

ON THEATRE SCHOLARSHIP AND CONTROVERSY: THE CASE OF THE DIRECTOR IN THE TRADITIONAL AFRICAN THEATRE

By

Abdul Rasheed Abiodun Adeoye
University of Ilorin
Nigeria

Abstract

African theatre has a codified identity. Its identity lies in its festival nature. It is fascinating however to note that the presence of the theatre director in the African traditional theatre or otherwise has always been a subject of controversy. While theatre scholars such as Nzewi (1979), Adedeji (1981), Amankulor (1981), Akinwale (2000), Ejeke (2000), Bakare (2002), Ogundeji (2003), Bell-gam (2003) and so on support the notion that the theatre director is eminently present in the traditional African theatre, Finnegan (1970), Echeruo (1971), Gbilekaa (2000) and so on radically disagree. Through the deductive method of research, we review these arguments and re-examine the essence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre by concluding that, there is indeed the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre.

Introduction: On Theatre Scholarship and Controversy

In a critical attempt to imbibe and make a career in the “culture of mass conformism” (Lyotard, 374) or subjugate same with the re-writing (Molande, 89) and reconstruction, “the theatre has always been in the hot spot of avoidable and unavoidable criticism” (Musa, 6). African theatre, with its copy-cat mentality or at some point, a shift towards renaissance is not insulated from controversy. For a re(presentation) of African theatre as a result of historical and educational hybridism has led to the image of under(presentation), over(presentation) or non(re-presentation).

In the 1960s, the Nigerian theatre scholars – rejoicing under the toga of new education – a legacy of the Western power and facing the crisis of identity necessarily raised the following posers:

- A. Do we have theatre in Africa?
- B. Can our theatre pass the acid test of classicism, a banality that should be used for measuring theatre?
- C. Is our theatre not a cultural commodity, mytho-ritual re-enactments or pseudo (semi-demi) and un-programmed theatre?

The sensitivity of the questions above, led to the then famous three schools; the Evolutionist, the Referentialist and the Relativist which later expanded through serious theatre scholarship and practice to include two other: the Alienistics and the Diasporans (Uka, 16-17). Interestingly, the Nigerian theatre scholars such as Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, Kalu Uka, J. P. Clark, J. A. Adedeji, J. N. Amankulor, Michael Echeruo, Oyin Ogunba, Oyekan Owomoyela, and so on have notably engaged in the naming and re-naming of African theatre. This controversy did not exclude the Euro-American theatre sympathisers such as Michael Etherton, Ruth Finnegan, Peter Johnathan, Berth Lidfors, James Gibbs and many more.

As we have scholars who will never agree to the existence of drama and theatre in Africa, we also have those who are convinced that Africa housed the best of theatrical manifestations especially within her indigenous nay traditional festivals. Who is right or what group is wrong will only be our continuous search to “fighting the windmills of ignorance” (Uka, 1). As we struggle to make a statement and develop the African culture, we must be objective and critical: Africa has enough theatre and drama buried inside her culture. What we can only do is to re-make, interpret, dramatise and translate African theatre and drama for social engineering and cultural revival. To continue to precipitate the crisis of non-existence of theatre and drama or its workers in the African indigenous theatre, especially in this era of postcolonial studies where there is a great reclamation of Western hegemony for voices within the global worlds could be seen as the continuation of the ‘deconstruction of the self’ which is the crisis of modernity (Dollimore, 553), interpreted further to mean an elongation of the performativity of the crisis of identity where cultural hegemony and stereotyping are often abundantly celebrated.

African theatre has a codified identity. Its identity lies in its festival nature. It is, however, fascinating to note that the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre or otherwise has always been a subject of controversy. While theatre scholars such as Nzewi (1979), Adedeji (1981), Amankulor (1981), Akinwale (2000), Ejeke (2000), Bakare (2002), Ogundeji (2003), Bell-gam (2003) and so on support the notion that the theatre director is eminently present in the traditional African theatre, Finnegan (1970), Echeruo (1971), Gbilekaa (2000) and so on radically disagree. We will review these arguments, re-examine the essence of the director in the traditional African theatre before drawing our conclusion which is clearly in support of the existence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre.

Traditional African Theatre: A Review

The traditional African theatre is a festival theatre. It housed the total theatre performance aesthetics which is a theatre of collective rhythm. In all its ramifications, the total theatre idiom is the essence of the African theatre. African theatre is also technophobic and even within its monologic theatricals; the total theatre idiom welds many performance kernels into one unique, communicative, entertaining and educative performance.

