

GHANA TELEVISION DRAMA AS A REFLECTION OF GOVERNMENT OPINION

Samuel Amanor Dseagu

Abstract

Under the terms of its charter of incorporation, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Television, popularly known as GBC-Television, is expected to reflect and propagate the views and ideology of the government. Thus, since its inception, GBC-Television has been used over the years by the various governments of the day as a medium for educating the nation on government policy. The CPP government of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah made an aggressive use of it in the sense that under it GBC-Television was turned into an arm of the party.

Since 1966, when the Nkrumah regime was overthrown, successive governments have been more discreet in their manipulation of GBC-Television. I shall concentrate in this paper on one such phenomenon of a discreet manipulation of the television by a government. I shall examine and discuss the use of supposedly fun-creating drama programmes on GBC-Television between 1983 and 1988, for political indoctrination about the aspirations of the PNDC government. I shall then conclude that in the absence of investigative broadcasting in many of our African nations to map out subtle changes in thinking and ideology in and among our political leaders, such programmes can be studied as codes of political behaviour.

Introduction

The popular impression in Ghana about news broadcast on radio and television is that such broadcasts are slanted to reflect the master's voice. As such people tend to be sceptical about the veracity and the reliability of the news and other supposedly serious broadcasts of the nation's media.

Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Television, despite the fact that it enjoys a monopoly situation in being the sole television system in the country, has not enjoyed the respect that it deserves on account of the popular perception that it is only there to 'sing its master's voice'. It however appears that the public is often critical about GBC-Television over the wrong issues. When one considers the set-up of the organization, it should become clear that the organization has in fact been carrying out to the letter its principles.

The principles of the organization were clearly spelt out by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in a speech marking the start of television service in Ghana.

Ghana Television will be used to supplement our educational programme ... Its paramount object will be education in the broadest and purest sense. Television must assist in the socialist transformation of Ghana ... It must reflect and promote the highest national and social ideas of our ideology and society.¹

With that goal in mind, the government of the Convention People's Party treated the television system purely and simply as an arm of the party. When the Nkrumah regime was

overthrown in 1966, one of the excesses of his government that the National Liberation Council under General Kotoka tried to correct was the heavy-handed use and manipulation of the communications media.

Following in the footsteps of the NLC, successive governments tried to adopt a hands-off policy towards the media in general and the television service in particular. Nonetheless, in this matter, the practice appears to have always fallen short of the intention. For instance, General I.K. Acheampong once made it clear to the representatives of the media that the government of the Supreme Military Council of which he was the Head expected them to adopt

the responsibility of influencing the thinking and habits of our people.²

Similarly, although Fl. Lt. J.J. Rawlings has on a number of occasions reprimanded the press for not airing opinion contrary to or different from the government, he himself made it sufficiently clear early in his 'revolution' that he expected the media

to help carry the policies of the government to the people.³

Besides, the organizational structure of the television system in particular and the media in general is such that it is mainly appointees of the government of the day who serve as policy makers and controllers. Under such circumstances, it is often risky for an organization such as the television system to openly court views contrary to the government line.

In spite of such constraints, GBC-Television has tried over the years to carry out its services in a highly professional and efficient manner. This it has done by following a certain procedure of broadcast. It would appear to even the most uninformed lay person that GBC-Television follows a well-defined structure of programming so as to balance news with entertainment.

A brief outline of a typical day's, or to be more accurate a night's broadcast - since the broadcast on most days is only at night, with only the week-ends having additional morning broadcasts - will serve to describe how *serious* programmes are balanced with *light* programmes. A typical night's broadcast is as follows: programme survey at 5:55; children's broadcast, 6 - 6:30; adult education in a Ghanaian language, 6:30 - 7; news and commentary, 7 - 7:30; current affairs discussion, 7:30 - 8; music or drama, 8 - 9; late news, 9 - 9:15; movie, 9:15 - close down.

Assuming that the government of the day holds a tight grip on the sort of news that is disseminated and thus maintains an overt control over the serious programmes of news and current discussions, one could still argue that GBC-Television could still offer certain programmes that can defy direct manipulation and control. In Ghana such programmes are likely to be the *lighter* programmes such as music and drama.

The music programmes, as is to be expected, take the form of a variety of songs sung by both leading and budding artistes. Some of the songs could have a heavy political slant; others might not be political at all. The point is that GBC-Television does not feature music artistes because of their political affiliation but rather on account of their popularity and for the *pure entertainment* which their songs and dancing afford.

