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The diptych space/time and the ritual of sacrifice in Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*.

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Abstract
This article shows that the diptych space/time constitutes a key element whereby Soyinka justifies the metaphysical link between the world of the living, that of the dead, and that of the unborn found particularly in the Yoruba cosmogony. At the same time, Soyinka delves deep into his Yoruba culture and denounces the absurdity of some traditional practices such as the ritual of human sacrifice for the sake of the preservation of the community. He thus uses death as a means of salvation.

Résumé
Cet article démontre comment Wole Soyinka utilise le diptyque espace/temps pour plonger dans la cosmogonie Yoruba en montrant le lien supranaturel qui existe entre le monde physique et celui métaphysique des ancêtres. Ce faisant, Soyinka dénonce certains rituels traditionnels (le sacrifice humain par exemple) qui doivent être bannis. Il utilise ainsi la mort comme moyen de salut pour la société.

Contrary to many African writers of his time, Wole Soyinka mainly insists on the role of the individual who sacrifices himself to save the community. For him, theatre constitutes a way for the individual to identify himself with a specific culture. It is also a means to require his own identity among a community which, sometimes, may tend to deprive him of that identity. As Soyinka writes, "ritual theatre, viewed from the spatial perspective, aims to reflect through physical and symbolic means the archetypal struggle of the mortal being against exterior forces."[1] The individual is thus in a perpetual attempt to identify himself within a society, which inevitably creates a feeling of fear and unease. This particular situation turns every action of the individual into a very important element for that identification. Thus, his actions finally bear a ritual aspect to an extent. Soyinka states:

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[1] Wole Soyinka. *Myth, Literature and the African World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p.43.

> Ritual theatre, let it be recalled, establishes the spatial medium not merely as a physical area for simulated events but as a manageable contraction of the cosmic envelope within which man – no matter how deeply buried such a consciousness has latterly become – fearfully exists. And this attempt to manage the immensity of his spatial awareness makes every manifestation in ritual theatre a paradigm for the cosmic human condition. (*Myth, Literature and the African World*, 41)

Nothing is then fortuitous, and this sometimes urges the individual to undertake all-important actions in order to achieve self-identification. This explains in some cases the necessity to do sacrifices for the sake of the preservation of the community in which the individual identifies himself. The sacrifice appears unavoidable as it is obligatory to conserve the existence of the community and of its attributes. As Kole Omotoso puts it "It is unconceivable that there should be no continuity in the life of the community."[2] Saving the community becomes thus an obligation, which justifies the importance attached to the carrier in *The Strong Breed*.[3]

However, there are prerequisites for a good carrier: if in Eman's home village the carrier is a descendant of the family of the "strong breed", in the village he fled to the latter is chosen among the strangers. In both villages, the carrier is chosen the last day of the year before midnight. The choice of the carrier is thus tied to time and space. We can state that in *The Strong Breed*, Soyinka uses the diptych space/time to epitomize and criticize some ritual practices of his Yoruba culture.

The purpose of this paper is to show that the diptych space/time is determinant in the fulfilment of the role of the carrier. By the same token, we will illustrate that through the use of flashbacks, Soyinka highlights the real causes of Eman's failure and, at the same time, he expresses a critical view of the ritual sacrifice of the carrier.

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In *The Strong Breed,* Soyinka delves deep into the Yoruba cosmogony in so far as he focuses on the traditional beliefs of his people. He uses death as a means to save the community from disappearing into the "abyss of transition" which, according to Soyinka, is a zone where occur changes of essence and is situated

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[2] Kole Omotoso. *Achebe or Soyinka: a Study in Contrast*. London: Hans Zell Publishers, 1996, p.20.

[3] Wole Soyinka. *The Strong Breed.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973.

nowhere precisely. This area represents a fourth stage that can be added to the three ones basically found in the metaphysics of most African societies: the world of the living, that of the dead (ancestors), and that of the unborn.

In fact, *The Strong Breed* can be seen as a play whereby Soyinka fully explores the concept of destiny and its effects. For that purpose, he utilizes the concepts of space and time in such a way that they constitute an unbreakable nucleus necessary for the fulfilment of the role of the carrier.