Beyond the kaleidoscopic momentum of globalisation in theatricalisation, however, the African theatre relies heavily on the total theatre aesthetics of dance, music and song, puppetry, poetry, acrobatic display, incantation and invocation, evocation and chanting, mime and pantomimic dramatisation and so on. All these canons have become a recurring decimal of artistry in the poetic justification of African theatrical aesthetics.

The concept and scope of traditional theatre according to Meki Nzewi includes drama, dance, music, visual plastic, costume arts and functioned as mass media for every given community for its is highly rationalised and organised. It has two ideational categories; the spiritual and the secular (Nzewi, 16-17).

The spiritual and secular essence of the traditional African theatre is not divorced from the communal nature of African social system. This social system enjoins the majority of the people living in a community to fully participate in the African cycle of life which Soyinka (1976) critically theorised through the Yoruba ritual theatre. The spiritual essence of the traditional African theatre lies in the survival strategy and protection from war, pestilence

unmitigated disaster and so on while the secular “catered for the articulation of socio-political systems, and as a neutral ‘vox populi’ of the community” (Nzewi, 16). Ironically, it is possible for one person to actively participate in the spiritual and secular essence of the traditional African theatre. In fact, Nwamuo (41) submits further that:

Traditional African theatre is a social institution which relies for its operation and supports on a mesh of inter-relationships-between actor and audience, actor and manager and manager and audience. It is the nature of these relationships which give theatre at any one particular time, its special character. It is part of the people themselves and is rooted in African culture.

The secular/social vision of the traditional African theatre shows the dynamic change and the non-static nature of culture, the concept which produced the traditional theatre in Africa.

The vibrancy of the traditional theatre in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised. In a “Foreward” to Gowon Ama Doki’s recent work; *Traditional Theatre in Perspective: Signs and Signification in Igbe, Girinya and Kwagh-hir*, Saint Gbilekaa affirms that:

The Nigerian theatre scholarship of the 1960’s, 1970’s and even 80’s dedicated much space to traditional theatre... This tradition of scholarship was continued by the succeeding generation of scholars who looked at the robust theatrical traditions in their environments (Doki, ix-x).

The Nigerian literary and popular theatre traditions are also greatly influenced by the multiple aesthetics of the traditional African theatre which “is the oldest and most indigenous form of theatre in Africa... a theatre which elements and traditions are deeply rooted in the ontology and cosmology of the African society” (Ebong, 2).

The crisis of what is drama and that which constitutes drama in African is rooted in the writing and re-writing of the canons of traditional African theatre. Interestingly, (Amkpa, 82) has added to the burden of interpretation when he concludes that “within the scope of teaching and practice, Nigerian drama is enmeshed in a crisis of definition and identity”. It is therefore, important to give credit to recent scholarly efforts on traditional African theatre such as Doki (2000, 2001 and 2006), Musa and Akoh (2001), Ododo (2001), Ogundeji (2003), Menegbe (2007), Balogun (2007), Ibrahim (2007), Joseph (2007) and so on. In spite of the crisis of using the Western canons to define African theatre or using our own socio-political and cultural history as premise for analysis; we want to conclude this review on S. E. Ododo’s admonition:

What constitutes drama or theatre is culture referent. In other words, it will be misleading to maintain that theatrical experience that does not conform to Western theatre canon is no theatre. A theatrical analysis of a festival within an African culture therefore has the capacity to share similarities with Western theatre tradition and also present its own unique aesthetic features (2).

Let there be no intellectual intimidation, culture is not for sale and since it housed the theatre, it should change and grow at the owner’s pace.

Director in the Traditional African Theatre: The Antagonists

Two schools have emerged on the scholars who did not believe that there is the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre. The first group includes Ruth Finnegan, Michael Echeruo and Richard Wallaschenk. The main thrust of this group is their conclusion that there is no theatre or drama in Africa and that, if we have theatre and drama at all, they are pseudo and bereft of Western features and elements. This group will therefore not accept the notion or the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre.

