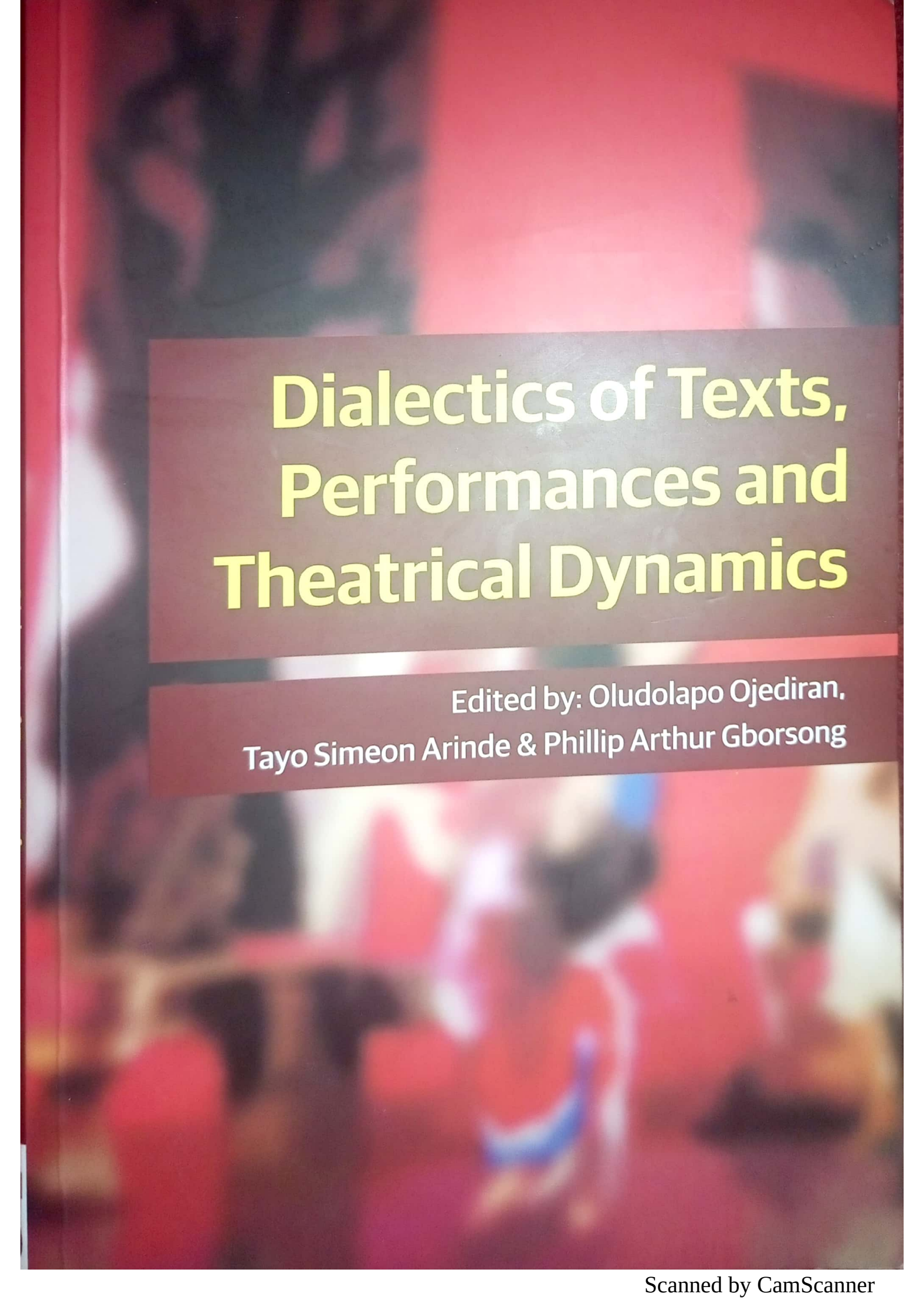




Dialectics of Texts, Performances and Theatrical Dynamics

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Foreword

I am honoured to have been asked to write the foreword of this book written by great academics in the field of Performing and Communication Arts. It has been my pleasure to know and work with the authors over the last two decades as senior academics with great passion for writing, excellence and great organisational abilities. I have had the privilege of watching them grow academically as they create niches for themselves and I am proud of their achievements so far.