It so happens that the music programmes and the drama programmes occur on alternate days: if today there is music, drama will not occur; if there is drama, music will not occur. By the principles of formalist and structuralist transformation,⁴ it is obvious that GBC-Television reckons both the music programmes and the drama programmes as *pure entertainment*; that is, as programmes intended to provide mainly fun and relaxation.

Intention

My aim is to describe how such pure entertainment dramas are often manipulated and slanted to project a political view and by so doing to highlight certain political issues as legitimate conclusions where they would otherwise be controversial and even politically divisive. I shall be restricting my discussion to how the GBC-Television dramas from 1983 to 1988 were used to project as legitimate and popular certain pertinent issues of development which at the time were in fact controversial and even politically explosive and I shall then conclude that for that reason the dramas of the period can be seen as an index of the evolution of the PNDC government's political ideology.

A General Description of the GBC-Television Drama Programme

As has already been stated, the drama programme alternates with the music programme. The days set aside for drama are Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The time-period normally runs from about 8 to about 9; that is after the *Current Affairs* discussion programme and allowing for commercials, and before the *Late News* programme but again allowing for commercials.

The drama programme is divided into drama in English and drama in the Ghanaian languages of Akan, Ga and Ewe. Starting from Sunday, there is Akan drama on Sundays, Ga and Ewe drama on alternate Tuesdays, a repeat of the previous Sunday's Akan drama on Wednesdays,⁵ and drama in English on Thursdays.

The Akan drama was synonymous throughout the seventies with one theatre troupe: the *Osofo Dadzie* group. It is a troupe comprising about six regular male characters and about four regular female characters. One of the male characters is called Osofo (Akan: *Pastor*) Dadzie. He is conspicuous by his clerical collar and suit; sometimes, as if to add emphasis to his calling, he would be seen holding a Bible and either giving counsel to members of his congregation or praying. Opinion is divided on this issue, but it is claimed that his name has been given to the entire group on account of his popular appeal.

Another very popular character in the troupe is *Super O.D.* It is claimed that the initials *O.D.* stand for *Osofo Dadzie*. According to most accounts, in the early days of the troupe, many people thought he was Osofo Dadzie; but when the confusion was cleared he had already become associated with the name so he was given the name 'Super Osofo Dadzie' to distinguish him from his namesake.

He is cast as a foil to his namesake. Whereas Osofo Dadzie is a priest and is therefore decent and well-behaved, Super O.D. is a man-of-the-world: often seen cracking dirty jokes or having a good time or making fast money.

The members of the troupe are itinerant actors and singers belonging to the professional guild known in Ghana as *Concert Parties*. At the time of our concern, the troupe was absent from the country for a while but returned in 1986.

During the absence of the Osofo Dadzie troupe, several other troupes surfaced but most of them have since died out except the Obra (Akan: *life or stylish manners or modern life*) troupe which now performs on alternate Sundays with the Osofo Dadzie troupe.⁶

All those groups are essentially private performing groups whose main source of income is the earning from their performances all over the country as they go on their regular touring circuits. Their mode of operation is that on the day of their performance in a town an advance party will drive in a car or truck round the town playing pop and highlife music and intermittently interrupting the music with the announcement of the play. At the scheduled start of the play the troupe will treat the audience to several performance of live music before the actual dramatic performance. The dramatic performance is often

interspersed with more musical performances. Hence, a play which would normally last for about forty minutes on television would go on in a town performance for about two hours from about 8 to about 10 at night.

Similarly the Ga and Ewe groups are made up of private performers. The Ga performing troupe has also since the seventies been synonymous with one group: the *Adabraka Drama Troupe* led by Mr. Mensah. Adabraka is the name of a quarter of Accra; and, Mr. Mensah is the name of the leading character in the troupe. The Ewe performing group is also synonymous with one particular troupe; that is *Agbedefu*, a troupe based at Ho, the capital of the Volta Region.

As is to be expected, the performances from these Ghanaian language-speaking groups are varied and without any discernible political bias. Indeed, since they are mainly professionals, they try to stay clear of controversial and political issues which might detract from their popularity and hence from their earnings.

Since the public has for the past twenty years been watching these performers in their varied roles, the impression has been created that their performances are free from political indoctrination. Thus, one could say that the expectation of the average television viewer is that such plays would be *pure fun*. Indeed, it is common for a viewer to keep himself busy somewhere else during newstime and the discussion programme, both of which deal with *serious* issues, only to come back when a play is about to begin.

