

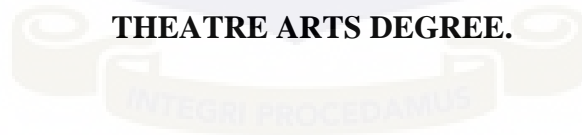
**‘IN THE PIPELINE’: HIGHLIGHTING POLITICAL PROPAGANDA  
IN GHANA THROUGH DRAMA**

**BY**

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN  
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MFA  
THEATRE ARTS DEGREE.**



**FEBRUARY, 2017.**

**DECLARATION**

I do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by any one for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged.

I bear responsibility for any shortcomings.

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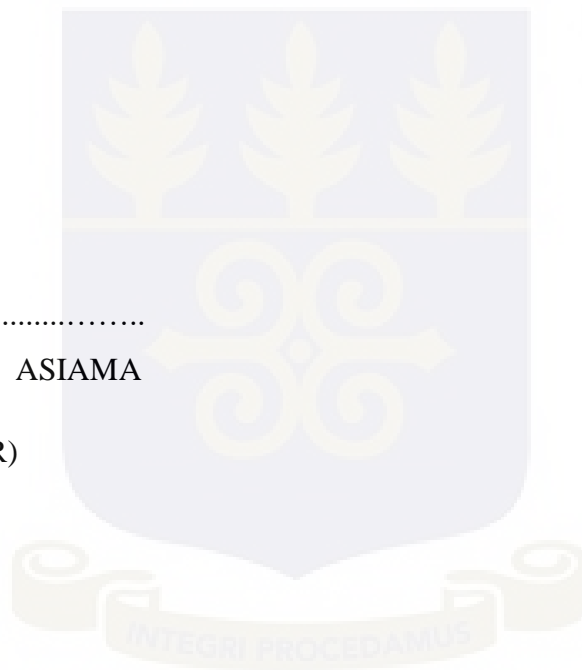
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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the Lord Almighty, without whom I would not have had the strength to undertake this study. Also to my wife, Hanna Appiah Afful and the small boys—Justice, Dennis and their sister, Naura, I am grateful for their support.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

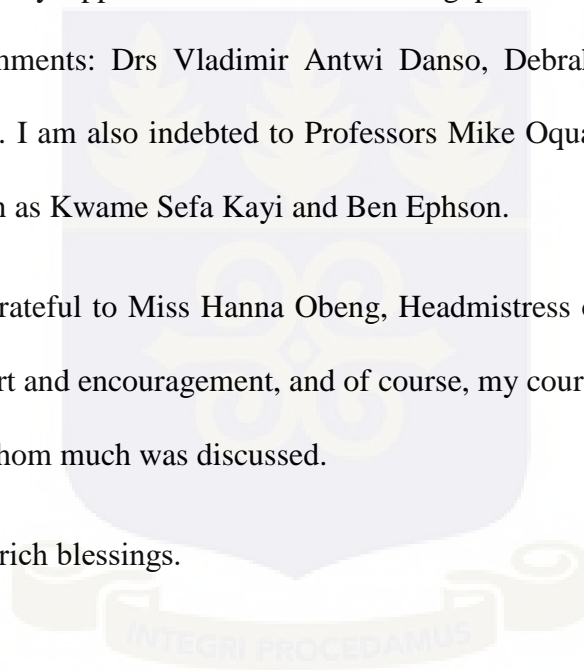
Many people need to be thanked for their help in this research project. My initial thanks I address to my supervisors Professor Martin Okyere Owusu and Reverend Dr. Elias Kwaku Asiama for their invaluable support. In fact without their quiet encouragement and gentle prodding, it would have been difficult finishing the work on time.

Special acknowledgement goes to the University Authority, Head of Theatre Arts Department and associates who kept us on our toes to realize our academic goals.

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To all, I pray God's rich blessings.



## ABSTRACT

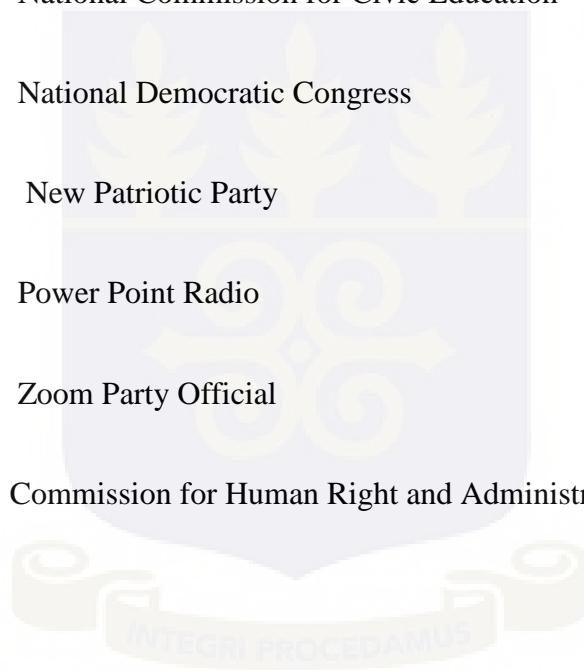
This work is an academic exercise undertaken for my master's degree – MFA- at the School of Performing Art, University of Ghana. The study examines the phenomenon of political propaganda campaign in contemporary Ghana from the standpoint of drama since 1992. As a playwright, I settled on a play entitled *In the Pipeline* for my project work. My motivation for such a work derives from personal experience, interviews and observation in Ghana politics; my academic curiosity to analyse political campaign improprieties and also my fervent desire to contribute in awareness creation. Theatre is the medium adopted in this work based on the research I undertook in my study area, and the data collected on political activities at Kintampo District Assembly, and general observation on political situation in our country Ghana.

Based on this, I developed a theatrical piece to interrogate, investigate, and critically analyse and evaluate my findings of the research field. My work is a contribution to the existing body of knowledge where drama/theatre is used effectively to conscientize, educate, inform, entertain and critique the Ghanaian political environment.



### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS - - - - -	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
COLA - - - - -	Cost of Living Allowance
CPP - - - - -	Convention Peoples' Party
FM - - - - -	Frequency Modulation
LECIAD - - - -	Legon Centre for International Affair and Diplomacy.
NCCE - - - - -	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC - - - - -	National Democratic Congress
NPP - - - - -	New Patriotic Party
PPR - - - - -	Power Point Radio
ZPO - - - - -	Zoom Party Official
CHRAJ - - - - -	Commission for Human Right and Administrative Justice



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study.

Political propaganda has become synonymous with maintaining power in most governments throughout the world. However, the extent of its use and impact on the socioeconomic development of Ghana remains a subject for research investigation. The effort to reach out to the public through the use of drama becomes the centrepiece upon which political propaganda thrives. Other collaborative media that enhance dramatic art include the print, and electronic. In an effort to trace propaganda from its genesis and historical content through the ages, several old literatures have been consulted. With due diligence, however, such books have been interspersed with relevant recent publications to simulate the Ghanaian situation. The research focuses on the improper development of propaganda politics that is risky to the task of nation building. Protagonists of political power have resorted to its use to attain and remain in power, while others have suffered humiliating defeat due to the abuse of its use.

Drama is one effective way by which political propaganda is transmitted. This creative industry has undergone phenomenal development over time as theatre and theatrical practices continue to fascinate audiences. It has been the vehicle of socio-political engagements in confronting and addressing social problems. 'Drama,' according to Dietrich (1953) 'is a story in dialogue form, of human conflict, projected by means of speech and action from a stage to an audience' The elemental 'story' that fundamentally deals with human issues which come in the form of dialogue or speech have the power of educating the masses on acceptable social behaviour. Hence, every stage raised for such social intercourse has a story to tell-- a story or message which is delivered through action propelled by conflict. It is this message emanating from the discourse that attracts the

audience/spectators' involvement as stimulus of reactionary force, which takes away the illusive aspect of theatrical action and plunges the whole action into real life encounter. It is this involvement which usually characterises political theatres that make campaign theatres polemic in their structure and form. In furtherance of this, Dietrich (1953) avers that "the moment that the spectator becomes objective or critically evaluates the actual artificialities in the dramatic performance, the illusion is gone" In all the theatres that have political character, the elements of total theatre manifest. Though they are created for various reasons and purposes irrespective of their locations, they address the social needs of the communities or society. The engagement of public discourse through the realm of drama has historical antecedence dating back to pre-colonial days chiefly for mass education, information and entertainment, and to address and confront the problems experienced by the people.

Ancient Greek society used her amphitheatre and proscenium arch stage to address political issues in plays such as *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes and *Antigone* by Sophocles. The theatres of the Elizabethan Era, according to Black (1959) were worthy source of propaganda drama and hence played fundamental roles for politicians as:

It provided a 'platform' for the 'lay' politician who had no other means of finding an audience...And it became part of the machinery of propaganda when the government decided to appeal to the *Vulgus Profanum* in order to popularize a policy (p.295).

Drama therefore serves the socio-political purpose as a medium of communication for politicians in their effort to popularize certain ideologies or policies. Such dramas' contribution to the development of society is imperative, if not imaginative. The meaning is linked to the political message espoused, as Worthen (2004:544) associates the completion of the political theatre with the open involvement of the audience:

By fragmenting the stage space, by showing how the illusion is made rather concealing its means of production, and by involving the audience more overtly in deciding the meaning of the plays events, the theatre is shown to be a political instrument. Like television, newspapers, universities, the courts, and so on, the theatre is an institution that produces the ideas and images with which we govern our lives.

The central concern, however, is placed with the audience/spectator whose disposition creates the theatre's meaning as an interactive event that examines human behaviour in relation to our day-to-day lives. As an agency of learning by interacting among other things, the theatre reveals images and ideas that shape and regulate society.

In all these, however, considerable observations of theatrical conventions are preferred. Though not strictly as conventional theatre will have it, it is inclined towards extending the frontiers to encompass social, cultural and political quests which are quite relevant to the time and place. As Boal would make us have it, he proposed a theatre which he named 'Invisible', the kind he said must have a script core which will inevitably undergo some modification according to the circumstances, to suit the intervention of the 'spec-actors' This kind goes through the normal rehearsal procedure since it has the script but its performance does not occur in a theatre building as Western prescription will have it. Meanwhile, Boal expected the actors to play to the rules of normal conventional way of playing on stage; he demanded:

The actors must play their parts as if they were playing in a traditional theatre, for a traditional audience. However, when the play is ready, it would be performed in a place which is not a theatre and for an audience which is not an audience. In the course of our European experiences we did shows in the Paris Metro, in ferry boats, in restaurants, and streets of Stockholm... (1985:227).

The acting spaces and stages have not toed the strictly western concept of drama, as performed in play houses and confined buildings, but have sprung up in spaces with impressive platforms that afford the entire community, participation in the dramatic

enactments. Thus the invisible theatre quality of spontaneity and open convenient location attracts unsuspecting spec-actors as its audience to topical issues being communicated. The nature and character of it makes it suitable for political campaigning; for all it needs is the care and control so that it does not degenerate into chaos. As Africa has abundance of dramatic elements with regards to the social and ceremonial activities, it is not out of place to regard open spaces such as market places and/or community grounds interactions as theatres, though they are devoid of some conventions. The fact that such political campaign theatres have no strictly rehearsal treatment, most often, no strict dialogue or text, no elaborate scenery, and mostly, no box office, even, sometimes neither well organised audience nor sitting arrangement, etc. suggest that drama has assumed a wider dimension beyond the confines of conventional drama.

In Ghana, the traditional method of theatre in the round fashioned after the Anansegoro model by Sutherland with its frontiers extended through Abibigoro by Mohamed Abdallah, have shifted the focus on proscenium to a sort of fragmented stage, ideal for much more involvement or intervention with audience. Djisenu appreciates: ‘Generally speaking, in Ghana “there has been a commitment since the days of Nkrumah to place both tradition and contemporary performance where they belong, namely the very midst of the people”.’(Deandrea 2002: 206).

The play *In the Pipeline* expounds the differing facets of dramatic medium in delivering political propaganda treats. The vigorous introduction of propaganda in the body politic of Ghana has created avenue for labour unrest, social indiscipline and fierce attacks among political opponents on one side, while on the other, it facilitates the dissemination of government policies and programmes. It is commonplace to admit then, that theatre and politics are inseparable. However, the extremity of Ghana’s political propaganda

accomplishment contrives to undermine the country's traditional unity. There is therefore, the need for research into its intricate function as a communicative tool delivered through the dramatic art in Ghana's political scene.

### **Etymology of Political Propaganda**

The concept of political propaganda may be considered a social domain of study.

According to Ross (2002) the term 'propaganda' was coined by Pope Gregory X in about 1622 to further the propagation of Catholicism after the rise of Protestantism. From the 1790s' onward the term gained currency for its secular activities. The frequency with which it functioned gave it a pejorative sense of meaning. It therefore suffered a paradigm shift as it was appropriated to the political sphere. However, it became much more pronounced and gained currency during the World Wars.

According to Berelson and Janowitz (1966), Soviet Encyclopaedia defines political propaganda as "Political activity designed to influence by dissemination of ideas and slogans the consciousness and mood of the broad masses" (p.470). It further relates it as an instrument of class or party struggle through the medium of radio, press, speech, posters, leaflets, cartoon, and so on and so forth. These are special articles of agitation fashioned on a mass scale through mass communication spectrum for education purposes. After World War II, Soviet citizens engaged in political campaigning as members functioning between the general public and the party leaders as state-sponsored communicators, meant to strengthen and consolidate internal structures, "while employing all tactics to weaken western democracies" (op.cit: p. 470).

Several authorities have associated themselves with the term propaganda. As cited by Berelson and Janowitz (1966: 361), Holt and Van de Veld (1960) identify propaganda as "the attempt to influence behaviour ... by affecting through the use of mass media of

communication, the manner in which a mass audience perceives and ascribes meaning to the material world.” Thus, political propaganda could be described as a way of managing public information with the purpose of controlling power. They further see propaganda as a deliberate attempt to influence the attitude and opinion of the large masses of people on controversial issues which are of relevance to them. We can therefore distinguish the idea of propaganda from material evidence since the latter deals with factual issues.

Lasswell (1966:267) defines propaganda “as attempt to influence attitudes of large numbers of people on controversial issues of relevance to a group. Propaganda is thus distinguished from education which deals with non-controversial issues.” In reality, educational matters are based on stark facts which cannot be exaggerated.

Propagandists usually appeal to emotions. According to Ross (2002), The Institute of Propaganda Analysis maintains:

...in all these devices, our emotion are the stuff with which the propagandist works... without it they are helpless. With it, harnessing it to their purposes, they can make us glow with pride or burn with hatred,...what we mean is that the intelligent citizen does not want propagandist to utilize his emotions even to the attainment of ‘good’ ends, without knowing what is going on (p.27).

The danger here is that the appeals to emotions usually subvert reason. In the event where people are made to think with their hearts and stomachs the tendency to accept mediocrity and base things are high. A propagandist may choose to send something across; good or bad, with the intent of realizing specific response or action. Their objective is not to please society with what they want, but to get their ideological message across without the audience scrutinizing it to generate criticism. Meanwhile, the material disseminated may be harmful or beneficial to the masses but the impact it makes is their goal.

Political Propaganda appeals mainly to emotions not intellect. It shares the same boundary with public relations and advertising which seek to shape the perception of the public or promote a commercial product of an organisation.

According to Garth and O'Donnell (2006:17) "Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist"

The pejorative connotation of propaganda has been widely viewed from the perspective of lies, appeals to emotions, and as issues which are founded on deliberate manipulation. However, propaganda will be seen to be triumphant if it articulates positive values of policies and programmes by way of educating through theatrical practise on such platforms. Governments have depended on it for public patronage of issues of national importance and particularly for national cohesion. The government of Nkrumah for instance, relied vehemently on mass education theatre through the concert party fame, which drew and attracted huge audiences of the rank and file of the communities "...Nkrumah's government itself began to set up guitar bands and concert parties to act as organs of CPP propaganda, such as the Workers Brigade band and Concert Party" (Deandrea, 2002: 199). Notwithstanding this, the manner in which the message functions in the political realm is that which determines its betrayal and/or construct. Thus, political propaganda becomes teleological due to its tendency to accomplish the intended effect on public opinion. These are special articles of agitation fashioned on a mass scale through mass communication spectrum for education and national consensus purposes.

In analysing political propaganda from the perspective of visual elements, Bryder (2008:102) defines propaganda as "the manipulation of symbols for the sake of controlling public opinion in contexts characterised by power, influence and authority relationships,

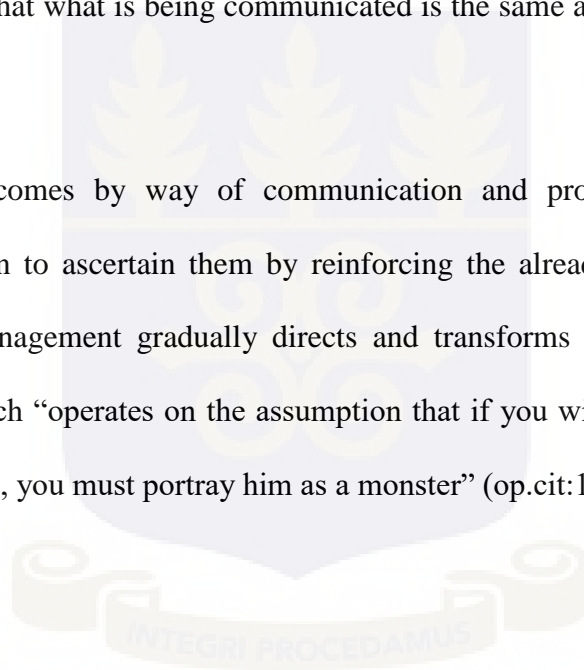
between people and groups of people”. Here symbol materials which come in the form of pictorials, factoids are manipulated in such a manner as to compete for the attention of the masses of people who read meaning into such messages.

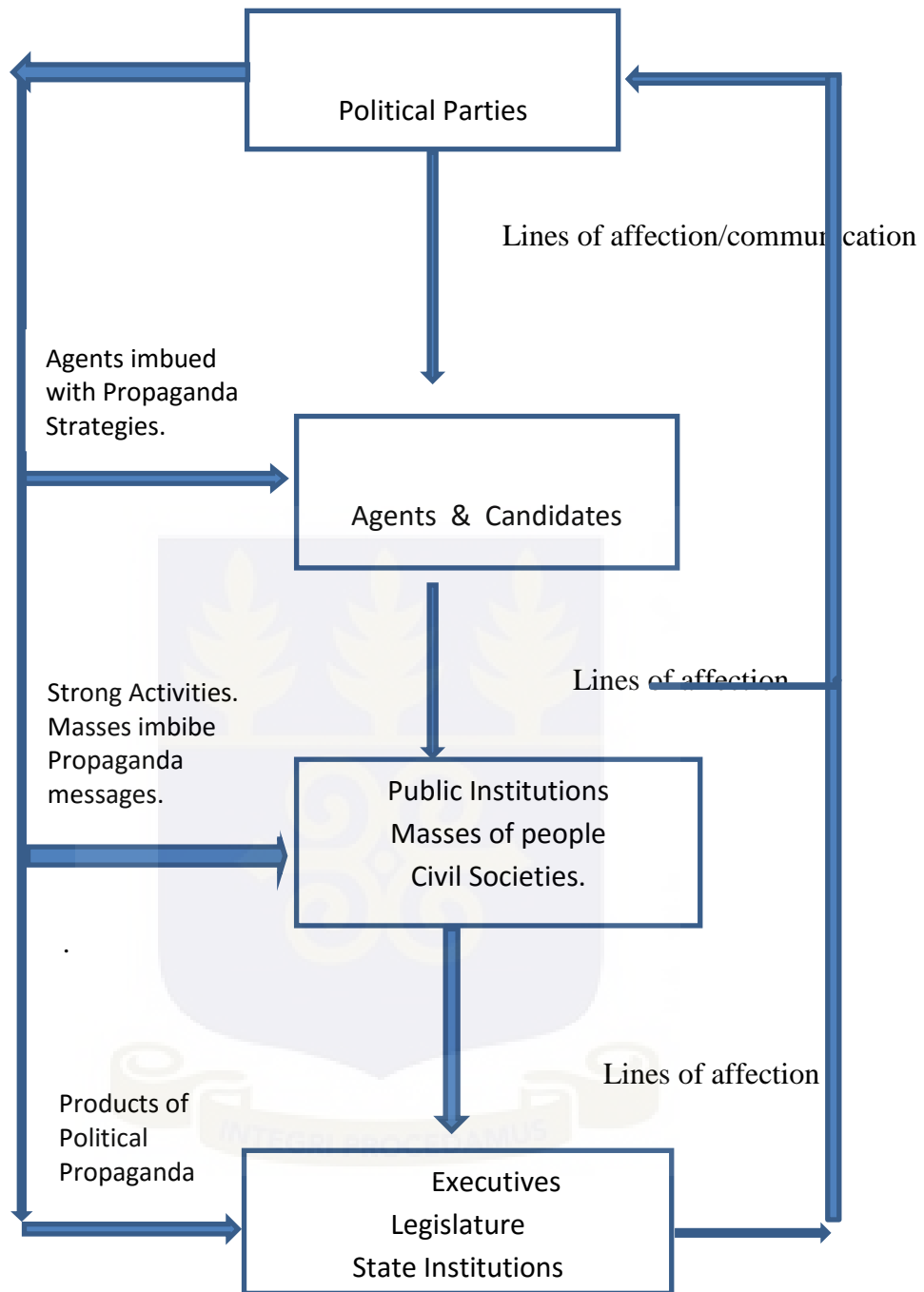
Political Propaganda is a form of art that communicates political message. In her etymological assessment, Ross (2002), believes propaganda can be analysed by using the communication model of sender—message—receiver. The model designates propaganda as something done intentional; it involves persuading its recipients. In other words, it employs persuasive means in its delivery; the [sender] is doing so deliberately, and has a target for his persuasion [receiver] and also the means of reaching that target [message]. Quite often, the intent to persuade shifts to intent to lie in this bid to influence or convince someone or a group of something. That is, the person persuading believes in one thing which he knows for a fact, but tries to convince others to hold contrary opinion. Ross terms such deviation “epistemic defective messages’ that which is full of false statements, bad arguments, inept metaphors and immoral commands” (op.cit:27). The strategy breeds controversy because it circumvents reason; twists the fact by appealing to emotions, and that is the worry. This is why the public needs much information and education on the exercise so as to be able to discern what are propaganda symbols and what are facts.

From the variety of perspectives examined, and in the context of this study, the researcher takes political propaganda as “a deliberate reconstruction of information with or without the intent to exaggerate a material fact for the purpose of changing public perception toward a cause”. The intentional redesigning of any idea to suit the objective of the propagandist by manipulating public opinion negatively or positively to his advantage is the preoccupation; this is the newfound strategy Ghana has adopted for her political convenience and exigency. Any successful strategy generally consists of a planned

sequence of movement from one position to another, with key leaders and agents as instrument for reaching large groups of the population thereby affecting all ranks, as lines of communication depict [Figure 1]. Thus, ideas emanate from party hierarchy, and go through the various levels of interaction with the end-product determining the success or failure of the communicated strategy. The dynamic nature of propaganda strategy is reflected in the levels of implementation as described on the organogram. “Political propaganda’ according to Bryder (2008) ‘is not so much a matter of convincing audiences about the virtues of the propagandist’s own ideas and policies as an attempt to make the audience(s) believe that what is being communicated is the same as they always thought it was” (p.103).

Political influence comes by way of communication and propagandists try to find empirical verification to ascertain them by reinforcing the already pre-conceived mind. Such perception management gradually directs and transforms public opinion towards political agenda which “operates on the assumption that if you wish to communicate that your opponent is evil, you must portray him as a monster” (op.cit:105).





**Fig. 1.1: Organogram Depicting the Cycle of Political Propaganda**

Bryder (2008:108) maintains that “Communication which aims at persuading, is usually called rhetoric”, and because of its capacity to persuade, rhetoric is viewed as ‘propagandistic.’

When a society has fanatical propagandists, the people hardly get accurate information since they are constantly under bombardments with propaganda material one after the other. In his writing, Orji (2003) condemns the acts of sycophancy, corruption and opportunism as emanating from political propaganda. He avers that sycophancy has rocked Nigerian successive governments to the point of entrenchment in the entire government structure. These are those who sing praises where they are not due and get themselves insinuated into public office to perpetuate their propaganda deeds:

The reality is that sycophancy is a business...Indeed sycophancy is something that has tragically eroded the moral fabric of the Nigerian society, destroyed her cherished values and virtues. Seen in a broader perspective, sycophancy is a tendency to promote mediocrity at the expense of merit which frustrates the desire for vibrant leadership and concern for public good. It is a situation where the leader is falsely clothed with the image of a demi-god, where facts are hidden or sometimes coloured and embellished to suit the whims and caprices of those who have maneuvered their way to become 'leader's confidants'. This could be at the prompting of the leader who is obsessed with self-glorification or by professional praise singers who see it as an easy means to favourably position themselves for government patronage (p.149).

The situation is reminiscent of the satire by Mda (2002) on Southern Africa political leaders who engage in similar corrupt practices and create the impression that they serve the people well. The images of corruption and hypocrisy painted by the President and his cabinet ministers in *Fools, Bells and the Habit of Eating* is something that has characterized most African leadership, and hence smack of derision.

However, the craze for power and its application infringe the liberty of others while it promotes that of others among politicians and opinion leaders. This trend has generated bitterness, rancour and frustration to the point of civil groups taking to the streets to demonstrate their grievance and agitation. All manner of strategies, antics, tantrums, even threats and hyped up propaganda are used to undo opponents and proponents of the other

group or party. In his review of *The Trial of Mallam Ilya*, Djisenu (1998/99) gives an apt account of propaganda flaws in Nkrumah's regime when Mallam Ilya:

“...for being critical...is framed up and then accused of attempting to assassinate the leader. He is nearly coerced into making a compromise; publicly confessing to a crime he has not committed, in order to avoid the death sentence. Confronted by Ilya's firm stance, Abdul Karim and El- Fasi coerced Halima to say that Ilya raped her; and then confessions said to have been made by Ilya are circulated in order to preserve Kumranh's reputation (p.21).

So many innocent people are made scapegoats and victims through propaganda machinations. The idea is to shore up or preserve the dignity and image of political figure(s) that may after all not deserve it, but take precedence even in judicial matters. As the wheel of justice grinds in a gradual process, the accumulated falsehood usually precipitates in direful consequences in the event of the truth being revealed.

The thrust of political propaganda can be so damaging and pervasive such that its ugliness has characterized Ghanaian politics of late and getting entrenched to the point of explosion.

Josiah-Arye (2008) asserts that, many a time, weird and wonderful stories are sometimes concocted to give credence to things that never happened. He gives his own experience in which his credibility as a General Secretary of a party was soiled as a teetotaler all his life and therefore unfits for that public office. It thus becomes the strategy of the contesting parties to play down the achievements and credibility of each other to win public sympathy as Josiah-Arye (2008:84) again, gives retrospective analysis of NPP and NDC tussle “... what was clearly a strategy of the then opposition was aimed at casting the then government as voodoo-ridden”

In his *Review of The Theme of Political Betrayal in the Plays of Zakes Mda*, Chijioke Uwah (2003) points out that:

The concept of deception which goes hand in glove with betrayal is emphasized with symbolism. Mda did this in *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland*, where the removal of the hoboes from the city street and parks was done to present a façade of prosperity and cleanliness to visiting delegates of an environment conference...Mda shows how cabinet manipulates the perceptions of the public, using its influence to deceive and betray...they use the frontage of film set house to deceive investors into perceiving prosperity (p.143).

