antagonist, his cold blooded response to how he settled the rest of the farmers is shocking.

For what? Did the spillage cost them their lives, like it did my father? Well, I simply called them together when I was vying for this position and gave each of them, a bottle of gin and a bag of rice and they happily carried me into this well-padded leather seat. (13)

To sensitize these operators and the rest of us to meet the need for environmental sustainability, the playwright uses Prof. Aladinma to propel the plot of the play. Hence, as the play progresses, Prof. Aladinma tries to convince the LG Chairman to assist in the initiative of building a dyke that will fortify their community's river banks so that Ndoli land which is a natural coastal zone doesn't become vulnerable to flood in the future.

Unfortunately, this proactive preventive measure advocated by Professor Aladinma meets stiff opposition from the Chairman who sees the proposal as 'a useless project' though this is not to his face, instead he diplomatically asks Prof Aladinma to go home and write him a proposal; actually a subtle dismissal.

Don't worry. I told him to prepare a proposal. When he brings it, I will let you have a look at it. It is better you witness the madness with your own eyes. (9)

The Chairman's response is a sad commentary on the insensitivity of our leadership to the environmental degradation going on all around us today. From huge heaps of refuse that constitute menace and eye sore in capital cities and suburbs, to blocked drainages, broken tarred roads, sand excavations that create and widen erosion paths, congested ghettos where hygiene and sanitation are exiled and so on and so forth. In spite of Professor Aladinma's extensive research and field work, done to produce the blueprint and the assurance of UNDP's willingness to do the greater part of the project, with the Local Government providing only 20% of the sum, Chairman remains adamant and replies with, 'there is nothing in the Local Government purse'.

Prof Aladinma makes more attempts to visit and convince the Chairman but is rebuffed again and again with flimsy excuses. But soon, the consequences are rife, the doomsday arrived as can be glimpsed by the lamentations of Dimkpa, one of the villagers opposed to Prof Aladinma's green initiatives,

Ewh! Go to my farmland, go there now, and you will see nothing but an empty womb. I, DimkpaOkaji of Ndoli! The great yam farmer whose efforts had never been ridiculed in the past, not by the weather, not by spirit, not by man or woman. I, the pride of yam harvest, whose hands mother earth has always blessed by bounty, now does not have even a yam tuber to boast of this season. (58)

Undeterred by oppositions, nonchalance and ignorance from some villagers, some of whom like Anayo ascribed the dearth of fishes in their rivers to the anger of the gods "Someone may have done something that provoked the gods" (58), Prof. Aladinma continued his campaigns and succeeds in garnering support and followership through his Cooperative Society and Theatre Troupe and it is this few knowledgeable and dynamic group that were able to reap bountiful harvests. Even Mazi Chinedum, one among the sceptics applauds the Prof as a great man whom farmers had come to trust and rely on (60) and declaims, "our hunters are beginning to see the folly of their crude strategy of setting the entire village forest on fire in their attempt to catch a tiny bush rabbit"

There is no doubt that the playwright not only succeeded in x-raying and explaining the reasons and preventive measures that ensure environmental friendliness and management, he also shows in the final analysis, that we can still reap from the environment, that the environmental hazards encouraged by man can still be circumvented and indeed defeated scientifically and methodically. Let's begin from prevailing solutions and mitigation from other climes as we hear from the lips of Desmond, the PhD student from England;

As I am talking to you now, the Japanese are building quake resistant houses, the Chinese are constructing houses that can float on water in case of flooding, the Germans and other nations of Europe are producing green vehicles powered by all kinds of biological wastes or oxygen. India has now introduced cyclone detection tracking systems and tsunami warning devices. (53)

He even has some good advice for our leadership here;

If this flood occurs, it will increase the vulnerability of local farmers. Government must put together a planned process and take deliberate steps to create institutions and structures that will stimulate the adaptive capacity of rural dwellers to the threat of climate change. (54)

As for circumventing and defeating the adverse effects of climate change as it relates to our local farmers reminiscent of Ndoli land, the problem is not just ignorance and nonchalance but lack of knowledge.

