

FORM AND CONTENT OF BATA DANCE PERFORMANCE OF THE
YORUBA PEOPLE OF SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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ATTESTATION

I, OKEGBEMIRO OLANIYI..... Hereby attest that this research report is carried out by me and that I am solely responsible for all errors and omissions, if any.

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SIGNATURE AND DATE

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by OKEGBEMIRO OLANIYI JUNIOR with the matriculation number (TMA/11/0103) in the department of Theatre and Media Arts, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Under the guidance of the following.

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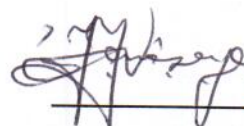


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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, The ever present, omnipotent, omnipresent, the king of kings, all-knowing and faithful God. He who bestowed on me the wisdom and knowledge to finally sail through with this work.

My dedication also goes my sweet parent and siblings, for everything they have done for me.

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ABSTRACT

Generally, indigenous dances have strong influence in our society because of the power such dance entails, these dances are most spectacular and are representative of any art form which calls for the highest participation in African indigenous life. The consistency of studying or practicing indigenous dances, paying attention only to the form without apt attention to the content is a problem that besets indigenous dances in Nigeria. The less attention given to traditional dances in Nigeria as regards the analysis and review of the content is an issue that needs urgent attention. The compilation of this work is situated around the totality of Bata dance of the Yoruba people of South West Nigeria. This work tends to capture the output of Bata dance reviewing both its form and content to be a pivotal component that should be critically considered and examined when studying, practicing or making research on Bata or Bata dance performance. The Bata dance of the Yoruba people of South West Nigeria is one of such dance that is facing such formalist ideology which specifically tenders its focus on the form of an art work. However, the anti-formalist ideology is borrowed in this work to inculcate the habit of not only studying the form, but also the content of traditional dances in Nigeria, specifically Bata dance. A thorough study of the form and content elucidates and brings to the fore, the proper understanding of the dance in question. Form complements content and vice versa. Thus, this study concludes that every indigenous dance is embedded with both the form and the content and it is recommended that researchers and dance practitioners should observe the both sides when studying or practicing indigenous dances in Nigeria. Nevertheless, in the course of exploring the form and content of Bata dance, the analysis of the dance was duly observed in order to appreciate the aesthetic value of Bata dance of the Yoruba people of South West Nigeria.

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CHAPTER ONE

1:1 BACKGROUND TO STUDY

The emergence of dance can be traced back to when man came into existence. This has led to some theorist's belief that dance is as old as man himself. Having originated from the birth of man, some scholars are also of the belief that the emergence of dance is also credited to the birth of a child or even while the baby is still in the belly. Dance is said to have been buried in our sub conscious and as a result of that, man dances unconsciously especially with rhythm. Dance can be referred to as one of the traits man possesses. This is so because, the activities that man engages in, sometimes turns out to be a dance movement. For instance, if a man is digging a hole consecutively and simultaneously, if one takes note of the timing, one will notice that dance is occurring. According to Olomu (27), "Dance is essentially a human engagement". Hanna corroborates this point when she asserts that dancing is a "human behaviour" (3). Benson portrays a more detailed view by expressing that:

Dance consists of human movement and comes from our innate capacities and impulses to move, to express, to organise, to relate, and to communicate. These basic instincts are apparent throughout history in a great variety of dance styles and forms.
(1)

Hence, it is against this backdrop that Stephen Muecke quoted in Yerima when he describes the simple act of walking, its importance to man and his environment, and its relationship to dance when he says:

Your feet have to skin the surface- no more than a couple of millimeters above the ground. And you have to incline your whole frame a little in advance and as it were to fall slightly

forward. Let your body begin to fall (I hold her, we laugh) and then your first foot swings forward on that falling momentum then the next. So you are not bringing your feet nor marching. Marching is a little like the opposite of walking, or its 'fascist' are light. Your arms hang from relaxed shoulders; you don't need your arms to walk, you need your legs and the automatic rhythm that legs and trunk induce. (20)

Muecke's perspective is based on the description of dance and not just the act of walking or movement. On the other hand, dance is movement because until the body moves, dance cannot occur. This follows that man had started dancing before he knew the word to use to describe dance itself. According to Wikipedia the free encyclopedia:

Dance has certainly been an important part of ceremony, rituals, celebrations and entertainment since before the birth of the earliest human civilizations. Archaeology delivers traces of dance from prehistoric times such as the 9,000 year old Bhimbetka rock shelters paintings in India and Egyptian tomb paintings depicting dancing figures from circa 3300 BC. This connotes that dancing has been in existence far back in the centuries (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_dance).