The implausible behaviour of most of our politicians is responsible for the diverse and dissenting views that abound today. These calculated efforts to throw dust upon dust in people's eyes for political expediency, is the bane of Ghana's present political agitation. In his research into Ghana's electioneering process, Brobbey (2009), avers that in a highly gullible society such as Ghana, where 'vote buying'(p.88) is considered normal by over 50% of the population, any misguided propaganda material carelessly thought out to feed any cause, can receive inappropriate emotional responses such as racial or ethnic tension, or interest group clashes. Propaganda churned out in this way, subverts the principle of objectivity. Propaganda, under normal circumstances is acceptable as one of the operatives of democracy due to its tolerant quality. What makes it dangerous is perhaps, the absolute falsity the propaganda artist resort to characterise his message. In recent times, the act is meant to stimulate people to react in a specific violent manner against their staked victim or opponent and that is what present day political propaganda seeks to achieve, – redirecting public opinion through a particular message. This makes the subject a sharper political tool that touches the feelings or nerves of the populace due to its calculated form to infuse or influence public opinion. Its dissemination "largely involves word of mouth, literature and mechanism of mass information..." (Josiah-Arye, 2008:75). And campaign theatres have largely been used to articulate this phenomenon where the social dialogue has shown qualities of spontaneous voluntary-actors jumping on stage to participate in the action.

This brings us to the purposive kind of propaganda which is adopted by politicians to portray their enemy as evil and the audience as victims of their act. For instance, in Ghana a tiny or insignificant mistake or comment by a political figure could be illuminated and blown into a massive proportion through this offensive exaggeration to sway public mind. And in such situation, a good parliamentary material is lost as he can be fixed on the wall and shattered into fragments in the public eye. Such candidate may never recover from such attacks till he gives up his political ambition for the rest of his life. Here is where propaganda's destructive force is felt. Garth and O'Donnell (2005) describe it as 'black propaganda'; that which is "credited to a false source and it spreads lies, fabrication, and deception" (p.18).

In political circles, however, the period leading to elections and beyond is different. Peoples' attention to mass communication is business to them and would spend time listening and debating over issues of political interest.

According to Lee & Lee (1939:23-24), The Institute of Propaganda identifies some devices that are effectively and subtly used by propagandists as powerful weapons for swaying popular opinion and actions. They include:

- Name calling: giving an idea a bad label is used to make us reject and condemn an idea...
- Glittering Generality—associating something with a "virtue word"...
- Transfer—carries the authority, sanction, and prestige of something respected and revered over to something else in order to accept and approve or disapprove and / or reject.
- Testimonial—consist in having some respected or hated person say that a given idea or program or product or person is good or bad.
- Plain Folks—the method by which a speaker attempts to convince his audience that he and his ideas are good because they are "of the people" the plain folks.

- Factoids—an assertion of fact that is not backed-up by legitimate argument or evidence.
- Card Stacking—involves the selection and use of facts or falsehood ... logical or illogical statements in order to give the best or the worst possible case for an idea, program, person, or product.
- Band Wagon—has as its theme, “Everybody—at least all of us—is doing it. “... members of a group to which we belong are accepting a program...we must therefore follow our crowd and “jump on the band wagon”

The ability of the populace to become aware of these devices and their use is a step towards freeing their minds from control of propagandists. The ability also to examine the product put out there by the propagandist, by investigating the source, analysing the idea and reading into the motive behind the ‘push,’ absolves one of pandering to emotionality, prejudice, and unnecessary prejudice. Once we are made aware of any attempt to convince us of an idea or material, an analytical examination on its merit will be done to ascertain what the persuasion amounts to. Name callings and other careless application of the devices by both propagandists and their agents “... have ruined reputations, stirred men and women to outstanding accomplishment, sent others to prison cells, and made men mad enough to enter battle and slaughter their fellow men” (Lee & Lee 1939: 26). The tendency for such a situation occurring underscores the writing of the play *In the Pipeline*. It is therefore prudent for present political generation to suspend judgment until they have heard as many sides to a story or issue as possible before taking sides.

## **1.2 Thesis Statement**

There is apparent discontent over the use of political platforms and spaces for political propaganda that has assumed a cancerous dimension in Ghana’s politics of late. In contending with Ghana’s political propaganda, Josiah-Arye (2008: 81) stresses that “Propaganda largely involves word of mouth, literature and mechanism of mass

information.” Such dissemination of information is done by means of the press, radio, speech, posters, leaflets, cartoon, television discussion, internet, film, and of course the theatre, etc. Different scholars see propaganda rhetoric as undesirable and negative if not evil in its mechanizations and affectations. Powell (1959:4-5) declares that “Propaganda is a nasty word, like sin, crime, communism, fascism.” He argues further that propaganda is like a dog full of fleas, adding “In fact, I say it is all fleas and no dog.”

Powell’s description reveals the danger associated with the ‘word’ propaganda as it could be equated to a virus that can consume its parent animal or plant. The takeover of the whole body by the flea is the gradual but steady heaping of lies till it is established as a fact. If there is no deliberate or sustained effort at reversing or debunking a meretricious propaganda that serves the ends of only a vicious person or group, a whole government or political figure could crumble under the smear of propaganda. That will mean, inciting public hatred or dislike against an individual, a group, party or another country as the case may be. One of the reasons for this controversy is the notion that ‘power sweet’ and that whichever party or individual controls the national purse wields the soul of the country and apparently, the better off. This psychosocial paradigm has enshrouded the politics of Ghana and most African countries South of the Sahara to the extent that, there is wanton display of bigotry in the competition to gain or retain power. Politicians resort to whatever clandestine or diabolic means to win power, no matter the cost.

However, one key weapon that has been used effectively for most successive governments is the employment of propaganda gimmicks to infuse the people with government policies and programmes. There is a held view that the mounting of campaign theatres facilitates the preaching of robust exaggeration of fantastic propaganda peddling and spinning that has the power of dividing a united people asunder, in spite of its other usage as a tool to communicate state information.

The form lends itself to the aggressiveness of propaganda messages expounded by political actors. Meanwhile, the assiduity of a section of the audience may trigger a reaction consequent on audience intervention among the audience/spectators, thereby striking a balance as agitprop theatre. "...[I]t is our hope' caution Pratkanis and Aronson (2001: 356) 'that knowledge about the process of persuasion will allow all of us to detect and resist some of the more obvious forms of trickery and demagoguery'".

Based on this notion therefore, the study seeks to examine the dangers associated with political propaganda through the use of campaign theatre.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

- a. examine the dangers posed by political propaganda through campaign theatres.
- b. create awareness on campaign theatre as participatory drama for social change
- . c. draw attention to improprieties of campaign theatre as a source of public agitation

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study.**

The research was mostly confined to Kintampo South Constituency with reference to specific areas and Accra, where some activities and events, such as mammoth rallies also took place. Activities of two major political parties- National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) - were used. The project seeks to examine how politicians have used the platform to interact with the people and the impact thereof.

This subject is being researched into because of the intricate nature of intervention associated with open theatres as a tool of information dissemination to the citizenry. Due to political expediency, however, factual information are doctored or exaggerated to score

much political points. This triggers attacks, malignity, smearing and disgusting insults which threaten public peace due to the time and place of performance, hence the agitation.

First, the projection of propaganda through the medium of Campaign Theatre breaks or extends traditional literary drama as prototypes which have gone through various phases of change since colonial time. The character of such Ghanaian political theatres is akin to Marion Frank's Campaign Theatre (used chiefly for education and awareness-raising) as a political tool that involves local as well as foreign elements for government to resolve issues and inform the citizenry of its various programmes and policies.

The study looks at the subject from 2000 to date. The last 16 years' study may seem as though the word propaganda evolved rather recently, however, its impact and thrust has been quite phenomenal and dynamic. There is therefore the need for research work to be done to examine the dimension it has assumed and the extent of impropriety and risk to nation building. This study seeks to determine that. Even though the concept goes beyond the specified time, the research does not rigidly confine its study to the stated period as references could be made outside for elucidation purpose.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. Is dramatic enactment of political propaganda a source of anarchy and confusion?
2. Do political campaign messages pose any risk to audience-spectators?
3. How can campaign theatre effectively address the challenges of public agitation?

### **1.6 Justification of Objectives**

The functional role of political drama as a particularly adopted medium of reaching out to the larger public for political discourses has more than over-stepped the boundary of dramatic practice, duly seen as a new phenomenon, a new theatre in the making, or better

still, an extension of dramatic art. Josia-Arye (2008) argues that political propaganda theatre has the quality of aggressively attacking your political opponent, while taking precautionary measures to blunt the enemy's retaliation. The purpose and finesse of this art as a means to ground one's opponent has shifted dynamically over the period to a form of group agitation and labour unrest. It is imperative to confront the issue head on in order to draw attention to its dangers and exigencies.

It is essential then as an evolving dramatic form to regulate its operation and control its character due to the tendency of such campaign drama effacing itself in content and outlook. With the current propaganda messages being touted on political platforms and the subsequent reprisal agitations that follow, it is necessary to remodel such drama as mass communication tool for national cohesion rather than insurrection.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study.**

Dramatic delivery of political propaganda as a two edged sword, needs to be objectively handled and to carefully examine the impropriety about it as a researcher.

Access to relevant research material became a matter of choice, as vast array of drama books were available. However, there were not enough books to consult on political propaganda in the context of Ghana. Other political materials from the Kintampo South Constituency were difficult to obtain during the time and had to resort to what the researcher observed and experienced. In the effort to reach out to the various designated points and personalities, several difficulties such as travelling were encountered.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the Study.**

The choice of Political Propaganda for this study is largely due to the fanciful and exaggerative trends it has taken to deny Ghanaians of true information regarding policies,

projects, issues and lately, venomous attacks on personalities which tends to destroy the beauty of our democracy. It equally has the tendency to destroy the political process. At the time of the research, another round of political campaign had started vigorously, and this afforded the researcher vast opportunity and space to gather relevant data as there were rallies here and there. The study shows how literally, the concept seeks to create differences within the political setting of the country.

Tracing events from 1992 has been necessary to show the ascendancy of propaganda trend, depth and its tendency to threaten or destabilize the democratic credentials chalked by Ghana in its political journey. It also shows how troublesome the introduction of propaganda has become a pawn for political game in Ghana. Again, tracing the development of propaganda over the last two decades and its present impact, it is only ideal to trim and regulate it for national development.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The Study is organized in five chapters.

Chapter One – Introduces the background of the study. It comprises; the etymology of political propaganda, objectives, thesis statement, the scope and research questions, limitation, delimitation and organization of the study.

Chapter Two—The chapter looks at literature review and dramatic theories. It also examines some theories of communication, the playwright's role, and conclusion.

Chapter Three—Theoretical and conceptual framework: introduction, assumptions on model theatres; political campaign theatre; political propaganda and conclusion.

Chapter Four –Presents analysis and design of the play '*In The Pipeline*' including methodology, format, devices, characterization and conclusion.

Chapter Five–Conclusion: introduction, major findings, observation and recommendation for solution to problems identified, and summary.

-- Notes and references.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews related literature on drama and how it can highlight political propaganda as a tool of intervention. The chapter also examines dramatic theories; communication; campaign theatres that exemplify audience involvement and playwrights who have used theatre as an instrument of propaganda. It will look briefly on works that espouse political propaganda and draw conclusion in relation to my topic.

#### 2.1 Drama/Theatre

Drama has been described variously by scholars, but Webster's dictionary defines it as:

a composition in verse or prose, intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually, involving conflict and emotions through action and dialogue and typically designed for theatrical performance.

This definition situates drama in a literary domain in which the elements such as plot, dialogue, scenery, conflict and action propelled by emotions are identified. The description gestures towards Western assessment and definition of drama. However, drama comes in different forms with all having some or all of these elements. The forms of drama could be classified from ritual and myth, traditional and story-telling, literary and the popular drama to open dramas. For the purpose of this study, however, I shall look at drama in the eyes of several scholars who doubt or belittle the idea of drama in the African sense of it as proper drama. In looking at the social functions of the African Theatre, Traore, (1972: p.18) quotes the sceptical Adande (1954), about African drama being accepted as such and states that:

If the numerous festivals of our villages-to wit, pre-ploughing or post – harvesting rituals, with or without masks; circumcision rites, religious

ceremonies developing through several `acts` and comparable with full-scale ballets by virtue of the number of performers and the complexity of the overall choreographic design – if all this may be considered as theatres, it is clear that the development of theatre in Black Africa took a different turn from that of modern Europe.

Thus, all these ritualistic dramas, such as religious and naming ceremonies have eluded the recognition of such scholars perhaps due to the absence of aesthetic difference or elements considered in Western concept of drama. Apparently, the comparison is the reason for this ideological difference or bias. The observation by Oscar Brockett (1995) echoes this idea when he writes that:

In studying African theatre, most of us soon become aware of its “otherness”, its unlikeness to the traditions with which we are most familiar... When we turn to African theatre, we may be inclined to impose on it Western assumptions and associations, thereby seriously misperceiving it. (p.66)

In the same vein, Ruth Finnegan (1970) entertains similar sentiments about the recognition of African drama when she writes:

Though some writers have very positively affirmed the existence of native African drama, it would perhaps be truer to say that in Africa, in contrast to Western Europe and Asia, drama is not typically a widespread or a developed form. (p.500)

As scholars measure African dramatic performances in the light of literary drama which usually occur in playhouses, they may have little to appreciate of the African numerous traditional enactments which emanate from their culture, belief and other social ceremonies. Focussing on the dimension of political campaign drama as an extension of the popular theatre in Ghana let's examine the Greek term of 'drama' interpreted by (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 1994) as “a thing done” while 'theatron' also means “a place of seeing” thus the two terms come to a common end of interaction.

In general terms, a thing done at a seeing place constitute an enactment which occurs at a specified place for people to see. Hence the consideration of the two terms can be interchangeably recognised as drama and/or theatre. By observing the two interactional forces as occurring within a certain frame by design, it is conceptualized as deliberately bringing to be, certain elements that make the concept 'of seeing an enactment' meaningful and complete as drama/theatre.

In writing about drama as an imagined, imitation of real life in a structured form of enactments, Beckerman (1970) as quoted by Bame (1991) defines "theatre" as that which "occurs when one or more human beings, isolated in time and/or space present themselves to another or others", and that: "Drama occurs when one or more human beings isolated in time and or space present themselves in imagined acts to another or others" (p.47).

In looking at the components that converge to distinguish theatre, perhaps from other acts that purport to be seen as theatre, Finnegan (1970) examines African drama by looking at the essential elements that define drama:

Most important is the idea of enactment of representation through actors with other elements, appearing to a greater or lesser degree at different times or places; linguistic content; plot; the represented interaction of several characters; specialised scenery etc, often music and of particular importance in most African performances -- dance.( p.503)

The commonality of the idea of enactment by actors whose representation or stories are imaginative and interspersed with music and dance, of course, run through all the descriptions as imitation of real life. And African social ceremonies are replete with such performance requirements. Bame identifies three planes of theatre usage to include "theatre" as "used to refer to a play house, a building or a place which is furnished with seat and equipped with a shape on which play and other entertainment are presented to the

public'' second theatre used interchangeably with drama as defined above and the third institutionalised for presentation and learning of dramatic performances.

The second usage however, opens a wider avenue which encourages variety of concepts according to the cultural context of people who perform them. In West Africa and specifically Ghana, African societies express artistic values in all aspect of their lives. These values are expressed through the arts of music, dance, and story-telling drama. The performance of these is not only meant for entertainment, but they play the crucial role of educating, communicating and for social cohesion.

Traditional African music and dance, to say briefly, have also functioned as a convergent point for social activities such as funeral, religious rituals, marriage, and for inspiration of work and behavioural appraisal. As means of social control, music and dance have been a medium of transmitting information throughout generations.

'Drama,' according to Dietrich (1953:3) 'is a story in dialogue form, of human conflict, projected by means of speech and action from a stage to an audience'. (*Drama in this context shall be used interchangeably with theatre to mean the same*) It functions effectively in African societies as a living experience just as any other in other cultures, though initially our African forefathers never created any generic term to designate their theatrical activities.

"For them' argues Diakate et al (1999):

Theatre was a lived experience which did not need naming for it existed at every moment or point of living such as rituals of birth, naming, initiations, harvest, marriage, status elevation and death, all being capable of giving rise to theatrical events, where music, dance and verbal parody figure in equal parts.(164)

Thus, theatre has manifested in variety of ways under various circumstances to express human sentiments which quite often involve the whole community or a section of it. In

Ghana its vitality is very much felt in all aspects of our lives, especially in socio-political circles and for political purposes. There exists some controversy between scholars of African Literature over the line of ritual and drama.

Finnegan (1970:500-517) describes traditional drama as “quasi dramatic phenomena” and that there is little in Africa that may be described as drama (in European sense of the term) largely because of the absence of sustained and coherent dialogue, plot and interaction between characters.” Okpewho (1992:115) departs at this point when he outlines the controversy this view readily generates. He acknowledges that oral literature has helped sustain successive generations through acculturation of behavioural value system and the absorption of ideas passed on to them by older ones to constantly remind them of ethical values that must be observed and kept alive for posterity.

If drama may be seen through such descriptions, then it can equally qualify as performing the same functions as it does in different cultural settings. Its originality, however, occurred contemporaneously among cultures, and therefore the fact of the late-theorising of our own experiences coupled with the late-recording and documentation of the term in Africa does not make it a new concept.

Okpewho (1992) further recognizes that the functional role of drama in African traditional society is very relevant in contemporary social situation. Dramatic art therefore is not just merely relevant for entertainment but as part and parcel of the emotional and aesthetic aspect of the African. To a large extent, the prevailing socio-cultural conditions determine the dynamism of expression. The use of drama as a tool for propaganda deployment purposes therefore, is not accidental since the theatres erected for them are for mass communication and education, among its other functions. These traditional story-telling trajectory popularised in literary drama, way back in the 1920s have remained in force

beyond Ghana's Independence in 1957 and continue to grow. Agovi (1989:18) gives an apt illustration of theatre as having been nursed in the churches in the form of:

cantata's and also by educational institutions that performed British plays, and such plays were given official support by colonial government and by the middle 1940s the British council was established to 'undertake and continue the imperial cultural dissemination and enlightenment.

In that regard, all performances were fashioned according to European rather than African modes and sensibilities since most of the literary works came from European source. Africans, for that matter, Ghanaians had no documented or recorded dramatic literature of their own, and with formal education in the hands of the missionaries, dramatic performances came by way of Western literature which the educated Ghanaians accentuated as "the virtues of Western drama", Mloma (1991:14) observes that it was "designed to enhance capitalist structures. It was deliberate efforts to paralyze the ability of the arts to question injustice and create awareness that could move people to fight against colonialism". The objective was to europeanise the African mind through Shakespearean plays and earlier dramas of Sophocles. Articulation of Western drama wore on alongside National Theatre Movement well beyond 1950 till it occurred to educated Ghanaians to fashion out "a theatre that will derive its vitality and authenticity from roots firmly planted in the traditions of the people" (Agovi, 1989:2). These culminated in the literary works of earlier dramatists in the 1960s. Notable among them include Efua T. Sutherland, through whose pioneering work *The Marriage of Anansewaa*, evolved a new dramatic form she termed *Anansegoro* and others such as Joe de Graft, Ama Atta Aidoo and so forth.

Gibbs (1999) cites the work of Dickson as one who may have pioneered mass education as an officer in the Gold Coast. The colonial administration adopted his method and use of theatre in dissemination of development messages in the Trans-Volta Togoland, (now

Volta Region of Ghana). Dickson's work marks the earliest theatre usage for mass communication in the first half of the twentieth century. However, his works did not receive much blessing from the colonial Administration but later found favour with the Convention People's Party (CPP) administration.

In the same study, Gibbs(1999:21) recounts theatrical activities in the then Gold Coast on how the "Drama for community development in the Gold Coast flourished...And it formed part of the brief of the Workers' Brigade Concert Party that Nkrumah later set up involving Bob Johnson and others." The whole gamut of mass education, however, started with Alec Dickson whose propaganda purpose of education in Trans -Togoland was to: "convey by display, demonstration and discussion- to illiterate farmers, herdsmen, plantation workers, copperminers and schools, what the war was about, why it had been won, and how they could contribute to victory"(op.cit:14). This exemplifies the Campaign theatres that underpin the discussion. For instance, after independence, succeeding regimes in Ghana have relied heavily on political propaganda as an approach in disseminating developmental information to the larger Ghanaian populace with varying degree of success through drama. The CPP government, led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah adopted the mobile cinema praxis in 1960. Before independence the British Colonialist had used same propaganda information dissemination to reach out to the Gold Coast public through drama.

The CPP mobile vans were equipped with loudspeakers, electric generators and canvass screens, and would move from village to village, which became a fascinating attraction to the rural audiences. These communities were educated and entertained as they received political messages alongside social, economic and cultural, geared towards national cohesion and development, but the underlying motive was to drum up unconditional support for government.

The program usually started with the national anthem followed by newsreel and some documentaries. Then the real message was given, followed by “Work and Happiness” the work song for workers exhortation. The Mobile Cinema messages caught on well with the people as the method was used to whip up enthusiasm for the Akosombo Hydro- Electric project – hence the popularity of the CPP government.

Also, the CPP government encouraged the use of Drama for public education. In the 1960's the Workers' Brigade Band used drama in the form of concert party to educate and inform public opinion for national development. The concert party then came to re-orient public opinion and to set new parameters upon which national interest could be won for attention and development in the new administration. Apart from the use of mobile cinema, literary theatre was enhanced, endowing it with local resources. Theatre practitioners such as Efua Sutherland brought much impetus to the concert party tradition by tackling the lack of intimacy that existed between actor and spectator.

Through her research into the concert party genre, Sutherland took ordinary life stories and composed plays whose presentational style announced their characters preoccupation to the audience that were directly involved. Her story-telling drama took a form that engendered active audience participation with each contributing to the dialogical build-up and making of the story. The interactive performance usually occurs in open spaces with both actor and audience-participant taking turns in the enactment. This kind of ‘shared experience’ which most often than not, create participation with the audience, fosters a kind of theatre that is comparable to the campaign theatre. Thus, the participatory method of campaign theatre is politically purposeful because it identifies with the interest of the ordinary people in their social life.

## 2.2 Dramatic Theories and Theatres.

The real origin of theatre is speculative as it had evolved differently according to the cultural context of people. ‘Anthropologists,’ says Brockett (1995:1) ‘picture theatre “as emerging out of myth and ritual.” As a human activity that serves various purposes of enlightenment, theatre keeps evolving according to the daily needs and lives of a people. Brockett (1995) examines the fantasy of dramatic form from which people objectify their fears—it provides a fine platform to confront issues about daily lives in their effort to fulfil their hopes and aspiration. Such created theatres become platforms of bargaining—a place where actors and spectators strike a deal of contention through the interactive dialogue, “The theatre then, is one tool whereby people define and understand their world or escape from unpleasant realities” (p.6). This presupposes that most political messages purport to subvert the sensibilities of the people. In trying to evaluate theatre as a platform for political propaganda it is worthwhile to examine it as a public event with political theme. “[W]hen we discuss theatre,” asserts McGrath (1996:5) “we are discussing a social events, and a very complex social event, with a long history and many elements, each elements also having a long and independent history”. The concept of drama has had variegated understanding and meaning in terms of their structure and delivery. The African concept of drama differ in the aesthetic input common or familiar to Western and other cultures, defends Traore (1972:56),

“...while Africans for their part are interested in the expansion of the dramatic horizon and the free flight of the audience’s imagination. It is a question of fluid production in order to make the largest number of people participate so as to ‘produce pictures and ideas, popular in content and in realization, from which an entire people draw a lesson and derive its spiritual food’, to use Capeau’s words.

Notwithstanding the elemental deviation or constraints African drama suffers in the eyes of Western scholars, the availability of space and its motivating factor help facilitate the

presentation which in all respects is regarded as drama. Open campaign theatres are hence examined specifically from the perspective of Theatre for Development due to their explicit political nature and content as platforms for mass outreach.

The dramas involved in this discussion are largely non-scripted; a continuum of the story-telling traditional theatre, "...there is no written text, its place being taken by improvisation, while an important part is played by production techniques" (op.cit:p.57); they are mobile dramas, which are largely seen as political campaign theatres. They are not confined to the principles that define conventional theatre houses, as they are held in open spaces. They have no rehearsed characters; the dialogue is most often in a monologue, as political actor after actor, take turns to address audience and react to audience responses. Fashioned after the Ghanaian story-telling format, the stage draws heavy audience participation, almost surrounding the stage in a horse shoe form. It is in such interactions that issues are resolved or publicly made aware, largely regarded in the realm of developmental theatre as agitation propaganda.

Various authors have defined Theatre for Development. Abah (1996:247) identifies Theatre for Development as:

people's theatre, addressing their own problems in their own language, among their own idiom and on their own terms the ordinary people are the subjects, and in practice, the ones in control. That is, they decide the agenda and participate in making the drama on those chosen issues.

Hence a theatre brought to the doorstep of the people who then have much say and determination of issues to be addressed. Tim Prentki (1998:4) observes Theatre for Development from sociological perspective and states that theatre:

Used in the service of development aims; a tool available to development agencies which pursues the goals of self-development and an improved quality of life of all people whose material conditions leave them vulnerable to hostile and predatory forces, both natural and human. In other words it is an

instrument in the struggle to help their own become subjects, and cease to be objects of their own histories.

But political theatres, fashioned in the likeness and content of Theatre for Development is different in several respects. The political actors may or may not be part of the audience but since the people's power reside with them, they usually determine the direction of the struggle, and how and when to overcome it. Nogueira (2002) agrees and adds that Theatres for Development have various terms associated with it. Some of these terms are People's Theatre, Popular Theatre, Community Theatre, Theatre for Liberation, Theatre for Change, Theatre for Integrated Rural Development and Theatre for Integrated Development.

The use of these terms interchangeably depends on the circumstances and situations under which dramatic performance occurs and therefore political campaign theatres draw their strength from them as they bear similar features.

Mda (1993:84) holds the opinion that Theatre for Development is a scripted play that is performed to live audiences or even broadcast to people over radio. He distinguishes between Popular Theatre and Theatre for Development as he state that:

The dichotomy here is a simple one and lies in the fact that Theatre for Development may not necessarily utilize popular theatre...So not all Theatre for Development is Popular Theatre, and vice versa. However, theatre for development is most effective when it is popular theatre.

Mlama (1991:20) shares same view when she indicates that they can be used interchangeably to mean the same thing. She observes that:

People research into their problems of life, discuss and analyse them, bring out their root causes and suggesting their possible solutions. These problems are concretized in theatrical portrayals incorporating the people's viewpoints and expressions followed by collective strategizing and mobilization for action to solve the problems in question."

The collective affection of both performer and spectator leads to collective realisation of the objective set before participants. This observation described by Mlama as constituting popular theatre translates in the following features as Theatre for Development.

That Theatre for Development is people-centred. The people take centre stage of the production since it is intended to effect change in people through their own creative effort. In this concept, the spectators/ audience, as well as the performers are the people from the same community and it is usually without written script. By this method, audience/spectators are guided to express their sentiments over the 'issue' of their gathering. This reflects the Campaign theatres which involve the local community as representative actors in collaboration with the visiting political actors. Their participation in addressing issues of local concerns ties in with Brechtian notion of popular theatre, discussed in subsequent chapter. The participatory nature of this genre of theatre involving the community makes it awareness-effective, the kind which targets the spectator as a participant in the performance.

Theatre for Development depends largely on the message which is intended to raise awareness and galvanize the people to effect a change of their own conditions of life. Three points sum up this relationship. First, theatre itself is development. The whole theatrical practice ascribes value to the people. Second is theatre's role in personal development. People so engaged become producers; people affected one way or another can be transformed. The third is theatre's role in social or community development. Through identification of problems, prioritization, mobilization, and awareness, development in terms of solving collective problems can be enhanced by theatre.(Gibbs et al 1999). The major function of awareness creation through this facility is not without exaggeration- the hidden motive of the theatre.

In his review of David Kerr's work on African Popular Theatre, Eckard Breitingger points out that Kerr focuses attention on organizational structure of such popular theatres which have political implications in the delivery of government policies, and other such interests. He looks at 'liberating, emancipative aspects of popular art forms in the process of creating theatre, of bringing it to an audience with a political message, but more importantly as... political statement'(Gibbs et al 1999:146).

The statement gives the impression of a monologue inclined theatre in which the masses receive messages, be it political or social. However, the content of the message can be appealing or displeasing to audiences depending on how manipulative or persuasive it turns out to be.