The first manifestation of the diptych space/time appears in the choice of the carrier in Eman's home village. Indeed, Eman is a descendant of the family of the "strong breed" who are the only people accepted to purify the village by accepting to carry the sins. As such, Eman must follow the footsteps of his father by accepting to be the carrier of his village on the last day of the year. Eman's status as a carrier is thus related to his lineage in his village, but also to the moment when he has to fulfil his duty. But contrary to the expectations, Eman decides to withdraw and flee to another village.

In fact, Eman's refusal to fulfil his duty as a carrier is not fortuitous. On the one hand, it is an outcome of the death of his betrothed Omae whose fate is ultimately connected with his own. For the sake of clarity, Soyinka uses another representation of time in the play, that is to say the flashbacks through which the past and the present are interwoven. This allows him to lead the audience towards the real causes of Eman's refusal.

The second flashback in the play (*The Strong Breed*, 136-142) shows Eman and Omae both aged about fourteen. Clearly, this is during circumcision time, and the flirtatious Omae is not allowed to get in contact with Eman:

> OMAE [*coyly*]: Aren't you glad to see me?
>
> EMAN: I am not.
> OMAE: Why?
> EMAN: Why? Do you really ask me why? Because you are a
> woman and a most troublesome woman. Don't you know anything about this at all? We are not meant to see any woman. So go away before more harm is done.
> OMAE [*flirtatious*]: What is so secret about it anyway? What
> do they teach you?
> EMAN: Nothing any woman can understand.
> OMAE: Ha ha. You think we don't know eh? You've all come
> to be circumcised. (*The Strong Breed*, 137)

As the flashback unfolds, the audience is progressively shown the first signs that foresee Eman's failure. In effect, he decides not to go back to his home village and not to carry away the sins for his folks:

> EMAN: You are afraid of what I will say about you? Don't
> worry. Only if you try to shame me, then I will speak. I am not going back to the village anyway. Just tell them I have gone, no more. If you say one word more than that I shall hear of it the same day and I shall come back.
> /…/
> EMAN: I won't come back.
> OMAE: Smoked vulture! But Eman, he says you cannot return
> next year. What will you do?
> EMAN: It is a small thing one can do in the big towns.
> /…/
> Listen carefully Omae… I am going on a journey.
> OMAE: Come on. Tell me about it on the way.
> EMAN: No, I go that way. I cannot return to the village.
> OMAE: Because of that wretched man? Anyway you will first
> talk to your father.
> EMAN: Go and see him for me. Tell him I have gone away for
> some time. I think he will know.
> OMAE: But Eman…
> EMAN: I haven't finished. You will go and live with him till I
> get back. I have spoken to him about you. Look after him!
> OMAE: But what is this journey? When will you come back?
> EMAN: I don't know. But this is a good moment to go. Nothing
> ties me down. (*The Strong Breed*, 140-141)

It is then obvious that Eman has decided to go to a long journey. Another element epitomized through this second flashback is Omae's attachment to Eman. The two young persons who love one another are introduced to us. At the same time, we are shown that Omae does not hesitate to infringe the traditional laws: she sees her betrothed by coming to the hut where the circumcised boys are kept.

Eman's decision is reinforced in the first flashback (*The Strong Breed*, 132-134) through which he is shown discussing with his father. This appears first through his father's scepticism:

> OLD MAN: I meant to wait until after my journey to the river,
>
> but my mind is so burdened with my own grief and yours I could not delay it. You know I must have all my strength. But I sit here, feeling it all eaten slowly away by my unspoken grief. It helps to say it out. It even helps to cry sometimes.
> [*He signals to the attendant to leave them*]
> Come nearer… we will never meet again son. Not on this side of the flesh. What I do not know is whether you will return to take my place. [My emphasis]
> (*The Strong Breed*, 133)

The old man is not convinced that Eman has returned to be a carrier. Eman's answer is clear enough: "I will never come back" (*The Strong Breed*, 133). He does not want to fulfil his duty because he is affected by the Omae's death. Though he knows that "no woman survives the bearing of the strong one" (*The Strong Breed*, 133), Eman is psychologically dejected. Moreover, he was away for twelve years, and this has changed him as he states: "I was away twelve years. I changed much in that time" (*The Strong Breed*, 134). Here again appears another impact of the diptych space/time. If Eman has changed his views towards the tradition of the carrier, it is because he has moved from his home village to another one for twelve years. This is different from what happens in *Death and the King's Horseman*[4] where Olunde decides to come back to recapture the honour of his family.