The pivotal effect of dance cut across the movement of the body to communicate or make a statement. However, it can be categorized and described in various ways due to the fact that it is multifunctional and carries a lot of interpretation depending on the perspective in which one views or perceives it. Dance could reflect or express one's culture through the type of dance that is performed, the costumes utilized, and the music that is used to accompany the dance.

In Africa, dance is an integral aspect of daily life. This is a fact corroborated by Keita Fodeba who opines that "Unlike other forms of dance, African dance is not detached from the lives of the people (who own it) (20)". Tume further explains the essence of dance as a daily life of the people when she says: "it is an emotion icon which serves as a message carrier of inner

feelings”(167). Ahmed Yerima is in agreement with Tume when he posits that “if culture’ is defined as the “way of life of a people”, then dance, which is a central part of culture, is also a way of life of any given people. This is because both culture and dance are intertwined” (17). In this context, Ahmed Yerima is trying to emphasize on the relationship between dance and culture as it relates to African traditional dances.

1:2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Until late, traditional or indigenous dances of Africa (Nigeria inclusive) have received minimal attention from scholars. Where it is found, it addresses and/or analysis the performance as performed, negating the cultural interpretation in the area of content and form of the dances studied. The less attention given to traditional dances in Nigeria as regards the analysis of the form and content of traditional dances in Nigeria is an issue that needs urgent attention.

Research has been made by scholars on different traditional dance performances in Nigeria, but their researches does not shoot a deliberate arrow at both the form and content of these dances, paying rapt attention to the form only. In reference to modern civilization, some African traditional dances (Nigeria inclusive) are being modified for contemporary use without the choreographer taking cognizance of the form and content of the dances. In most cases, during the course of modification, the cultural value and every other element that makeup the dance performance is usually lost. Hence, there is need to address this deficiency and put facts straight for better comprehension and acceptance. This has informed the crux of this study/research.

1:3 PURPOSE OF STUDY

Traditional dances of Africa (Nigeria inclusive) have been misconceived and misconstrued. They are seen as mere entertainment which has nothing to offer. The main purpose of this work is to extensively study the form and content of Bata traditional dance performance. The predominant focus on form without apt attention to content has been the major reason behind the waning of indigenous art forms especially dance. These two concepts are inseparable because one must lead to the other. Beyond the medium/media, style and physical structure of the dance, there is also need to look at the purpose or essence for which the dance is being created. The Bata dance of the Yoruba people of the South West Nigeria is one of such dance that is facing such formalist ideology.

Since form and content in a dance is the analysis of all the embodiment of a dance performance, the purpose of this study is to bring to the fore the realm of Bata dance performance, indicating and taking into cognizance the form and content of Bata dance performance of the Yoruba people of south West Nigeria. Its historical antecedents will be explored, leading to discussions on its form and content for better comprehension and appreciation of the dance.

1:4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

It is expected that the documentation of the research will serve as a resourceful material for further academic study. As there are many other indigenous dances that have continued to be ignored in this regard. It will also aid the effort of researchers on dance as an academic study and also to demean their limitation towards the research of a specific dance only from the performance angle (form). The successful accomplishment of this research will also bring about

the total comprehension of any traditional dance, at such making the researchers and readers understand virtually everything about the dance that is being studied.

Finally, the justification and significance of this study transcends across choreographers, dancers and dance researchers alike; to choreographers who may create a dance routine without imagining and creating the forms and content for the learner's or dancer's comprehension, and to the dancers who just learn a specific type of dance without making vigorous effort to know everything about the dance beyond performing it, to the researcher who will just discuss and analyze the performance of a dance and fail to further take a deep look at the content which will give a general overview of the dance in question.