The authors, Drs. Oludolapo Ojediran, Tayo Simeon and Philip Arthur Gborsong have distinguished themselves as great scholars by putting together their intellectual precision to produce this spectacular book, *Dialectics of Texts, Performance and Theatrical Dynamics*, which presents a good reading material on various discourses on artistic issues in Africa with particular examples from Ghana and Nigeria to a much wider public.

This important book consists of ten well researched and written chapters by many scholarly endowed authors from both Ghana and Nigeria. The book covers all the essential areas of the subject matter and is a great contribution to changes in various artistic issues and discourses of theatre and communication arts. The book expresses the commitment of the authors to enriching, training and research in Performing Arts.

Each author of the chapters utilises their personal pieces of wealth of experience for an elaboration of the chosen topics and bring home to their readers in such ways that the narratives can be properly understood. I am convinced that each author have put in their intellectual erudity and depth to deal with the various topics.

The book has ten chapters and each dealt with varied topics of interests. The book embraces core academic writing styles, the

ADEOYE'S NEO-ALIENATION DIRECTORIAL THEORY RELIVED IN NIGERIAN LEGION CORPS OF COMMISSIONAIRE CADET TRAINING

Solomon O. IKIBE & Oluwatosin IBITOYE

Abstract

The Neo-alienation directorial theory propounded by AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye in directing plays, which keeps cast and crew on their toes from the beginning to the end of a play was recreated sometime ago at the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires organised training for the recruitment of new cadets in Ilorin, Kwara State. Using the descriptive method and participant observation tool, the study draws out the similarities in the style used in the training of the cadets, especially during the Passing-Out-Parade (POP) and the application of Adeoye's Neo-alienation in directing the process of the recruitment exercise. This study concludes that indeed, Adeoye's Neo-Alienation theory is covertly applied by some other professionals without formal training in the art to train their new in-takes. The study therefore, recommends application of different artistic approaches to advance and solve life challenging problems.

Key Words: Neo-Alienation, Music/songs, rehearsal, Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaire, aesthetics

Introduction

Redman in *Encarta Suite* defines alienation as the "estrangement from other people, society, or work". However, *Encarta* said that the term has been "widely used in sometimes contradictory ways"

Músa, R. A. (2007). Directing Wole Soyinka's comedies on Nigerian stage. An Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis Submitted to the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

Nwachukwu, M. and Oziogu, A. I. (2012). Olojo Festival of Ancient Ile-Ife. Retrieved from https://r.search.yahoo.com/_ylt=AwrCwGF8ulxeqkoAkhYPxQt.;_ylu=X3oDMTBByZnU4cmNpBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwM5BHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzcg--/RV=2/RE=1583164157/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwvw.vanguardngr.com%2f2012%2f11%2foajo-festival-of-ancient-ile-ife%2f/RK=2/RS=1_2uHhiy1QqYe_KktlnqLWBp8iA- on 2nd March, 2020.

Okpewho, I. (1992). *African oral literature*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP.

Olafiranye, D. (2017). Olojo Festival 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.travelagenciesfinder.com/NG/Ile-Ife/1216513088368806/Olojo-festival> on 11th March, 2020.

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such as drawing people closer instead of estranging them. Thus, neo-alienation should be a revival of bringing people closer, either in the work place or social engagements. In the same token, AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye, a theatre director and scholar at the Performing Arts Department, University of Ilorin, Nigeria, came up with the Neo-alienation theory used in play production. Adeoye, is known for his simplification of Wole Soyinka's hard core plays on stage as epitomised in his directing of Wole Soyinka's plays in both his Master's and Doctorate's researches. Adeoye (2010), postulates that acting, technical theatre, lighting, costume, make-up, music, dance, dramatic theory and criticism (all put together) make directing a special art of the theatre.