In *Death and the King's Horseman*, when the king dies, his horseman must be buried with him. But the horseman Elesin Oba refuses to fulfil his duty and to be

[4] Wole Soyinka. *Death and the King's Horseman*. London: Methuen London Ltd, 1993 (first published in 1975).

buried with the king. Instead, he is attracted by earthly pleasures he claims himself by stating that he deserves to be honoured before joining the world of the ancestors: *"Then honour me. I deserve a bed of honour to lie upon."* (*Death and the King's Horseman*, 20).

Yet, for the sake of honour, Elesin Oba' son, Olunde, who has been to Europe to study medicine, accepts to commit the "ritual suicide" at the place of his father. Olunde's aim is to preserve the honour of the family and avoid the curse of the village on his father: "And since he has been so helpful to me I don't want him to incur the enmity of our people. Especially over nothing." (*The Strong Breed*, 52). In order to achieve his goal, he tries to convince Jane Pilkings to not interfere in the ritual of the sacrifice: "But at least have the humility to let others survive in their own way." (*The Strong Breed*, 53). Thus, Olunde keeps open the bridge between the world of the living and that of the dead ancestors.

It is then clearly shown that the time Olunde spent in Europe – four years – does not prevent him from still keeping some important aspects of his culture by accepting the ritual practice. In *Death and the King's Horseman*, Soyinka praises the safeguarding of the traditions by the younger generation symbolised by Olunde, contrary to what happens in *The Strong Breed* in which he pictures another young person whose fondness for earthly pleasures soils his sense of duty.

In *The Strong Breed,* the shift of location for a period of time has resulted into a change of ideas for Eman who decides to flee away from his village to go to another one. But through the play, we notice that this new shift of location turns

Eman into what he was fleeing, that is to say a carrier.

In fact, this situation is not a surprise to the informed audience in so far as the first flashback reveals a premonitory statement made by Eman's father:

> OLD MAN: I am very sad. You only go to give to others what
>
> > rightly belongs to us. You will use your strength among thieves. They are thieves because they take what is ours, they have no claim of blood to it. They will even lack the knowledge to use it wisely. Truth is my companion at this moment my son. I know everything I say will surely bring the sadness of truth. (*The Strong Breed*, 134)

The old man's words mean that Eman will certainly fulfil his duty among a community that is not his. The metaphor used by the old man also reveals that Eman cannot escape his destiny as a carrier. In one way or another, his final end is to be a carrier. Soyinka focuses on this aspect of the destiny of the individual who is doomed to meet it. In order to epitomize that inevitability of destiny, he

firstly contrasts Eman's "two lives" in his home village and in his new village. With a new location and another time, Eman turns to be a carrier again.

Secondly, Soyinka shows through Ifada and Eman that no one can change the destiny of the individual. This is justified in the sense that Ifada, who was first chosen as a carrier, is finally freed when Eman took his defence, considering him as a helpless boy who is not willing: "Yes. But why did you pick on a helpless boy. Obviously he is not willing." (*The Strong Breed*, 128). Clearly, Eman has forgotten that the traditional practices and laws in his home village are different from those in his new village. In other terms, the shift of location has entailed a change as far as those rules and practices are concerned.

Beyond this superficial aspect, however, we can see that Ifada is not actually destined to be a carrier, even if he is a stranger in the village. Moreover, Soyinka stresses to an extent the absurdity of those traditional rules which have also a part of subjectivity. That subjectivity can be noticed through the fact that the carrier symbolizes the scapegoat which should be blamed for the sins of the village. He is the one who should purify the village by accepting to shoulder the responsibility for those sins. The fact that an individual only decides to take the responsibility of a whole community justifies the acceptance of such people who can be chosen as a carrier (a descendant of the strong breed in Eman's home village, and a stranger in Sunma's village).