1:5 SCOPE OF STUDY

This research will focus basically on the form and content of Bata dance performance. The researcher will maintain the discourse within the confines of this traditional dance, specifically talking about the form and content of Bata dance performance of the people of South-Western Nigeria with particular attention to Oyo and Lagos. The choice of these two cities is based on the level of dance and performance practices, while Oyo is said to be the cradle of Bata dance.

1:6 LIMITATION OF STUDY

The compilation of this work encountered few obstacles that have hindered the researcher. However, some of these obstacles stems down to the interview method in which there were obstacles as devised by the interviewer. It is no surprise that the nature of human beings cannot be highly dependable. It is as a result of this, that the researcher encountered few

obstacles in terms of interview in the collation and gathering of information. Sometimes, these people that are to be interviewed could not be reached easily and are difficult to locate. Even when they are located, they may not easily divulge concrete information. Hence, in most cases, they regard one as a spy or government official who would use their information against them. Beyond the issue of the personnels perceiving one as a spy, some of them also demand a ransom before they utter a word. As a result of this, the researcher interviewed just few personnels in the collation of information as regards this work on dance practitioners of the Oyo State Council for Arts and Culture, and other private individuals that own and run dance companies and dance centres.

1:7 METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is multifaceted. Hence, various methodologies will be used to carry out this study.

This research shall make use of two major methodologies. These shall include; the primary and secondary data collections. While the primary data collection shall be based on qualitative (interview) method (both structured and unstructured methods), the secondary method shall include library materials such as text books, journals, newspaper cuttings, and mimeographs.

Finally, the use of webliography has its place in this work. More facts will be gathered with the aid of the Internet or web. It will enable the work to be rich with ideas, since there are limited literary works on dance generally and Bata dance in particular. The internet which is also referred to as the web, will be used to rescue this effect.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 CONCEPT OF DANCE

Different scholars tend to perceive dance from different perspective and have given so many definitions and theories to back up their idea or perception towards dance. One of Nigeria's dance scholars Bakare Ojo Rasaki while writing in his Rudiment of Chorography, defined dance as "the rhythmic movement of the body in time and space to make statements" (3). Following the above definition, one discovers that the essentials of dance are rhythm, human body, space, time and communication. Hence, these essentials can be referred to as the elements of dance. Thus, it is important to note that the greatest tool of dance is the human body. Every body movement is however not qualified to be called dance. For a body movement to qualify as dance, it must have 'rhythm'. Rhythm is the underline beat that animates movements. This is where the 'time' in comes. Rhythm is created when the movements happen at specific time. Without timing there can be no rhythm and without rhythm, dance cannot occur. Even when there is rhythm, the body that is to move rhythmically needs to occupy a space. These then goes to mean that dance can only take place when the body, rhythm, space and time are present. The presence of the aforementioned indicates act of dance (3).

Dance is the art of movement of the body, usually rhythmically and to music using prescribed or improvised steps and gestures (www.wikipedia.org). Dance in other words could also be said to be the movement of the body to a tempo, music or rhythm to communicate or pass across a message. Dance can be defined as the movement of the body in accordance to a rhythm and if necessary accompanied by music to exemplify a dance package for the purpose of visual aesthetics.

Dance is the art form in which human movement becomes the medium for sensing, understanding, and communicating ideas, feelings, and experiences (www.toolsforlearning.org).

Dance may also be regarded as a form of nonverbal communication with the body, necessarily in accordance to a rhythm or accompanied by music. Dance provides a way of learning, in other words, it develops communication abilities, problem solving techniques, and creative and critical thinking skills along with kinesthetic abilities (www.toolsforlearning.org). Thus, looking at dance from another angle, "a dance" is any one prescribed sequence of such movements, or the music to which it is performed, or an event at which it takes place (the free dictionary).