Mda (1993) states that mass education campaigns have been employed to reach out to so many villages. The use of conventional information media such as radio, posters, as well as extension workers who do the grounds work of distributing pamphlets and other bill boards, also have their limitation as captured in these words:

There is instant feedback. But the villagers do not create the messages; they merely react to messages pre-determined and pre-packaged by bureaucrats at the head office. Theatre has been found to be an effective means for involving people in the development of their communities". (p.62)

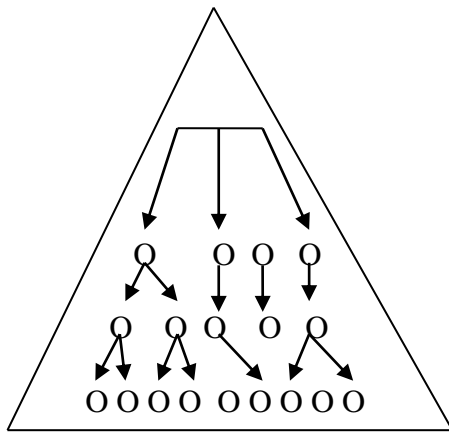
Mda's description aptly fits the campaign theatre that the study looks at. In effect, concludes Bame (1991:61) "if the black African forms [of drama] look different to the Western eye and to the eye of those who because of their training see such art-forms through Western spectacle, it is because the African forms are at a level of development different from Western drama and theatre". It is worthwhile then to have scholars and outside observers accept that the paradigm of theatre under consideration is purposely constructed to facilitate actor-spectator participation of events for the purpose of intervention.

### **2.3 Theatre Communication.**

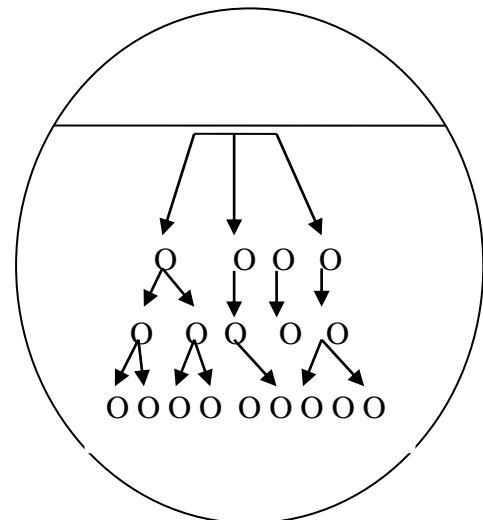
Theatrical communication occurs from two perspectives: the context of stage production and the concept of audience reception. The concept gives a clear signal of a schemed communication that moves from one source and is received at the other end with possible feedback responses. Thus, when such messages are received by audience and there is negative reaction, it is deemed to have been understood or accepted to act upon.

There are two models of communication for consideration here.

The picture is elucidated by Alec Dickson's and Asiama's (2010:17) model of Post-colonial Mass communication system of Buem people which tends to explain the pattern of information flow from one source down to the audience-masses. Its one-directional character creates the impression of authoritarian regime in which lies no feedback but follow the 'order' situation; a case where the audiences' part is just the consumption. The audience in turn diffuse the message to and across the community on a one-to-one, one-to-group/family basis, until the whole community is aware of the content. What is perhaps disturbing about this model is the high probability of distortion and falsification in peddling the message. It is in such peddling that propaganda finds active expression. It backfires when the grassroots communication is not handled with care; sometimes resulting in sporadic clashes between party fanatics here and there.



**Fig. 2.1: Post Colonial Mass Education**  
*(Asiama's Model)*



**Fig. 2. 2: Post Colonial Mass**  
*(Alec Dickson's Model)*

Though the two communication strategies examined here fit in our concept of campaign/ open theatres due to the circumstances under which they are held and performed, there is the employment of one or a combination of the two models as discussed above in the mobile-political campaign theatres. Ross Tuttle (2002) gives an apt interpretation of the communication model of sender- message- receiver; indicating that propaganda is sensually intentional.

She says the [Sender] is intentionally sending persuasive message to a target audience [receiver], and the means of reaching that target is the persuasive [message]. Interpreted further, the [sender] acts on behalf of a political institution, organization or cause, by targeting a social group [recipient] he has in mind, and unleashes his emotional [message].

In similar manner, theatre and other media seek to bring the audience to accept the message through the art of performance. Drama's role is to stimulate response in the audience of the community. After the dramatic event, further communication may continue among audience/ people and between the community members in the form of follow-up or post-performance reaction or discussion of the message as indicated above.

Elam Keir in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (1980) examines the use of semiotic principles in theatre practice. His focus is on actor – audience relationship. He poses the question of initiator of the communicative act in the theatre, and attempts an answer that places the spectator/audience at the centre as the initiator of the communicative act by his presence and potential reception of the message. Elam’s observation fits the process of theatrical campaign of political propaganda. The massive gathering of electorates around political platforms during election and other campaigns, reveal that such audiences become the originators of the communicative act by their massive presence.

#### **2.4 The Playwright’s Role & Environment**

Like that witch doctor of the past, you are a master storyteller who uses a special form of theatrical magic to communicate to audiences, giving them insight into a world that is no less confusing for being modern, and illuminating mysteries that surround us. [Catron 2000 p.2]

A playwright’s preoccupation is informed by his social responsibility as an interventionist who cast back the picture of society through the theatrical medium. This is done with the society in mind. What motivates him to write, stems from his observatory and imaginative powers with that compelling factor to express it for human appreciation. As observed Soyinka in his 1967 Uppsala address, the artist “has always functioned in society as the record of the mores and experience of his society and as the voice of vision in his own time. It is time for him to respond to this essence of himself”. [Gikandi 1985, p.4] The expression of this onerous responsibility is uniquely inherent, not driven by mass sensibility, but is motivated by his “own personal conviction or observation that human beings are simply cannibals all over the world so that their main preoccupation seem to be eating up one another” [op.cit, pp.4-5] Thus the greed of humanity which one cannot stand informs the basic need for writing, so that society sees itself in that light and makes amend. Soyinka’s position is reiterated by Osofisan (2001:109) that “...in every class

society, riven by inequalities, the mouth of the artist always speaks for the poor and the deprived, those who, in Franz Fanon's graphical phrase, constitute the 'wretched of the earth'." It is these wretched of the earth who constitute the playwright's audience; whose worry he would bear; those he would have to instruct or enlighten by drawing the attention or by arousing their conscience to a debilitating evil, and drama does this effectively.

"In drama," according to Dietrich (1953:27)"...the author writes for the audience. His prime purpose is to project his interpretation of life clearly and forcefully, so that the experiences of characters in the play may be shared by the spectators"

In a satire, Mda (2002) projects cabinet leaders in a ludicrous manner to show society what pertains in the administration of a country. He uses allegorical characters to portray the preoccupation of their elected leaders:

JUSTICE : The Wise One is already perfect, thank God.

HEALTH : Although the populace seems not to be aware of that.

JUSTICE : Exactly. That is why we must enhance his image, not him. And we can do that by giving him a new title.

YOUNG MAN : [*Laughingly*] He already has a string of unnecessary titles as far as I'm concerned.

JUSTICE : Who asked you ? You are not even a member of this cabinet.

CULTURE : I can think of an excellent title. The Anointed One...

JUSTICE : I think the Chosen One sounds better.

PRESIDENT : Why don't you use both titles and get it over with?

GENERAL : The Wise One has spoken.

OTHERS : It shall be so...

JUSTICE : Another proposal. The title of Chosen One and Anointed One will certainly get us a following from the believers. We need another title to get intellectuals in our houses of learning on our side.

HEALTH : I know! Let us call him Doctor. (pp.90-91)

Again, Dietrich (1953) argues that:

The spectator who is caught up in the imaginative whirl of the theatre feels a fellowship and an intimate personal contact with the characters in the play. When the spectator projects himself unto the stage and joins the action, he is able personally to enjoy the responses evoked by the characters with whom he identified himself with. In other words the spectator is able to broaden his social sphere in the theatre. (op.cit.39)

The physical presence of both actor and audience fosters an interaction that is cordial, mutual and expressive. Co-production with audience/spectator gives better understanding of issues at stake and helps in joint solution. However, in the event of a hurt- supporter or the aggrieved whose icon has been blackmailed or condemned, the burning desire for reprisal may cause insurrection among the audience. This begins the encounter, leading to high level hostilities and culminating in character and political assassinations.

Since time, theatre has been used as a mouth piece to influence decision of state policies and to expose corruption and fight against injustices in society. It has also liberated people from colonial domination. In analysing the functionality of drama to effect social change, Awo Asiedu (2008: 227) considers that plays create some 'kind of awareness which lead to change' and this very much also links up with "the audience and the manner in which they respond to performance".

When drama answers a social question which has been held on for a long time as public opinion, the audience begins to appreciate and discuss the basic truth that has eluded them all that while. Such a product, material, or information may create awareness in the audience and a new perception or direction of thought will affect and ultimately improve their way of life. Osofisan (2001:136) puts it aptly:

I have sought advisedly, by suggestive trope to deny consolation to the manufactures of our nation's anomie, and at the same time, to stir our people

out of passivity and evasion. I am able to identify and bring to public attention areas of injustice, of gathering anger in the land.

It thus becomes the responsibility of the writer to point out certain observations he makes for society's consideration and attention. In much the same way, the media which is sometimes seen as the fourth estate of the realm plays such complementary role in exposing wrong doing and fighting injustice, corruption as well as liberating and empowering the vulnerable especially, women and children. These demands have called my attention to the writing of the play, *In the Pipeline*. Thus, contemporary playwrights according to Abdallah (1987), represent their societies as observers, spokespersons, historians, reporters, as reminders of moral and structural etiquette, and the conscience of society.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed related literatures that examine critical issues and practices of the drama in the deployment of political propaganda to provide a bearing for our understanding.

The authors discussed, have examined the extent of theatres exemplifying the dissemination of political propaganda. Also, some communication models relevant to the study have been examined as engendering participation of audience freely at open spaces. They include the uni-directional models by Alec Dickson and Asiana's Post-colonial to provide an invaluable help to situate political campaign theatres. The study also examines theories underlying dramatic performance with particular reference to campaign theatre activities that enhance actor/ audience relationship. Variety of theatre perspectives have been discussed with particular reference to Theatres for Developmental purposes-- from

which our popular campaign theatres have sprung-- for our particular study. Finally, mention is also made of the playwright's role in society, which is relevant to the study.



## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The chapter examines concepts, theories and principles underpinning (a) drama / theatre (c) politics and (d) political propaganda as dramatic in Ghana.

**3.1 Assumptions on Model Theatres.** Great thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, had the view that ‘man learned through imitation and that the theatre ‘purges’ man of impure emotions’ This assertion has been given credence and built-upon by later and succeeding generation of philosophers and scholars such as Goethe, Rousseau, Darwin and others who saw “drama as an inherent part of education to profit and delight.” However, the basic underlying factor in their aggregate thought according to Courtney (1968:19-20) is the consideration that “all drama should develop ideas: it should arouse emotions and thoughts which the audience *ought* to feel.” This is applicable to all cultures as all human societies have certain practices in common, albeit, each social set-up has its specific characteristics of values and development. Drama portrays the cultural upbringing of a society.

It is therefore an important method of communication within a society. According to Mda (1993) drama and theatre are often treated interchangeably. He says drama is a literary composition while theatre is actual performance that may or may not emanate from literary composition. “Theatre involves life performance that has action planned to create a coherent and significant dramatic impression ... it uses the element of other arts such as song, dance, and mime in addition to dialogue and spectacle”. (p. 45)

Again, according to Courtney (1968:262) drama and theatre evolved through:

Stable civilization that led to communal religious enactments within the framework of the ritual myth; thus the temple was established and the stylization of ritual became liturgy. When the theatre emerged from the

temple, and the bonds of ritual and liturgy were loosened, drama became more secular, although individual cultures developed in varying ways, priests and celebrants became actors and audience; and the ritual myth persisted in comedy as communal adjustment and in tragedy as ultimate experience.

The development calls to attention the conventions of theatre practice which has the core aim of interactive communication. Classical Greek theatre predates the concept of Aristotle which defines the place of the chorus as very important in the communication process as well as themes of social, economic and political considerations of Athens.

The chorus in the orchestra shows that no physical barrier separated performer from audience: the presence among spectators of the cult statue of a good (Dionysius)...further reveal that the absence of a physical barrier was matched by the absence of any 'spiritual' barriers. Stage, orchestra and auditorium formed a single unit and so too did actors, chorus and spectators, all of whom were sharing in the common act of devotion (Walcott, 1976: 4-6).

However, this theatre arrangement did not satisfy some later theatre practitioners who wanted their people to explore their own real lives and create a deeper understanding and affection that relieves them of their problems.

According to Worthen (2004:544) the completion of the political theatre may be associated with the open involvement of the audience:

By fragmenting the stage space, by showing how the illusion is made rather concealing its means of production, and by involving the audience more overtly in deciding the meaning of the plays events, the theatre is shown to be a political instrument. Like Television, Newspapers, Universities, the Courts, and so on, the theatre is an institution that produces the ideas and images with which we govern our lives.

The central concern, however, is placed with the audience/spectator whose disposition creates the theatre's meaning as an interactive event that examines human behaviour in relation to our day to day lives. As an institution of learning by interacting among other things, the theatre reveals images and ideas that shape and regulate society. Political

campaign theatre focuses much more on the involvement of audience and the reason why it is taken to their doorstep or locations other than conventional theatre buildings.

Later personalities, such as Meyerhold (1969) focus attention on the audience by challenging the assumptions and conventions of naturalist theatre. He calls for special attention to the creativity of the audience in a co-operation that takes away their passivity by dismissing illusionist theatre and making them co-creators of the drama. He advocated the presentational theatre, disagreeing with Stanislavsky who placed much premium on the actors and stage production while Meyerhold's focus "transferred it to the audience" (Duerr1962:446).

Conversely, the theory of participatory theatre is largely anchored on proponents such as Bertholt Brecht, Augusto Boal, Erwin Piscator and others already mentioned whose work explored the theatre as a forum for political ideas and dialectical methodology for social change. In the context of Brecht, born in 1898, a German poet, playwright and theatre director, he went to exile when Hitler rose to power in 1933, touring Europe and United States till he returned to his native Germany and founded his company The Berliner Ensemble. He had developed a dramatic genre; "its performance, its reception, and its writing all involve the idea of *Verfremdung* translated as alienation, distancing or estrangement, ... in theory, epic drama [that] requires an objective attitude so that it may instruct its audience" (Clark, 1973: 307), From his Marxist perspective, Brecht submits that a play should not cause the spectator to identify emotionally with the characters or action on stage but it should provoke rational self-reflection and evoke a critical view of action on stage. Brecht thought that the experience of climactic catharsis of emotion left the audience complacent without doing critical assessment of his situation. He wanted his audience instead, to adopt a critical view of recognizing social injustice and the impact of exploitation, and be moved so as to leave the theatre resolved to effect a change in the

society. For this purpose, Brecht employed the use of techniques that remind the spectators that the play is a representation of reality and not reality itself. The artistic and technical innovations which were brought to bear on the stage include:

“the narrative element, projection, the film, the greater facility in changing sets through machinery completed the equipment of the stage and did so at a moment when the most important human event could no longer be so simply portrayed...”[op.cit, p.308].

The employment of these techniques, such as the actors’ direct address to the audience, the use of bright and stage harsh lights, songs to interrupt the action, explanatory placards, the transposition of text and stage directions spoken aloud,-all give a contradictory presentation of a story(Wikipedia).

Brecht’s revolutionary theatre coincided with a period of increasing political interest and a changing world order, and as a political writer and director, he exerted great influence on the theatre from 1940s onward. For purposes of illustration, two of his plays; *Mother Courage and Her Children* and *The Good Woman of Szechwan* will be looked at to situate their interventional approaches. Brecht’s theatre company, the Berliners’ Ensemble was first performed in German and later during their visit to London, *Mother Courage* was staged on bare stage with harsh lights. This was partly because he used to stage his plays in streets with only street lamps or car headlights for lightings, but mostly because his kind of theatre was without illusion, that which is described as “deliberate theatre.” This is quite comparable to the campaign theatre in outlook and presentation, sometimes distancing the audience by way of monologue delivery, since they are usually staged in open spaces for specific purposes. The kind of simple stage of *Mother Courage* serves to prove that all these decorations weren’t needed to make a good play, and that (in Brecht’s opinion) they detracted attention from the message the play intended to put across. His plays were written in a way that deliberately evoked emotional responses in the audience

and demanded some reaction from those audiences. Thus the theatres couldn't help but made the audience ask questions of themselves, about the playwright, and most importantly his political philosophy. Mother Courage keeps pulling her cart and trudging round and round while losing her children and everything one by one in the process of war, leaving the audience asking "will this ever end?" Brecht's determination to create a specific reaction from audiences led him to make changes after *Mother Courage's* first performance as he felt the audience was being too sympathetic toward Mother Courage. Mother Courage herself was intended as a character that would provoke a strong reaction on the audience. Brecht wanted his audience to ask 'why doesn't she change?' Meanwhile it was the audience Brecht wanted to change as Mother Courage is, after all, a fictional character.

In the province of campaign theatre, however, such rhetorical question has the tendency to trigger several verbal answers, sometimes to the extent of physical involvement in the proceeding action on stage. It may spark direct confrontational intervention in a situation when the subjectivity of the spectator turns objective – illusion destroyed with reality. Another way is to make a statement and ask the audience if they agree with you or not. One might receive varied answers, but the audience will be drawn into the action as part of the solution to their own social problem. It is the allowance of such intervention which sometimes poses the danger associated with political propaganda.

Brecht influenced modern theatre by advocating that real political and social issues should be portrayed on stage to entertain, but most importantly to challenge current and existing ideas. His new style of dialectical theatre proved hugely influential and successful in engaging with the audience, and challenging them to think about their world and make their own judgement of events.

*The Good Woman of Szechwan* also demonstrates Brecht's Marxist ethics in his creation of a dual character with a split personality which depicts how goodness triumphs over evil. Szechwan is described as 'nothing but one big muck-heap,' a microcosm of society where people do not commit to good deeds. Several stage directions were delivered to the audience for reasons different from Shakespearean texts. There is an alienating intent behind these monologues such as is delivered by Wang in the opening scene, which breaks the distancing effect between the spectator and the actor. That serves to remind the audience that they are watching a play that seeks to instruct and address the political and economic problems put forward by the characters. Also, by including historical moments and figures in his plays, Brecht allows his audience to share a critical judgement toward reality, which hitherto (middle of the 1950s) was unknown technique in playwriting. Brecht intended his characters to be unlikeable so the audience would not sympathise with their sometimes terrible events that befell them. In the same paradigm, political actors of the campaign theatre deliver their speeches by this direct address, unleashing condemnation, libel, vilification, invective as well as inveigh against their opponents, such that subjectivity turns objective and could resort to an uproar. It is against these potential occurrences, characteristic of the campaign theatre which without restraints would trigger clashes proportionate to political violence. Meanwhile, Brecht's idea in designing his Epic Theatre thus is to enable the audience evaluate what he/she saw and heard on its merit alone and not a feeling the viewer may have for the character. Brecht wanted the audience to leave the theatre discussing what they have just seen and to relate this to their own environment and effect a change for the betterment of society. There were, however, some negative receptions to the Brechtian theatre, as it was rated as propagandistic, which rally people along Marxist beliefs, yet it influenced playwrights such as John Osborne and John Arden. Hence, in his plays, Brecht chose to alienate the audience of his epic theatre by

provocation and instruction through the process of entertaining. In this theatrical practice, the spectators and performers are detached in interactive communication through the 'alienative effect' as writes (Clark, 1973: 309):

Nothing permitted the audience any more to lose itself through simple empathy, uncritically (and practically without any consequence) in the experiences of the characters on stage. The presentation exposed the subject-matter and the happenings to a process of de-familiarization. De-familiarization was required to make things understood.

Thus the practice holds the individuals as capable of reasoning along with the unfolding events and hence able to make judgment out of their own mental and emotional disposition. His departure from Western conventions of theatre, though had the element of entertainment embedded in it, its instructions were chiefly to influence thinking by reflecting on issues communicated through the dramatic enactment. Most of Brecht's practices were community- based theatre.

While Brecht distanced the spectator/audience in the theatrical equation, Augusto Boal (1985) sought to incorporate them in the real act of the dramatic event. Boal's experimental theatre with the people of Peru led to the development of the concept which has become a theoretical source for practitioners of the art in his book *Theatre of the Oppressed*. His ideological concept emanates from Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* which makes clear distinction between the teacher and the learner as interactive...but a collaborative art in which both teacher and learner have equal responsibility of involvement in the performance process. The paradigm exhorts people to explore their own real lives which are also schemed, such that, there is an affectionate encounter between the participant-audience and participant-actors. The procedure affords both participants the reality of confronting issues through their interaction -tagged 'conscientization' by Freire. This type of popular theatre can be utilized by anybody

desiring it, be it artistic or not. Its nature is characteristic of open-political campaign drama- that in which political actors try to dialogue with local communities through speeches, amidst musical and comic performances.

Boal (1985) proposed another theatre he named 'Invisible', the kind he said must have a text with a script core, which will inevitably be modified according to the circumstances, to suit the intervention of the 'Spec-actors' This kind goes through the normal rehearsal procedure since it has the script but its performance does not occur in a theatre building. Meanwhile, he expects the actors to play to the rules of normal conventional way of playing before audience:

The actors must play their parts as if they were playing in a traditional theatre, for a traditional audience. However, when the play is ready, it will be performed in a place which is not a theatre and for an audience which is not an audience...In the course of our European experiences we did shows in the Paris Metro, in ferry boats, in restaurants, and streets of Stockholm.....(p.277).

Hence, Invisible theatre can be likened to political campaign theatres in some respects as it can be sited anywhere, at any location that tends to attract unsuspecting 'spec-actors' as its audience to its enthralling stage decoration and thrilling of topical issues being communicated. However, their presentation and action were tailored to a specific goal, while the nature and character of political campaign theatre takes a course suitable for political campaigning; for all it needs is the care and control, so that it does not degenerate to chaos.

The concept of forum theatre hinges on the attempt to bridge or break the traditional partition between spectator and the stage by incorporating audience to make an input in the dramatic action. The technique of this dramaturgy seeks to situate the actor-audience relationship in terms of the communication of message in theatrical form. The post

dramatic relay of information or diffusion of innovation theory is very relevant and useful in understanding the core political communication process.

Experimenting with the people's theatre in Peru, Boal (1985) explains and demonstrates the possibility of how oppressed people can express themselves by turning from 'passive spectator to an 'active' actor. This technique of simultaneous dramaturgy has been hyped up by later practitioners. Here are three methods within reach for non-formal education.

They are 'agitprop', participatory and theatre for conscientization. As discussed earlier agitation propaganda was a Marxist idea meant to infuse public opinion toward a goal. In the case of the spectator/audience, his involvement is predicated on his assumed duty as the 'writer of the script' for the political actors through their emotional responses in the communication process. By this method, the spectators launch into what is known as Forum theatre in which the spectators intervene and direct the course of action. Theatre practitioners acknowledge that in this relationship lies the communication praxis which generate responses.

Clark (1973: 397) says Antonin Artaud's essay *Theatre and Cruelty* advocated the kind of theatre "that wakes us up: nerves and heart." Like his predecessors Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco and others, Artaud calls for attack on the spectators' sensibility by pining for the theatre that plays to the reality of events which give the heart and senses of audience the kind of true believability that touch human requirements and desires.

It is in this vein that he calls for a "revolving spectacle which, instead of making the stage and auditorium two closed worlds, without possible communication, spread its visual and sonorous outbursts over the entire mass of spectator" (op.cit:1973: 398).

Political campaign theatre is fashioned along these descriptions. It facilitates learning and offers spectators the space to reflect, analyse, make decisions and promptly see the results in a favourable environment.

### **3.2 Political Campaign Theatre**

Campaign Theatre, as Marion Frank (1995: 114) called in her writing on AIDS Education in Uganda, is associated with information dissemination. As subgenre of Theatre for Development, she describes “...these are open ended to enable a broad-brush approach to be used. Campaign theatre takes regular performance in order to get the message or information across to as many people as possible” Frank admits by declaring that “Through theatre, changes are brought about more easily than through lectures, radio, and newspapers. Theatre involves people and motivates them for action—which is after all its objective”. Frank says the communicator assesses his audience, understands their circumstances and is aware of their social strata and therefore massages his message in a manner that affect the audience as an integrated whole.

The concept makes theatre break down communicative barriers resulting from any hidden motive for the sake of behaviour change, and conveying knowledge about expected aid and arousing audiences’ emotions to stimulate acceptance of the message. Audiences have variety of responses to variety of messages, and for the effective transformation of any ingrained attitude or behaviour, some politicians resort to emotional appeal backed by monetary consideration and fantastic promises in their face-to-face interaction process. In this context, the political actors introduce the subject of the campaign as the electorates- for that matter the spectators- react through other means of responses.

In assessing audience responses in campaign theatres, Dietrich (1953) opines that, ideally the normal theatre practice of viewing theatrical production as an illusion detaches the

spectator from participating because the illusion helps to maintain his subjective responses—which are based on his feelings. The moment the spectator's feelings go beyond his controlled limit, he turns to be objective or when he develops the full sensual notion of artificiality, the illusion disappears and launches him into reality. Under this condition any member of the public so charged with the reality of things can jump on stage and make an input. Such open plays, says Worthen (2004) “disrupts the expectations, attitudes and preconceptions of the empowered audience and invite the audience to develop different ways of reading their society/ leaders as part of their involvement in the play” (p.545).

The passion with which they get involve from ‘passive spectator to active actors’ is ascribed to campaign theatres. The interactions that take place between the performers and the audience result in the identification of problems common among the audience. The spectator through discussion then improvises and offers solution by identifying with the crises or problems at hand. This is the conscientization stage—that which is exploited by politicians.

Dietrich (1953) identifies two ways of responses to the illusion of action on stage. One is, Empathic responses – in which spectators’ reaction to stage action and sound, involves his motor response. “It is the process of feeling into” the object or action being viewed” in other words he makes bodily movement corresponding to the dramatic action he is viewing. Most often spectators of political campaign theatre have such seizures, causing them to respond favourably or distraughtly as the situation may be.

The other is, Emotional identification – a spectator who draws on identifying himself with a character on stage by experiencing, emotionally the character in the play.

“The imitation motor responses and the emotional identification are complimentary; and therefore a ‘spectator who becomes so tense in imitation of the action on stage...such that his muscle actually ache...has objectified the situation, and the illusion of the play is destroyed.’ This situation leads the spectator then to a ‘participant spectator’ due to the strong stimuli. Hence ‘objectivity has replaced subjectivity and the spectator’s artistic detachment has been destroyed (op.cit:p.49). The illusion turns into reality. Such instinctive outburst Stanislavski would call natural behaviour. His concept of acting impresses on the individual to behave naturally- asserting that acting is like living. Mayerhold and Alexander Basky, however, disagree. They claim that “[A]cting is human behaviour designed in terms of the theatre”. Duerr,(1962:446) therefore it must be distinguished from other human activities by something that is peculiar to itself; otherwise we would be justified in calling any activity which occurs in everyday life as acting. This is characteristic of theatres in the open such as political ones, since the social intercourse that happen is sometimes driven by impulse and therefore largely tends to be repulsive in the delivery process. Control is necessary.

“A fundamental assumption of political theatre” according to Worthen (2004) is that fixed ideas which are clothed in the mind-set of societies are part of the larger system of discrimination in operation and are relevant pointers or indicators of attitudes that are dominant among the people and those in authority. Stereotypical invectives that have characterized our political theatres reveal the nauseating behaviour of those whose leadership position influence and control society. And once politicians are in the forefront of it, followers pander to such prejudices and the cycle continues. Once pronouncements are made, the concept of ‘diffusion of innovation’ gets promoted among the audience.