Of course, if strangers are accepted in the village, it is because in this case the villagers would not have any difficulty finding the appropriate carrier. As Oroge explains it to Eman, no sensible person would accept to be sacrificed as a carrier. Consequently, the choice is fixed on Ifada who is the idiot of the village. For Jaguna, "Ifada is a godsend" (*The Strong Breed*, 128), meaning that the latter has no choice; he does not have to be willing. Therefore, giving shelter to strangers, particularly to idiots like Ifada, is the easiest way for the village to have a carrier:

> JAGUNA: What is the man talking about? Ifada is a godsend.
>
> Does he have to be willing?
>
> EMAN: In my home village, we believe that a man should be
>
> willing.
>
> OROGE: Mister Eman, I don't think you quite understand. This
>
> is not a simple matter at all. I don't know what you do, but here, it is not cheap task for anybody. No one in his senses would do such a job. Why do you think we give refuge to idiots like him? We don't know where he came from. One morning, he is simply there, just like that. From

> nowhere at all. You see, there is a purpose in that. (*The Strong Breed*, 128) [My emphasis]

All this argument over the choice of Ifada as a carrier has a particular purpose in the play, which is to reorganise the events so as to have again the conformity between Ifada and his destiny. Ifada is not destined to be a carrier, and as such, he does not have to be sacrificed. Now the only alternative found by the villagers is Eman who is the only other stranger in the village:

> JAGUNA: Take him out. [*The men carry out Ifada*] You see, it
>
> > is so easy to talk. You say there are no men in this village because they cannot provide a willing carrier. And yet I heard Oroge tell you we only use strangers. There is only one other stranger in the village, but I have not heard him offer himself [*spits.*] It is easy to talk is it not? (*The Strong Breed*, 129-130).

Eman is ridiculed by Jaguna who considers him as nothing but a coward. At this level, Soyinka illustrates the absurdity of the ritual sacrifice and of certain traditional rules. Soyinka becomes critical towards his own community by pointing out the senselessness of human sacrifice which, apparently, is accepted only by senseless people.

In trying to save Ifada, Eman just turns back the lights onto himself. He takes back inadvertently the status of a carrier. It is only through the stage directions that the audience is first introduced to Eman as a carrier:

> [/.../ About half-way down the passage, Eman is crouching against the wall, tense with apprehension. As the noise dies off, he seems to relax, but the alert hunted look is still in his eyes which are ringed in a reddish colour. The rest of his body has been whitened with a floury substance. He is naked down to the waist, wears a baggy pair of trousers, calf-length, and around both feet are bangles.] (*The Strong Breed*, 131)

Then it is the woman who discovers Eman hiding from his pursuers:

> WOMAN: Oh, my head. What have I done! Forgive me
>
> > neighbour... Eh, it's the carrier!

> *[Very rapidly she clears her throat and spits on him, flings the pail at him and runs off, shouting.]*
> He's here. The carrier is hiding in the passage. Quickly, I have found the carrier!
> *[The cry is taken up and Eman flees down the passage. Shortly afterwards his pursuers come pouring down the passage in full cry. After the last of them come Jaguna and Oroge.]* (*The Strong Breed*, 131)

This is reminiscent of what Eman's father told him about the inevitability of his destiny. Eman has become a carrier, but in the wrong village and among the wrong community; among those his father called "thieves". On the one hand, the ritual of the carrier is tarnished because Eman first refuses to be a carrier, and then accepts so as to avoid the sacrifice of an innocent and unwilling boy. Thus, the significance of the ritual is partially removed by the attitude of both Eman and the villagers.