At this juncture, the question that is to be asked is "What is the purpose of dance?" The fundamental reason why dance takes place is to make a statement; to communicate; put across a message; express a thought. The vehicle that conveys this message is the dancer. There is no dance for dance sake, just as there is no art for art sake. The historical and functional origins of dance and art generally attest to this. All arts, no matter the nature and form definitely have something to say. For instance, we misconstrue the woman who wriggles her waist and shakes her buttocks at "owambe" parties in Lagos, as dancing for dancing sake. But she is communicating something showing off the pride and beauty of womanhood (4).

Furthermore, dance has been critically exposed from different perspectives. Having done that, it is important to note that the discussion of the purpose of dance may not always have a purpose transcending utility due to the fact that people utilize it for different motif. In recent times, dance has certainly chosen to prove its relevance and purpose in the society. Objectively dance is utilized in a bid to denote celebrations, ceremony, rituals, and entertainment since before the birth of the earliest human civilization. In addition, another early use of dance may have been as

a precursor to **ecstatic** trance states in healing, rituals and for secular purpose. This is common among various cultures especially most traditional African dances (2).

However, in most cases, the uses of dance are highly implemented for various purposes in West Africa. West African dance is an essential component of West African culture. African dance has traditionally played an essential role and has proven to be pivotal in the culture of the tribes.

2.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF DANCE

Different meaning of dance has been perceived by different scholars. The way one scholar views and interprets dance is different from the way another scholar views and interpret it. This then goes that, there are numerous meaning and definition of dance by different scholars. Hence, dance can be defined as the involvement of the body which moves to any form of music and rhythm, whether consciously or unconsciously to accomplish its intended efficacious purpose. This definition tends to capture the assertion that dance emerge from the sub-conscious realm, knowingly or unknowingly for a purpose. The purpose could be that it will make the individual happy, or maybe such individual is trying to pass a message or any other specific reason that must have instigated the movement of the body at that point in time. However, this concludes that there is no way dance can be accomplished without the movement of the body. This fact is supported by Encyclopedia Britannica online when it explains that:

Dance is the movement of the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music, and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing idea or emotion, releasing energy, or simply taking delight in the movement itself (www.encyclopedia.com).

According to Webster's dictionary dance can also be defined as "a succession of more regular ordered steps and movements of the body usually performed to musical accompaniment

(456)". This point is backed by Hornby when he defines dance as "series of movements and steps that match the speed and rhythm of music (15)". Onwuka Ugo is in agreement with Hornby when he asserts that:

Dancing is therefore a functional art, it is the expressive medium of the body, an outward interpretation of musical rhythms and movement that is sensuously carried out by the human affective domain (4).

Furthermore, dance is a concept that emanates from within; as such dance tends to express one's feelings in most cases. Through dance, one can understand the emotions of the dancer.

According to Encyclopedia America "The motion that arises from emotion, the instinctive channeling of energy into rhythmic forms that will convey meaning to both the beholder and the doer" (1978).

In agreement to the above, Okwesa sees dance as the:

Oldest of the arts which concerns itself with the movement and gestures of the body in space and time of the accompanying music either to express ideas or emotional experience of man in his environment (111).

Machlis further justify this assertion when he opines that:

Dance springs from man's joy in his body, his love for expressive gesture, his release of tension through rhythmic movement. It heightens the pleasure of being and at the same time mirrors the life of the society(1997).

Dance is a concept that tends to portray and promote one's culture. Through dance, one can be able to easily tell the culture or tribe of a given society. For instance, as Bata is for the Yorubas, So is Atilogwu recognised for the Igbos. Based on this, Rust states that:

A significant part of the general cultural pattern of any society is intimately related to human experiences and because of this,

reflects the spirit of the age in any society with fidelity. Dance is an indispensable arm of socialization process by which culture patterns come to be incorporated in the personalities and the members of the society (3).

However, irrespective of all these various meaning and definition of dance, one thing is continually constant and that is the assertion that dance deals with the movement of the body.