Apart from the Ghanaian language plays, another important component of the drama programme is made up of the English plays. These are usually plays written and directed by Ghanaians; but sometimes plays written by Nigerians but directed by Ghanaians are also performed. The impression over the years is that the condition for the broadcast of the English plays is that it must be modern.⁷ Such plays are normally broadcast on Thursdays, after the news discussion programme. As in the case of the vernacular plays, the groups performing the English plays tend to be private; that is, they have no direct sponsorship from the government.

There is however this important difference. Whereas the groups that perform the Ghanaian language plays tend to be performers who learned their trade from the stage, most of the English play performers are graduates of the University of Ghana's School of Performing Arts. Such performers tend to look down upon their Ghanaian language performing colleagues as being unsophisticated. However, most viewers would rather give a preference for the Ghanaian language plays.

The themes of the plays, in the Ghanaian languages as well as in English, are varied. As there is very little advance publicity about the programmes of the television broadcasts most viewers listen anxiously on the day of the drama to the announcer as the detail of the plot for the day is announced. In a way, this expectancy about the drama also adds to its popularity.⁸

Another cause of the popularity of the drama appears to be that to most people the drama with its varied plot and performing group serves as a sharp contrast to the more predictable news programmes. For almost a decade the news programmes in the publicly-owned media, including the television system, have been heavily biased in favour of projecting the views of the government and also in projecting international radical views. As such, most people can predict what perspective will be adopted by GBC-Television in the presentation of the news and the other news programmes. In contrast, the drama programmes are always refreshing in the sense that they always bring up something totally new.⁹

One could even declare that one of the causes of the popularity of the television plays

is that they are free from political indoctrination. As most of the performing groups are private entertainers whose major aim is to make money from their performances, they try to avoid treading on the controversial grounds of polemics and politics; subjects which have been known to have brought on dangerous and sometimes devastating consequences for some people. Thus, one of the well-known characteristics of such plays is their freedom from heavy-handed propaganda.

The Plays of 1983 - 1985

The GBC-Television plays performed during the period of 1983 to 1985 appear to have broken away from almost all the well-established expectations. Both in the Ghanaian languages and in English, the plays were more clearly slanted to project certain broad ideological stands of the government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC). One of the pervading themes of the plays was the need for a radical re-structuring of Ghanaian society to bring about social and economic equality. That theme was a direct reflection of the urgent task which the government had set for itself at the time.

The well-known drama groups were then not on the scene: the Osofo Dadzie group was rumoured to be in Germany; Mr. Mensah was not performing; and the newer groups which came on the scene did not make any profound and lasting impression on the viewers. The situation was therefore ideal for agents of the government to try to fill the vacuum. However, as the heavy-handed manipulation of the GBC-Television of the Nkrumah era had been discredited, the government could not therefore have resorted to a direct manipulation. As was to be expected, the government preferred a more subtle and discreet manipulation.

This took the form of administrative encouragement. Many new groups emerged at the time to perform plays with the theme of revolution for equality. Although many of those groups had very little or no prior experience either as entertainers or as students they received extensive programme time for their performances. For instance, in addition to performing on Thursdays, such groups were again featured during the Ghanaian language performance times and were then highlighted during the daily adult education news discussions in the various Ghanaian languages, an exceptional practice on the part of GBC-Television. Outside the field of GBC-Television, such groups gained regular access to the state-owned theatres where they performed to live audiences.¹⁰

The cumulative effect was that such newer groups felt encouraged to promote the ideological views of the PNDC. Although the plots varied, most of them resolved around the single theme of revolution for equality. Also, most, if not all, of the performing groups were introduced with a particular song that was sung at the gatherings of revolutionary activists in the country. If anything, the *revolutionary* song that prefaced such plays tended to present the plays as a reflection of the radical ideology at the time. Thirdly, the plays of the performers all had this single motto: *Get Involved*. Normally, as the revolutionary song was being broadcast, the motto of *Get Involved* would be splashed on the screen to be followed by the title of the particular play for the day.