On the other hand, it shows that the concept of time, though it plays an important role in the choice of the carrier, may sometimes be of no significance in the identification of the stranger. Here, the space has more impact and contributes more to the designation of the carrier. In spite of the time Eman has spent in the village, the reality is that he is still a stranger and may be chosen as a carrier. This is understood by Sunma who tries her best to convince Eman to leave the village with her for the night. Sunma knows that the villagers still look upon Eman as a stranger:

> SUNMA: By yourself you can do nothing here. Have you not noticed how tightly we shut out strangers? Even if you lived here for a lifetime, you would remain a stranger. (*The Strong Breed*, 123)

Sunma considers that Eman should not interfere in the sacrificial rites of a village where he is a stranger. Moreover, for her, the sacrifice is just a murder that should be banned. Sunma's attitude is a new illustration of the importance of the diptych space/time. She is aware of the influence of the shift of location in connection with the temporal shift. These two elements constitute the fundamental axis round which Sunma centres her speech in her attempt to convince Eman to flee:

> SUNMA: Tonight. Only tonight. We will come back tomorrow,
> as early as you like. But let us go away for this one night. Don't let another year break on me in this place... you don't know how

> important it is to me, but I will tell you, I will tell you on the way... but we must not be here today, Eman, do this one thing for me.
>
> EMAN [*sadly*]: I cannot. (*The Strong Breed*, 122)

The key terms in Sunma's speech are all suggestive of the interconnections between space and time; which clearly appears through the combination "here-today". These terms preceded by the adverb "not" and the auxiliary "must" imply that Eman's ending as a carrier or not depends on his location at a specific time. It means that Eman becomes a carrier if he stays in the village, whereas leaving it just for the night will utterly prevent him from being sacrificed.

Eman's destiny being stronger than any other power, he stubbornly decides to stay. He does not want to leave and creates the necessary conditions for the unavoidable fulfilment of his destiny. This justifies the interconnections between the individual and the universe in general, and the cosmological influence upon him. In other terms, the individual is, in a way or another, tied to a cosmic reality that manifests itself through deeds and beliefs. Soyinka writes:

> Man can shelve and even overwhelm metaphysical uncertainties by epic feats, and prolong such a state of social euphoria by their constant recital, but this exercise in itself proves a mere surrogate to the bewildering phenomenon of the cosmic location of his being. (*Myth, Literature and the African World,* 2)

Soyinka reinforces his arguments to prove that the link between the individual and the "supra-natural" world cannot be broken or, if it is broken, it may cause a chaos in the world of the living and in that of the dead ancestors. He states:

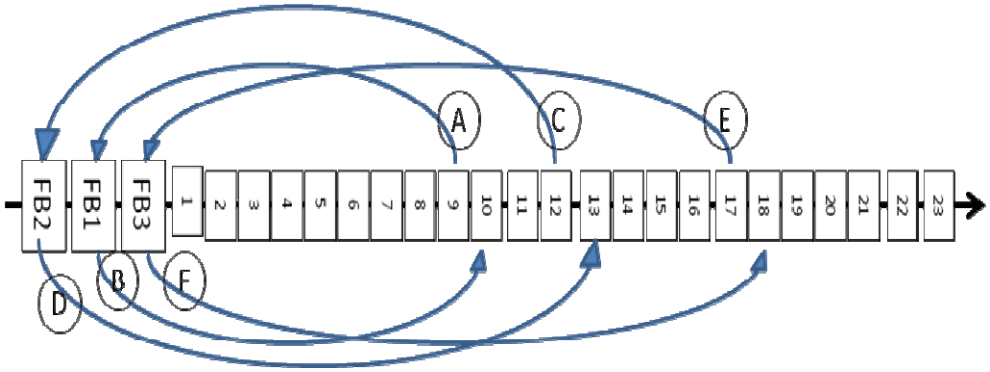
> In Asian and European antiquity, therefore, man did, like the African, exist within a cosmic totality, did possess a consciousness in which his own earth being, his gravity-bound apprehension of self, was inseparable from the entire cosmic phenomenon. (For let it always be recalled that myths arise from man's attempt to externalise and communicate his inner intuitions.) (*Myth, Literature and the African World*, 3)

This is reminiscent of the belief in the "chain of being" in England during the Elizabethan period. People believed that there was a link between the earth and Heaven, and that any break of the "chain of being" would result into a chaos. Any trouble on earth is a reflection of the disorder in Heaven. Similarly, Soyinka's description of the Yoruba cosmogony illustrates that link between the individual and the cosmic:

> Thus the death of an individual is not seen as an isolated incident in the life of one man. Nor is individual fertility separable from the regenerative promise of earth and sea. The sickness of the individual is a sign of, or may portend the sickness of, the world around him. Something has occurred to disrupt the natural rhythms and the cosmic balances of the total community. (*Myth, Literature and the African World*, 51)

This is all the more understandable since the "fourth stage" constitutes an area where occur changes of essence, where there is a dialectical mutation of the physical and the metaphysical, and of the material and the spiritual.