2.3 DANCE IN AFRICA (AN OVERVIEW)

Etymologically, African dance is said to have evolved from religion (ritual) and myth, dating back to man's life and the quest to be conversant with his environment. In Africa, ritual dance is a way of achieving communication with the gods. In the early periods, in a bid for man to make a living, man had to get conversant with his environment through hunting expedition, farming and all other activities. This instigated the thought that there must be a supernatural power behind nature. This supernatural power needs to be worshipped. That is why in African mythology, it is believed that there is a Supreme God, the Great and Almighty God, who is too far away to be of practical importance in daily life and so is not worshiped directly. There are numerous other spirits, deities and agents which act as intermediaries on behalf of humankind, and which are worshiped directly because they have direct influence over the affairs of man. Sometimes these agents are worshiped in the form of natural objects, or deities. For instance in Nigeria, these deities may include Sango, Egungun, Obatala, Esu and many other of such. Most African dances serve as a means by which the people of a given society relate to their ancestors. Irrespective of the motif behind the dance, it combines the expression of man's feeling in order to communicate with their ancestors.

African dances deals with culture and that is how it has been in the African continent. In Africa, dance is a means of celebrating festivals, ceremonies, marking rites of passage, and ritual activities. Asides all these purpose, Dance is also done purely for enjoyment.

African dance is connected to Africa's rich musical traditions expressed through instrument and songs. African dance has a unity of aesthetic that is evident even in the dances within the African Diaspora.

Traditional African dance is an essential element of Africa's cultural heritage, providing a vital expression of the region's philosophy, and the living memory of its cultural wealth and its evolution over the centuries, as observed by Alphonse Tiérou:

Because it has more power than gesture, more eloquence than word, more richness than writing and because it expresses the most profound experiences of human beings, dance is a complete and self sufficient language. It is the expression of life and of its permanent emotions of joy, love, sadness, hope, and without emotion there is no African Dance (1).

Traditional African dance possess a huge impact of diversity from the Western type of dance in the sense that; an African dancer often bends slightly toward the earth and flattens the feet against it in a wide, solid stance. As such the dancer is on a second standing position. Observers describe many of the dances as "earth centered," in contrast to the soaring leaps and up right style of dance found in European dance forms, such as ballet. In African dance, gravity provides an earthward orientation even in those forms in which dancers leap into the air, and this include dances such as Bata of the Yoruba people and Atilogwu of the Igbo people of Nigeria.

2.4 THEORIES OF DANCE

The theory of dance is a very controversial subject matter. Historians, philosophers, theories, choreographers, critics, and aestheticians have offered various definitions and

explanations. The debate is still raging, and perhaps may go on forever, because of the nature or activities often referred to as dance. Myron Nadel captures this drifting, illusory nature of dance thus:

Dance is not a substance that can be felt, lifted or weighed. It is something that occurs when a human entity moves in directed patterns consciously performing specific movements while other human view this phenomenon(1)

People often refer to dance as, a patterned rhythmic movement in time and space. Roger Copeland“argues that this conception is misleading because it does not distinguish between human and non- human actions” (1). The definition, he continues "could embrace movement of waves, orbits of heavenly bodies, movement of bees, sawing of trees, and even marching in parades could be described as dances.” (1).

In this context, we will look briefly at some definitions and explanations which have been shaped by traditional theories of art.

Firstly, there is the Mimetic theory that art is an imitation of human passion, activity or nature. This was propounded by Aristotle in his “Poetics” and has been a dominant theory of art in Western societies. Until the middle 18th century, this theory was unchallenged. J.G Noverre, an eighteenth century choreographer, dance patron and theoretician further expounded this philosophy. According to him; “dancing is or should be a faithful likeness of beautiful nature” (13). Dance has links with pantomime. Dance imitates what people do as well as their sufferings and joys. Selma Jeanne Cohen, a 20th century dance historian whose work has made remarkable contributions in the field of dance, also accepts this Aristotelian concept when she adds that “dance has only been able to represent nature accurately because of the technical achievement of modern ballet and modern dance in the last three hundred years” (15-21).

