

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SATIRE AS A DRAMATIC TOOL FOR SOCIETAL REFORMATION: EFUA SUTHERLAND'S *THE MARRIAGE OF ANANSEWA*, EXAMINED

Olaniyan, Modupe Elizabeth (Ph.D)
Department of Theatre and Media Arts
Ekiti State University (EKSU)
Ado-Ekiti, NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

The use of satire as an artistic weapon is an age long phenomenon. The ancient Greeks employed it in deriding unwholesome moral and institutional tendencies in their societies. Writers like Vigil, Horace, Juvenal and others also employed it in the old Roman Empire as a medium of attack on their Emperor's excesses. People in the traditional African societies also use folklores, songs, proverbs and verbal arts to comment and ridicule human failings and to attack prevalent social vices. Thus, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of satire as a tool for reforming the society. Efua Sutherland's *The Marriage of Anansewa* will be the focus of the study. The researcher explores a textual analysis of the play to reflect the effectiveness of satire as a tool for reforming the society through its plot, theme and characterization. There are cross references to other creative writers who have used satire to attack societal ills with the purpose of sanitizing them. An attempt is also made to trace the history and types of satire in the work. The chosen text is of great socio-cultural relevance, as it carefully records one of African societal problems concerning marriage.

Keywords: Africa, Playwright, Reformation, Satire, Society.