Through the way Soyinka uses space and time in *The Strong Breed*, he creates a spiral structure which allows him not only to guide the audiences back and forth and to show an imbrication of the past and the present. The spiral structure can be represented in a chart as follows:



It is worth mentioning first that we have placed on a chronological axis the three flashbacks (FB1, FB2, FB3) and some key events (1 to 23) selected from the play and listed in table 1 of the appendix. The curved arrows indicate the movements back (A, C, E) and forth (B, D, F) from the present and the past and vice versa as the events unfold.

We have put FB2 before FB1 because it shows Eman and Omae both aged about fourteen. Though Eman's age is not mentioned in FB1, it is however clear that the events occur after those described in FB2 because we know first that it is after Omae's death; then we know that it is after Eman's journey ("I was away twelve years", p.134) which project he talked about with Omae in FB2 ("I am going on a journey", p.141).

After key event 9 which shows Jaguna and Oroge running after Eman, the audiences witness the first flashback which shifts them in the childhood of Eman and Omae (movement A). Then they are taken back to the present (movement B). The second flashback which occurs after Jaguna and Oroge go off takes the

audiences to circumcision times (movement C) when Eman was aged about fourteen. After taking the audiences back to the present (movement D), the play unfolds for a relatively longer moment, then there is another return in the past (movement E) which shows Eman's father who asks him to go away. The final step in the present (movement F) which ends the third flashback shows Sunma suffering and supported by Ifada. This can be regarded as the first signs of the ending of the play because we see Sunma who crumbles on the wall, and then the villagers begin to return.

The consequence of the spiritual structure is that the audiences are perpetually reminded the metaphysical link between the world of the living, that of the dead ancestors, and that of the unborn. The audiences do not only know the past and the present, but can also foresee the future. This is one of the most important characteristics of the Yoruba cosmogony; which is justified by Soyinka who writes "It is necessary to recall again that the past is not a mystery and that although the future (the unborn) is yet unknown, it is not a mystery to the Yoruba but co-existent in present consciousness." (*Myth, Literature and the African World*, 149).

This situation is another illustration of the inevitability of man's destiny which he can meet at anytime, whereas the justification can be found clearly in the past. This is valid for Eman whose wavering attitude is grounded on facts explained to the audience through the flashbacks. For example, Eman would gain the pride of his father and of his community if he accepted to his duty as a carrier for his home village. His blood designated him to shoulder an honourable task, but he finally dies unwillingly, carrying the sins of another village. Nothing can be more absurd, as Soyinka seems to state. The justification is found in the first flashback, when Eman's father draws his attention on the fact that he may behave in a way which will not satisfy his family. In any case, because he belongs to the lineage of "the strong breed", failing to fulfil his duty will be a betrayal for him and for the family.

Moreover, when analysing more carefully the old man's discourse, we can notice the premonition in it and the inevitability of destiny. He explains to Eman that he cannot avoid fulfilling his duty. No matter how hard he will try, he will never be able to flee his task. That is what is meant by the old man when he states that Eman cannot do less than the task he is designated for as a carrier and a descendant of "the strong breed". Their discussion illustrates it:

> OLD MAN: Other men would rot and die doing this task year
>
> after year. It is strong medicine which only we can take. Our blood is strong like no other. Anything you do in life must be less than this, son.

> EMAN: That is not true father.
> OLD MAN: I tell you it is true. Your own blood will betray you
> son, because you cannot hold it back. If you make it do less than this, it will rush to your head and burst it open. I say what I know my son.
> EMAN: There are others tasks in life father. This one if not for
> me. There are even greater things you know nothing of. (*The Strong Breed,* 134) [My emphasis]

It is thus clear that even if Eman tries to avoid his destiny, he will meet it sooner or later.