Biting metaphors were used by some of the leading scholars in this group to debunk, as mere wishful thinking, the notion of drama or the presence of its worker, the director in the traditional African theatre. Finnegan (501) says that there is no “linguistic content, plot, represented interaction of several characters, specialized scenery” in the African drama while Echeruo (147) concludes that the Igbo ritual is lacking in dramatic content and that the ritual content must be forced to “yield its story; to cut through the overlay of ceremony”. This is a clear invitation for the imposition of Western theatrical rhetorics on African theatre while Richard Wallaschenk in (Amkpa, 83) bemoans the meaninglessness of African drama as against the European’s meaningfulness in dramatic content.

Saint Gbilekaa leads the radical school, to debunk, through a well-researched article; the presence of the director in the indigenous African theatre. Using the Tiv Kwagh-hir’s organised theatre in the Northern Nigeria, Gbilekaa (32) reflects that:

We cannot therefore accept the view that directing is a prominent art in traditional theatre, at least not in festival theatre. Accepting a director in this theatre would mean viewing him as mere follower of laid-down procedures and principles of repetitive production techniques

In their continuation of the Westernisation of the directing art and the Westernisation of African theatre, Saint Gbilekaa raised some issues in his article which he titled; “The Position of the Director in Indigenous African Theatre:”

1. Play directing is the ultimate means in the first instance, serving the playwright with a lot of devotion, finding the mood that is germane to the play...
2. Those who find the director in traditional African theatre, do so from a generalised perspective.
3. If directing exists in traditional theatre at all, then it is communal, collaborative and corporate in nature (Gbilekaa, 30-36). We shall return to these issues in the course of this work.

Interestingly, Saint Gbilekaa also recalls that he is responding to three questions posed to him by directing students. The questions are:

1. Is traditional African theatre a director’s theatre?
2. If it is not, what should we call the priest of the festival theatre and the leader of the improvised African theatre, or the lead dancer of either an all-women’s or men’s dance?
3. Is he a mere convener, an organizer of a variety show or is he a manager? (Gbilekaa, 28).

Director in the Traditional African Theatre: The Protagonists

Scholars such as Nzewi (1979), Adedeji (1981), Amankulor (1981), Akinwale (2000), Ejeke (2000), Bakare (2002), Ogundeji (2003), Bell-gam (2003), Johnson (2001 and 2003), Musa (2002 and 2006) and others have directly and indirectly support the presence of the theatre director in the African festival theatre.

First, is J. A. Adedeji. Using the famous Yoruba— Alarinjo theatre, a unique traveling theatre among the Yoruba of Nigeria which uniqueness lies in its ‘repertory system’ (where the masque-dramaturge’ is made use of), Adedeji (223-4) historically observes that:

Ologbin Ologbojo founded the Yoruba theatre... It is claimed that it was on account of his hybrid son, Olugbere Agan, that he established the theatre as a permanent part of court entertainment. To launch him, Ologbin Ologbojo got Olojowon, the master carver, to carve a wooden face mask and Alaran Ori, the costumier, to build a set of costumes. With these Olugbere Agan careered as a costumed actor and a strolling player. Ologbojo himself serves as a masque dramaturge or animator who handled the improvisations while Akunyugba, the palace rhapsodists, provided the choral chants.

Considering the above, Musa (53) reflects that Ologbin Ologbojo was essentially a theatre director if the above is critically considered. Firstly, he founded his own theatre, instructed a career to carve for him, engaged the service of the costumier and “handled the improvisations”. All these functions are basically that of the director who must coordinate all theatrical activities.

In his article, “Production Styles on the Nigerian Stage: A Historical Review”, Akinwale (118) also reviews the Alarinjo Travelling Theatre and concludes that “one is apt to believe that Esa Ogbin the progenitor of the theatre can be regarded as one of the earliest theatre directors”. Esa Ogbin was a leading light during the formative period of the Alarinjo Theatre. Closely related to the presence of the director in the traditional African festival theatre is the latter day phenomenon of the actor-manager-theatre-director that surfaced before and during the dawn of professionalism in the Nigerian theatre. Adedeji(226) again informs that “several new troupes sprang up beyond the Ologbojo lineage and these were free to entertain individual or group of people who invites them. Names of troupes like Aiyeba, Lebe, Aiyelabola and later Agbegijo, Ajangila and Ajofeebo emerged”. These troupes have managers who were actors and directors of their various troupes.