Diffusion of Innovation theory makes possible interpersonal communication networks. The theory postulates that when a new idea originates at a point it spreads through the

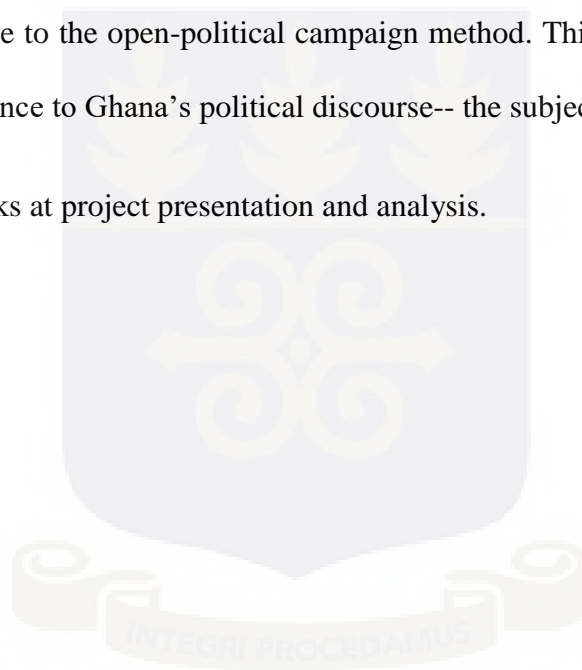
neighbourhood from person to person. Once a person gets hold of information he lets it to other members within the community and the next man also passes it on to the other in that process. This takes us back to Asiamah's concept of post-colonial education which hinges on few individuals in position of influence or power making decision for the entire social system in uni-directional communication mode. According to Rogers (1964) Diffusion of Innovation theory has 4 key elements. (i). Innovation: 'as an idea practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption'. (ii). Communication channel: the means by which messages get from one individual to another. (iii). Time: the innovation-decision period is the length of time required to pass through the innovation decision process" Rate of adoption is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system. (iv). Social system: defined as a set of interrelated units that is engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal'. (pp.152-156). Many a political theatre has resorted to the diffusion innovation theory as a strategy to reach out to their target audience. However, any mishandling, distortion or misguidance of the innovation can lead to tension, conflict and ultimate explosion if larded messages inveigh against a group or individual. According to Blumler, & Katz (1974), this innovative political campaign theatre examines "representative images of reality" as they subvert the expectations and behavioural attitudes of audiences by subjecting them to preconceived ideas that make them develop different ways of assessing themselves and their leaders through their involvement in the play. This is in consonance with Brecht's idea that theatre should be such that it makes its audience think about the world they live in (op.cit:545).

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed variety of theatre concepts propounded by theatre practitioners from empirical and theoretical perspectives. The study looked at model theatres through generations but the fundamental consideration is that drama should develop ideas, arouse emotions and thoughts which the audience ought to be part in a constructive manner. The involvement of audience becomes quite significant due to the political nature of the theatres discussed.

Discussion of these concepts is in the realm of Boal's theatres of Invisible and Forum which are comparable to the open-political campaign method. This has evolved over time with particular reference to Ghana's political discourse-- the subject of this study.

The next chapter looks at project presentation and analysis.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PROJECT PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the play *In the Pipeline* (for convenience of arrangement, however, the textual matter of the script has been placed in Appendix C instead); it includes the writing process, methodology, format, language and characterisation. The play has been written to serve variety of purpose – to raise consciousness, to entertain, teach, to probe human conditions, to examine philosophical questions and statements, and importantly to challenge the premise of campaign theatres as compromising attacks, smearing and violence. It is envisaged that by exposing the shortcomings of campaign theatre, remedies may be found to improve upon its delivery to serve a better purpose. The paradigm shift is as a result of the blatant disregard for values that make politicking attractive. This comes in the form of wanton verbal and sometimes physical attacks that threaten to divide the country. From experiential evidence, the researcher has created the play to confirm the exigencies of political propaganda on Ghana’s political platforms. As cited by Gikandi (1985: 3), “...if a writer is to play a useful role in the growth of a new African community,” says Wole Soyinka “he must function as the barometer of his society” and by so doing, “he must write about the experiences of his people and register the mood and feelings of his community”. Through theatrical delivery the social and political circumstances of the audience may be examined for reflection.

In this research, the author used observation and interviews, to create the content of the play contextualizing those propaganda manifestations. The play’s reading<sup>1</sup> was presented

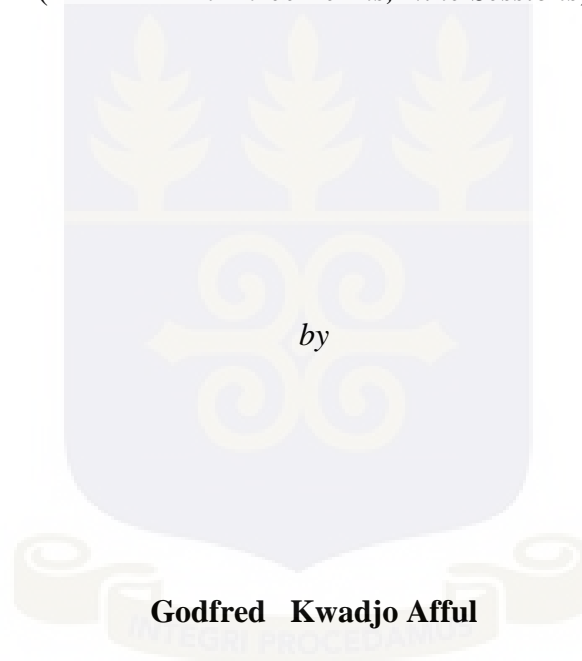
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1. Appendix B. 1. Play reading scenes conducted at E.T.S Drama Studio. 2. Group of students interrogate the philosophy of the play *In the Pipeline*.

to University of Ghana audience and using the post- reading discussions<sup>2</sup> as a basis of awareness of propaganda intrigues and ways of addressing them. *In the Pipeline* does not target any particular group or party by the elements of setting and characters that appear and interact in the world of the play; it rather portrays an illusion of the general Ghanaian situation. Its primary aim is to educate and create awareness on a looming danger that has the potential of explosion.

**IN THE PIPELINE**

(A PLAY - *In Three Terms, Nine Sessions*)



#### 4.1 The Writing Process

The play is constructed with political campaign stage in mind. Some special effects provide important clues to the background of the characters and their actions. *In the Pipeline* exemplifies political propaganda drama in all aspects as dramatic piece that is received and understood as a campaign theatre tool. The pipeline hinges on political rhetoric– “The art of making great matters small, and small matters great” noted Isocrates. It has become a convenient way of psyching up community members towards a particular event that may or may never happen. It has the tendency to make facts and ideas attractive and convincing. It is therefore an exploitative mechanism by those in power to make reality sometimes illusive. The pipeline may deliver the ‘good’ or may not, depending upon the circumstances and the motive. Thus when the protagonist, Kwabi Aye kept loading the pipeline with promises soon to be delivered, the people become aware of his intriguing art and responded by showing their intransigence, culminating in their agitation for the fulfilment of pronouncements made in the past.

Also, symbols such as party colours, badges, graffiti, flags, T-shirts, and other party insignia are used to expand the scope of the drama.

The role of *political campaign theatre*<sup>3</sup> as effective means of communication for political discourse is predicated on Boal’s (2002) Agitprop theatre. The open campaign theatre, however, departs significantly from conventional theatre from the perspectives of delivery and reception. As a mass communication platform, information flow is sometimes uni-directional with audience participation being minimal, in terms of responses.

The dramatic construction of the play *In the Pipeline* is predicated on elements that make it a campaign theatre with similar structure and enactment like popular theatre, defined as:

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<sup>3</sup> Campaign Theatres of two major Political Parties of Ghana. see appendix B.

a theatre through which intellectuals try to communicate with the people most disadvantaged in their society; either by presenting plays to them in which problems of the society are articulated from the point of view of the people or getting them to present plays themselves which increasingly help them to analyse their society. Hence the type of drama can be utilized by all people whether they are artistically talented or not. (Crow and Etherton; 1980:574)

The play is divided into *terms and sessions*. Like any other agitation propaganda theatre, however, certain devices are employed to capture and involve the audience by making them part of the action. They get involved both physically and emotionally.

#### **4.1.1 Mode of Audience Involvement**

Audience involvement is quite crucial to the organisation of political campaign theatres. Several techniques are adopted to ensure audience/spectators attention and direct participation in the dialogue in the form of responses (*T1:S3*). Political actors, in their speech, may pose a rhetorical question in a bid to attract empathy in their appeal, thereby arresting audience attention. The technique of phone-in inputs as administered by the host of Power Point Radio (PPR) in soliciting audience responses and reactions to monologues and submissions of the political actors is an intervention that calls for self-evaluation of ones chances of acceptance or rejection. The platform opens up the window of opportunity for audience involvement, by way of interrogating certain held opinion and claims that may be falsified or exaggerated. It also allows for quick rebuttal as the process holds in check intimidating or hate speech that has the tendency to disrupt proceedings. Such spectator-actors planted among the larger audience are able to articulate their views objectively as would any audience-spectator. In this way, propaganda in any form; be it an exaggeration of material fact or concealment of a corrupt deal, risk exposure. Thus through the phone-in calls, Kwabi Aye of *Zoom Party* is stripped naked as a womanizer, while Nana Ama brands him "...Incredible monster! Misogynist. You are an insult to womanhood. (*T3:S1*).

In the same vein, access could be granted to a volunteer spectator to address his fellow spectators as a way of involving the audience. In a response to Kwabi Aye at the rally, a citizen reacts “Well that might be one out of the problems tackled ...Where is the stadium you promised Ayima people last term?” (T3:S2). In communities where local names, symbols and even images have relevance to the interpretation of themes or issues being dialogued, there is stronger feeling of spectator-participation and attention. They most often than not applaud by slogans and choral responses (T3:S2). The issuing out of souvenirs such as party handkerchiefs, wrist bands, caps, t-shirts create a lot affinity. These go a long way to create post –performance discussion long afterwards, as discussed earlier under diffusion of innovation theory.

#### **4.2 Methodology**

The study purposely employed two qualitative approaches in gathering data. An unstructured open observation and interviews were adopted by the researcher to observe and interrogate a number of events and behaviours taking place about two major political parties –NDC, and NPP. Most of these occurred in the form of survey which allows one to study large numbers of people and take the opportunity to engage a good number to determine their opinion on why campaign platforms have become avenues for political agitation and condemnation. Also, the design enabled the researcher to reach a large number of respondents to obtain the desired representative sample to deduce the perception of the entire adult populace on political propaganda.

The major variable observed was propaganda-campaign stages and the behaviour of the actors and audience-spectators. The study involved direct personal observation, as a participant observer (PO) by identifying with the respondents, to examine the structural composition of the performing stage, the actions and reactions of political actors and their

audience/spectators; responses to certain pronouncements and declamatory statements by officialdom during rallies. These were recorded or noted and analysed, but without the guidance of a questionnaire. The campaign propaganda messages, under normal circumstances, are unwritten and non-rehearsed. Their performances take place on conveniently erected open-stages made of boards,- the size of which can carry a score of actors as they move up and down the stage,- in a large open compound which can accommodate large crowd. They are dismantled after performance.

Another instrument employed is in-depth interviews, which were conducted with politicians, communication experts as well as intellectuals for insight into the negative aspects of political campaigning messages. The interviews were ‘open’, ‘unstructured’ and ‘semi-open’ to allow for freedom of expression. These were recorded and analysed (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). In addition, groups of students, held discussions on the subject in the context of dramatizing the negativity of political propaganda. Relevant publications and newspapers were consulted. However, the research does not seek to theorize a new concept; it attempts to confirm the prevalence of impropriety in political campaign theatres and how to disengage them on all the field works. The data gathered and analysed confirm the concept of campaigning as an art that raises awareness of the populace about both positive and negative (but particularly negative) aspects of political propaganda in the Ghanaian society. The findings became a major confirmatory contributing to the writing of the play *In the Pipeline*.

In an interview with a respondent (April 29, 2013) on the many faces of propaganda used to win political power, he explained the phenomenon as “the Conspiracy Theory in which some African leaders literally keep their people poor so that they can continue to stay in power.” He opined that politicians play on the illiteracy and ignorance of the people to

stay in power, as they know majority of the people from whom they derive their mandate are uneducated.

In a related interview, another respondent (April 30, 2013) widened the scope of political propaganda to embrace ethnicity, religion or regional as inextricably linked to propaganda gimmicks. He condemned it as a practice which “reduces a person’s objectivity” and subjects one to political ploy.

He looked at Ghana’s political propaganda as “one thing which might not be the truth but sounding it so loud for it to appear as the truth.” He distinguished political propaganda from political invective, appropriating political invective as that which is “meant to defame, or denigrate.”

Similarly, two interviewees (June 4, 2013) shared the same opinion. They view propaganda as that meant to make an untruth look truthful, the purpose of which is geared toward political advantage. In a question as to whether indeed propaganda is a bad thing, one respondent was emphatic: “political propaganda is not a bad phenomenon at all; spreading the good thing you are doing is not, unfortunately propaganda in Ghana has turned to be a way of mischief, a mischievous way of trying to tell the public what is not there.” He said things have deteriorated to the extent that present situation cannot be compared with the gains of the 1970’s because of propaganda intrigues. On a comparative level a respondent likened present political system to socialist-communist tendencies, that is; “ideology and brainwashing.” “Like propaganda and subterfuge,” he continued ‘children believed the slogan...if your father said something against the government report him.’ He went on; “One thing about propaganda is that you say something so many times so that that which is a lie begins to look like the truth, so that, that which is impossible begins to look possible.” He cited examples to buttress his point; “Communists, Socialists,

Revolutionary leadership, the Nazi Gestapo, Goebbels in Germany under Hitler was a master propagandist; one of the propaganda messages was that, Germans should hate Jews, Jews are evil, they suck your blood, and they must be eliminated. By constant propaganda, this got into the head of many Germans and it sparked hatred among the populace...” (June 4, 2013).

Unfortunately, when propaganda assumes such dimension, then there is the threat of a looming danger. The question of tribal sentiments being fanned by political figures in their quest for power are largely unforgiveable since they tend to undermine national unity as they sow seeds of division and discontent. On the question of tribal differences becoming an issue of propaganda, a communication expert (May 9, 2013), expressed cautious optimism in the way politicians lobby the citizenry for acceptance. He said “our tribes are different, our religious... so there will be ... but we have lost focus as a collective body.” To overcome these tendencies he suggested that “strong decisive leadership that will rise above this pettiness” was needed. He bemoaned the culture of silence in which people are afraid to speak up the truth for fear that they will be intimidated and ridiculed.

What perhaps is critical in the discourse is political invective; the other side of the political propaganda. A respondent differed in the general view held by other authorities in this discussion. He argued that defamation, denigration and personal vendetta are the cardinal issues needing special attention more than the card stacking device that hinges on exaggeration of numerical facts by politicians. He said concrete facts would be there for everyone to see if the government lied about them. To him, what has become uncontrollable is the denigration and destruction of people’s reputation.

Associating people in political circles with extreme hatred because of differences in ideology and tribe was a bad precedence for Ghana’s fledgling democracy. In a discussion

among a group of Students<sup>4</sup> (May 27, 2013) on the subject, members remarked that name calling, insults, abuse and attacks on the reputation of political opponents was the result of the rewards such attackers received from their cronies and party leadership. In the discussion, panellists admitted that “the nature of our politics has turned from political opponents to political bitter enemies” and accused the media and the campaign platforms of excesses in their operations. Again, “the more vociferous you are,’ said a respondent (June 4, 2013) ‘the more you have a reward; a car or position in government”. This has encouraged a number of politicians and aspiring ones to develop a rigorous way of attacking their opponents, through condemnations and direct confrontations, through radio, television, print media and political campaign theatres.

What is most disturbing, however, is that the phenomenon of political invective has the so-called educated people in the forefront who open up the Pandora’s Box for their followers to deliver the blow. In circumstances like this, indiscipline is all you are left with, and one will need propaganda to shield it, while the other also prepares a counter propaganda to combat it, and the cycle of propaganda war continues.

A respondent cited the Rwanda genocide as triggered by media propaganda; “The use of ` lies, intimidation, insults and the tribal card to incite the people...” The political analyst took a swipe at the turn of events saying, “Propaganda creates some siege mentality. And within this siege mentality the whole country goes rotten as everybody is running on indiscipline.” His school of indiscipline which was the creation of propaganda is expressed in the City Centre incidents in which a gang of arms-wielding men and another gang of land guards brazenly took positions, supposedly to protect lands with impunity, in the city centres of Kumasi and Accra respectively. He argued pessimistically that the “rule of law

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<sup>4</sup> A group of students discuss political propaganda

is lost, constitutionalism lost, crime gate is opened because crime has now got political colours. Someone steals 'A' and someone else also comes to prove that it is 'B'." The implications of these are that the country was gradually becoming ungovernable and therefore pitied the President, because according to him "everybody is caught in this quagmire of propaganda and lies in this country" (June 4, 2013).

While a media personnel (May 9, 2013) observed that "propaganda has thrived because we have lost much of our values as Ghanaians we were brought up to believe," a group of Students (May 27, 2013), also agreed that "propaganda thrives and works well among illiterate populace." This view is equally held by other respondents, who claim that propaganda works extremely well when majority of the people are not really educated. They therefore called for the intensification of education, blaming that the key leader to spearhead the educational drive is the same platform that is responsible for the spread of propaganda materials. They called for other civil institutions such as National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) to help.

In disagreement with other respondents for including the media as responsible for most of the propaganda peddling and spinning, a press editor likened the media to "a conveyor belt" asserting that "it is media people's responsibility to expose the politician and not to clean up their acts." He does not see why a politician must not be quoted verbatim if he has "verbal diarrhoea" (April 18, 2013). He indicated that parties have won power through the reliance on political propaganda. But other respondents were unanimous in their call to control such propaganda excesses on political platforms.

As to whether such exaggerations occur only in campaign theatre as on other media platforms, a theatre expert (April 25, 2013) in a statement said "that depended on the artist, unless it is pornographic, there is free expression in the theatre." He admitted

“emotionalism is worldwide and that depends on the artist or writer’s point of view or what he would like to draw attention on.” Hence any propaganda material will work in the context of the drama being staged.

It is apparent from all indications that the current raging political propaganda and invective is dangerous for Ghana’s unity, its fledgling democracy and future. This premonition stems from collated views by personalities and authorities across the political spectrum. In an observation, her Ladyship the Chief Justice commented on the fragile nature of the divide and rule politics of Ghana and Africa, Wood (November 19, 2012 p.19). She recommended that “consensus building remains critical to the enterprise of nation-building.” To her, the issue of ‘winner-takes all’ that has characterized Ghana’s democratic governance does not auger well for continuous practice. The system has given birth to vindictiveness with its accompanying witch-hunting and blame-game. This development has tended to exert some level of influence and pressure on politicians to resort to various clandestine and overt means to obtain power, retain power or regain power.

This has given rise to propaganda of all forms and shapes; from ethnic consideration down to the private life of an unsuspecting individual, and from concrete materials down to abstract statements. In her Ladyship lecture at the Great Hall, University of Ghana, Georgina Wood again viewed political leaders as those who “tended to play the regional and sectorial card for short term political gain” and therefore cautioned that, “we would as a nation have to work extra hard to overcome this tendency if we are to succeed in our quest to build a stronger and united country” (Daily Graphic, November 19, 2012. p.19).

Her position is reiterated by the Asantehene Otumfo Osei Tutu II<sup>5</sup>, who said the true meaning of democracy was for Ghanaians to forge unity in diversity to address the common problems; he stressed the need to be guided by the level crossings signal, “Stop, Look and Listen” to warn or guide us into the future, since “partisan politics was eating up the Ghanaian society” (May 22, 2013 p.10). Of course, the Asantehene challenges Ghanaians:

If we are honest, we must be feeling as though we are all encapsulated in a hot air balloon, adrift on the horizon, our senses numbed, our nerves rattled and our emotions outraged by ceaseless cacophony of noxious party propaganda. The air we breathe is polluted with party propaganda. There is no issue that is not reduced to propaganda. (op.cit p.10).

The tendency to tarnish, defame and insult opponents for political power has taken the central theme of his lecture. In the same encounter, he cautioned, that we should stop provoking each other with some of the things we say on radio. We must learn to show respect toward each other. Professor Agyeman Badu Akosa also thinks the confusion stems from politicians who buy votes to assume power. The CPP Presidential hopeful in a remorseful reflection confirmed the many twists and turns propaganda manifest, and admitted that “if you don’t pay, you don’t get elected” to political office. The development is largely due to the lifestyle of contemporary politicians who after attaining power, quickly get rich and display their opulence with pride and impunity. The ordinary man has nothing tangible left than to demand his bit or sell his vote or power. Professor Badu Akosa decried the practice: “...They look at the highest bidder and whatever you have to talk about does not matter. Whether you are espousing issues that will bring comfort to

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<sup>5</sup> The Asantehene , Otumfo Osei Tutu II delivering His Lecture to mark Constitution Week in Accra.

them, they are saying they don't want it next year, they want it now and that in a sense corrupts the system" (Daily Graphic: May 18, 2013. p.12).

Accordingly, in a review of electoral process in Ghana, Brobbey (2009), reveals that "Ghanaian voters voting behaviour is strongly influenced by very interesting and/or despicable factors; such as personal effects like 'chamber pots, roofing sheets, T-shirts' and other items like physical cash, job security and so on and so forth" (p.87).

These are some of the propaganda materials which come in different shapes and forms. Such development stifle freedom of expression and either put fear in people or embolden others to speak disparagingly about people and issues. The purported sharing of cash and in-kind comes once, but blurs the objectivity and vision of the recipients by preying on their gullibility as a people. This implies that people are ready to accept anything irrespective of the quality. It is no wonder therefore that propaganda messages find place in the heart and mind of people and would be prepared to go out on physical attack when struck or stricken by propaganda gimmicks.

Political propaganda has opened doors to political victimization and if we are not careful says an interview respondent, "propaganda will take us into the tipping point and at that point, an innocuous slip will take us to the abyss." (Respondent June 4, 2013). That without circumspection the battle will shift from ideological base to muscle exertion. Most of these happenings are the materials that inform the contents and themes of the play, *In the Pipeline*. From the foregoing discussions it can be generalized that propaganda breeds mediocrity, giving cause to ideological or partisan battle, war of words and hate speech.

Based on the interviews and discussions, the following conclusions were drawn as materials used in building the play- *In the Pipeline*:

- That Ghana's political propaganda has become synonymous with deceit, lies, distortion, brainwashing, hate speech and political invective; This is deployed in the play, especially when Kwabi Aye –a major character is severely and critically evaluated on his failed promises by the audience.
- Beyond the theatre platform, excesses of the print and electronic media are largely responsible for this 'propaganda war' that threatens to tear the nation apart; The phone-in calls- as a reactionary treat in refuting the claims of political actors by the planted audience-actors - that occur during the 'assess your aspiring candidates programme' on PPR is a technique that helps expand the frontiers of theatre as audience participatory element.

As observes the Asantehene:

The air we breathe is polluted with party propaganda. There is no issue that is not reduced to the level of party propaganda...Our society is so polarised that good is bad if you belong to one party and bad is good if it is the other way round. No sober-minded Ghanaian can afford not to be concerned (Tutu II, May 22, 2013 p.10).

- There is general breakdown of trust in the leaders as a result of political propaganda which threatens the social stability and traditional values of morality; Leaders must exhibit high level of moral standard especially as honourable men whose lifestyles are to be emulated. If they turn out to break certain social norms and conventions that ascribe to them their dignity, then they shall definitely lose their credibility and dignity in the eyes of society. Thus Kwabi Aye comes under severe attack when fellow aspiring contestants discover that he is not legitimately married as a public figure, but keeps changing women. The incident costs him dearly as he is branded a 'misogynist'.

A respondent succinctly termed the phenomenon ‘clientellism or cronyism’; to attain and retain power by relying on the gullibility of the people and trying to bribe your way to power” (June 4, 2013). The voting scene in the play, (*T3;S3*) manifests this practice, as electorates route to cast their vote while party agents accost them with their *memprop* and cash packages to win their votes.

- As partners in the resolution of issues, there is high involvement of audience/spectators during the enactment, and long after the performance—post-performance discussion; Audience involvement may turn either way depending upon the circumstances of the campaign, the degree of patronage, the friendliness of speech, pronouncements and interaction. Whatever transpires in this theatre will have a long-trail discussion long after performance.

However, as the interaction between political actors and audience during such campaigning serves as a medium for public information to explain government policies and projects, nothing untoward should be done to derail the good cause of campaign theatre as a platform for public-assessment of officialdom.

Since the situation must be a concern to all well-meaning Ghanaians especially political party followers and their leaders, there is an urgent need for intervention to alert Ghanaians on the dangers ahead as a nation.

#### **4.3 Format**

The features as displayed and exhibited by both political-actors and audience-spectators during the process of campaigning, was simulated for the purpose of tailoring it into a theatre for study. The various observables and interactive aspects were collated and examined for its impact on politics and society. The preoccupation of politicians, their

social conditions, temperaments- informed by their comments, and their general appearance are all incorporated into the materials to construct the play *In the Pipeline* to reflect the happenings of society for self-re-examination. Much as theatre is largely anodyne, the crave for power has been gradually but seriously emerging in a full force as a new phenomenon during campaigning, and this must be checked.

Campaign theatres are performed in the midst of the audience without fees, thereby encouraging larger participation. Spectators usually stand, while others sit along the three sides of the stage—with the actors having the fourth wall behind them. The programme usually starts with musical prelude, followed sometimes by comedies and jokes to whet the interest and patronage of spectators. This is followed by the actual rendition of speeches and oration. It is during such occasion that propaganda laced messages are delivered in succession and in series, which come in one continuous stream without *acts and scenes* changes. The concluding aspect is musical, as participants disperse. Performance usually takes place in the afternoon to enable a whole community people to attend and interact with their leaders in a harmonious way. Their nature is mobile or itinerant as the movement is from community to community.

In most platform mountings, political protagonists advocate strongly their party's ideological position and appeal to the citizenry to vote for them so that they can run the affairs of the country. The strategy comes especially when a community proves hostile and needs to be reconciled. Issues about health, education, environment and security, and general welfare most often attract the kind of open dialogue with political actors. Under such conditions, a volunteer who may act as a mouthpiece or spokesperson for the audience would intervene as a collaborator, or raise controversy that would gradually spark a collective bargain between visiting-actors and community-audience. To play their cards well, the political actors sometimes resort to identifying themselves with 'localised'

images or names that have resonance with that 'local' audience to broach a better understanding for their cause. However, at the end of the day, a deal is struck as propaganda takes its toll in the form of promises and agreements, all things being peaceful.

Also, the incorporation of radio as a composite part to complement political propaganda theatres is a new phenomenon that helps situate and give meaning to the kind of theatre under discussion. The introduction of the phone-in calls –a platform which assesses and evaluates aspiring MPs is crucial to the selection and election of candidates, since society is given the chance to probe them further to establish their suitability and commitment. The programme helps, so that the citizens do not suffer unnecessarily when self-seekers do not get elected to public office. This electronic communication further gives anonymity to callers, which also aids in the interventionary process of theatre as their contributions help confirm their position, refute their allegations or intercede with constructive suggestions. The interposing of the phone-in calls by planting some spec-actors in the auditorium among the audience is to give effect to the intervention quality of the play, while a miniature radio station is set up on stage to broadcast the debate scene. So also would some planted spec-actors charge on the scene of the rally to disrupt proceedings, thereby creating confusion to end the rally.

The dramatic construction of the play *In the Pipeline* is predicated on elements that make it a campaign theatre. The play is divided into *Terms and Sessions*. As a political play, the *terms* are the major *acts* while the *sessions* constitute the *scenes* to give an indication of the term of office for an elected government or a member of parliament. Its organisation is structured along popular theatre, with regards to its political implications. It is erected to advance government policies, or for a particular class of sponsors whose interests are of paramount concern to the society. The play, *In the Pipeline*, falls in the domain of

‘campaign theatre’ otherwise termed ‘information campaign’ by Marion Frank, discussed earlier in chapter three. The play has a simple plot that treats various conflicts through the sessions, and the dramatic action is dominated by the drive for continuity of power held and advocated by the protagonist Kwabi Aye. All other themes and episodes are directly related to him.