Furthermore, Soyinka reinforces his view about that absurdity by letting the audience feel some kind of regret invading Oroge and Jaguna. This information is given first in the stage directions where we learn that the villagers are "subdued and guilty" (*The Strong Breed*, 145). They are guilty of being obliged to sacrifice almost unwillingly a human being for the mistakes he has not committed himself. Moreover, they have caused the unnatural death of Eman, even though his fated task as a carrier is natural to an extent. This leads Oroge and Jaguna to regret their acts, particularly when they consider the attitude of the villagers:

> JAGUNA: I am sick to the heart of the cowardice I have seen
> tonight.
> OROGE: That is the nature of men.
> JAGUNA: Then it is a sorry world to live in. We did it for
> them. It was all for their own common good. What did it benefit me whether the man lived or died. But did you see them? One and all they looked up at the man and words died in their throats.
> OROGE: It was no common sight.
> JAGUNA: Women could not have behaved so shamefully. One
> by one they crept off like sick dogs. Not one could raise a curse.
> OROGE: It was not only him they fled. Do you see how
> unattended we are?

> JAGUNA: There are those who will pay for this night's work!
> OROGE: Ay, let us go home. (*The Strong Breed*, 146)

The atmosphere in which Soyinka puts Oroge and Jaguna on the one hand and the audience on the other hand, is meant to epitomise the inner feeling of both the actors and the audience of the play. It entails a sensation of guilt in front of an absurd ritual practiced "unlawfully".

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In *The Strong Breed*, Soyinka's critical stance comes to a climax. There is no doubt that in this play Soyinka states his strong belief in the irrevocability of the destiny of the human being. He uses space and time as physical elements and "as a medium in the communicative sense" (*Myth, Literature and the African World*, 39) in order to epitomize the main aspects of destiny which, to an extent, is ultimately related to the individual. However, it does not prevent him from showing a gleam of hope. In effect, the regretful attitude of the villagers and the reactions of Oroge and Jaguna in the last scene of the play can be perceived as a means for Soyinka to state that they are becoming aware of the absurdity of the ritual human sacrifice. Therefore, it can be expected that those people may one day decide to get rid of that practice. In the same way as Eman's view has changed over the years, the villagers may have a different stance as time goes by. In other terms, the diptych space/time may probably lead to the necessary changes and to the awakening of the people.

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Appendix

Table 1: Key events selected from the play

Key events selected from the play (chronological order)			
1	Sunma tries to convince Eman to flee the village	13	The Girl talks to Eman
2	Arrives the girl with the effigy	14	The Girl runs off
3	Enter Jaguna, Oroge, and three men looking for Ifada	15	Enter Jaguna and Oroge, led by the Girl
4	Eman tries to protect Ifada	16	Eman talks to the Priest
5	Jaguna: "Ifada is a godsend"	17	The Priest shows Eman's father
6	The men carry out Ifada	18	Enter Sunma, supported by Ifada
7	Eman is ridiculed by Jaguna	19	Ifada tears down the hanging effigy
8	Eman is hiding, discovered by a woman	20	Sunma crumbles against the wall
9	Jaguna and Oroge are running after Eman	21	The villagers begin to return, subdued and guilty
10	Jaguna and Oroge are still running after Eman	22	Enter Jaguna and Oroge
11	Sunma revolts against her father, Jaguna	23	Jaguna and Oroge go off; Sunma, Ifada, and the Girl remain as they are
12	Jaguna and Oroge go off		

Table 2: Key events selected from the three flashbacks

Key events selected from FB1	
1	The Old Man talking to the Attendant, asks for his son Eman
2	Eman tells his father that he will never come back*
3	Old Man to Eman: "You blood will betray you"*
4	The Old Man goes away
Key events selected from FB2	
5	Omae visits Eman who asks her to go away (circumcision hut)
6	The returning Tutors tries to take Omae to his hut
7	Eman re-enters to free Omae from the Tutor
8	Eman tells Omae about his project to go on a journey*
9	Omae tries to convince Eman to stay, but he refuses*
Key events selected from FB3	
10	The Old Man does not want Eman to get closer. "We cannot give the two of us"
11	Eman is visibly relieved because he does not have to follow his father*

* These key events of the flashbacks portend Eman's failure to fulfil willingly his duty as a carrier.