What follows is a description of a play that was performed in 1984 first in English and was then reproduced in the Ghanaian languages for subsequent broadcast either as full-length plays or as sketches intended to highlight themes for discussion in the daily Ghanaian language *Adult Education* programmes.¹¹

Enter a middle-aged male in an office with a well polished table and chair and with curtains in the windows. The man sits behind the table, opens one or two files and appears to be deeply engrossed in them. Intense noise is heard from the outside. The

man out of curiosity peeps through an opening in one of the curtains and sees a group of people approaching his office with placards and singing.

Immediately afterwards, the door of the man's office is flung open and a group made up of a young woman, a young man, and a fairly middle-aged man rushes in. They seize the middle-aged man against the background of singing and shouting from a larger group outside and announce that they have seized control of the office and are throwing out 'management'. The middle-aged man is pushed out of the office and is heckled a few times by the larger group outside. After some time, peace is restored; the smaller group comprising the young woman, young man and the fairly middle-aged man gives brief speeches in turn against muted singing and dancing in the background. Finally, the young woman announces the formation of an interim management committee to run the office.

Discussion

That play has many elements of a model communist or socialist society. The middle-aged person who was sitting at a table in the office and was acting as a manager or administrator represents the *ancienne* regime. As in Ghana, the majority of the population is in the young to 55 age bracket and also since the retiring age is from 45 to 60,¹² the impression that is created by the middle-age appearance of the character is that he is out of keeping with the aspirations of the younger and majority opinion of the society.

The male gender of the character is equally important. It reflects that tendency in traditional societies to erect and emphasize male dominated structures of authority. Again, the demographic situation of Ghana suggests that since females outnumber males in the nation the male dominated institutions do not adequately reflect the reality and are therefore at variance with the 'democratic' aspirations of the society.

During 1982/83, there were intermittent power cuts as a result of the low level of the water in the dam at the hydro-electric power station at Akosombo. Persistent campaigns were made that people should shut off unnecessary power use so as to conserve power for only important uses. One of the uses deemed unnecessary in those days was power for room air-conditioning. Such functionaries of the government as *P.D.C's* (*People's Defence Committees* and *Workers Defence Committees*) were charged with the responsibility of ensuring that offices did not make such unnecessary uses of power for room air-conditioning. Thus, although it would have been expected that the middle-aged man's office would have air-conditioning to emphasize his luxury and decadence the display of the air-conditioner would have been counter-productive in the sense that it would have given the impression that there were people who still used air-conditioners in spite of the appeals to the contrary. Hence, in the furniture of the office an air-conditioner was conspicuous by its absence.

Similarly, one would have expected to find soft carpeting at the office. However, conditions of life in Ghana at the time being so stringent would have rendered the display of soft carpeting unrealistic. Also, one could interpret the curtains in the windows psychologically as a reflection of the middle-aged man's isolation from the society.

Throughout the opening scene, the focus was on the middle-aged person. He was the most important personality in the community; his importance stemmed from the senior position which he held at his place of work. The inference was that in the *ancienne* regime authority did not stem from the democratic will of the people but was imposed by an oligarchy. All of those interpretations are buttressed by the artistic feature of perspective.

In the opening scene the perspective or point of view was dominated by the middle-aged manager. As he went to the window to look out of the curtain, the public was expected to follow his perspective for the last time. That symbolized the coming to an end of his epoch.

The unceremonious opening of the man's door suggested violence. His seizure and subsequent ejection from his office suggested a violent overthrow (*a revolution*) of the *ancienne regime*. The appearance of the young woman in the group of *leaders* was of immense significance. It signified the eradication of the male-dominated structures of society and the introduction of a *classless* society based on complete equality.

Similarly, the younger age of the leaders signified the eradication of the old structures of authority and the introduction of more *progressive* ones in society. The presence of the fairly middle-aged male was however significantly disturbing. Did it not signify the slogan: *two steps forward, one step backward*? In the light of the hindsight about the revisions and the modifications of radicalism in government that ensued in later years, this presence of the much older person in the ranks of the 'radical youth' which thus upset the neat balance of the sexes in favour of that same old condition of male domination signified a certain contradiction in the radicalism of the government.

The final section dealing with the establishment by force of a management committee signified the successful overthrow of the old order. It reflected the processes being encouraged by government at the time by which all dwellers in an area were to establish leadership committees (*People's Defence Committees*) and all workers in an institution were to establish similar leadership committees (*Workers' Defence Committees*) to gradually take over the functions of authority from the previous holders. However, there was considerable vagueness as to precisely who were the previous wielders of power.