In *Term One*, the opening exposes Kwabi Aye is an incumbent Member of Parliament (MP) of the Yoko Constituency, seeking the third term. His unbridled ambition to hold on to power is underscored by both inter- and intra-party rivalry he encounters as he moves into action. The conflict gets complicated and he seeks spiritual assurance with a Mallam who further puts him in a dilemma.

*Term Two*, With the introduction of a female Independent candidate –Nana Ama Kobi and a former opponent, Dr Yaw Bofa- into the race leading to the election, Kwabi Aye resorts to all manner of intrigues to consolidate his hold on to power, but Nana Ama makes some incursions into his party and steals *Stone*, the goose that lays his golden egg.

*Term Three*: The climactic point occurs in a debate organised for the three contestants at the *Power Point Radio* platform, in which the audience/spectators make input as participants. Kwabi Aye demonstrates his pride and intolerance when questioned about his extra-marital life-- as a public figure – ending the debate. The climax occurs at a grand rally when Kwabi Aye’s pronouncements and promises are met with strong currents of discontent, ending the rally in pandemonium. This culminated in Kwabi Aye’s defeat after all manner of tricks and souvenirs employed to sway the people this time, failed to entice electorates.

Like any other agitation propaganda theatre, however, the device of special spectator-actors’ are planted amongst the audience to facilitate their involvement as part of the

players' action. They get involved both physically and emotionally when they are due to make input and appearance.

#### 4.4 The Concept of Memento Propaganda (*MEMPROP*)

Juxtaposed among the various concepts espousing political propaganda is a new phenomenon that has characterised Ghanaian electioneering process of late; the voluntary 'dish out' of gift in return for vote as exemplified in the play *In the Pipeline*. This practice where political protagonists dole out petty and pretty packages as souvenirs, and cash to demand the electorates mandate in election has resulted in political agitation and argument over quality leadership. Ofori explains to Nana Ama over the re-nomination of Kwabi Aye by the constituency executives:

NANA AMA: So they renewed Kwabi Aye's mandate with unanimity!

OFORI :He won, don't marvel, by coercion and intimidation. I could have beaten him but... *[flashback demonstration by OFORI and STONE as envelopes and mobile phones are given to delegates with vows and cursing statements following]*

OFORI :You know when famished people chance upon food they gorge it ... and one funny thing... every delegate who received a parcel from him pledged the taboo of **Antoa Nyama** to confirm his commitment to vote for him. (T2:S3)

The concept, which the author calls memento propaganda (*Memprop*) involves the giving out in open secret- mobile phones, laptops, iron sheets, even cars, and motorbikes, to agents and individuals in return for election services. In most cases recipients and beneficiaries are made to swear their commitment. In the mime voting scene, an electorate is confronted with some souvenir:

1<sup>ST</sup> ELECTORATE : *[Listens to whispers and moves toward the PARTY AGENT spotting SEED PARTY T-Shirt, takes cash, counts and stuffs it in his pocket and is coached on the ballot paper who to vote for. After accepting to vote for the appointed candidate and party, he is shown a contraption... to swear by and the agent touches his lips or forehead with it and allows him to go. As he moves towards the POLLING CENTRE, he is bemused and stops*

*on the way, dips his hand in and brings out the money from the pocket, looks at it for a moment sighs heavily and begins to walk slowly away].(T3:S3)*

As also captured by Brobbey (2009, p.87), "...most Ghanaian voters' voting behaviour is strongly influenced by very interesting and/ or despicable factors; such as personal effects like 'chamber pots, roofing sheets, T-shirts,' and other items like physical cash, job security and so on and so forth."

In the same vein, a community threatening withdrawal from voting could be swayed by quickly moving machines to grade their road for them to change their mind, if that was their beef. After the elections, they sink back into their wretchedness as nobody cares about the road again. The idea defeats rational thinking for both 'giver and taker' as no one benefits in the end. Their immediate gain soon wears away as the terms associated with it absolves the politician of any further responsibility.

#### **4.5 The Role of Civil Societies**

The activities of political groups make it necessary to embark on mass education to educate and instil in the citizenry civic responsibilities and values of nationalism. The nagging problems of propaganda embroilment, with its ability to contaminate the entire Ghanaian citizenry, calls for dispassionate analyses to re-orient Ghanaians toward the model. The underlying precepts of propaganda therefore is corruption and vice versa, as the tendency to wilfully lie or sway public opinions about a particular case or situation is quite noxious.

Undoubtedly, corruption begets propaganda.

There is therefore the need for civic education among the youth, to grow in them values of national rights and responsibilities as part of their curriculum in schools, to overturn the

misrepresentation which conceals unpleasant acts detrimental to the progress of the country.

The National Commission on Civic Education in collaboration with Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and other institutions are therefore advocating the inculcation of moral values, sense of patriotism and civic responsibilities in the Ghanaian youth.

The NCCE is of the view that “introducing the constitution and its prescription to school children at a younger age would facilitate the understanding of their right and civic responsibilities, and this will have an overall impact on the fight against corruption.” (Daily Graphic: May 27, 2017 p.17).

In his own words, the Deputy Chairman in charge of Operation, S A Akuamoah opined “This is because the young ones are not well armed to join the fight; they only see people with riches and power as their role models and end up associating with them.” Indeed, the inclusion of this manual in the GES curriculum will help make the children understand how dangerous it is to indulge in destructive propaganda and the consequences thereof.

In a related engagement Daniel A. Latsu “called for civic engagement between citizens and public officials in the decision making process, since such engagement are key to national development.”(Daily Graphic: July 8, 2017 p.19)

Other non-governmental organization (NGO) and religious bodies such as the churches, Islamic organizations and other democratic institutions must spearhead this drive for mass-education on the positive and negative aspects of political propaganda, particularly its erosion of Ghanaian values and attitudes. However, the leadership must first have

discerning mind with the power to recognize and make rational inference so as to make it unconditionally meaningful.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In the above discussions, the chapter presents the play *In the Pipeline* and examines the writing process, the research methodology, format, language and characterisation. These are meant to situate campaign platforms as theatre that examines human behaviour. This has come about in the form of public dialogue involving both political protagonists and spectator participants who strike a deal on this political platform. Also, there has been a thorough discussion from authorities whose ideological comments say political propaganda is embroiled in political lies, deception, invective, resulting in labour agitation. The Editorial of Ghana's authoritative newspaper "The Daily Graphic notes with disappointment, the fact that strikes have now become the norm for all manner of workers to press home their demand for better service conditions or even what they have already negotiated for" (Daily Graphic: Sept. 9, 2013:7). These labour unrests are response to propaganda improprieties communicated on political campaign platforms. This method of campaigning collaborates Mda's *Agitprop*. The situation makes it dangerous for national development, hence mass education must be done from childhood, not ignoring the adult voters in the fight against the debilitating propaganda.

The concluding chapter five harps on the observation and major findings of the research work, and recommendations for application.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.0 Introduction

The study examined the concept of propaganda in the context of campaign theatre as a modern political tool. Various authorities on theatre theories and practices have been reviewed to situate political campaign theatre, as an ideal platform that enhances effective communication exchange. As theatre for development, the campaign theatre has fostered effective actor-spectator relationship. The other dimension focuses on the dynamics of drama to propagate political propaganda messages. The analysis of political propaganda reveals its use and abuse to attain ones goal. It also has the potential setback causing social unrest. Data gathered and analysed reveal a direct correlation between propaganda and agitation – as one of the major outcomes of socio- political confrontations.

It is generally understood to be a derogatory word in spite of its functionality in political circles to advocate social change.

The various interactions that have taken place in the context of the study point to a common generalization that theatrical delivery of political propaganda deeply affect political-actors and participant-audience(s)—showing their manners negatively and positively.

#### 5.1 Major Findings

The various interactions that have taken place in the context of the study point to some common findings:

- Socio-economic agitation is inextricably linked to political propaganda. To strike a good deal, political- actors and audience-spectators engage in its abuse, which result in tension and labour unrest. The practice of politicians adopting souvenir propaganda (*MEMPROP*) also, corrupts electorates into electing myopic leaders.
- That campaign theatres are used abusively to intimidate, defend corruption and exaggerate material facts. Thus the play *In the Pipeline* seeks to highlight these practices as thought-provoking and consciousness-raising tool in order to bring about political and social change. This is evidenced by the circumstances under which they are held.
- The platforms located for political campaigning are major sources of propaganda gimmicks which mostly produce political agitation. They also function as stages for public education and fora for expression.
- The messages of political campaign theatres are largely unscripted, and considering their performance structure they only unleash condemnation and defence of their illegitimate acts.
- The functional role of political campaign theatres as information and education, have been overturned for miscarriage of political expediency that only provokes unrest and agitation because it erodes the quality of human life.

## **5.2 Recommendations and Suggestions**

The study reveals some unconventional practices associated with the art of political propaganda. It is this researcher's hope that some recommendations and suggestions arising from this study will be given the needed attention. The researcher recommends that:

1. The presentational form of political campaign theatre creates opportunities for participation in discussion of issues that affect the community; however, the technique must be carefully thought out to overcome emotional outburst that destroy the value of its objective so as to promote the efficacy of the art.
2. The character of campaign theatres differ diametrically to literary drama in terms of their presentation and patronage and therefore must be used with circumspection to subverts public agitation.
3. Propaganda theatres should be structured such that charges of alleged corruption, intimidation, political in-fighting, and personality clashes, that are associated with political propaganda are avoided or highlighted to warn people against impending danger.
4. It is imperative that audience/spectators frame their mind and psyche themselves up as though in conventional theatre, which events are illusive and thereby be guided by restraint so that they do not unnecessarily pander to emotionality.
5. As an emerging phenomenon, it is proper that the populace, especially school children are educated on the good values of patriotism so that they grow to overcome improprieties of propaganda.

### **5.3 Observation**

The study observes that political propaganda occurs openly on campaign platforms through dramatic performance. The practise is undertaken to enhance the communities' form of expression to be able to take collective decision regarding their existence. The study focused on campaign theatres as drama that highlights political propaganda.

The concept of propaganda thrives on emotionalism in its appeal to people. Due to this feature, it has been viewed as a derogatory word which connotes lies, manipulation of

facts and deception, especially during political campaign pronouncements. The outcome of which is that public opinion is shaped through the manipulation of propagandists for purposes of winning the hearts of the electorates in the political process.

Political propaganda and campaign theatre are inextricably linked. The prime purpose of it was to engender a harmonious interaction between political actors and their publics by way of information and education but a rather dangerous paradigm shift has changed its focus. The good deed is superimposed with condemnation, libellous attack, and invective on political opponents. The method and design of campaign theatre currently, create the atmosphere for negative intervention.

The study also reviewed aspects of methodology applied in gathering data. The methods were largely qualitative; employed to look at the premise that political campaign stages are synonymous with developmental theatres in Ghana. Much of it was based on general personal observation. As a participant watching activities on these campaign theatres mounted by politicians, it was discovered that propaganda was loudly touted here.

Also, personal interviews were conducted on the subject and recorded for analysis. As part of the analysis, extracts of the interviews were incorporated to confirm the idea that campaign theatres have come to be recognised as forums that unleash condemnation, smearing hate speech among others. These are what trigger the negative intervention and subsequent unrests.

The simulation of the play *In the Pipeline* presents a picturesque complexity and intricacy of propaganda in Ghana's political sphere and the dynamism it has assumed lately especially, during electioneering period and after.

The content of the play foregrounds political propaganda as a crucial tool used to sway public opinion. The play is also based on the author's personal philosophy, experience and observation of politicians and their preoccupations. It has been found that propaganda is most effective way of reaching out to the masses, mostly the uneducated and the poor.

By experimenting some scenes on stage during the play-reading exercise, a number of issues came into play. As theatre promotes social gathering, the interaction between actors and audience during and after the theatrical experience creates awareness and enhances social life. This experience opens vistas of new perception, and the recognition of the need to transform ones social outlook, analyse facts, alleged facts, opinion and propaganda. It was also realized that audience/spectators frame their mind and psyche themselves up as in conventional theatre which events are illusive and should therefore be guided by restraint.

The project is an experimental one that tries to examine the extent to which propaganda affect every individual, party, group, state institutions, civil societies and administrators, (as depicted on the organogram p.10) hence the need to re-examine the issue. Based on the findings, the study concludes that political propaganda corrupts state administrators, state institutions, parties, and the citizenry.

The source of the country's overwhelming indiscipline and labour agitation is the result of political propaganda; a situation that creates insecurity. Therefore, it is recommended that critical steps are taken to address the situation from slipping to complete chaos.

#### **5.4 Application**

The massive attraction and patronage of campaign theatre as a communication tool has been discussed to reveal its creative potentialities. As a medium, the study is a source

material for application by academicians, politicians, media, diplomats and policy-makers as well as the generality of Ghanaians.

### **5.5 Summary**

The thesis has examined campaign drama as a vehicle for political propaganda in the Ghanaian political scene. It has in the preceding chapters reflected on the impropriety of political propaganda during political campaigning in Ghana. The study is undertaken with these objectives in mind:

- (1) The recognition of political campaign as vulnerable political theatres in Ghana.
- (2) The performance of political campaigning risk social unrest.
- (3) The campaign theatre as a participatory tool for social dialogue.

The play *In the Pipeline* gives food for thought and serves as self-evaluative piece for our edification.

Broken into five chapters, readers are taken through an academic exercise which examines the histrionic of theatre concepts and challenges not only politicians, but also the Ghanaian citizenry who may have access to the work.

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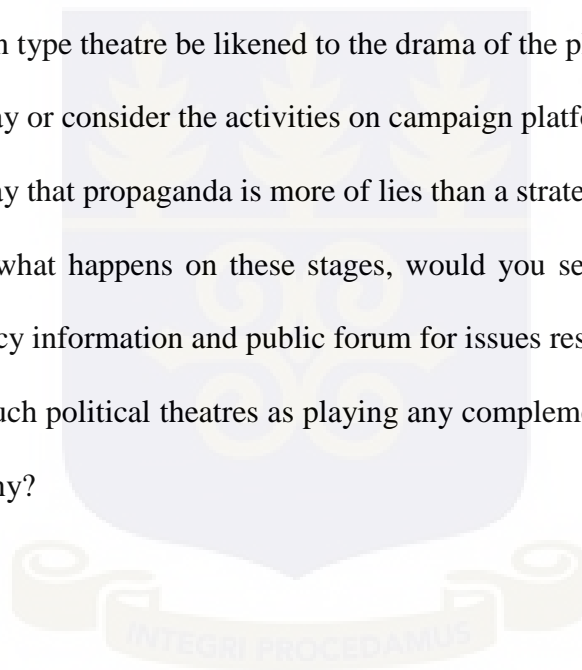
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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How often do you attend political (campaign) rallies?
2. Are audiences/spectators allowed interactive dialogue with political actors during such campaign rallies?
3. In what form/shape do campaign theatres take?
4. Do you think or take spectators involvement a healthy development, in terms of their aggressive agitation for their welfare?
5. Can campaign type theatre be likened to the drama of the playhouse?
6. Would you say or consider the activities on campaign platforms a form of drama?
7. Would you say that propaganda is more of lies than a strategy to win power?
8. Considering what happens on these stages, would you see them as a convergent point for policy information and public forum for issues resolution?
9. Do you see such political theatres as playing any complementary role in promoting social harmony?



**Appendix B: Pictures of some scenes captured during play performance**



T1; S1 Kwabi Aye arrives with Stellie at Haggins Hotel



T1; S3 OFORI antagonizes Kwabi Aye, escorted by the Police, after the Zoom Party meeting



T2; S2 Kwabi Aye consults with the Mallam



T2; S3 Independent candidate Nana Ama lobbies Ofori and Stone to campaign for her



T3; S2 Kwabi AYE addresses crowd/audience



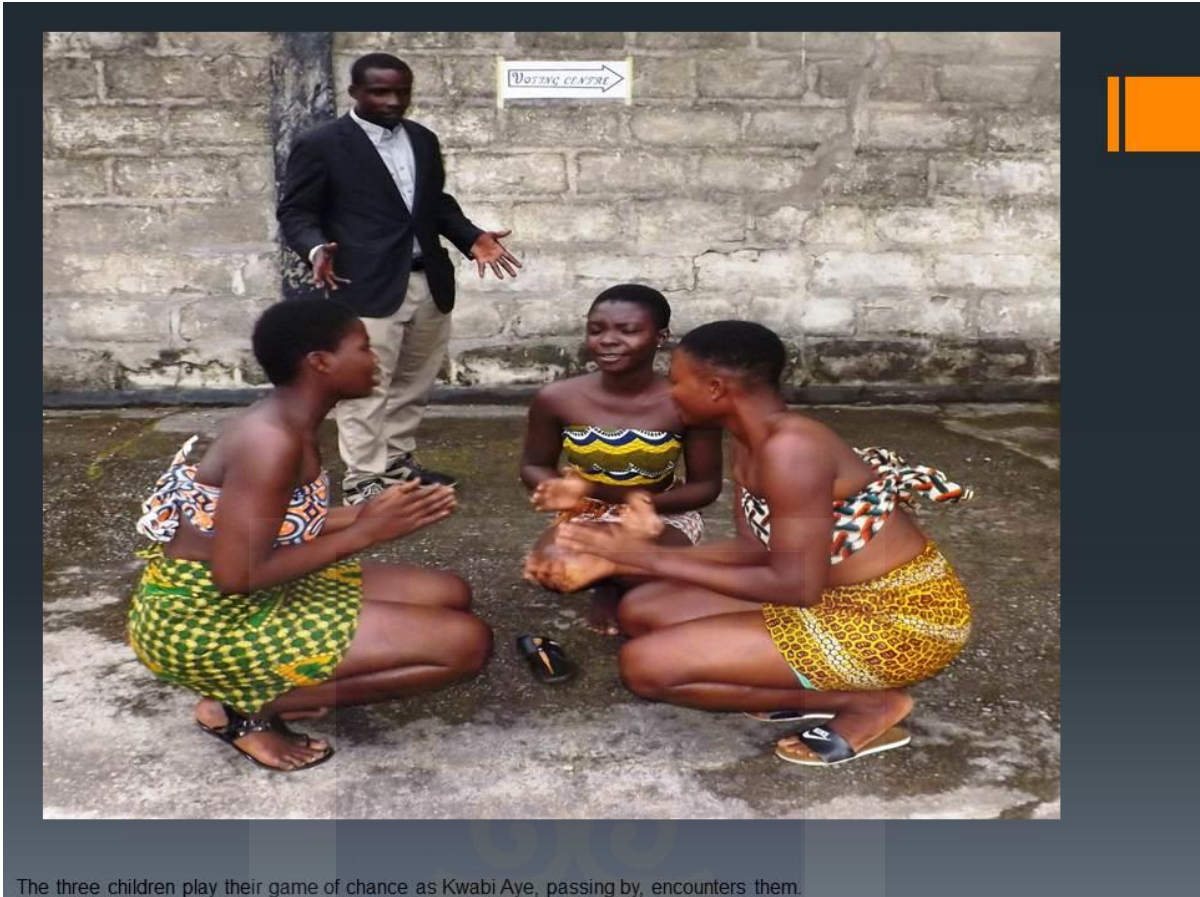
T3; S2 Kwabi Aye the MP interacting with crowd/audience during the rally



T3; S2 A citizen questions the incumbent MP - Kwabi Aye of promises made



T3; S3 Party agents influence electorates with propaganda materials (MEMPROP) to vote for them



The three children play their game of chance as Kwabi Aye, passing by, encounters them.



A group of Students in discussion of political propaganda at Univ. of Ghana.



Post Play-Reading Discussions of *In the Pipeline*.



• *The Asantehene delivering the lecture. Pictures: SAMUEL TEI ADANO*

The Asantehene, Otumfo Osei Tutu II delivering His Lecture to mark Constitution Week in Accra.



• An NPP female supporter carrying a chop box to depict the essence and need for free SHS policy.



• President Mahama addressing a rally at Kasseh Ada. Picture: EBOW HANSON

Visual propaganda material during 2012 political campaigns, John Dramani Mahama interacting with audience at a political campaign rally



• Nana Akufo-Addo addressing a rally at Koforidua.

Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo Addo addressing audience/spectators at a campaign rally.  
*Campaign Theatre of two major Political Parties of Ghana.*

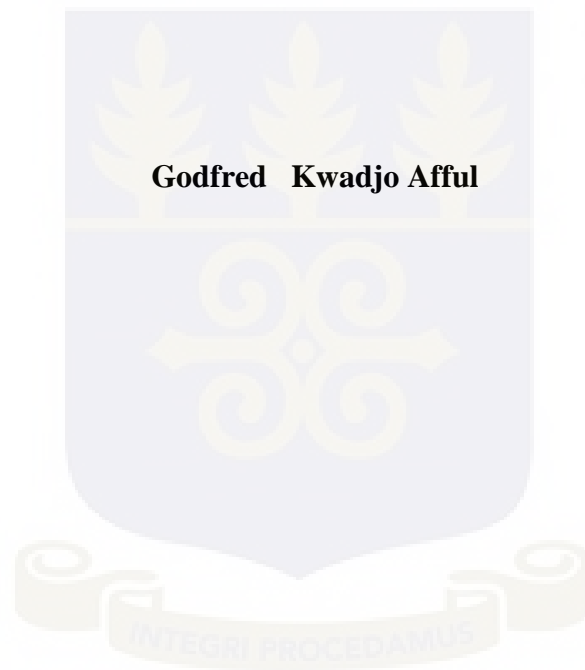


*Appendix C*

**IN THE PIPELINE**

*(A PLAY - In Three Terms, Nine Sessions)*

*by*



**Godfred Kwadjo Afful**

### **Setting**

Time: Present; during electioneering campaign period.

Place: Amoma; the main action takes place in and around a small Guest House—named Hedggins.



## THE CHARACTERS

KWABI AYE : *Z.P. M.P-- Yoko Constituency*

DR.YAW BOFA: *S.P. Candidate*

NANA AMA KOBI: *Independent Candidate*

STELLIE: *Companion of Kwabii*

OFORI : *Rebel ZP Chairman*

SARFO: *a.k.a STONE: ZP Constituency Organizer*

SARKODIE: *A teacher & ZP Constituency Secretary*

AKWAMSI: *ZP Soldier*

MALLAM

HOST KAMA: *P.P.R.*

*Z.P.O: ZOOM PARTY OFFICIAL*

D.C.E

*D.C.E: DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVE*

CHIEF

*Z.P : ZOOM PARTY*

POLICE INSPECTOR

*M.P: MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT*

2 CORPORALS

*S.P: SEED PARTY*

GATE BOY / PORTER

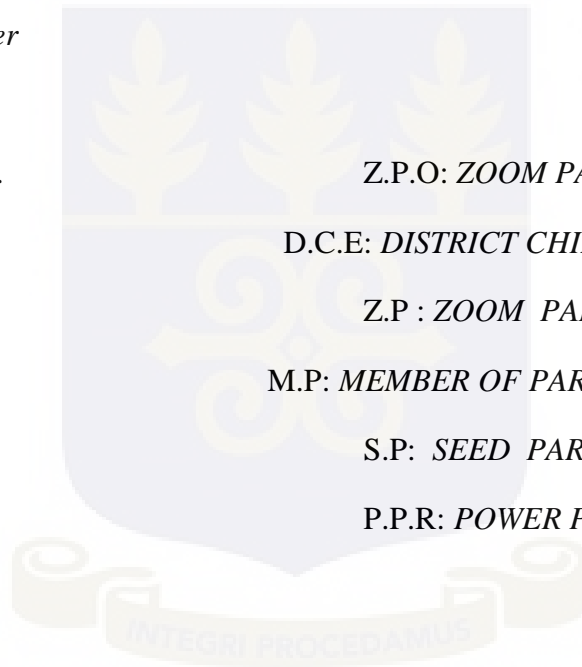
*P.P.R: POWER POINT RADIO/FM*

1<sup>st</sup>, --3<sup>rd</sup> CITIZEN

CROWD - - - *Audience*

1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup>. 3<sup>RD</sup>. 4<sup>TH</sup>. 5<sup>TH</sup>, ELECTORATE

3 CHILDREN/ CHORUS



TERM ONE SESSION ONE

Night. The court of Hedggins Guest House

*[Enter KWABI AYE and a young Lady. A PORTER BOY carries their ecolac bag. He opens the door to a room and wheels the bag inside; the Lady enters too. The porter looks around briefly and runs back shouting.]*

PORTER

S-h-e-w-a-a-r-r

*[Enter AKWAMSI limping on the left leg and looking around]*

*[KWABI comes out to make a phone call.]*

AKWAMSI

Hi! Honable, hiii Honable, welcom, welcom, welcom! *[Shaking him and lisping]* Yisee, ibi yesterday noo we de talk your matter o, na we no no sey u dey road de com sef. Now bisness go be.

KWABI AYE

I hope all is well at home. Much of the grounds work has been done? And I suppose we're going to continue?

AKWAMSI

Everytin de move well for home! *[Raising the hand]*

KWABI AYE

Then I would like to meet all of you tomorrow morning, so please go and call me the Secretary right now. And get all your members ready in the morning, right?

AKWAMSI

Yessir er...err honorable yisee ...

KWABI AYE

I don't see anything yet... go and call them.

*[As AKWAMSI moves reluctantly, KWABI AYE picks his phone dials and talks]*

KWABI AYE

Hello...Sark, I've arrived. Yes ... at Hedggins but this time in Room 2. ... I am waiting... OK ... thank you.

*[A moment later SARKODIE comes. He presses Room 2 doorbell and sits by a table arranged in the court for two persons. KWABI AYE joins him later and exchanges handshake greetings.]*

KWABI AYE

*[Enter KWABI AYE]* How now; how are events?

SARKODIE

We have had to put up stringent defence in your absence; we came close to a clash but thank God we have watered it down; and the grounds are fertile now

*[Craning his neck]* Tell me! Secretary, was it a serious prompting?

SARKODIE

Oh! of no consequence. Naturally you would expect a few dissensions here and there. There... occurred some agitation somehow... but it was a minor one.

KWABI AYE

The last package I sent down some five or so months ago ... did you extend a ... fraction to them ... I mean for their activities?

SARKODIE

You couldn't be right Honourable. They were all given out to them for the 10 – day program. They came back narrating how pleasant it had been trekking your message around. Perhaps the success story incurred the discomfort of 'our' opponents and...

KWABI AYE

And you think there is no cause for trouble!

SARKODIE

Honourable, humanly, you should expect some level of absurd incidence; especially as the bid is political and competitive.

KWABI AYE

Yes I do but... *[looking him up]* what do you think then?

SARKODIE

Well...whatever ...

KWABI AYE

That means we should find ways and means to maintain our position.

SARKODIE

That's right, you see your present position affords you the opportunity to protect your integrity and honour at the expense of... 'Cash'

KWABI AYE

No! I think you're wrong there. It is rather the projection of my identity as M.P that calls for exaggeration not necessarily cash. While highlighting the 'enemy's' shortcoming we should reinforce our message.

SARKODIE

That's right.

KWABI AYE

For now I hope no one has raised a finger over my candidature...

SARKODIE

You see, were it not for the bridge over the Odum River and the re-gravelling of Amoma road you would have walked bare-chested in the whole constituency without any blame. But...

KWABI AYE

Those were fatal promises I admit. *[He pauses and reflects for a moment]* It was a mistake. I shouldn't have said them so loud and confidently.

SARKODIE

But they were trump cards indeed. You wouldn't be 'sitting here' if you hadn't made those pronouncements.

KWABI AYE

Do people still make issues of them...do they talk about it so much?

SARKODIE

They do. Why not, they do.

KWABI AYE

I thought I could bring myself to impress on the party's central think tank to appreciate the need to do something about these two requests which are very crucial to the party's second victory in this constituency.

SARKODIE

Well it couldn't happen, but it would be better if you discard the thought of it and forge a way forward. There is still a lot of time ahead.