Secondly, the expressionist theory, championed by such people as John Martin, Susan K. Langer has been influential since the Romantic era. This theory is widely accepted by the proponents of modern dance. According to this school of thought, dance is a form of self-expression or an expression of emotions. The implication of this theory is that dance is a form of language (non-verbal speech). John Martin (3) sees the art of dance as the transference of mental and emotional experiences that the individual cannot express by rational or intellectual means. Susan K. Langer (30) is a modern aesthetician, whose dance theory is one of the most influential in the twentieth-century history. Her theory of "virtual powers" sees dance in part as an expressive art. In her view, the gestures of dance express feelings but not what the dancers feel. They are virtual or illusory gestures which are logical or symbolical expressive but not self-expressions. She traces the origin of dance to ritual worship and magic making.

Thirdly, Andre Levinson, a Russian critic rejects the mimetic and expressionistic theories on the note that these theories treat dance as a 'sign'. In his own view, dance is a 'pure form'. The beauty of dance consists precisely in the contours of the movements themselves. The view is commonly held by the new dance or dance of the absurd proponents. Paul Valery, a poet and critic of the twentieth-century further developed the aesthetics or formalist theory of dance. For him dance origins are not utilitarian. The dancer does not interact with the supernatural powers in Langer's "virtual power". According to Copeland, "man possess surplus energy, more energy, than his virtual organs require, and he soon discovers that certain of his movement by their frequency, succession or range gave him pleasure equivalent to intoxication" (4).

Fourthly, the phenomenological approach to dance looks at dance in a pre-reflective manner. According to Maxine Sheets, "Dance is a phenomenon that is created, it does not exist prior to its creation" (11). She rejects the empirical definition of dance being a force in time and

space. This is an 'existential' view which is neither objective nor subjective but rather an attitude of being present when the phenomenon occurs.

Fifthly, Eleanor Metheny introduces the philosophical concept of the theory of symbolic transformation in movement, in order to examine the meaningfulness of human movement. She presents three ways of looking at movement: as visually perceivable pattern of movement, as a non-verbal symbolic form and as a perceptual form incorporating all sensory perceptions while the movement is being performed. This could simply be referred to as the Kinestruct, Kinecept and kinesymbol concept (22).

Sixthly, dance is often closely associated with other arts. Dance is often associated with painting. Some say: dance is visualized music. Others see dance as stylized pantomime. Still others have referred to dance as 'sculpture in motion'. (153).

2.5 DANCE AND OTHER ARTS

The "Arts" generally are a comprehensive term which embraces such diverse aspects as music, drama, dance and so on (Mitchell,175). In this context, dance is the focus in which it is referred to as an art just like every other art in the theatre. It is often combined with music and drama. Dance is concerned with the use of the body to communicate, especially in relation to other theatrical elements. According to Suru:

Dance is concerned with the use of the body gesture, body movements and other dance elements for expression the elements being referred to here are: rhythm, time, space, dynamics, costume, props, make-up, music, drama and so on. Dance messages are communicated using the elements mentioned above and through signs and symbols to impact on the life of people (1).

From the definition, we are able to deduce the ultimate purpose of dance which is to make statements or communicate an idea, using the body and other elements. Therefore, we can say that dance is an art which make statements.

2.5.1 Dance and Music

Music is an essential element that serves as an accompaniment to dance. In fact, it can be said that dance and music are two brothers from the same mother due to the fact that they are interwoven. They go along with each other and serve as essential purpose for each other.

Music is a sound that is organized in time. It has to do with the composition of notes to arrive at a harmonious melody. Music as defined by Mereni is the “Art and science of sound” (8). According to Wikipedia online “Dance is the art of movement of the body, usually rhythmically and to music, using prescribed or improvised steps and gestures” (www.wikipedia-dance.com). Since the definition of dance encompasses music, then it can be said that music is an essential tool that intimately relates to dance.

It is pertinent to note that, the relationship between dance and music is rhythm. Music produces the rhythm that dance needs, while dance makes use of the rhythm that Music produces. One of the purposes of music to dance is the timing and tempo, because without these components, dance cannot be sequentially arranged in order and its aesthetic value will be lost.

2.5.2 Dance and Drama

In Africa generally, and Nigeria in particular, it is usually difficult if not impossible to separate dance from drama. This is why some scholars see dance in Africa as performances because it involves virtually all the genres of art. It is understandable that dance is the movement of the body in time and space, during performance the use of mime, gestures and others in interpreting movements makes dance a *sin-qua-non* with drama especially in indigenous African dances.