As this type of play was given maximum air-time for broadcast by GBC-Television, one is inclined to suspect that the play enjoyed the support of the administrators of the television system and for that matter of the PNDC government. Similarly, the play reflected certain important policies and programmes of the PNDC government at that time: such as, the need for a re-structuring of institutions; the need for the establishment of *interim-management* committees to take over power immediately from the old guard without having to go through the normal democratic processes of change;¹³ and, the need for such committees to act as the vanguard of the drive towards a classless and egalitarian society.

As this series of plays so significantly reflected government thinking in the years 1983/85, their total disappearance by 1986 was therefore remarkable. By 1984/85, the PNDC government had embarked in conjunction with the World Bank and the IMF upon the policies of the *Economic Recovery Programme*. One is inclined to speculate that the disappearance of the radical plays from the GBC-Television repertoire in 1986 reflects the changing attitudes of the government toward many of its earlier radical actions. 1986 therefore serves as a convenient point for marking off the plays of 1983/85 from those of 1987/88.

The Plays of 1987/88

Unlike the plays of 1983/85 which promoted radicalism, the plays of 1987/88 promoted gradualism. Prior to the start of the electioneering campaigns by candidates for election into the district assemblies, a series of plays and sketches were performed on GBC-Television dealing with the message of mass participation in the *grassroot democratic* elections to ensure dedicated representation. That message was carried across in full-length plays performed by the well-known drama groups described earlier and also by new groups which appeared to have been composed specifically for the purpose.¹⁴ The dramas by such

ad-hoc bodies were mainly performed as sketches introducing topics for discussion in the Ghanaian language *Adult Education* programmes. Needless to say, the topics dealt with the message of the plays and sketches; namely, that all must vote in the district assembly elections so as to ensure an adequate *grassroot representation* in the assemblies.

The following is a summary of one of such drama broadcast. It was performed by the Adabraka Drama Troupe in Ga with Mr. Mensah as the lead actor:

Enter Mr. Mensah in uproarious laughter. When he calms down, he says (in a soliloquy) that the 'Government' has now given up 'the struggle' and is asking the old politicians to come forward for elections. He says he as an old politician will enter the fray and bring in all his old friends and they would use their old tactics once again.

He goes out to see one of the old friends, a (Makola-woman) who turns him down with the reason that he failed to pay for the consignment of provisions he collected at the last elections to distribute to prospective voters.

He goes from there to a bank manager who also turns him down with the reason that now there is 'accountability' in the land so the previous practice of massive loans are now discouraged. Finally, Mr. Mensah goes to an elder who advises him that the government is seriously bent on cleaning up politics so he and other 'discredited' politicians would be well advised to stay off the district assembly elections.

With that, Mr. Mensah announces his withdrawal from the contest to avoid embarrassment.

The following is a summary of a sketch performed as an introduction to an Ewe Adult Education broadcast also on the same theme:

Enter a richly attired chief with his retinue in council. The area 'District Commissioner' comes to seek advice from the chief on how the people can be mobilised for development. The chief recommends 'grassroot democracy'. The 'D.C.' then announces that everybody should vote when the time comes to ensure dedicated leadership.

Discussion

Significantly, both the Ga and the Ewe plays boldly featured traditional rulers (*an elder and a chief richly attired*) in a positive role as wise guardians of society. This demonstrates a spectacular contrast to the image of traditional rule that was carried across in the plays of the radical era. Secondly, in both plays the traditional leaders appeared to be giving support or validity to the policies of the government. The underlying notion was that the traditional leaders as wise guardians of traditional authority were experienced enough to tell which policies would be beneficial and which ones would be detrimental to the people. The thinking therefore appeared to be that since the traditional leadership was in support of their policies, the government was on the right pace with such policies. That thinking marks a spectacular shift from the approach of the previous radical era.

Thirdly, in contrast with the earlier recommendation in the plays for the establishment of *people's power* by force wherever necessary, the latter plays appeared to be seeking some amount of accommodation with the traditional rulers. Significantly, the Ga play suggested however that accommodation did not extend to the old-time politicians.