KWABI AYE

Fact is, the party doesn't see a problem here. The margin I scored put them at ease while I fear their attention is far away from us.

*[A door opens and closes. In a moment, STELLIE shows up in her nightdress with a cup of coffee. She places the coffee on the table before SARKODIE and warns them of how deep the meeting has travelled into the night].*

STELLIE

I suppose the Honourable travelled all day today ... he must need rest. Could you continue your discussions later at daybreak?

KWABI AYE

*[Looks her up]* Stellie, we are discussing very important issues and this is the time for it.

STELLIE

Yes but it is late. The gentleman's presence may be needed at home. You need rest yourself.

KWABI AYE

I need briefing you know... for a long time I haven't been here.

STELLIE

It doesn't matter. You are here at last.

KWABI AYE

It does. It matters much to me, my lady.

STELLIE

So you'll not come to bed tonight?

KWABI AYE

I have series of meetings to honour as a guest during the day and...

STELLIE

That's why you need rest.

KWABI AYE

And I am here to learn the grounds.

STELLIE

You didn't prioritize your ideas before coming then...

KWABI AYE

You don't understand Stellie.

STELLIE

*[Exasperated]* How can I? when you are sitting out here drawling in conversation deep into the night. If you don't care for yourself don't you care about other people? I have had a round sleep since you sat here... and it doesn't dawn on you we are already in the early hours of the morning.

*[At this juncture SARKODIE in awakening mood becomes conscious of the indignation his long presence is about to cause and makes effort to stem the embarrassment.]*

SARKODIE

*[Rising to his feet]* Honourable, I wish we had paid attention to the lady's concerns.

KWABI AYE

*[To STELLIE]* You can be very compelling sometimes.

STELLIE

That's my duty... I cannot leave you sitting here all night. *(To SARKODIE)* Gentleman, I think you will be kind enough to go home and come back to continue your meeting at day break.

SARKODIE

Thank you...I wish you a joyful night *[SARKODIE sets off to go and KWABI AYE gets along to see him off.]*

STELLIE

Mr. Aye,*[shouting]* I never wept nor mounted the witness box. I never was one of those ladies.

*KWABI AYE stops, stuffs something in SARKODIE'S hand, bids him goodnight and returns to join her.]*

KWABI AYE

Why are you...?

STELLIE

You can't treat me like that; look at the time.*[She holds his hand and pulls him inside.]*  
*[Lights fade]*

TERM ONE SESSION TWO

MORNING

*[On the opposite sidewall of the Guest House across the yard are posters and graffiti which may have been posted there before dawn. At break of day, a noisy group approached the courtyard singing and drumming. Actors planted amongst the audience come from all corners to join in the riot, with some holding but hiding their placards which have various inscriptions on them. As they demonstrate their displeasure, their ringleader occasionally interjects with ... speeches.]*

OFORI

*[Enter OFORI and DEMONSTRATORS]* Chooboio

CROWD

Yeeeh!

*[They start a militant song,- a call and response marching song,- stamping their feet to match the rhythm while others dance a caricature dance in the process]*

Yayi wawa Kwabi Aye, Yayi wawa koloshe;... )2x Kwabi Aye, we sack  
you!

Yayi wawa aa a, yayi wawa koloshe; We sack you for good.

Hei... hei... hei...hei yayi wawa koloshe;

Yayi wawa aa a, yayi wawa koloshe;

Left...right, left...right, yayi wawa koloshe;

Yayi wawa aa a, yayi wawa koloshe!

OFORI

Chooboio

Ladies and gentlemen, we have gathered here this morning to register our displeasure in the way this constituency has been run over the last three years. You know, you and I voted for KWABI AYE of the Zoom Party to cater for our needs and to help us secure jobs, construct our roads, our streets, even our walls along the streets as he promised four years ago in line with the party's manifesto on this very ground, but what do we see... our roads so deteriorated, our walls so reddened with dust. Matter of fact, our plight has worsened more than ever... so...

*[The militant song cuts in again... Troubled by the din, the barricaded KWABI AYE slightly opens his door to view events and closes it quietly to avoid any embarrassment as the ringleader resumes his speech.]*

OFORI

As I was saying, Ladies and Gentlemen we have gathered here to protest vehemently against the manner items are even distributed and shared under cover, the disbursement of party COLA fraught with favouritism... These and many more such happenings compel us to revoke and denounce, even renounce Hon. KWABI AYE as our representative in Parliament *[placards raised]*. I believe in sincerity we all did him the honour of elevating him to that pedestal but ... we are all marching from here to deliver our grievances to the headquarters ...

*[Demonstrators hear siren of the police striking force swooping in on them and begin to run helter-skelter]*

*[Enter the police]*

INSPECTOR *[in a scaring gimmick]*

Stop there ... hei you ...stop or I shoot... Corporal shoot them there...*[The policemen pick pieces and placards left behind, then the POLICE INSPECTOR makes a statement]* Nobody takes the law unto his hands and disturbs public peace. I think it is improper for a group to organize and attack innocent people going about their normal business just like that...I dare them come again. Were I to get their leader eh... he would smell pepper well-well.

*[Enter KWABI AYE the MP escorted by one POLICE OFFICER.]*

KWABI AYE

I am convinced of two disgruntled men who are spreading this violent attack on my hard won reputation. And I daresay their plot will never get hatched...

INSPECTOR

*[Shakes his head in bafflement]*But i hatch already.

KWABI AYE

*[Doubting]* Not at all, be that as it may, I still hold my position as the very executive personality in this constituency. Where are they? Why did they have to run? ...Cowards. *[Whining]*. Look whether it is the collective votes of that bunch of disappointed group which won for me my power or not, what they must recognize is that I have the responsibility to serve my people.

INSPECTOR

They are not here... let them come before you address them; not us.

KWABI AYE

I know... yes I know they are out there ... but you need to understand me.

INSPECTOR

We do, but your electorates... do they?

KWABI AYE

Their agitation overwhelms me. I decide whom I talk to and where I go. It isn't their threats that will steer my direction and purpose. I am tired of them... poor people.

*[One of the Police officers shows Hon. KWABI AYE a placard bearing the inscription... TO HELL WITH KWABI AYE ; NO MORE OUR MP]*

KWABI AYE

*[Almost fuming with rage]* I shall fight them wherever they meet me... We shall fight on the air waves... We shall fight on the ground... even on the political platform... and we shall fight in the inner circle to redeem my name and secure my position. I shall not rest until I've won the battle. Once a teacher, always a teacher, once elected always 'honourable'. Attempts at denouncing or renouncing my political career will not scare me. I am still the man here. I wouldn't lose my focus to such opponents whose failure to win power still haunts them. *[turning to the INSPECTOR]* I thank you for your prompt response to disband this frivolous organization.

*[Enter AKWAMSI to whisper into KWABI AYE'S ears]*

INSPECTOR

Honourable, are you OK?

KWABI AYE

I'm ripped... but I am.

INSPECTOR

Do you have any idea who the organizers are?

KWABI AYE

Yes, the man who happens to be my party rival during the last primaries, called OFORI, and his bosom friend, Sarfo with a popular nickname: 'Stone' very instrumental in our party.

INSPECTOR

I see. It's partisan issue...but we'll hunt for them.

KWABI AYE

Very necessary and I appreciate that, yet the earlier the better... especially before they infuse and infect the larger community with their diabolical idea. I hear they are regrouping somewhere downtown – near the Community Centre.

INSPECTOR

Sort it out at the office. If you need mobile security, you are welcome to do so. Until we know their motive and grievance...

KWABI AYE

Inspector, they have no motive.

INSPECTOR

They have! Nobody gets up to demonstrate without grievance ... I mean without cause. The mere taking to the street is enough streaks to draw public attention. The elders say 'the yeast from the enlightened section of the community usually affects the larger one.'

KWABI AYE

All this I know. I do my best to bring them to understand the workings of government.

INSPECTOR

And you suppose the people don't know this? Look they even tell us the limits of our operations and the stretch of rights they can enjoy as citizens when they flout the law.

KWABI AYE

Inspector, is it this fear which is why you were unable to rain a baton on even one of them and... not able to arrest any?

INSPECTOR

*[Pointing to the graffiti on the wall...]* these are all wake up calls. Officials in charge of the district are equally hard put when they take a tour here. When the determination of a people reaches saturated levels they become immune to death. No amount of threat or bullets will silence or stop them.

KWABI AYE

Do you see them as right in their action?

INSPECTOR/CORPORAL

Far from that, but you see, we may not succeed in apprehending anybody on this matter since it is purely intra – party fighting.

KWABI AYE

*[Aside]* Oh! The rot has eaten deep everywhere. See how they declare their position. *[Turning to the POLICE INSPECTOR/]* But at least for causing public disturbance you have a case.

INSPECTOR

We are not leaving the matter to chance. You may come with us to the police station.

KWABI AYE

I suppose we can sort it out, there.

*[Exeunt INSPECTOR, KWABI AYE and others]*

**TERM ONE SESSION THREE**

*Members of the ZOOM PARTY prepare for a meeting at the court. Members come in twos—some wearing Party T- shirt and discussing the previous demonstration. They take their seat and wait for KWABI AYE and other Party officials as Actors planted in the auditorium.]*

*[Enter SARKODIE, ZPO, and AKWAMSI]*

SARKODIE

You, foot soldiers should wake up. There are signs of trouble in the air.

AKWAMSI

Yisee de aloota be big wahala. De charman don feel bitter for two consignments he no get portion.

SARKODIE

That wasn't anybody's doing; he had travelled and you know every party COLA is a hotcake...Do you see that the party itself is in crisis?

AKWAMSI

No, no, no, we no dey for trouble. Ofori an im group be only two people. We more pass dem; we dey for de grassroot people, we de do the work. Officer ino be so?

ZPO

Indeed our ability or inability to hold on to power will depend to a large extend on today's meeting. The prelude action this morning is a presage of a real hard time for our survival as a ruling party here in this district. *[They sight some members at a distance approaching the grounds of the meeting from the audience.]*

AKWAMSI

I sure u no de say our party go fall now...sontin wey we fight hard ino be joke before we win.

ZPO

That is why we should have been able to convince the Central Committee Members at least to help with one flattering project. We would have cleared this entire hurdle and Hon. Kwabi Aye would have had a walkover victory. You know he hints that if he gets the third term running, *He* would be made a Minister.

SARKODIE

*[Pointing to them as they join them at the meeting].* Ah here comes **Ofori** the rebel chairman. Carefully following him is **Stone** the Party Organizer and Footsoldier. *[turning to ZPO]* Is it not a ploy to gloss over their negligence? Do you believe them?

ZPO

We should. You see! **Ofori** and his think-alike are bent on bringing down the party. They are doing everything humanly possible to affect the sympathy the Zoom Party enjoys here and we must psyche the people.

SARKODIE

That is much to the point. And Ofori wields considerable intimacy among the people.

ZPO

I think you should mobilize a counter force. Headquarters would not take any excuse anymore if you are unable to match this threat boot for boot. Had you organized a counter demonstration, even before the police intervention, we would be living up the ideals of the party and...

SARKODIE

Yes they would sanction it... but... that tool is *démodé*. It is no longer fashionable; people will rise to condemn it. Even if the police are not prejudiced, they should stand against it. Sarfo says 'that dawn brush was just a tip of the iceberg'. They are going to carry out a series of such action to draw the people's attention to the promises made during the last campaigns. And don't underestimate their abilities; it is Sarfo who has weaved and knitted the party into shape here... through his uncompromising grass root leadership activities.

AKWAMSI

So we for giv dem chance?

OFORI

*[Enter OFORI, closely followed by STONE, who tiptoes to view the arrived members before making his full appearance on stage.]* Why not! Indeed all this rumpus would have abated had all the high sounding words been followed with action. Those pronouncements; those proclamations... the flamboyance...they ring a bell.

SARKODIE

What do you mean?

*[In a Flashback Scene] OFORI moves down-centre to Audience as Crowd mockingly imitates KWABI AYE'S previous campaign message.]*

OFORI

The great talk that won everybody's applause... and yet we are where we were. *[Spontaneously, he picks the megaphone and in KWABI AYE'S manner, he mounts a mock campaign platform to address a mock crowd while the audience in a euphoria respond in voice over to KWABI AYE'S political rhetoric. Other characters freeze.]*

Are you able to pay your electricity bill?

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

No! Noooooh ; Daabi yentumi

OFORI

Do you have pipe borne water to drink?

CROWD/AUDIENCE

No-Noooooh : Daabioo

OFORI

The little water you get, are you able to pay?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

No-oooh / Daabioo

OFORI

I see a lot of talented youth in this town, do you want a stadium?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yeee yeee! / yepe dodo

OFORI:

I see great potential in the teeming youth, do you want jobs?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yeee yeee! [*from planted Actors in the auditorium*] Wo ye good/ woye mafia...

OFORI:

Employment?

CROWD / AUDIENCE

Yeee yeee!

OFORI

Education?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yeee yeee!

OFORI:

Nananom, Ladies and gentlemen, through my tour in the constituency, I have realized that the road network is very poor... and unfitting for a busy town such as Amoma. I have in consultation with my party officials decided that something must be done immediately... after the elections.

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Something like what?

OFORI

Tarring the roads... Do you approve of that?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yesssss; [*through individual voice overs*] you are great... you are marvellous... that is Godly statement. Now or no vote, action.

OFORI

You want the road done.

CROWD: AUDIENCE

[*Rousing response*] Yessssser

OFORI:

[*Aside to STONE*]. The people are very happy; see how the crowd is swelling... how the crowd is moved!

STONE:

Hit there! Hit there, the people are enthralled. Kwabi...that is your tramp card.

OFORI

You... [*Pointing the left hand to a planted actor but a chorus response*] you need the road?

CROWD: AUDIENCE

We need it big. We need coal tar.

OFORI

That would be done within the next six months after my selection.

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yes sir!

OFORI

That would mean when I am re-elected...

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yes sir!

OFORI: AUDIENCE

That is when you re-elect the Zoom Party.

CROWD: AUDIENCE

Yes sir!

OFORI

Ladies and gentlemen, it is our responsibility to help raise you from the threat of poverty and want... to the cradle of power...to...

CROWD: AUDIENCE

*Kwabi! Kwabi!*

OFORI:

To good drinking water...We are zooming.

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

Zoom... Zoomm!

OFORI

To dazzling light...

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

Zoom ... Zoom large!

OFORI

To better jobs, ... to the empowerment of women... Yes all these, my party and I shall do – but not without your vote. Join the big band. We're zooming to victory.

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

Zoom,

OFORI

We are zooming to victory.

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

Zoom,

OFORI

We are zooming all the way to victory. Your vote is your power; my election is your security guaranteed. Vote massively for the Zoom Party and I, to fulfil all these 'promises' of guaranteed security.

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

**Kwabi** ...all the way.

OFORI

Yes! Be assured that some wolves would come in sheep clothing, with high sounding words and flattery. You must watch out and see to it that you are not carried away by such sycophants.

CROWD/ AUDIENCE

*[In a chorus manner the crowd agitates repetitively] Zoom, zoom, zoom. KWABI, zoom high! We need road, we need jobs [The response of the crowd becomes deafening and overbearing as it attracts KWABI AYE to the meeting. He is followed by a policeman.*

KWABI AYE *stops short upon seeing OFORI. In his discomfort, he turns to look at the policeman and signals for OFORI'S arrest, but he wouldn't. Lights shows on KWABI AYE*

KWABI AYE

[Addressing OFORI] You again? I have tried to avoid your person...

OFORI

I'm indispensable. You can't avoid me.

KWABI AYE

I can...but that will not make the party secure. We have considered your expulsion from the Zoom Party but that will not help matters.

OFORI

You and who? Tell me who! You rather tried cudgels and clubs on me and my men but that didn't help you either.

KWABI AYE

I had no intention of harming you...

OFORI

Why do you call the police to break up a rather peaceful demonstration?

KWABI AYE

I did not. The police know their duty. They couldn't sit down for you to disturb public peace. Something you know too well to be reminded of.

OFORI

You have not kept faith with the party...

KWABI AYE

You have rather undermined the party...

OFORI

In what way... and by what means?

KWABI AYE

By your actions... both open and secret.

OFORI

Your frivolity and bias...

KWABI AYE

Why do you show such ingratitude ... the party...

OFORI

Party... my foot. The people need you, not the party. The people have shunned the party and are pushing for you. The bridge you promised ...

KWABI AYE

*[KWABI AYE now turns to see if the police are in position,... in a drawling tone] The people?... the people have put the party behind them? ... OFORI. SARKODIE AKWAMSI, STONE [Then to the POLICE OFFICER] Corporal – let's go behind doors for our executive meeting.*

OFORI

You *[pointing to KWABI AYE]* and your Regional Minister played up a fake blueprint to deceive the people into believing their bitterness was over.

*[In a flashback demonstration, the REGIONAL MINISTER in a meeting, is seen giving the copy of a site bridge to KWABI AYE to mellow the agitating people of AMOMA.]*

*[Enter REGIONAL MINISTER, KWABI AYE, SARKODIE and OFORI]*

MINISTER:

You just don't let them take to the street before paying special attention to them. That means you are insensitive to their problem because they might have made several approaches to you before resorting to such action.

DARKWA:

Honourable, they only paid a casual visit.

MINISTER:

Who did?

DARKWA

The Queen and several elders...

MINISTER

And they didn't raise the issue of road or question the construction of bridge?

DARKWA

They did but it wasn't a formal complaint.

MINISTER:

What then brought them there... the beauty of your office? What is more formal than the majestic presence of a whole Queen mother in your office? Did it not occur to you that they needed help?

DARKWA:

Honourable, they had other demands too.

MINISTER

And you satisfied those ones?

DARKWA

Please, we indicated to them they were in our files awaiting funds for construction.

MINISTER

And is the bridge one?

DARKWA;

Honourable,.. no.

MINISTER

What major grievance brought the whole community to the Assembly then?

DARKWA

Honourable, the bridge and the road, but the bridge...

MINISTER

And what assurance did you give them?

DARKWA

I said we were considering it ... and that they would hear from us soon.

MINISTER

How soon was your soon before they took to the street? ... You see the Party suffers when negligence of this dimension sets in. You could paint a clean picture by visiting and expressing solidarity with them even though there was nothing in the pipeline. *[He swivels*

*back, picks a large sheet and back to face them. Shows it to them and gives it to KWABI AYE]. Go and summon the communities involved and show it to them, that ‘This is the kind of bridge designed for construction soon on the ODUM RIVER’. The rest is your discretion, bye.*

*[Lights fade out and later fade in on KWABI AYE hissing to himself as the policeman stands by]*

KWABI AYE

How do you do that, raising issues of every hue and cry, almost hijacking the meeting with unnecessary accusations and wrangling? The fact that our party is in power doesn't mean everybody gets satisfied... what did I hear... that all the insiders must get their wishes fulfilled because they have followed the party ever since its inception, yet have not benefited much because I am not helping matters? Listen also to STONE... ‘that his monthly COLA has been slashed, and other party foot-soldiers whose list he gave to me some time ago, have also not had anything’. These are the bases of their antagonism. They forget that I included their names under the physically challenged and the disability fund. And that all that they are taking every month at the party office is an internal arrangement. That notwithstanding, I earmarked some 5% of my common fund to cater for the needs of such contingencies. If in spite of all these the party is still suffering here, then the Zoom Party is under threat. But the MP must not suffer too. I must not suffer. Let them suffer it. Poor people! Though they blame it on unfulfilled promises, did I promise I was going to give every member an American green card? Look! It is not as though these my disgruntled opponents are more concerned about the people more than I do...*[pointing to his stomach]* it is their stomach, their stomach, just as their good is my priority. If you are hungry, do you go threatening other people for your predicament? I have gone beyond threats and trappings, I am determined to stay and fraternize with the constituents till the elections are over. It isn't your threats that will get me out of here.

*[Enter OFORI]*

OFORI

But our pressure will get you out of place. Are you ok, Honourable?

*[The CORPORAL comes between them. KWABI AYE ignores OFORI and talks to CORPORAL]*

KWABI AYE

Oh! I thought you went home.

CORPORAL

No, I saw you were beside yourself so I decided to excuse myself to give you room to sort out yourself.

OFORI

Why do you stand here lambasting us?

KWABI AYE

*[Turning to OFORI]* You come again? You have brought the party to disrepute.

OFORI

You rather... you have caused great disaffection to the party.

KWABI AYE

Me! Honourable Kwabi Aye?

OFORI

Who else but yourself?

KWABI AYE

I have what it takes to tame your sort, if you don't know.

OFORI

With your money or your intelligence?

KWABI AYE

*[Silent]* Eh...

OFORI

Is it your power or influence?

KWABI AYE

My power...

OFORI

You cannot stand here to blame others about your own negligence. You had better take the accusations at the meeting in good faith and stop making enemies of the situation. We shall hold you in check and point out your mistakes.

KWABI AYE

And you think you do that out of love for the people?

OFORI

For the people...whom else?

KWABI AYE

You cannot be that considerate.

OFORI

You are...

KWABI AYE

They may have known the enemy and he is you...

OFORI

It's you rather; the people are tired of you and would hang you up if they got you. You are inconsistent.

KWABI AYE

You are telling me...

OFORI

You dazzled a lady into accepting you... only to dump her after her first birth, with the excuse that she does not merit your status... she is incompatible ...she...

KWABI AYE

Is that one of your concerns? Did you need her yourself?

OFORI

Anytime you come here ... a different lady...

KWABI AYE

Is this the source of your animosity? Corporal...*[he moves forward to CORPORAL]* I sense a conspiracy.

CORPORAL

Not in my presence here.

OFORI

Don't call the police; his presence is to breakdown the barrier between us.

KWABI AYE

I don't see any major rift yet...

OFORI

I see one.

KWABI AYE

What is new then?. *[receives a call from inspector]*

OFORI

Why then are you so troubled after we have pointed out your short comings?

KWABI AYE

*[After the call]* Ofori, I hope we talk later...

OFORI

No, it's now or never again...

KWABI AYE

Are you forcing conciliation?...

OFORI

It is about patching up what makes us different in thought and action.

KWABI AYE

I will not deal with you as an individual...

OFORI

You would need all of us then!

KWABI AYE

*[He beckons the police to move away]*

OFORI

What time then?

*[Exeunt KWABI AYE, CORPORAL and OFORI]*

*[Lights fade]*

**TERM TWO SESSION ONE**

The Hedggins Guest House.

[KWABI AYE and STELLIE are sitting at a trolley-table chatting over snack at the court of the Guest House.]

STELLIE

Word has reached headquarters that you have been kidnapped, even killed or something like that.

KWABI AYE

It cannot be me. People can only speculate about my safety. If some disgruntled people take to the street to make a show of their own frustrations I don't bother much, but in this country, news travel as fast as they are distorted.

STELLIE

You cannot claim they are confused. They know what they are about. And from all indications, they have a moderate following or so it seems.

KWABI AYE

That is your perception.

STELLIE

And my perception is real. See how you nearly lobbed yourself into their midst had I not restrained you last night. Did you know they had planned this attack long before we arrived?

KWABI AYE

I think it was a plot kept away from Sarkodie-- the Party Secretary and his likes.

STELLIE

So your marathon briefings with him could not reveal this plot to you? Then the gentleman might be an accomplice, or to some extent, quite privy to the plot himself.

KWABI AYE

That's something I cannot contest.

STELLIE

You know we were hardly up before the noise began. And how come they quickly knew we are lodged in this hotel.

KWABI AYE

That raises the suspicion, but they know I usually lodge here when I am in town. Had they not planned beforehand they could not have quickly gathered enough people to act the way they did. What baffles me is the police inability to swoop down on them.

STELLIE

So... there was... no culprit?

KWABI AYE

No culprit. They bolted, all.

STELLIE

No casualty?

KWABI AYE

No casualty.

STELLIE

Then there was no arrest!

KWABI AYE

No arrest. So far no one is in the police custody.

STELLIE

How then do they claim they are investigating the incident? Well... you are there.

KWABI AYE

Where?

STELLIE

The culprit in police custody...

KWABI AYE

What do you mean?

STELLIE

Are they not following you everywhere you go? Is your movement not being held in check? Are your adversaries not walking about free in town? Has there ...

KWABI AYE

Stop blabbing. What do you know?

STELLIE

I now know your people better than you do. Why have the police failed or refused to apprehend any? It's because they all know the dust you threw into the people's eyes has gathered into a clot. Now they are firing it back at you.

KWABI AYE

The police have no cause to stand by them. Theirs is to execute their duties with dispatch and take time to delve into the root cause of disturbances such as this.

STELLIE

Do you perceive anybody will be apprehended at all?

KWABI AYE

The whole incidence is about a misunderstanding within the party.

STELLIE

You mean internal squabbles let out in that manner?

KWABI AYE

It is just an issue of people flouting the rule. Some people do not want to follow the party structures and behave accordingly. The party's hierarchy of command gets violated every now and then with impunity...something which has characterized our politics at all ranks.

STELLIE

Oh! It is a canker then. You acknowledge that! *[laughing]* Then it will eat you all up in no time. Honourable, look here *[moving towards him]* I believe you were able to establish the cause of yesterday's disturbances at your executive meeting. Weren't you?

KWABI AYE

You have the facts already, I suppose.

STELLIE

I do not want to be the next point of attack. Your opponents could strike again, and this time a potent one if matters are left the way they are. We better ...

KWABI AYE

Where lie your fears?

STELLIE

We had better change accommodation or make a quick getaway. The whole town knows you are lodged here. And don't play it down... they can storm this house and take you out.

KWABI AYE

It has never happened anywhere...

STELLIE

... that people have risen against a sitting MP?... even Presidents are overwhelmed. Look, aggrieved people have marched up to the Polis and demanded their pound of flesh when they have not been satisfied with events. The stormy wind blowing across the Desert will definitely reach here and it's sure to sweep some men like you across the ocean and lob you into exile.

KWABI AYE

Stellie you talk too much. Our system does not and cannot encourage such a situation...

STELLIE

What you and the other Parliamentarians are doing will surely get us there. Stone, Ofori and his think-alike are the starting point. Ideas generate from one source... from one person. An idea is a seed that is sown among people. It dies when the second or the third person disapproves of it. If the first two accept an idea and embrace it, - Eureka!

KWABI AYE

I appreciate your lecture.

STELLIE

These days more and more people are getting enlightened, knowledgeable and analytical as well as discernible...

KWABI AYE

But our district cannot put forth as much men.

STELLIE

Perhaps that's why you're riding high. But don't be deceived OFORI and a few others fit in my calculation. They are gradually and easily winning the confidence and support of the people. It's only a message, properly packaged and sold to them...and that's the end of you.

KWABI AYE

We have the message,... yes I have it. They don't. But tell me did you do your own investigation. You seem to know too much.

STELLIE

Go on then. Go on with the message [STELLIE *makes a mock walk*]. You set out strutting along...‘I am all that I need to be’. Now I hear the SEED PARTY is preparing a swifter candidate to challenge you... even a woman candidate.

KWABI AYE

Our elders say “the sojourner who seeks to wrestle power must tread cautiously.” I am not the target; I, so rooted. Look, this district is one of the world banks of the Zoom Party. We have no rival apart from our internal petty squabbles. Just be solidly behind me ... and love me [*walking towards her*] Don’t you care we marry?

STELLIE

How many times have you thwarted my suggestions! I have just learnt I am the fourth or so  
in

your line. Just let me be ... Let’s stay as we are.

[*Enter SARKODIE; STELLIE’S attention immediately focuses on him*] Gentleman what transpired at your meeting this afternoon?

KWABI AYE

Don’t be precocious. I thought you knew well to allow us our privacy.

STELLIE

Not on your nelly, what is private about death! I needs must know what’s going on, at least between you and this gentleman. I cannot stake my life on what seem to be a coup d’état.

KWABI AYE

Oh Stellie hold on, be patient.

STELLIE

Is he not the very person who spent the whole night, last night briefing you on home events?

KWABI AYE

Yes but..

STELLIE

Is it not a few hours later that we were nearly lynched?

KWABI AYE

I can vouch he is not privy to the whole commotion.

STELLIE

Kwabi, you cannot, I dare say you cannot vouch for him. You cannot guarantee his faithfulness.