Adeoye, in enumerating the features of his Neo-alienation aesthetics and African Theatre approach drew his inspiration from Brecht and Soyinka's production styles. Their style he reinterpreted into the Neo-alienation theory. According to Adeoye, his Neo-alienation theory has twelve aesthetic possibilities which he enumerates to include:

the aesthetic of theme, song of audience and players' systematic fraternization, multiple role-playing aesthetics, the aesthetics of artistic deconstruction, the aesthetics of human props and demystification, the multiple narrators' aesthetics, the aesthetics of de-technicalisation, on-the-stage make-up and costuming aesthetics, the aesthetics of complete instrumentation on stage, photoramic-caption's aesthetics, the modern operatic aesthetics, trado-modern aesthetics and the critical recalling curtain call aesthetics.

These twelve aesthetics are what Adeoye describes as the conglomeration of the Western and African theatrical aesthetics. Using these in the cadet's training, this study underpins the link between the theory and the style used during the cadets' recruitment training, since the training cannot be divorced from the African colonial experience. Having been close to Adeoye when he directed two of his plays – *The Smart Game*, and *The Killers* – it was observed that the Neo-alienation theory he used was brought

alive in the training and Passing-Out-Parade (POP) of the cadets of the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires. As attested to by Suru (2017, p.308) that: "the African performance theory advocates the tripartite presence of all the three genres of theatre – dance, music and drama – in a single performance", this was affirmed during the Passing-Out-Parade.

While undergoing the training at the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires, we observed that the Training Commander had used some of the features of the theory to inculcate discipline and military skills into the cadets under training. We noted during the training that all that was being done by the Commandant was nothing less than drama, where the trainees were like cast members/actors, other officers serving in various capacities like; the stage manager, property manager and the likes with the Commandant acting as the Director using Adeoye's Neo-alienation theory.

Consequently, this study focused on the training and the Passing-Out-Parade (POP) of the cadets of the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires paying attention to how Neo alienation theory comes alive. The study examined whether the use of songs, instrumentation, dramaturgy, choreography, miming, costuming and props are some of the theatrical elements used at the Batch B training and POP of the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires on Friday, 1st December, 2017.

The Training as Rehearsals

The training of the cadets which can be likened to *rehearsals* were held on Fridays at 4pm and on Saturdays at 6am weekly. Rehearsals began with jogging for thirty (30) minutes using morale songs to encourage and boost the strength of the cadets. After this, physical exercises were done, parade marching followed. The training commander, who is likened to a Director, used all manners of approach to make the cadets do what he wanted. He sang, danced, ran, instructed, shouted and of course, did the physical exercises with the slow and quick marches he wanted the cadets to

learn. Other physical exercises included jumping over obstacles using hurdles, frog-jump, jack-in-the-boat, lifting one's neighbour, tug-of-war, pinning-the-head, windmill, etc. Anyone who was unable to do any of the exercise was either flogged or made to undergo another exercise. No doubt, the exercises were very rigorous just as it is in play rehearsals.

Songs Used during the Training

To realise his productions, Adeoye uses songs to motivate the cast members during rehearsal. Similarly, the training commander at the cadet training used different songs during the training sessions. The songs were to essentially stimulate and encourage the cast members. Some of the songs are:

Song 1

Call: Wayo wayo wayo

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Wayo wayo wayo

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Papa come and see ooo

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Wetin man dey suffer

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Dem dey give us water

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Dem dey call am tea ooo

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Dem dey pin our head ooo

Response: Wayo yo

Call: Dem dey call am training ooo

Response: Wayo yo

Song 2

Mama no dey ooo; Papa no dey ooo.

If you want to fire me, fire me make I die.

I will never go back from this training.

Song 3

Call: This is the way I wanted to be ooo

Response: This is the way I wanted to be

Call: This is the way I wanted to be ooo

Response: This is the way I wanted to be

All: Ee I want to be a soldier,

Ee I want to be a soldier,

Ee I want to be a soldier,

This is the way I wanted to be.