In the Ekpe festival, Amankulor(118) has observed that “Ekpe combines the tragic and the comic aspects of the proceeding ceremonies... Ekpe takes place on Ekpe day. It is preceded by Ekpe eve, a free-for-all-night of dancing and rehearsals for drummers, dancers, chorus leaders and their choric group”. The rehearsals above by artists were and are still being coordinated by their leaders who were and are still the unsung theatre directors in community— related cultural performances such as the Ekpe festival, a traditional festival theatre.

Ejeke Solomon Odiri not only accepted the presence of the theatre directors in the African theatre, he wrote an article, “Play Analysis for the Director in African Theatre” to theorise his submission. Ejeke(39) even warns that “a director in the African theatre must

weave his interpretation round the African worldview to be able to capture essential meaning of the play and the production.”

Using the Nji-Owu performance of Opobo and dismissing as inconclusive, the notion of defining theatre directing through conventional Western canons, Bell-Gam (10) disagrees with Gbilekaa (2000) assumption that there is no director in the traditional African festival theatre. He also insists that:

A major aesthetic difference between directing on conventional theatre and that of Nji-Owu lies in the directorial time span of the two. While in the conventional theatre, the process of directing ends at the technical rehearsal, directing in the Nji-Owu performance progresses into the public performance (12)

The role of Akwafaribo (the master drummer in the Nji-Owu performance of Opobo) can be linked to that of the Gangan lead drummer in any Yoruba festival theatre. The two drummers are mostly in control of their various performances before and during productions. They are great inventors, performers and essentially, theatre directors who must “organise, control, manage, discipline, explain, motivate, inspire, dictate and command the entire members of the cultural troupe to ensure a successful performance” (10).

Wole Soyinka in (Yerima, 47) not only sees the theatre director as “the product of organic revolution in the theatre”, he also concludes that the theatre director “has always functioned in African society as the record of the mores and experience of his society and as the voice of vision in his own time”. Without going further, we are going to end our discussion on the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre here. This is because the works of scholars discussed in this sub-heading of our work have all shown that there is indeed the presence of the theatre director in the traditional African theatre.

The Universality of Culture and the Theatre Director

The main contention, as we see it this controversy has to do with the concepts of culture (the main creator of all theatrical performances and especially the traditional performance) and theatre director. Let us pose some critical questions:

- A. Is there a performance that is not culture based?
- B. Is it culture that influence performance or vice-versa?
- C. Even if a performance is drenched in ultra-abstractionism can it be divorced from culture?
- D. Who promotes culture?
Again, let us attempt to provide likely answers:
 - A. All performances are culture based
 - B. It is culture that influence performance and not vice-versa.
 - C. No performance can be divorced from culture.
 - D. The artistes and ultimately, the traditional institutions promote culture.

A critical look at the posers and the likely answers provided above will point to the direction of man’s unnecessary intellectual submission to misrepresent and misinterpret what culture is all about. Why we are not interested in starting another controversy here, we also want to draw some conclusions on the essence of culture:

- A. Culture is dynamic; it changes as the society changes. As a reflector, it housed, at a given time, a people's idiosyncrasies occasioned by urbanisation, human and technological developments.
- B. All cultural activities are theatrical and vice-versa. Certainly, culture is the engine room and the cultivator of the theatre and the theatre can only become a reality through the theatre workers one of whom is the theatre director.

Since culture is dynamic and the artistes (performers and performance makers) ultimately promote culture, it is, therefore, reasonable to submit that the primary theatre of the people (the traditional theatre) is not only gaining currency of discourse, as the postmodern theatre does, but changing in mode and operation in our ever-changing world. Culture as a cycle of life has also transited and grows to imbibe one of the main aims of the theatre: entertainment. Core culture based ritual ceremonies which were often done in seclusion have now become performances for pure entertainment and socio-political manifestations. Our analysis here point to a direction; traditional African theatre is a product of African culture and most African culture that are performance oriented are being put together by (performers and performance makers). One of the core performance makers undoubtedly is the theatre director.

This invariably leads us to who a theatre director is. In the theatre, the theatre director is a paradox. His identity has always been a subject of controversy and his functions too keep expanding. Scholars such as Whiting (1961), Brook (1966), Hodge (1971), Staub (1973), Morrison (1984), Cole (1992), Wilson (1994), Barranger (1995), Johnson (2001 and 2003) and Musa (2000 and 2007) have critical reviewed the person, identify, responsibilities and functions of the theatre director in the theatre. In most of these scholars' theoretical submissions, it can be concluded that the space of the theatre director should not be defined and confined to his roles and functions in the literary/modern theatre directing with proscenium stage mentality alone. In basic terms also, the theatre director has been confirmed to be a team leader, organiser, presiding officer, communicator, coordinator, unificator and above all, an artist and performance maker. The director includes every individual who assists or helps in putting together various minor or major performances or the person who coordinates, leads or manages a group of performers towards a holistic performance. The word 'director' should therefore be looked at from various multi-dimensional perspectives.