Then why didn't you tell me about the new species of seed yam from Professor Aladima that can do well in our water-prone soil? (18)

Dimkpa queries Okosisi his bosom friend. It is the same scientific knowledge and sound application of counter processes as enunciated by the Professor that made it possible for Odukwe to enjoy bountiful harvest enough to say to the defiant Dimkpa while handing him a basket full of free yams, "Whenever you are in need of yam, please don't hesitate to come to my house"(19) Stubbornness has reduced Dimkpa, the great yam expert to a

miserable disgruntled yam beggar! He is now as vulnerable not only before his wife but also before other women and this loss of dignity as a man is a great shame in the world view of his people. Upon all his threats and bragging, Ugodiya, a female farmer had no qualms about rebuking Dimkpa telling him bluntly to his face,

You have nobody to blame but yourself. We had series of meetings with the Professor on what species of yam to plant, when to plant and how to plant it in this difficult time of climate change. We were also introduced to different crop varieties and animal species suitable for our changing climate. (16)

Dimkpa proffers a lame excuse confessing that even though he liked Prof Aladinma as a person and enjoyed his theatre presentations a lot, that he was amused by their effort to discourage them from using artificial fertilizer, to which Odukwe replies thus:

If you had attended his lessons on how to process and transform animal wastes and decomposed organic substances into natural fertilizer, you won't still be questioning the logic of his drama on the dangers of artificial fertilizer. (16)

It is Dimkpa himself who eventually underlined the inevitable wisdom in using eco-theatre to achieve environmental sustainability, when he blames himself and surrenders to the new ways which is obviously the way forward if we must survive and grow not only our environment but we all as persons and communities

I am stubborn, arrogant, self-willed. I accept all that. We all learn by our mistakes. When you started this important Co-operative Society of Local Farmers with the retired Professor, I thought you were foolish, now, I have realised that I am the foolish one. (16-17)

This foolishness is echoed in *Wota na Wota* in the water politics that erupted between Ebenabo and Ebenato communities, entangling youths, traditional rulers and citizens of the warring communities against each other, bringing to stagnation, a Catholic initiated water project that was meant to build bridges of unity, peace and progress. This is an eloquent pointer to the massive need for water in Nigeria unmet by successive governments. Water is life, yet it is everywhere a problem and a scarce commodity. Harmen, the benevolent foreigner in *Wota na Wota* is appalled by the crude opposition his laudable water project was facing, a charity venture brought to a people whose greatest problem is clean drinking water. He takes great pains to advance some of the reasons for the water project.

Your regular source of water is a dirty stream. Your people die in thousands due to high infestation of guinea worm in the boundary stream. Nearly 80% of the diseases afflicting your people are associated with that unhygienic stream which is your main source of drinking water. Water scarcity is also the cause of severe

food shortage in your villages. Conflicts over that boundary stream, have also claimed the lives of thousands of your sons and daughters, who were traditionally agricultural and food processing workers. (62)

What a puerile waste of time, money, human and material resources! It is ironic that water a basic necessity in all societies, a major sustained of life, human, animal and plant will have to be provided not by governments in Nigeria but mostly by individuals and foreign NGO's, faith based organisations and foreign donor Agencies. The playwright in dealing with this presents us with Ikechukwu an unemployed young man from another community through whom, the search for amicable solution was begun. Harmen in an attempt to recruit him instructs

Study these files carefully and interact with our men at the project site before approaching the villagers. Be friendly with the villagers so that you can find out why they are creating problems for us. Your employment will be automatic, if you can resolve the crisis at Ebenano. (26)