Although the songs were taught only by *rote* according to Mereni (2014, p.43), we have been able to notate them without analysis. The notated songs can now be used by any other playwright, director or any other interested musicologist for further musicological scholarship. What we did is in line with Mereni's (2014, 24) expectations that Nigerian musicologists should be able to notate correctly the songs that he has recorded in whatever cultures and contexts they have been done and *not* "to fence off ourselves from the world".

Instrumental Music

At the training/rehearsal sessions, the brass-band was adequately used to accompany the parades in both slow and quick marches. Various musical instruments in the category of the percussions and brasses were used as accompaniment at the training. Among the brass instruments were 3 trumpets, 2 saxophones, 1 euphonium, and 1 trombone while the 1 bass-drum, 2 snare-drum and 2 tenor-drums in the percussion class were used. Interestingly, among the trumpeters, there was a lady. She distinguished herself so well that the audience took special interest in her as she blew (played) her trumpet to their admiration. This brass-band is actually what Ekwueme (2004, p. 45) calls the military-band which plays "marches, dance music, and arrangements of folk songs". This was exactly what the brass-band did and to Ekwueme's expectations, we have been able to notate some of the songs played by the brass-band herein for music composers and musicological analysis.

The Passing-Out-Parade (POP)

The Passing-Out-Parade can be likened to the real production/performance of the Corps of Commissionaires. Every cadet was in full military uniform as provided by the commander. The POP uniform is different from training kits. Different elements of the theatre were seen at the parade. In fact, considering all that was done, we can say that the POP was an entire work of the arts. We saw dramaturgy, choreography, music, scenography, costuming, make-up, miming, props, and lighting as provided by the sun to justify the dramatic nature of the event. There was a clear picture of audience and the performance stage.

Taking it from the performance of the cadets, we had the Column Party, Sub-Guard, Second-In-Command (2-I-C), Parade-Commander (not the Training Commander) and Squads 1 and 2 that made up the parade. Providing the live music as part of the POP set-up was the Brass-Band with a Drum-Major who acted as the Music Director. The Brass-Band provides the music used for the entire parade.

The entire production on the POP day can be divided into various segments which we likened to be movements or scenes in a play production thus:

Movement/Scene 1. The Regimental-Sergeant-Major (RSM) marches in the two squads and hands over to the Second-In-Command (2-I-C);

Movement/Scene 2. The 2-I-C calls in the Officers (Sub-Guard) to take their position;

Movement/Scene 3. The 2-I-C hands over the parade to the Parade Commander;

Movement/Scene 4. The Parade-Commander drills the squads to attention and at ease;

Movement/Scene 5. The Parade-Commander calls in the Column-Party;

Movement/Scene 6. The Column Party takes Salute;

Movement/Scene 7. The Parade-Commander signals the Band to salute various dignitaries at the occasion with various salute tunes such as welcome ('kabo'); general salute and the national salute for the State Governor who was represented by the Special Adviser on security matters.

Movement/Scene 8. Thereafter, the Nigerian National Anthem is played by the Brass-Band.

Movement/Scene 9. The Governor inspects the Guard of Honour as put in place by the two Squads, Column Party and the Sub-Guards. This is done with a musical accompaniment of the Brass-Band.

Movement/Scene 10. The main parade begins after the inspection of the Guard of Honour by the Governor. The parade begins with a slow march order by the two squads with the Column Party in-between them. The parade moves round the performance arena, observes the eyes-right turn and metamorphose into quick march as the Brass-Band automatically changes from slow-march-music ($\frac{3}{4}$) to quick march $\frac{4}{4}$ common time music (alla-marcia) moving round the arena again with the observance of the eyes-right. At the end of the quick march parade, the Squads 1 and 2 with the Column-Party stop at the command of the Sub-Guard officers.

Movement/Scene 11. Review Order is given by the parade Commander whereby Squads 1 and 2 (without the Column Party) move in 16-steps quick march towards the governor. The Parade Commander gives an order for the squads to remove hair-dressing (beret) and shout three happy cheers of Hip-Hip-Hip Hurray to appreciate the Governor. They are commanded again to replace hair-dressing. The removal and replacement of the beret by all the squad members is done with so much precision as guided by a sound from the Brass-Band that everyone obeys militarily, thereby adding more spectacle to the performance.