As a confirmed master of the theatre and the author of theatrical/stage action, Hoffman (1974), Johnson (2003) and Ejeke (2006), have confirmed that the roles of the theatre director goes beyond script selection and play analysis, the hallmarks of literary theatre. Most of the functions and roles of the theatre director discussed above are mostly present in most indigenous African theatre.

One interesting dimension is that our literary theatre has benefited tremendously from the traditional African theatre (Musa 2005) and (Menegbe 2007). African theatre resource aesthetics such as mask and masquerading, incantation and chanting, magic and puppetry, ritual and religious ceremonies, storytelling (call and response through the narrative technique) invocation and evocation, the cyclical and festival ceremonies and so on have sufficiently found place in the literary theatre tradition. This further confirms the indispensability of the traditional African theatre in the modern / literary theatre model.

Traditional African theatre such as the famous Argungu fishing festival, Boat regattas, Durbar festival, Efu wrestling festival, Eyo festival, Dambe popular boxing traditional wrestling and so on are festivals and ceremonies that are specially designed but are changing patterns. Most of these festivals and ceremonies are mainly being led and coordinated by theatre directors bearing different local names. They most times help in re-unifying and re-creating impact for most of the traditional African festivals mentioned here and elsewhere.

The Conclusion

If Gbilekaa (2000) agreed that the theatre directing that exists in the traditional African theatre is collaborative, communal and corporate then, we must insist that there is no reason to conclude that the theatre director cannot be found in the traditional African theatre. This is because collaboration is the main hub of play directing. Any artist who acts as a catalyst in the play production process is nothing but a great collaborator in performance articulation. Through culture contract also, the corporate nature of most traditional African festivals has given ways to their re-modification and all these are to the delight of the watching public. This task is mostly carried out by a few but committed performers.

All cultures of the world cannot bear one name nor have one method of theatricalisation. It is, therefore, in-exhaustive to conclude that since there is no theatre directing in ONE traditional African theatre, then, there is no theatre directing or director in the traditional African theatre. This is clearly unacceptable to the ever-growing and robust traditional African theatre.

The producer-director phenomenon has been well theorised at least, in the Western theatre history. In fact, “it has been argued that the director did not exist in the theatre before 1874, when a German Nobleman, George II, Duke of Sax-Meiningen, began to supervise every element of his theatrical productions and coordinating them into an integrated whole” (Wilson and Goldfarb, 35). This thus marked as severally concluded, the beginning of individualism and professionalism in theatre practice. This is, however, wrong.

In the 16th Century and as historically confirmed by Adedeji (1981) and Layiwola (2006) on the Alarinjo theatre of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, individualism and professionalism was brought into the theatre by the radical invention and innovation of Esa Ogbin, the maternal relation to Ologbin Ologbojo. As a creative and interpretive theatre director, “Esa Ogbin had introduced professionalism into court dramas, he liberated them from semi-formal environment of the palace and encouraged strolling and intra-guild competitions” (Layiwola, 570). Subsequently, this artistic feat of Esa Ogbin marked the birth of the producer-director-performer lexicon in a traditional African theatre, the Alarinjo theatre. No matter the nature of a performance, its cultural affinity or traditional bondage, there must be somebody or a group of people that will be saddled with the responsibility of performing a seemingly artistic, technical and or managerial function in ensuring the success of the would be performance or theatre and that person is the theatre director.

With relevant theoretical submissions drawn from various scholars and numerous traditional African festivals therefore, we want to conclude that there is indeed the presence of the theatre director and in fact, theatre directing in the traditional African theatre. Traditional African theatre can grow side by but in terms of dramaturgy, they are paradoxically different. Again, no matter the communal nature of African traditional theatre,

most of our festivals, even ritual ceremonies have established a “particular historical patterns in the consciousness of the individual, even as they are expressed as group or communal art” (572) That individual, wanting to make a meaning out of his people’s art, his people’s culture, his people’s tradition and ultimately his people’s theatre is the theatre director.