Conclusion

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the government of the PNDC placed an immense value on the use of drama for mass mobilisation. On numerous occasions, members of the government commented on such a significance. For instance, in the October 9, 1990 issue of the *People's Daily Graphic* the Upper West Regional Director of the Centre for National Culture was said to have

*suggested the use of community drama programmes to educate the rural population on the issues at stake in the country's search for a suitable future political system... (He also) said community drama also known as "popular theatre" could be used to dramatise the nation's past and present political experience so that the people of the rural areas could be guided by these experiences in their choice of a future political system for the nation.*¹⁵

It is obvious therefore that drama in general, and GBC-Television drama in particular, was expected by the government to serve not just the purpose of entertainment but also as a tool in the drive for development. As such GBC-Television drama, like all other general broadcast items of the radio and television systems of the nation, would have come under the censor's close scrutiny to ensure that whatever was being done for the purposes of mobilisation for effective development was not subversive, antagonistic, or even contradictory to the views and priorities of the government.

The GBC-Television drama of the period clearly therefore serves as a reliable guide to the thinking of the PNDC government on pertinent issues of national development. As such one can conclude that the drama could be viewed as sign and also as an indicator of ideological shifts in the policies of the PNDC government. To what extent was the drama an avenue of deliberate leakage by the government itself of its shifts and reversals of policy?¹⁶ Although likely to be immensely interesting, the answers to that question would take us well beyond the scope of this essay. Suffice then to say that the GBC-Television drama from 1983 to 1988 can be used to track the evolution of ideas and policies of the PNDC government and for that matter can serve as an index of the radicalism of the government.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) Speech by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah on the inauguration of GBC-Television on July 31, 1965 (Accra: State Publishing Corporation, 1965), p. 3.
- 2) *Daily Graphic*, Monday July 1, 1974, pp. 5 - 7.
- 3) *Daily Graphic*, Tuesday January 5, 1982, p. 1.
- 4) Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1968); Claude Levi-Strauss, *L'analyse structurale des mythes*, *Anthropologie Structurale*, 1958; Alan Dundes, *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (Helsinki: Folklore Fellows Communications, No. 19, 1964); Vladimir Propp *Transformations in Fairy Tales*, *Mythology* (ed.) Pierre Maranda (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Education, 1973), pp. 139 - 150.
- 5) However, in 1990 the Wednesday evening's repeat of the previous Sunday's play was consistently not done. The repeat has since been restored.
- 6) Since mid-1991 the Osofo Dadzie has not been appearing.
- 7) However, one should not see that as a hard and fast rule. In any case, it appears a conscious effort is made to screen out such old playwrights as Shakespeare, Moliere, etc. I have never seen any production of, say Shakespeare or Moliere,

on GBC-Television for the past seven years.

- 8) The linguistic factor is likely to contribute to the relative popularity of the Ghanaian language plays. Ghana, like most African countries, has only about a third of its population literate and even of that figure a significant portion regresses into functional illiteracy after elementary education.
- 9) In Ghana there is no such thing as *TV News* to publicise the television programmes in advance. At best the programmes can only be known one day in advance and that will be only in a summary form. What is much more common is that the programmes will be announced and explained in detail at the start of the television broadcast for the day during the afore-mentioned time-slot of *programme summary*. Hence there is often considerable psychological suspense attached to what will be forthcoming in the drama programme. That suspense no doubt adds to the appeal of the drama programme vis-a-vis the predictability of the slant of the more serious news programme.
- 10) As in Ghana a licence is required from the Police, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Information, and the Ministry of Education and Culture as well as from the Arts Council **before** such an activity can be held, the ease with which the licences were granted for the performances is in itself an indication of the tacit government support behind the performing groups.
- 11) I have tried unsuccessfully on many occasions to gain access to the GBC Archives to research the dates and titles of the specific plays discussed in the text.
- 12) Since 1990 the retiring age bracket has been changed to 55 to 60.
- 13) A clear illustration of that thinking can be found in the name of the present government: **Provisional National Defence Council**. In the manner of domino-effect all other institutions and organisations were expected to seize power immediately and set up interim (*provisional*) management committees (as workers' defence committees or peoples - community - defence committees). The parallel with the marxist-communist rallying cry, *Workers of the World, Unite!*, is instructive.
- 14) The writer recalls that in one of such plays in Ewe one of the characters was the chairperson of the *Adult Education* programme in Ewe. Considering that the chairperson was likely to be a statutory employee of the GBC and was therefore a person in public office, it was clear that the person was not acting for the fun of it but rather was obeying orders from above.
- 15) p. 3.
- 16) It is possible that the whole paraphernalia was a tactical design by the government to test its controversial policies on the minds of the people and by so doing to familiarise and legitimize the policies even before their introduction in earnest.