KWABI AYE

I can, Stellie, *[moving towards her and trying to caress her away but she frees herself.]* Don't be impertinent I can. Why do you want to shove away my links?

STELLIE

I see you don't care about your life. This is enough for me to learn. I think I must leave before I am over taken by events. *[She walks to the room and pulls her ecolac bag out ready to go.]*

KWABI AYE

*[He quickly rushes to grab part of the bag in a frenzy manner]* No. Stellie no!

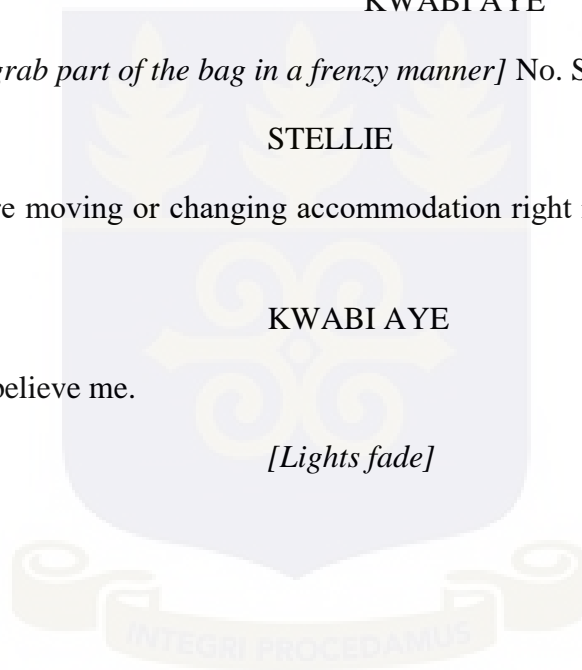
STELLIE

Then promise me we are moving or changing accommodation right now. I can't continue to lapse in false hope.

KWABI AYE

I will fix the problem, believe me.

*[Lights fade]*



**TERM TWO SESSION TWO**

KWABI AYE *seeks to strengthen and consolidate his hold on the MP-career by consulting with an experienced but subtle MALLAM who seldom comes to town. While covertly seeking to meet the MALLAM, he almost clashes with some familiar faces but quickly dashes off to avoid being seen as other people also take turn to consult the fateful MALLAM. Later he comes back, fully disguised in unfamiliar cape uniform with a cap to match, watches around before tiptoeing fast into the MALLAMS cubicle. The GATEBOY/PORTER suddenly appears and KWABI AYE almost startled. The spot light is thrown on them.]*

KWABI AYE

Salaam Alekum,

MALLAM

Alekum Salaam ... Oga, welcom.

KWABI AYE

Thank you. [KWABI AYE looks around. He sees before him variety of paraphernalia displayed by MALLAM]

MALLAM

U de com plus somebody?

KWABI AYE

No, I walk alone.

MALLAM

U no meet someone for here?

KWABI AYE

No, apart from your gate-boy, I am not sure of any other person.

MALLAM

Like I won close sef, wey I say mak I wait small...habba Oga why u de worry so?

KWABI AYE

Oh I am alright. I thought you said you had a call to...

MALLAM

Yess, I de espet someone before I go close work today.

KWABI AYE

*[Fretful]* You mean he is yet to come?

MALLAM

Abi! why ...someone de chase u? mak u no worry eh, as u don com here all your problems don go now. No wahala!

KWABI AYE

Oh! No eh ...I ...

MALLAM

*[MALLAM puts before KWABI AYE his spell and asks him to add any amount from his heart]*

Now mak u tak money from you heart, close your eyes den talk your matter plus the money all u like for yourself. *[As KWABI AYE does as instructed MALLAM brings ear closer.]*

KWABI AYE

*[He finishes]* I am done.

MALLAM

Ok! Put am for de cowries top now.

*[MALLAM stirs the cowries with the money as he lisps some incantations. He casts the spell and begins to shake his head, studies it a while and moves some of the stars-cowries from their positions in a bid to alter the destiny or fate of KWABI AYE. He casts the spell three times and raises the head in disagreement.]*

MALLAM

Oga!

KWABI AYE

*[Sits up and cranes his neck in an agonizing expectation.]* Mallam – any hope?

MALLAM

*[Momentarily quiet. Looks him up down but utters no word, robs his palms and removes his cap. He studies the scattered cast once more and speaks.]* U won chop MP election abi?

KWABI AYE

What have you discovered?

MALLAM

Talk me now, u won chop am abi?

KWABI AYE

What would you do if I want to?

MALLAM

*[Showing the three fingers]* Oga dis be my last question oo.

KWABI AYE

Have you sensed some trouble? I am the sitting MP.

MALLAM

*[Snapping the fingers]* Ai walaahi italahi...I sabi am.

KWABI AYE:

What?

MALLAM

U stil won chop de MP... u no de tire for de job eh ...for dis election?

KWABI AYE

Yes I have strong interest...

MALLAM

*[MALLAM scoops a handful of the cowries into the two hands and swivelled in the opposite direction in a prayerful genuflection. A moment later he swivels back to face KWABI AYE.]*  
Oga chance dey ba ino bi easy koraa.

KWABI AYE

My petition then.

MALLAM

Mak u bring your palm now.

*[KWABI AYE stretches his palms and MALAM looks closely into them for a moment, spits into them and tells him to rob and wipe his face with both palms three times. He tries, both hands reach closer to the face but stops in a freezing posture.]*

MALLAM

Go on now, do am... go on.

[KWABI AYE looks at him briefly and springs up ready to go but is stopped by the words of MALLAM] U go lose your laif wey u miss dis chance I de work for u. I talk u mak u no joke plus your chance oo.

KWABI AYE

What guarantee should I expect from you? Would you let me go in peace?

MALLAM

U tink I dey lie u? U no de trust wat I de talk for u abi? Big wahala send u here.

KWABI AYE

And I am leaving worse than I came.

MALLAM

I won mak u free so u go get your job sure.

KWABI AYE

You would not saddle me with agonizing spells before cleansing me.

MALLAM

Wey I look tee into your matter I see say u go lose your job for someone, u sabi?

KWABI AYE

[Turns round to face him] Who is he?

MALLAM

Ibi good u protet am.

KWABI AYE

Yes but who is that competitor? Would you let me know him or her?

MALLAM

I no de do my work like dat. I no de giv my costummas out for people abi...

KWABI AYE

Tell me! Is it an enemy from within or outside?

MALLAM

Me, I talk u...

KWABI AYE

Deny me this and I will accuse you of only juggling facts to make them seem real. *[muttering to himself, but the Mallam hears him]* Serendipity of a sinister sort...*[He threatens to go]*

MALLAM

Mak u no worry, my game na chance oo. Ba mak I talk u, u de play plus your own bisness.

KWABI AYE

Yes that is your trade. You confuse your clients to give in to your tricks. Look ...

MALLAM

You tink I de lie? Lonnn time u no belif wat I de see for your skin?

KWABI AYE

Look Mallam every politician knows he has opponents, enemies, adversaries, rivals and competitors... but I have come to you to help me know them so I can avoid them ... if we cannot haul them.

MALLAM

Oga, u don dream before u com here abi?

KWABI AYE

Dream?

MALLAM

Yess D-r-e-a-m *[nodding his head up and down]*

KWABI AYE

*[After a brief thought].* Well everyone dreams.

MALLAM

Now mak u talk me your las dream.

KWABI AYE

I don't remember, unless you give me a clue.

*[Enter DR. BOFA, the SEED PARTY candidate. As they freeze, the spot light shows the arrival of BOFA, who has also come to find his fate in the impending political contest. He is given a chair to sit outside with the gate boy.]*

MALLAM

U be lucky so, for you go mak dying wounds bleed wey u for know. U see de shados wey u com across be your own ghost.

KWABI AYE

*[Walking towards MALLAM]* You would kill a dying man if you had the chance. What shadows are you talking about? ...Well, I decided to sup with the devil. *[he sits back]*

MALLAM

Welcom. *[Staring him in the face]* You see some big hole dey etween u an yourself; etween u an your soul; yess... golmine dey for your bakyard. Ba I de fear you don sell am.

KWABI AYE

A goldmine! Behind my backyard...

MALLAM

Yes.

KWABI AYE

Sold to whom?

MALLAM

U, yourself.

KWABI AYE

*[Staring deep in his face]* Well I sold it, but who bought it?

MALLAM

Your soul.

KWABI AYE

You intrigue me. How? What has my soul got to do with my business in this physical world?

MALLAM

U for protet am n tak am bak, ba i cost.

KWABI AYE

I think I sense it. But tell me; is it from within my party?

MALLAM

U no go get chance now, so mak u stop dis MP job a...

KWABI AYE

*[Springs to his feet]* Throw away the mine?

MALLAM

... go for am, ba u go lose the mine.

KWABI AYE

Ah! You are very confusing. What...

*[Enter the gate boy]*

GATE BOY

Baba, som man com wait lonn time, he say he won see u.

MALLAM

Tell am mak he wait small.

*[Exit GATE BOY]*

KWABI AYE

Mallam what do I do to secure my position and myself then?

MALLAM

Dat be why I don hask u for your las dream. U see somthin dey wrong for u wey we for remove am now. U go need full elefant tusk, tail, three spoon gunpowder; chameleon wey ino die.

KWABI AYE

Sounds bizarre! Can't you convert it in monetary terms?

MALLAM

Ino be easy oo...ba mak I see wat I go fit do. *[He picks a small sack from the lot, rummages through this kit for what looks like a talisman and slings it around KWABI AYE'S neck.]* Wear am go all meeting, ba u for tak care u no go wear am do sex ... Na your victory dat.

KWABI AYE

*[He watches it in a mysterious way. Stops and searches through his pocket to produce a cheque, writes and signs, and hands it to MALLAM.]* I think this will be enough to take care of the bill.

MALLAM

*[Looks at bill, perhaps not too satisfied, gesticulates by opening both hands]* Now go n com next week. Mak u go in peace oo.

*[On stepping out of MALLAM'S presence, KWABI AYE sees DR. BOFA and retreats to pick his forgotten cap. But MALLAM who is now on his feet shoves him off to meet DR. BOFA who also nearly runs on seeing KWABI AYE As both quickly turn the opposite direction and scuttle away.]*

MALLAM

*[Surprised at their behaviour, he bursts into laughter].* Kurunwa nna shaka dunwa shi.

GATE BOY/PORTER

*[Stupefied but later]* Ba de man won see u, why he de run away so? 'Oyaa suro oyaa!'

MALLAM

Make u no mind dem,; poor people... dem go com bak.

*[Light fade]*

**TERM TWO SESSION THREE**

Night. The court of Hedggins Guest House

*[Enter NANA AMA KOBI, an aspiring Independent candidate. She invites OFORI to inquire about the development in the District/ Constituency; they're served some drink].*

NANA AMA

I'm glad to meet you as promised. What is this news that has filled the air?

OFORI

Hmm, the issue about the assembly! I suppose. That was yesterday; the people of Amoma stormed the District Assembly and disrupted proceeding with their demonstration. They have waited for this opportunity for far too long.

NANA AMA

What opportunity?

OFORI

Oh the presence of the two personalities.

NANA AMA

Who?

OFORI

Hon Kwabi Aye the MP and Hon. Darkwa the District Chief Executive.

NANA AMA

Yes I hear yesterday was an extra-ordinary sitting and many issues were supposed to be discussed.

OFORI

That's right.

NANA AMA

But how were they successful?

OFORI

Proceedings started almost at 9:00am. When the secretary's minutes had been read and accepted for debate on other issues, we heard in a distance; castanets, vuvuzelas and the like, playing with Asafo songs, and marching up to the Assembly.

NANA AMA

Where were the security men then?

OFORI

Where were they! In situations like that, if you don't play your cards well, you end up putting your credibility on line, and you know the implications. The DCE called the police to beef up security here, but the response was cold. Diplomacy was then the trick.

NANA AMA

So the people didn't inform the police of their coming?

OFORI

Why should they? Quietly, they gathered at a point closer to the Assembly offices where no intervention was possible, and marched up to deliver their grievances on a supposed bridge over River Odum whose reconstruction has been neglected for a long time.

NANA AMA

Oh! every traveller to that town speaks about that collapsed bridge.

OFORI

Yes the river has cut them off from the rest of the district.

NANA AMA

It's like the whole town marched up then?

OFORI

Their chiefs, queen mothers, committee members, elders, the youth ... all...

NANA AMA

Why is it now they are acting?

OFORI

*[Pointing contemptuously to the pictures of KWABI AYE and DARKWA on the wall as NANA AMA takes a closer look by walking towards it].* You know, for almost a year now, KWABI AYE has not shown up in the constituency. And his absence has created room for the DCE to smear him and shift all blame on him as the man who is holding their development at bay. So they have held their fingers crossed, waiting for the joint presence of the two men before striking.

NANA AMA

What could they do then, when the two men joined up?

OFORI

The whole proceeding ended in a commotion.

NANA AMA

None was touched!

OFORI

The internal security had already taken care of the executives. So the mob missed them.

NANA AMA

I hear Dr. Bofa of the SEED PARTY was very instrumental in the organization of the protest.

OFORI

Well, that is too early to point fingers at opponents. The fact is the people of Amoma are suffering indeed as Islanders.

NANA AMA

Why should they suffer unnecessary hardship? Why are they punishing them?

OFORI

That is the way politics is done in our part of the country, especially since Democracy started gaining root here. Several issues have come to make it selective, especially when the key person is not a Son.

NANA AMA

But responding to their call would make it much more easier to win their vote.

OFORI

That is not when we are a distance away from elections. Concerns are shown a few months to elections... that is when aspirants parade themselves – insinuating themselves into the people and yoking cheap familiarity. But the local people, ignorant as they are, would think of themselves as blessed because the most honourable executive of the constituency has come to fraternize with them. After gaining the people’s mandate, he disappears again, sometimes denying the people of the constituency any form of appreciation. Yet as a philosopher put it ‘we, so ignorant... they can reach us all the time’.

*[Enter STONE]*

NANA AMA

But tell me, why is there a rift between Kwabi Aye and Darkwa the DCE.

OFORI

Oh! there is no...

NANA AMA

There is, otherwise how does one blame the other for negligence?

OFORI

Both men harbour a bit of discontent against each other. The MP thinks the DCE is much resourced to deliver more than he is doing... and that complaints pointing to him should be directed to the DCE, while the DCE also thinks he has done enough to deserve an elevation to MP. He capitalized on the MP’s seldom visit to the constituency to project his own ideal. He thought he would win at the primaries but...

NANA AMA

So they renewed Kwabi Aye's mandate with unanimity!

OFORI

He won, don't marvel, by coercion and intimidation. I could have beaten him but...  
*[flashback demonstration by OFORI and STONE as envelopes and mobile phones are given to delegates with vows and cursing statements following]*

OFORI

You know when famished people chance upon food they gorge it ... and one funny thing... every delegate who received a parcel from him pledged the taboo of **Antoa Nyama** to confirm his commitment to vote for him.

NANA AMA

*[She looks at STONE for confirmation of the statement]* Then he is no more popular.

STONE

Yes, but the party, our party is.

NANA AMA

Then the attitude of the delegates must reflect the behaviour of the people. I mean the generality of the people of the constituency.

STONE

We do not follow like that.

NANA AMA

Yes, but in this situation he cannot reach out to everybody in the District the way he did to the delegates.

STONE

That's right, but a good number will get something. You see what the people need more is a...a...assurance – strong promises.

NANA AMA

Assurance! What kind of assurance?

STONE

Ahaa ...Promises; and some token packages...

NANA AMA

These promises...are he able to fulfil them?

OFORI

That takes us to the crux of the matter. You wouldn't be hearing disruption of Assembly sessions if they do. And some of us would not contest, if all was well.

NANA AMA

In that case, if you stand for the truth you have no stake; you are defeated.

OFORI

The fact is, if you stick to the truth you have no message, and without a message, you have no stand if indeed truth stands.

NANA AMA

What do I do then if I mean to contest?

OFORI

What? *[with an air of surprise]* The parliamentary seat?

NANA AMA

Why, is it a no-go area?

OFORI

I thought you said you plan to contest the parliamentary seat.

NANA AMA

Is there a monster in there?

OFORI

No, but we are all crippled by the no-message syndrome.

NANA AMA

You mean you had your eye on it too?

OFORI

A woman? Heh! Can you survive it?

STONE

Woman...Woman [*In a drawled voice*] Be your woman. Have you a strong spirit? Go and charm men with it... [*in a cursory but teasing manner*] get married and be free. This district has no space for women politicians.

NANA AMA

[*Stands in awe; surprised at what she is hearing. She looks away, contemplating her next reaction to what seems like a stampede, while STONE and OFORI enjoy her discomfiture. She turns to ask*] Tell me, is it a pledge, a vow...I mean a taboo or a curse that a woman should lead in this constituency!

STONE/ OFORI

We are only helping you to your place after long studies abroad.

NANA AMA

I know you are fine gentlemen. Does the constitution bar women from contesting for MP in the district?

STONE

You see, even men pack back midway after travelling the rough campaign road. Later, later you see them running away when you stop them they wave back.

NANA AMA

What's that? I mean what holds them out?

STONE

Nothing Lady! Nothing! Only the spirit to move on.

NANA AMA

[*Hardly believing*] I don't understand. Are they cash strapped or some spiritual threat they encounter?

STONE

We don't know which, but you are here; you are coming. Anyway, when you scale yourself and see you are heavy enough,... you may count on us. I have all the voters in this constituency under my watch, when I tell them which direction things are going, they follow.

NANA AMA

You would not fear to follow a woman then?

STONE

Which party are you joining, Woman?

NANA AMA

I am a *Lady*. I am yet to make a decision.

STONE

Ei! A woman to lady, lady to woman and back to a lady hmm! Then wake up quick and quickly before all the people are wooed away.

NANA AMA

I intend to reverse the trend, neutralize the basic concept of politics in this locality and give it a new outlook.

STONE

How would you do that?

NANA AMA

By taking credit for what I do rather than what I say. By counting on influential people like you who have no message but the strength to move around and sell a simple product quietly behind the scenes.

STONE

What did you do that we can sell?

NANA AMA

I built and furnished the maternity ward of the District Hospital, not long ago.

STONE

Hei! You are the AMA KOBI of Ayima? *[He turns round in wondrous exhilaration]* I am done Ofori... we are done. *[Aside to OFORI]* K- Fori she is the type we have been looking for.

OFORI

But we have our party and I don't see how we shall cross carpet to idolize you, lest we become stalking horses...

NANA AMA

I believe you have strong prospects for the District as I have.

OFORI

Well! We shall talk later. Meanwhile STONE will be at your beck and call.

NANA AMA

I am grateful.

*[Lights fade]*

### TERM THREE SESSION ONE

*[ A Radio Studio Scene-- Power Point Radio Studio (PPR) ]*

*[Enter the three contesting candidates of the YOKO CONSTITUENCY.*

*They are moderated by the Host, KAMA. They debate their chances of winning through the presentation of their ideas and philosophies. The three—*

*KWABI AYE, DR. YAW BOFA, and NANA AMA KOBI—all take turns to address issues*

*of political interest, as per their manifestoes. They introduce themselves first].*

KAMA

This is PPR and I am privileged to host the three parliamentary candidates of the YOKO Constituency. The three are Hon. Kwabi Aye, Dr. Yaw Bofa, and Nana Ama Kobi. This time we have one fine lady sorting it out with two gentlemen. They're going to roll out their vision and mission for the constituency. Listeners, please stay tuned for their submissions.

- *[Enter KWABI AYE first]*

KWABI AYE

I am Hon. **Kwabi Aye**, the incumbent MP for the YOKO Constituency. Though born here, my parents sojourned the length and breadth of the country, making it impossible for me to deeply immerse myself in our local culture and traditions. But it is said the sojourner's wisdom takes precedence over age in matters of cosmic knowledge. And over the past seven or so years, I have shared with the constituency my experience and knowledge. I did my best in bringing the District from the cold to the warm embrace of global fusion with local and national touch. My educational background has been unparalleled here, as it has been largely significant in my re-elections and continuous stay in power. As I am already the choice of the electorates I will only touch on three aspects of my works. The good people bear with me that our Constituency has had its fair share of the national cake in terms of school, and other infrastructures. I am proud to mention also that we are lucky to have me serving on the Financial Committee of Parliament – a portfolio some other members envy. By my contribution, both fiscal and monetary policies are maximized for National Economic growth. This year when the Electorates vote for me for the third time, I am sure to obtain a Ministerial position for my long service to the nation and the constituency. That notwithstanding, I have lobbied hard for the retention of the Regional Minister who is also a personal friend and a party colleague. The electorates' vote for me is for the betterment and development of the District. Thank you.

KAMA

Dear listeners that was Hon. KWABI AYE, your MP appealing to you for the maintenance of his position for continuity and development. Next is Hon. NANA AMA KOBI.

NANA AMA

*[Enter NANA AMA KOBI as an independent candidate]*

Thank you, respectable electorates, my greetings to you. I am **Nana Ama Kobi**, a new entrant in the YOKO Constituency; and an Independent Candidate. I know you have tried and tested the two major parties. You are witnesses to their services, lip services, their abilities and feasibilities, and the power of their messages. But I entreat you to try me. I wish to create a neutrality of the kind which binds everyone in the Constituency, that which diffuses the soaring tension between the Seeding and Zooming parties. Secondly, men have exhibited masculinity and dominance in our local and national politics for far too long and this is the turn and time of a woman. I must admit much has been done in the area of infrastructure and human development but there remains a huge gap between our District and our neighbours in terms of development. I present myself as a vital alternative to the two Party Candidates with the view of moving the District forward. And your vote will bring it to pass. Thank you.

KAMA

That was the Aspirant Nana Ama Kobi, an independent candidate vying for the YOKO Constituency Parliamentary bid. The next candidate is Dr Bofa, of the SEED PARTY.

*[Enter DR BOFA as the next candidate behind the microphone.*

*KAMA introduces Dr BOFA briefly and allows him to continue].*

DR BOFA

Good afternoon, good people of YOKO Constituency. I am Dr **Yaw Bofa** of the SEED PARTY, the Party that is sentimental to your wellbeing. Before I speak... I convey the felicities of my presidential candidate to you. Our party looks into the future of the Constituency and sees it bleak because of the snail pace development here. The Seed Party has identified Education as one major shortcoming in this District and intends to boost Education should you give me and my President the mandate in the next elections. Second item is the Road network, which is necessary for agriculture to thrive, if your produce can get to the city centres early enough. These, I think are the two major issues that concern the development of the people in this District now, though there are equally priority concerns, they are peripheral. This District has suffered for far too long in its efforts to join the Community of prosperous and growing Districts. And we are determined to take you there should you see the sense and the essence of putting us in the helm of affairs. People of this Constituency have for three consecutive terms been stampeded into accepting fake messages that keep us marking time. This is the time to shake these mental fetters away and take on new leaf. It is only those who are immersed deep in ignorance who refuse change and move forward. Lets' massively vote the Zoom Party out and gain our freedom of conscience. *[The host, KAMA signals him of time up and therefore rounds up his message]* Thank you for

giving me the opportunity to reach out to you through this medium. The detailed analysis of our manifesto pledges would be made available at our impending grand rally. Thank you.

KAMA

Audience, as usual, there was your candidate Dr Bofa of the SEED PARTY. Lady and Gentlemen you are welcome to the ‘Assess your Candidate’ debate program. Candidates you have the freedom to interrogate each other on his or her ideology, policies, promises and so on and so forth in this discourse. As Kwabi Aye is the incumbent I will give him the green light to begin.

KWABI AYE

Nana Ama I congratulate you on your bold and singular enterprise. I consider you have organized enough resources to undertake this venture. Have you considered that women, in spite of their numbers want men to lead because you are easily overcome by instincts?

NANA AMA

I haven't. But I've learnt to put those fears behind me. My education in a male-dominated environment has schooled me enough to contain situations, so I make provision for eventualities. However, women are changing. The Ghanaian woman you knew a decade ago is now a refined person... an enterprising woman...an enlightened one. Now we are growing; we are coming in from the cold, I'm ripe for the job.

KWABI AYE

What do you find unsatisfactory that makes you think exceptionally that you should contest Hon. Kwabi Aye?

NANA AMA

Thank you. I do not intend to do anything of my own accord but what the concerned communities decide they need, would be my priority.

KWABI AYE

Why should we need a change of personality if you'll toe the same line of action?

NANA AMA

You can share the same bed with someone but you cannot share the same dream. That aside, the degree of importance I attach to project execution and services is expeditious and may not be the same with others. My evidence is the Maternity Ward I built and furnished at the District Hospital. My training abroad enjoins me to deliver with dispatch when possible.

KAMA

The Seed Party and the Zoom Party are well established here. What can you do as woman going Independent; what magic will change people's mind toward you, a new comer?

NANA AMA

Look, when threads join together, they can entangle a lion and make it powerless. Decisions are taken overnight and if my message sinks in the electorates, they don't need a whole season to make up their mind... As two rams cannot drink from the same pail at the same time, let's give their wife the chance to prove her innocence. I know the electorates will vote for the independent Nana Ama to settle the score.

KAMA

Audacious woman indeed! This is 'Assess your Candidate' program at Power Point F.M. The Public will have the opportunity to meet them face to face at next week's grand rally organized to enlighten you. Stay tuned. [*Attention focuses on KWABI AYE*]

NANA AMA

Are you convinced about the rate of development in the Yoko Constituency?

KWABI AYE

Why not! I have already taken care of the Educational concerns in the District. I have given scholarship to many students. I have built many School blocks. I have given over hundred Sewing machines to school drop-out girls. I have ...

DR. BOFA

You have nothing... you braggart. Do you consider this as a positive development, going by the data revealed?

KWABI AYE

I am fulfilling my party's manifesto. That is part of our policy to empower the youth, especially the girls.

NANA AMA

...That girls should stop schooling and take to sewing? Is that what you mean, who framed this policy?

KWABI AYE

We can't get them all completing school. I think the District is moving forward and moving faster with them on board...

NANA AMA

I understand we need a dynamic person, not stout...

KWABI AYE

Who else, beyond me?

DR. BOFA

*[Deeply dissolved in self-delusion].* That is our bane and hence our problem. This is why the district is not making progress. This is the reason for the constant agitation, electorates are voting for strong men; it means those who can make noise better, but that raises the question of integrity – I mean the quality of our selected few. My brother, until we rose up to confront such issues, our District would continue to lag;...I am glad many more out there are coming to terms with this reality...

KWABI AYE

And you think your party is any better to liberate the people from poverty. Dr. Bofa, you should know that you are just scraping a dead wound only to bring it alive to hurt. And your party will suffer it.

DR. BOFA

*[Casts an enquiring glance at KWABI AYE]* It is the people not my party. I have not made promises whose failure torments the people. The asphalt road, the stadium, River Odum bridge,... these are the dead wounds being scraped.

DR. BOFA

You are a party bereft of new ideas. We are a principled party with our ideas etched on the Party's ideological goals. We cannot resort to fantastic promises and lies to win power.

KWABI AYE

And you think we haven't done so well?

NANA AMA

*[Sounding judgmental]* Your well-done is zero, considering your...

KWABI AYE

Well! 'Rome, it is said, was not built in a day'. Other things we couldn't do or finish would be taken care of in my next term.

NANA AMA

Do you think of retaining power again, when you have let down the people, neglected their calls, distanced yourself and called them people of no special treat? Can you now count on them for your victory?

KWABI AYE

My victory resides with the people.

NANA AMA

Although, you have recounted your chances of becoming a Minister, you have exhausted your chances to deserve a third term.

KWABI AYE

I haven't, not at all, I haven't abused my chances. I will double the works I have done. By dint of hard work, I have much recognition at the floor of Parliament. My hope to be selected to serve on the Financial Committee is an issue incontestable. From there, the graduation is the qualification for a Ministerial post. I am prepared, however, to serve in any Ministerial capacity.

DR. BOFA

Is it within the framework of your party's policy or just a gallery talk?

KWABI AYE

The Yoko Constituency and its people are dear to my heart; and that is where they feel my nerves. I don't remember turning down their request. Their well-being has been my main focus.