References

- Adedeji, J. A. (1981). Alarinjo: The traditional Yoruba travelling theatre. In Ogunbiyi, Y. (Ed.). *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A critical source book*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 221-247.
- Amankulor, J. N. (1981). Ekpe festival as religious ritual and dance drama. In Ogunbiyi, Y. (Ed.). *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A critical source book*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 113-129.
- Ankpa, A. D. (1986). Hegemony and drama: The crisis of Nigerian literary drama”. *Nigeria Magazine*. Lagos: Department of Culture, Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture, 54(3):82-89.
- Akinwale, A. O. (2000). Production styles on the Nigerian stage: A historical review. In Iyorwuese, H. (Ed.). *Theatre and stage-craft in Nigeria*. Jos: Supreme Black Communications, 115-141.
- Bell-Gam, H. L. (2003). Akwafaribo: The directorial function of the master drummer in Nji-Owu performance of Opobo”. *Anyigba Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 2 (2), 9-18.
- Doki, A. G. (2006). *Traditional theatre in perspective: Signs and signification in Igbe, Girinya and Kwagh-hir*. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.
- Dollimore, J. (1999). Post/modern: On the gay sensibility, or the pervert’s revenge on authenticity-wide, genet, orton and others. In Wolfreys, J. (Ed.). *Literary theories: A reader and guide*. New York: New York University Press. 553-569.
- Ebong, I. A. (1990). Drama and theatre among the Ibibio of South Eastern Nigeria: A case study of Utuekpe or Ekon Drama. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Birmingham, England.
- Echeruo, M. J. C. (1981). The Dramatic Limit of Igbo Ritual. In Ogunbiyi, Y. (Ed.). *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A critical source book*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 136-48.
- Ejeke, S. (2000). Play analysis for the director in African theatre. *Journal of Creative Arts*, 2000. 1 (2), 35-40.
- Finnegan, R. (1970). *Oral literature in Africa..* London: Oxford University Press.
- Gbilekaa, S. E. T. (2000). The position of the director in indigenous African theatre. In Iyorwuese, H. (Ed.). *Theatre and stage-craft in Nigeria*. Jos: Supreme Black Communications. 28-38.
- Layiwola, D. (2006). A place where three roads meet: Art, performance and the collective unconscious”. In Adelugba, D. et al. (Eds.). *Wole Soyinka at 70 Festschrift*. Nigeria: LACE Occasional Publications and Dat and Partners Logistics Ltd. 540-478.
- Lyotard, J. (1999). Answer to the question: What is the postmodern? In Wolfreys, J. (Ed.). *Literary theories: A reader and guide*. New York: New York University Press. 371-380.
- Molande, B. (2006). Moments of rewriting. *Journal of Humanities*. Malawi: Faculty of Humanities, 20:89-106.
- Musa, R. A. (2002). Play directing and directors: An evolutionary documentation in the Nigerian theatre. *Humanities Review Journal*, 2 (1), 46-56.
- Musa, R. A. (2006). Theatre for development in the Nigerian prison: Experience and a performance guide. *The Performer: Ilorin Journal of the Performing Arts*. Ilorin: Performing Arts Department. 8, 62-82.

- Nwamuo, C. (1984). New dimensions in African theatre. *Nigeria Magazine*. Lagos Department of Culture, Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture, 151:40-45.
- Nzewi, M. (1979). Traditional theatre practice. *Nigeria Magazine*. Lagos: Department of Culture, Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture, 15-25.
- Ododo, S. E. (2001). Theatrical aesthetics and functional values of Ekuechi masquerade ensemble of the Ebira people in Nigeria. *Africa Study Monographs*, 22 (1), 1-36.
- Uka, K. (2000). *Creation and creativity: Perspective, purpose and practice of theatre in Nigeria..* Calabar: Faculty of Arts. Manson Publishing Company.
- Yerima, A. (2006). Soyinka, the director and the Nigerian stage. In Adelugba, D. et al. (Eds.). *Wole Soyinka at 70 Festschrift*. Nigeria: LACE Occasional Publications and Dat and Partners Logistics Ltd. 39-66.

Abdul Rasheed Abiodun Adeoye
Department of Performing Arts,
University of Ilorin,
P. M. B. 1515,
Ilorin,
Kwara State
Nigeria
E-mail: rasheedmus2001@yahoo.com