Movement/Scene 12. Having done the review order parade, with various speeches by the Governor and the State Commander of the Nigerian Legion, the Parade Commander marches the Column Party out of the parade arena.

Movement/Scene 13. Parade 2-I-C takes permission and marches out squads 1 and 2 and the parade comes to an end.

Movement/Scene 14. The Brass-Band takes time to entertain the audience with various marches while the Drum-Major leads by marching and swinging the decorated staff in different spectacles to the amazement of the audience. The Brass-Band marched round the arena in straight, diagonal, circular and semi-circular forms which left us to wondering if the marches had been choreographed by a choreographer.

The production held the entire audience spell-bound for about one hour that it lasted. Applauses were given by the audience at various spectacular moments of the production as appreciation. There was no room for lapses and no empty stage was observed as every movement/scene of the production was closely linked to the other movement/scene in a military way. In fact, we can say that the straight-take directorial style was unknowingly adapted by the Training Commander.

Dramaturgy in the Passing-Out-Parade

The Passing-Out-Parade activities can be said to be artistic and dramatic as it entailed some elements of dramaturgy. Some of these very obvious dramatic elements noted by Atanda (2017, p. 267) include:

- i. Cast and characters
- ii. Stage
- iii. Actions
- iv. Facial Expression
- v. Costumes

- vi. Stage picture
- vii. Directing
- viii. Choreography
- ix. Voice and
- x. Presence of audience members etc.

The activities of the cadet commissionaires passing out were full of actions or we can as well say acting. This is because it was consciously stage-managed and performed before a live audience. The parade commander and the band major could be seen as lead characters. The lead characters influenced other characters on stage. The parade commander with a very clear and distinct voice communicated with other characters on stage which determined the next movement and action sequence. Their march was the action in this context. Their facial expression depicts intense serious mood which portrays the serious military life.

The characters were adorned in uniformed costumes to match. Hence, the use of costumes made the event more colourful and passed an aesthetics message across to the audience. Moving with a clear cut stage picture, the characters made effective use of the stage, from their core space to the peripheral space. For instance, the Column Party started from Down Stage Right (DSR) in a profile movement, moved to the Down Stage Centre (DSC) and turned to move to the upstage centre, giving the audience a full back picture before turning to a full front picture at the Up-Stage Centre (USC). The already choreographed movements of the hands and leg made the actions more appealing and aesthetically pleasing. Synchronising with the music from the band which was dictating the pace and tempo of each aspect of their movements. The transition from the slow to quick march showed a change in mood, change of actions, movements, tempo and pace of the performance.

Indigenisation of the Western Music/Band

The western band used at the event, predominantly consisting of western musical instruments is primarily meant for playing the European western music and rhythm. However, it was observed that it has been indigenised to a Nigerian music culture through the hybridisation of Nigerian pop music such as highlife, juju, and gospel music into the band performance.

Examples of these songs include the incorporation of song like:

Call: Ose, Ose o, Ose o, Ose baba!

Response: Ose, Ose o, Ose o, Ose baba!

Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Father!

Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you Father!

Ose baba

Ibitoye Oluwatosin



It was also observed that these western instruments were used for surrogate speech to mimic and imitate the human speech. This is a prominent feature of African (Nigeria specifically) music. Hence, some African music cultural features were integrated into the western music culture. Some indigenous folk songs and folk tunes were incorporated into the band.

Examples of these include the incorporation of folk tune like: Kabo o kabo.

Kabo o kabo	Welcome, Welcome
Kabo o kabo	Welcome, Welcome
Omo ki'le soro	The son who speaks
Omo ki'le soro	The son who speaks
Ki'le lanu, kabo!	And the land opens, welcome!