This hapless but enthusiastic young man takes up the challenge but is met with stiff opposition from all angles especially from his ilk, the irate youths who immediately rush to Harmen's house threatening fire and brimstone, "We don't care where Harmen is, but you must tell him that he has only three weeks to move his workers out of our land. That land belongs to us, not to the Catholic Church" P37. Their main grievance being that all the labourers hired at the site were all Catholics, not even a single Anglican in a land dominated by Anglicans! Severally, one is confronted with the violation of the tenets of religion which ostensibly should see all men as brothers and equals, by the same people who preach it, here even for land matters and recruitment quota, they are prepared to shed blood and truncate the water project, a defect in the social and physical environment; instead of spreading love and living tolerance and justice. Authority and charity are abused, communal wellbeing forgotten for immediate selfish interests and primordial reasons. Should this be the case even for a matter as fundamental as water, good health and sustainable environment? .The playwright appears to be asking. Ikechukwu, with the help of Harmen and Rev Ignatius, was able to albeit through very difficult negotiations and dialogue to get the two communities to a round table meeting which gave birth to the great public conference, where eventually peace was brokered and the project became a project for the two Communities. That notwithstanding, the Area Commander, a proponent of another religion had to lend a voice to help quieten the tension when he delivered a charged speech to the crowd, thus;

I am a Muslim; I am not a Christian. I am not an Anglican; I am not a member of the Catholic Church but I am working to maintain law and order in a town full of

Christians. Is not ironical that a Muslim is interested in the progress of your town while you Christians are fighting to destroy your homeland? (59)

There were other peace makers at last when the voice of reason started sinking in, like the two traditional rulers, the President of the Town Union and local Government Chairman. As Natives, they had no choice than to agree with the Area Commander of Police.

You are fighting yourselves because of a water project that will be beneficial to all of you. You people should stop quarrelling over nothing and encourage the Whiteman and his partners to attract more interesting projects to this town. (59)

In all, the playwright succeeded in establishing water as the precursor and main engine of community development and environmental sustainability. When the two communities united in the final scene which featured the commissioning of the multimillion era water complex. His Excellency, Dr S.K.C.K Okafor captured this succinctly in his speech

As you all know, we are here to celebrate water. Water is life and life is water. As far as life is concerned, water is more precious than diamond and gold because water is a vital component of all living things and a crucial aspect of any material produced by living organisms. Water is one of the most essential free gifts from God. Water is also one of the oldest concerns in human civilization. (91)

At a time like this when patients suffering from water -borne diseases occupy more than half of the world's hospital beds, the highest percentage being here in Africa, it is only expected that ownership and , maintenance of such projects as water plants should be embraced wholeheartedly especially by communities that cannot by themselves bring about such project through self-development. According to His Excellency, the Governor of Ebenebe State, they "are expected to respect these water installations, adhere to all environmental and sanitary laws that will help to conserve and preserve these facilities" 92. And by extension, the environment, be it in the rivers, the oceans, its free flow in gutters, and water for cleansing, dilution, irrigation and so forth. That's sustainability and when that is done, rain-fed agriculture will no longer be an only option, food, animal breeding and production, human life and health will be boosted resulting in improvements in the standard of living of everybody and ultimately, progress in the community!

Conclusion

I can hear a clarion call yet unheeded across Africa and in our fast environmentally decaying neighbourhoods. Why are many playwrights unconcerned? Are we not all intricately interconnected as the human society? Is this not a community where what happens in one place affects the other, if not today, maybe tomorrow? More so, in

matters of environmental sustainability. Where do I stop and where does the "other" begin? When playwrights and eco-critical scholars engage in deep ecological inquiry of the theatre, like Greg Mbarjiogu has done in the two plays under study, they can together forge a green dramaturgy, an ecological theatre, which will not only tap the power of performance to shape culture but also revive and transform the environment or society. According to Theresa J. May in her article, "Greening the Theatre: Taking Eco criticism from Page to Stage"

Green dramaturgy asks us to reconstitute the world, to re-conceive our notions of community in such a way that the very boundaries between nature and culture, self and other, begin to dissolve.

As theatre participates in our human ecological situations, it reclaims its ancient roots as site of ritual celebration of the reciprocity between people and the natural world. Thus theatre emerges not only as a means by which to investigate the long-standing humanist question "who are we?" but also the urgent ecological question "where are we?"

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