NANA AMA

You have not lived in this community for any number of years, not months, let alone establishing any abode or enterprise. How do you justify that affection?

KWABI AYE

My social contract with the people is what matters. The infrastructure you see around; the number of beneficiaries who have their own enterprises and the general state services they enjoy are quite convenient to me than my putting up a house.

NANA AMA

And you think it is convenient to always lodge in a guest house forever your life?

KWABI AYE

Statesmen are nationally inclined. Nkrumah didn't build a house in his own home ground. I...

DR. BOFA

You are not Nkrumah.

KWABI AYE

I am building a career first.

DR. BOFA

Career of women? A career of ladies?

KWABI AYE

Are you asking me or you are suggesting to me?

DR. BOFA

Answer my question.

KWABI AYE

I choose to answer or not. I am not under prosecution.

DR. BOFA

Believe me! Even the fifth woman you brought now has no chance of marriage.

KWABI AYE

And by that you mean?*[Rising up]* You can't pry into my private life. You daren't preach me the kind of lifestyle I should lead.

NANA AMA

A fifth woman you say?

DR. BOFA

I have records...*[turning to NANA AMA]* The first lady he took here, he abandoned; brought home another,...shuffled her; introduced another...he deleted; visited with yet another,...trashed; experimented another,...he dumped; and now touring with yet another...

NANA AMA

*[Facing KWABI AYE squarely]* Incredible monster! Misogynist. You are an insult to womanhood.

*[Amidst the build-up of tension KAMA reminds them of being on air and tries to calm tempers]*

KWABI AYE

*[To HOST KAMA]* This is an intrusion into my privacy.

NANA AMA

If this is of a fact then consider yourself hauled already. We cannot allow a womanizer of your dimension to continue to exploit womanhood. Your behaviour smacks of honour; and I will urge all the women to vote against you. A womanizer a...

*[KWABI AYE raises a threatening hand quickly moves to spank NANA AMA who squeaks and yells in the process as they go round; She calls for help to restrain HON. KWABI AYE. DR. BOFA moves to intervene but stumbles and falls; while KAMA also rushes to protect the studio gadgets, shouting for the security].*

NANA AMA

*[Running away from KWABII and shouting]* We are not in the jungle... Here is a studio...Honourable..

KWABI AYE

*[Retorting]* We are... we are in the African jungle. I'll show you we are in the depth of it; you imp... not on me.

KAMA

Porter...help...eh security...oh please... please stop. You are honourable men and women. You should behave honourably. *[A porter quickly intervenes and restrains KWABII who has already spanked NANA AMA]*

DR. BOFA

*[Preening up and examining his suit]* The honourable man has displayed one of his hidden attitudes of gross misdemeanour to the whole world; his emotional imbalance and his ...

KWABI AYE

I can contain so much but to label me a womanizer, a miso before the world, I can't accept it. The aspiring candidate must retract the statement and apologize or I seek any means of justice.

NANA AMA

I have no apology. Is it a fact that for four consecutive times you visited the constituency you have by no means changed women.

KAMA

This is an unfortunate incidence! I least expected you'll go that far. Please sit down.

KWABI AYE

You should have stopped them from...

KAMA

How would I know they were building up firebombs? You all hold yourselves honourable and were given the opportunity to evaluate yourselves in a fair manner. The lady...

KWABI AYE

. You couldn't allow her to talk anything that will soil my hard won reputation. It has taken me years academically and practically to attain this feat. And you know I am building a career of statesmanship... That is what humbles me.

NANA AMA

And you call this humility?

KWABI AYE

Who summoned me to you to try me? Are you seeking to make me a figure of public hate? Finding cues to justify your insult?

KAMA

I must warn that this platform affords you the opportunity to agree or disagree with one's works and vision for the constituency – not insults, not one's private affair.

NANA AMA

What is private affair? Is the honourable member not a public figure?

KWABI AYE

The debate is about issues and choices, acceptance or rejection of one's position not my private life... not my private life at all in a contemptuous manner like that. I need a retraction and apology.

NANA AMA/DR. BOFA

No retraction! No apology!

KWABI AYE

What?

NANA AMA/DR. BOFA

No retraction! No apology! You can't have it.

[KWABI AYE hits the table with his palm and bolts but stops at an entrance to gesture threateningly to NANA AMA and quits, while DR. BOFA enjoys his discomfiture]

DR. BOFA

[*Shouting it out to KWABI AYE*] The Seed Party is the government in waiting...

KWABI AYE

[*Shouting back*] Poor people!

KAMA

It is unfortunate we shall have to end this session of ‘‘Assess your candidate’’ program.

[*Musical interlude*]

[*Lights fade*]



**TERM THREE      SESSION TWO**

*[At the foregrounds of the HEDGGINS GUEST HOUSE, a platform is set as the stage for the grand rally of all the participating candidates. On the sidewall are partisan colours and posters and other graffiti. The stage is set with a standing microphone. Supporters with party insignia display them and piping vuvuzelas amidst music and dance. Each candidate's address is preceded by a MODERATOR-- KAMA and a key supporter who introduces the candidate][Planted Actors amongst the Audience (taken as Crowd) respond as Citizens and also ask questions].*

*Enter STONE and NANA AMA KOBI with a background Music "Economy no aye hard"]*

STONE

Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeei!

STONE

Tchooo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeeei!

STONE

Tchoo Tchoo Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeeei!

STONE

Good Afternoon Nananom, elders, ladies and gentlemen, another term has come round in our political life and this is the time we reflect, and see inside our pockets, the food on our table, take stock of things, and see who can help us in this election. And I am sure everyone here has a story to tell whether things have been good or not for you and our Constituency. I am saying that things didn't happen the way we expected so we have looked for a new **Star of Hope** for the Constituency.

*[The CROWD begin to boo and whistle ... blow their vuvuzelas]*

STONE

Tchoo boi ... Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeeei!

STONE

The person I am ...

A CITIZEN

Have you disowned Kwabi Aye and the Zoom Party?

STONE

We are tired of one-man show. We now need a person who sees our problems and will come home to us all the time, and I can beat my chest for *[He searches for the hand of NANA AMA KOBI to raise as the one choice]* Nana Ama Kobi *[There was mix feeling among the crowd as STONE himself has been once a staunch, committed and respectful executive of the ZOOM PARTY. The twist of events almost divides the crowd. He tries to control the crowd]*

STONE

Tchoo boi, Tchoo boi!...

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeei!

STONE

You don't need to make noise over my crossing over. It means we are keeping keen eyes open The star I am giving to you for consideration has returned from studies abroad. A true Burger. *[KAMA takes the microphone to continue proceeding]*

KAMA

The candidate we are presenting to you is a full time Lawyer and Public Policy Administrator- A lady who single handed built the maternity ward and provided everything in it free of charge. What do you think she will do when *she* becomes M.P.? It is not our money she wants; yes a lady whose only interest is your welfare. One in whom we can trust and cast our burden. Your part in the whole process is your vote, to make it happen. Well, I hand over the microphone so you can hear her vision for the Constituency.

KAMA

Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeei!

*[Enter NANA AMA KOBI]*

NANA AMA

Thank you. Nananom, my fathers, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters, I Submit myself humbly to you for consideration as your next MP *[She begins to wane with the tongue drooping and the face going pale. She is held up and supported to stand. The drama attracts the pity of the crowd as the men struggle to revive her].*

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Oh! Oh! Help oh!

A CITIZEN

Straighten her, it cannot happen, it cannot be here...

*[She is carried away to allow for the continuation of the programme, and Kama continued and finished her speech]*

KAMA

Ladies and gentlemen, we regret the tragedy as we can only hope for her quick revival. However, as we go to the Polls next week, be mindful of the **Silver Star** which is her symbol and her beautiful face as you see here. *[He raises a sample ballot Paper]* The number three and the only woman on the ballot paper and give her your thumb. Thank you. *[The air is filled with shouts, whistles, vuvuzela blasts and music]*

*[The SEED PARTY OFFICIALS enter to take their positions as the next presenters of their manifesto]*

KAMA

*[Shouting the Seed Party Slogan for audience attention]* See... See... Seed!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

‘Gu aba pa!’ Sow the Good Seed!

KAMA

Nananom, Elders, Ladies and gentlemen, Good afternoon we have met on this ground again to introduce to you the Seed Party’s Parliamentary Candidate for your vote. The Seed Party still believes in the principle of quality Education, Healthcare delivery and better Housing among others. This position of the Seed Party has not changed and today as I introduce the Party’s Parliamentary Candidate, I hope he brings to you the concerns of this Constituency as

has been identified and packaged for your responses... Ladies and gentlemen [*raises DR. BOFA'S hand*] I present to you the Honourable DR.YAW BOFA as your candidate for next week's elections.[*A deadening noise*]

[*Enter DR.YAW BOFA*]

DR. BOFA

Sow a Good Seed!

CROWD /AUDIENCE

Gu Aba Pa!

CITIZEN

What! if you turn out to be a bad seed?

DR.BOFA

*Insha Allah!* Thank you Moderator. Nananom, Elders, Ladies and gentlemen and good people of YOKO Constituency, I am deeply disturbed by recent development at this all important rally.

The lady candidate had a charge to deliver her vision. Indeed we all regret the incident ... but so shall it be,

And it shall be before the dawn of event

Some conveyed on stretchers bent,

Others carried shoulder high;

But the sublime and resolute shall prevail the sigh

In the face of this cryptic world of politics...

Her circumstance has done her worst ... but we hope she fights to the end. Elders, Ladies and gentlemen we have all regretted the mistake we did in the last election. Aren't we? We all understand now that 'lies did the trick'. Propaganda won for us a government full of deceit and here we are. If we are still not convinced the evidence is there now for everyone to see. The football Stadium that was promised; the River Odum bridge, the asphalt road, the jobs ...oh my...

[*Flashback scene where KWABI AYE and D.C.E. meet the gathered community of Amoma to present to them the cherished news of an exclusive bridge over **Odum River***]

KWABI AYE

Nananom, elders,ladies and gentlemen, youth, the welfare of Amoma and its surrounding communities are very dear to me and my Honourable D.C.E. It is not that we have forgotten

or neglected such an important town as this, but as our elders say, ‘when the ideal woman keeps long at the washroom, she’s sure to be putting herself in order’. The recent moves made by you with regard to the road and especially the bridge have not gone unnoticed. I am therefore privileged to present to you on behalf of the D.C.E. and on my own behalf [*the DCE hands him the blueprint and he displays it*] this exquisite Bridge’ to be built on the River Odum. [*the presentation is greeted with jubilation and excitement. When it dies down he continues*] I must add also that we have here [*pointing to one of his men*] the contractor who is going to execute the project very soon. [*another round of applause*] Details of the Surveyors and Consultants would be made available in due course. .

DCE

Nananom, it is our considered view that the project attracts local content material and labour and we cannot look anywhere than the communities around Amoma. We therefore see it as a fair opportunity for job creation in the locality. I will entreat all and sundry to get involved in this viable project. However, I must caution that the contractor must be given the free hand to operate, as any act of militancy from the youth or any group for that matter, could disrupt the work. Our doors are open to complaints. Thank you.

CHIEF

On behalf of my people and on my own behalf, I wish to express our profound gratitude to you and your officials for this singular but important edifice to be constructed over the River Odum which has been the bane of our predicament and now a source of relief and happiness to my people. Also this meeting has served as a bond of unity and understanding between us and the Assembly. As a token of our appreciation [*pointing to the boxes*] please convey them home. Thank you.

KWABI AYE

Nana, we also appreciate your gesture. Thank you for the long suffering and endurance. We hope you’ll continue to bear with us as we tackle the District problems one after the other.. Thank you all.

[*As the officials examine the boxes of gift the lights fade out on them and fade in on DR. BOFA*]

DR. BOFA

The twenty kilometres asphalt road between Amoma and Ayima; the employment and jobs promised the youth and many more are all visible sources of judgment. I don’t need to belabour the point. They are empirical evidence that make for quick decision. Ladies and gentlemen that is why I am cautioning you to sow the good seed and see the results in the next four years. The machinery of propaganda has robbed us of the good seed that my Party and I wanted to sow in this constituency, but I say this is yet another chance to try the good seed; and the man once again is DR. BOFA. **Sow the Good Seed** – [*the CROWD joins him*] **Sow the Good Seed**- in Education, in Healthcare, in Water and more importantly the road network. Sow the Good Seed.

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Gu Aba Pa.

DR. BOFA

Vote for the Seed Party for better Services. Thank you and God bless you. *[He steps out with his group. Music takes the air]*

*[Enter KWABI AYE and his ZOOM PARTY OFFICIALS. They position themselves for their presentation].*

SARKODIE

Tchoo boi!

CROWD /AUDIENCE

Yeei!

SARKODIE

Zoom Zoom Zoom!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Zoom High!

SARKODIE

Zoom Zoom Zoom!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Zoom on!

SARKODIE

Elders, Party Officials; you are welcome to this last but important rally. Looking at the calibre of contestants, I can only conclude that the battle is ended and won; but it will end with you. That is when you prove next week that you know ... and have only one MP in the person of *[KWABI AYE comes closer and gives his hand to be lifted]*The Honourable Kwabi Aye-- The charming, handsome, charismatic leader, Ladies and gentlemen, here comes your Saviour.*[As the CROWD boos and jeers amidst excitement and vuvuzelas hooting, KWABI AYE positions himself behind the microphone to address them].*

KWABI AYE

Tchoo boi..... Noo shaking!

CROWD /AUDIENCE

Nooo challenger!

KWABI AYE

Noo shaking!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Nooo Challenger!

KWABI AYE

No challenger indeed! Nananom, Elders, Ladies and gentlemen, you are welcome to this great assembly. Thanks for your massive attendance. As a matter of fact, I wish we ended this programme due to the incidence we have just witnessed. I must admit I am distraught with distress over her tragedy, which in every respect is charged to her inexperience. She simply feared the crowd. May she re---

A CITIZEN

You baby elephant...Step down! you choker ... a halter you...

SARKODIE

Yes! another hired traitor! one of them. Know that Kwabi Aye has one more term to bring the people to the lime light.

KWABI AYE

I would rather not hurt anyone since the purpose of our gathering here is simple. It's about my personality and my commitment to your welfare. Let those sitting on the side-lines, yelling and blurting out their frustration be told that Kwabi Aye is gone already because he has not finished the business of his people. I am trying to move you from darkness to light. *[A sudden lights out, but quickly a megaphone is switched on to calm the audience who are whistling and making all sorts of noise. KWABI AYE manages to shout through the megaphone for attention].*

KWABI AYE

Tchoo boi, Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeei!

KWABI AYE

Whether it is a deliberate act of undermining or a technical hitch, we are undaunted by such happenings. The Zoom party is determined to beat the Seed Party in both Presidential and

Parliamentary elections, come hell and high water. We're going to thrash them to their lives again. We shall never cede power to the Seed Party... not when I am alive.

A CITIZEN

And how will you do that?

KWABI AYE

We are a Party that believes in the welfare of the people,... the individuals as constituting the society. I have been able to provide sixty sewing machines to about sixty Junior High School dropouts and about sixty more are forthcoming...*[Pointing to one member of the audience]*

A CITIZEN

Me ?

KWABI AYE

Yes, would you not be happy if your daughter had one of the machines to build a career?

A CITIZEN

Well that might be one out of the problems tackled.

KWABI AYE

Next year will see more supply of machines to empower the women and girls. Also a boost in borehole water, electricity and road reconstruction will be my priority *[It is getting dark and now because the standby lamp can illuminate only a circular area around the podium, members take advantage to cause a melee by raising disturbing questions that threaten to disrupt the rest of the proceeding]* I stand by my promises that, Kwabi Aye is determined to move the District from darkness to light. Look! The Zoom Party is people-centred and that is why your welfare is dear to me than everything else. We shall do big, big things in ...

A CITIZEN

*[Interfering in Kwabi Aye's speech]*

Where is the Stadium you promised Ayima people last term?

*[The man is audible enough but the pretending KWABI AYE begged the question apparently to avoid it. Yet another person tries to shout it out, but it's swallowed in a high sounding Tchoo boiii].*

KWABI AYE

Did I hear you right?

*[While expecting relief from SARKODIE, KWABI AYE strenuously searches in his shirt for the MALLAM'S neck ring and pulls into the open]*

A CITIZEN

He is asking where the Stadium you promised the people of.....

SARKODIE

Tchoo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeeei!

SARKODIE

Tchooo boi!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Yeeei!

SARKODIE

Zoom Zoom Zoom!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Zoom High!

KWABI AYE

*[Defiantly continues].Ladies and gentlemen, we have come to one most important aspect of our meeting here. A special envoy of the President is here to deliver His message to the people of this District, the YOKO Constituency. Let's welcome him with our two hands... [There are shouts as well as claps and vuvuzela noises that rock the air for close to a minute. It dies down through the meticulous display of a blue print by KWABI AYE while the ZPO delivers commentary on it].*

Z.P.O.

Zoom Zoom Zoom!

CROWD/AUDIENCE

Zoom High!

Z.P.O.

Nananom , honourable members, ladies and gentlemen, I am privileged to be in your midst as the President envoy. He bids me convey his greetings and best wishes to the entire

Communities of YOKO Constituency. As a token of his appreciation for your commitment towards upholding the sovereignty of the Zoom Party, he compliments you with the *[KWABI AYE raises the blue print, turns round to acknowledge cheers from the crowd]* construction of 34 kilometre - dual – carriage asphalt linking the three major towns of Amoma, Jema and Ayima. This feeder road when constructed soon after the elections will facilitate much economic activities and raise the living standard of the people of YOKO District. Details of the Project would be made available at the District Assembly Offices later as.....

#### A CITIZEN

Y'ate abre! Don't confuse us...Where is the Stadium you promised four years ago? Where is the bridge, and now a road? *[Others join in the hysteria as it deepens, and questions turn into insults. The crowd surge forward,... some begin to charge on the officials]* Where are the jobs? You braggarts ...hypocrites, baboons, grafters, profiteers, worms, vampires...

*[Lights fade out on crowd commotion and fade in on KWABI AYE]*

#### KWABI AYE

What! Could the Presidential envoy's statement spark fire and cause such a riotous behaviour.*[Taking steps towards him is STELLIE]* What has become of this people now? I mean could people react like this even if it inflamed passion. It is a shame. If you hooted at government officials, would you expect anything good from them! How do I explain this? I think there are some elements who are bent on destroying my good prospects... their discontent is growing by the day. See, I just managed to scuttle away unhurt... others suffered several blows. *[Looking around]* Tonight I shall find out from the Mallam the meaning of all this. It paints a blight picture. *[Enter STELLIE].*

#### STELLIE

*[Examining KWABI AYE]* That was a nightmare. Were you hurt?

#### KWABI AYE

I escaped... I must act against this contagion or else I flop...I must resource the foot-soldiers and set them working aggressively as soon as possible; shake the countryside; bring all floaters and drifters, as well as rebels back to the fold. This, I will do by whatever means.

*[Lights fade]*

**TERM THREE SESSION THREE**

*[Mime Voting Scene: On the wall are posters (Polling Station There; Polling Centre Here) showing the polling centres as electorates follow to cast their votes. The electoral process is going on off stage but the focus is on the electorate passing by to vote as they get encountered by party fanatics who have positioned themselves and canvassing for votes; some holding assorted souvenir, cash and candidates posters as well as ballot papers to influence voters].*

**1<sup>ST</sup> ELECTORATE**

*[Listens to whispers and moves toward the PARTY AGENT spotting SEED PARTY T-Shirt, takes cash, counts and stuffs it in his pocket and is coached on the ballot paper who to vote for. After accepting to vote for the appointed candidate and party, he is shown a contraption... to swear by and the agent touches his lips or forehead with it and allows him to go. As he moves towards the POLLING CENTRE, he is bemused and stops on the way, dips his hand in and brings out the money from the pocket, looks at it for a moment sighs heavily and begins to walk slowly away].*

**2<sup>ND</sup> ELECTORATE**

*Is beckoned by the Seed Party agent, but walks on, then by the Zoom Party Agent, he stops, watches the items before him and his aggressive beckoning, scratches his hair in a pensive mood and walks on to the Polling Centre.*

**3<sup>RD</sup> ELECTORATE**

*Each of the two aggressive Party Agents of SP and ZP surround this potential protégé with the intention of winning him to his camp. His non-resistant posture makes them pull him left and right with each holding one hand. After a moments struggle, another person comes to wrestle his right hand from the ZP agent, and is pulled away by SP agent to go through his ritual orientation. While walking away, he still gets attracted to the ZP agent, who also entices him with items after taking him through the ballot paper. He then looks quizzical as he moves to the Polling Centre.*

**4<sup>TH</sup> ELECTORATE**

*He passes without heeding to any whispers and beckoning from the party agents.*

**5<sup>TH</sup> ELECTORATE**

*She neglects SP agent and moves to ZP man who gives a small parcel and cash, the agent produces some contraption for her to swear on. As she comes away, she stops to look at the package then jumps at it and quietly stuffs it in her breast area and walks to the Polling Centre [Later a Policeman comes to sack them from their point of inducement].*

*[Enter the CHORUS of three children playing the Anhwe wakyire game in a call and response order]*

1<sup>st</sup> CHILD

Translation

1. Anhwe wakyire	Don't Look Behind
Yee yeee	Yea yea
Obi reba oo	Someone proceeds
Yee Yee	Yea yea
Orebewu	someone to die
Yenhwe y'akyi, yenhwe y'anim	Don't look back or look forth
Obiba bewu.	One proceeds to his end

2. Anhwe wakyire	Don't Look Behind
Yee Yee	Yea yea
Akansie a yeresie yi	In this contest
Yee Yee	Yea yea
Dee ebesie biara	Whatever the outcome
Yenhwe y'akyi yenhwe y'anim	Don't look back and forth
Fa no saa ara.	Let it be.

*[Enter KWABI AYE, passing to vote. He encounters the children as they sing and stops to watch for a while].*

KWABI AYE

Why have you decided to place your game here this busy day?

3 CHILDREN

It is the game for all citizens

1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD

A game of chance.

2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD

A game of win and lose.

3<sup>RD</sup> CHILD

A game of no complain / argument.

3 CHILDREN

It's a game of chance if you win, you win, if you lose, you lose, no looking back.

KWABI AYE

But here is a busy road [*He moves on, and stops*] Is this the interpretation of the Mallam's snare? If we don't die early we shall witness strange and embarrassing things. [*He moves on, thinking*].

[*Enter NANA AMA KOBI, on her way to vote closely followed by DR. BOFA. They stop to watch and listen to the children*].

DR. BOFA

Ayikoo! Moopiaw!

NANA AMA

This witty folksong may mean a lot to us.

DR. BOFA

If they should explain, you'll see the sense in it. It is the food for thought for you and me. When we were children we used to play it, but the song has undergone innovation with the new generation and we must accept it. Let's hear them explain their concept.

NANA AMA

[*To the children*] What do you say about your game?

3 CHILDREN

It is the game for all citizens.

1<sup>ST</sup> CHILD

A game of chance and fortune.

2<sup>ND</sup> CHILD

A game of win and lose.

3RD CHILD

A game of no complaints, no argument, no looking back.

3 CHILDREN

It's a game of chance, if you win, you win, if you lose, you lose, no complaints.- ha ha ha [*laughing*].

NANA AMA

Hmm boi!

DR. BOFA

I told you. Let me go and cast my vote.

*[They move away]*

TERM THREE SESSION THREE [CONTINUED]

*[6.30 PM -By relay, POWER POINT FM announces the collated results of the Constituency elections. Excluding NANA AMA KOBI, KWABI AYE and others sits by a radio to listen]*

NEWS READER

This is P.P. FM, the time is 6.30, The results, read by **Kama**. The general elections conducted throughout the country have come to an end with results trickling in from various polling centres'. The general conduct and atmosphere have been peaceful with the notion that it has been free and fair. However, here are the aggregate constituency results we have at hand. YOKO; Three Contesting candidates – KWABI AYE of the ZOOM PARTY polled Two thousand eight hundred and sixty (2,860) votes, DR. BOFA of SEED PARTY polled (6,442) votes, Miss AMA KOBI – INDEPENDENT polled 8,775 votes.

KWABI AYE

*[In apparent hysteria, goes berserk and turns off the radio, hits a nearby table]* No no! This cannot be, how can a woman win in this constituency? It would be fatal for this constituency There has been an underhand deal; I demand a recount. It cannot happen like that.

STELLIE

Like what? What do you mean?*[She rises up and follows KWABI AYE who is mad on stage]* I am not surprise. I knew your disaster was in the pipeline.

KWABI AYE

This is incredible. I'll challenge it . I will go to court.

STELLIE

You won't go to court.

KWABI AYE

I will go to court.

STELLIE

You can't go to court. How, the people have done their part. You must understand that the people have entered a transitional period. They are shaking off fantasy; at best they are embracing reality. Had I not restrained you, you would have stripped yourself of all property in gambling for power...

KWABI AYE

She is not ripe for them.

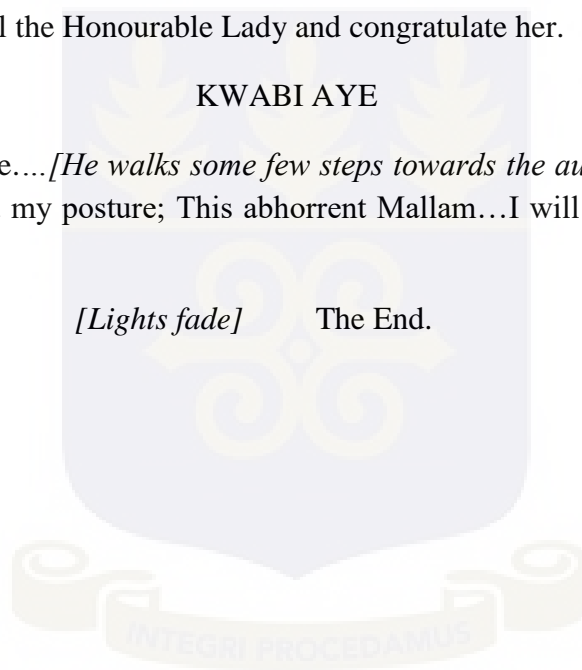
STELLIE

Yet they chose her. Call the Honourable Lady and congratulate her.

KWABI AYE

This is sheer ingratitude....*[He walks some few steps towards the audience thinking hard]*. I should have maintained my posture; This abhorrent Mallam...I will crush him when I find him.

*[Lights fade]* The End.



## GLOSSARY

- Page**    1    **Shewaar**: a derogatory word attributed to casual affairs or relationship.
- 7    **Militant song**: a tri-lingual military training song, comprising Akan, Hausa, English, meaning Kwabi has been removed from power, and removed for good.
- 32    **Salaam Alekum** : an Arabic greeting—meaning “Peace be unto you”
- 32    **Abokyi**: a Hausa word –meaning “my friend”
- 34    **Walaahi Talaahi** : an Arabic phrase. It is expressed “God is my witness”
- 40    **Kurunwa nna shaka dunwa shi.**: a Hausa clause meaning “clash of interests or fears”
- 40    **Oyaa suro oyaa!.**: an Akan clause meaning “clash of interests or fears”
- 42    **Vuvusela**: a S. African pipe-instrument introduced in public gatherings and during political campaigning to jubilate or create awareness.
- 61    **Two boi**: a Slogan used to arrest crowd unanimous attention.
- 71    **Y’ate abre**: an Akan exaggerative clause meaning “We have heard it a number of times; we are tired or fed up of it”
- 75    **Ayikoo moopia**: an Akan expression extolling one for something well done.
- 79 Solmization of *Y’ayi wawa* and *Anhwe w’akyiri* songs,

YAYI WAWA



Yayi wawaa Kwabi Aye yayi wawaa koloshi: yayiwawa aa -- yayiwawaa koloshi.

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ANHWE W'AKYIRE



1. Anhwe wakyire, Yee yeee; Obi reba oo, Yee yeee; Obiba bewu, Yee yeee;



Yenhwe y'akyi, yenhwe y'anim, Yee yeee; Obiba bewu, Yee yeee.<sup>3x</sup>