Kabo o kabo



The 'Kabo o kabo', is an indigenous tune used to herald the arrival of a prominent personality or dignitaries at events. We can therefore say that, the indigenisation of the western band makes the music more homely, appealing and entertaining while the audience (listeners) are familiar with such tunes/songs. This made the information, communication and entertainment function of the music art effective.

The following icons of Adeoye's neo-alienation was realized in the training and POP of the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires as most of them were actualized and used.

- i. Aesthetic of theme;
- ii. Song of audience and players' systematic fraternization;
- iii. Multiple role-playing aesthetics;
- iv. Aesthetics of artistic deconstruction;
- v. Aesthetics of human props and demystification;
- vi. Multiple narrators' aesthetics;
- vii. Aesthetics of de-technicalisation;
- viii. On-the-stage make-up and costuming aesthetics;
- ix. Aesthetics of complete instrumentation on stage;
- x. Photographic-caption's aesthetics;
- xi. Modern operatic aesthetics;
- xii. Trado-modern aesthetics; and
- xiii. Critical recalling curtain call aesthetics

During training and at the POP, the theme of the program was re-echoed for the trainees to understand why they were at the training and on the field for the POP, the Master of Ceremony kept making mention of the reason for which people were invited from all over.

Secondly, there was the common songs used to motivate the audience and the trainees, thereby creating a systematic fraternization of the players and the audience: *mama no de yo...* as transcribed and notated above.

There was also the multiple role playing aesthetics in the entire process of training. The trainer did so many roles – song leader,

trainer, band-leader, etc. artistic deconstruction where the players played instruments and also at column party.

Human props demystification was not however achieved as no one acted as human props in the POP and training period. Moreover, there was no application of makeup as the military has no time for make-ups. However, everyone was properly costumed in army uniforms before attending the POP. During the training, the trainees were dressed in normal white shorts and short-sleeved T-shirts.

Complete instrumentation on stage was realized as all items of props and musical instruments were used during the training sessions which we see as rehearsals. However, there was Dress and Technical rehearsals as we normally have it in the theatrical parlance.

The photoramic-caption aesthetics was realized as many pictures of different formations were observed during the parades. Modern operatic aesthetics were not part of the POP as the music was basically instrumental as provided by the brass-band.

Moreover, trado-modern aesthetics could be seen as achieved because everything in military POP was done. Finally, the critical recalling curtain call aesthetics was missing except for the closing remarks which was made by the Commandant of the Kwara State Command of the Nigerian Legion Corp of Commissionaires as a vote of thanks to the dignitaries such as the Governor, the State Police Commissioner, Sector Commander of Nigerian Road Safety and others who attended the Passing-Out-Parade.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Passing-Out-Parade (POP) which has been pre-rehearsed at various trainings were coordinated by the services of the Training Commander whom we see as the Artistic Director and the movements coordinated by the services of a choreographer. The performance was performed in a straight-take technique as there was no empty or blank stage from the beginning to the end and the characters held the audience spectacle all through. It was observed

that although the Training Officer did not pass through a thespian institute, yet he was able to apply a method of galvanizing human resources to make a para-military production and performance of such magnitude that held an audience spell-bound and fascinating. Obviously, Nigerians have what it takes to make things work when they put themselves together for action.

The Batch B cadet POP was more than a usual or normal POP event rather a moment of musical appreciation, reception of the indigenisation of the western brass-band musical instruments as though they were African musical resources, aesthetic display of dramatic actions, gestures and movements in the military and para-military parade. The POP was also a moment of enacting much more than the tripartite presence of all the genres of theatre – dance, drama and music – because there were props and beautiful costumes in that single performance.

Having seen the success with which Adeoye's Neo-Alienation theory has been used to impart dramaturgy, musicality and discipline in a performance, this study recommends that the Brass-Band units of various Music Departments of Nigerian higher institutions – Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education be invigorated, empowered and equipped to perform with all enthusiasm as was seen in the Nigerian Legion Corps of Commissionaires, Kwara State Command. Again, Brass-Band trainers in various institutions should adapt the Adeoye's Neo-alienation theory to impart musical skills and knowledge on their students.

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