Preface

Johnson Pepper Clark (b 1935) is the foremost African playwright writing today. Poet, critic and playwright, he has shown how in spite of Western education he is committed to native tradition in art. Though he has written a few plays they are worthy of critical attention and academic discussion because they are a paradigm of Clark's training and his rootedness. He does not consider African experience different from Greek or European experience. So he borrows the form from European models but gives it a local flavour and a habitation and a name. His plays are not derivative but are original and authentic. It is interesting to read plays about a world which is dark and we gain a lot of insight into a society which has a long tradition of oral and performing art. However there are insurmountable difficulties working on a writer like Clark because it is difficult to get at the primary and secondary sources. So this dissertation is not dense with critical judgments. It is a simple and honest attempt to respond to a writer who is not favourably discussed by Western critics. It is hoped that this dissertation will place Clark's work in the right perspective so that it is considered worthy of discussion.
There are six chapters in this dissertation - 
(1) Introduction to African Drama (2) Song of a Goat
(3) The Masquerade (4) The Raft and The Ozidi followed
by Conclusion. I thank my supervisor Dr. M. Kumara
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