This assertion is evident in the definition of drama by Dictionary.com when it states that “Drama is a composition in prose or verse presenting in dialogue or pantomime a story involving conflict or contrast of character, especially one intended to be acted on stage; a play.” In the definition, pantomime portrays the use of the body which includes gestures, facial expression and all these can be achieved through movement with the body.

Theatre is the mirror of the society, which means that the various art forms or performatives of the theatre are nothing but a replication of the human society. The relationship between dance and drama goes beyond mere entertainment; they are used to prod out issues and vices in the society, questioning the existing state of affairs in the society and tries proffer solutions.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 ORIGIN OF BATA – MYTHOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

Every traditional dance in Africa, specifically Nigeria has its origin and background. As such, these indigenous dances have a traceable link or source through which one can identify its origin.

There are so many accounts as regards the origin and history of Bata dance. Different individuals have contributed different story as regards the origin of Bata. Hence, there is an element of diversity in the story of how Bata came into existence in Yoruba land. Irrespective of these diversities, there is one specific thing that is dominant in all these different stories and it is being included in all the stories. The inclusion of Sango, the god of thunder and lightning is the specific factor that is dominant in the story of the origin of Bata.

However, one cannot tell precisely the factual story of the Origin of Bata, due to the fact that the devotee of the deity Egungun claims that Bata is fully associated with one of Yoruba's pantheon Egungun. While some other devotee of Sango claims that the origin of Bata can be traced back to the deity Sango. Irrespective of the controversy, Jeleel Ojuade tends to shed more light on the origin when he asserts that "Yoruba oral traditions confined the emergence of Bata dance to religious rituals. That is serving as accompaniments to Egungun and Sango during their lifetime" (8). Here, Ojuade is of the opinion that Bata dance is associated with Egungun which is also supported by Ogunba and Irele's proclamation as quoted by Ojuade when they opined that:

Sango was an ancestor, deified and worshipped by people after his death. It was Bata drums that used to entertain Sango and accompany Egungun who were both relations and inseparable. (8).

The point raised by these scholars suggested Bata was used for both the Egungun and Sango. The inseparable nature of these two can be traced to the fact that Egungun is the practice of ancestral worship of which Sango can be likened to since he is seen as deified ancestor.

Hence, an interview was carried out by the researcher in order to gather more information and facts as regards the origin of Bata.

The mythological account of Bata can be traced back to the early period of the Yoruba kingdom. Its origin transcends from the mythological platform of the Yoruba people of Oyo. There is no way one would discuss the origin of Bata without including the name of the deity Sango.

According to Bata myth, the origin of Bata is said to have emerged from the heavens, through God who is referred to as Eledumare in the Yoruba diaspora. Eledumare summoned a female who happens to be a dwarf, to descend upon the surface of the earth in order to entertain the inhabitants of the earth, especially the deities with Bata music. The name of this woman is said to be Ayan, but during that era, she was referred to as Ayanagalu because of the nature of her height. Ayanagalu descended from the heavens with a Bata drum (which is presently referred to as *Iyailu* in present) to execute the mission as sent by Eledumare to beat the drum as a means of entertaining humans, especially the deities. Ayanagalu's anxiousness to descend on earth did not make her to wait for all that Eledumare has to tell and give her, before she descended upon the earth. When Ayanagalu descended upon the earth, her first encounter with one of the deity is with Egungun. Egungun then requested for Ayanagalu to commence with the work that she was sent to do by Eledumare. As Ayanagalu wanted to commence the beating of the drum, her hands were not able to reach the two surface of the drum due to her short nature. So Ayanagalu called on Eledumare to inform him that her hands cannot reach the surface of the drum, and Eledumare

told her that, he was not done with her before she descended upon the earth, due to the fact that she was eager to descend upon the surface of the earth. Eledumare in his ability provided an object called Bilala which is in form of a stick, in order serve as an extension of Ayanagalu's hand, so that it will be able to reach the edges and surface of the drum.

Ayanagalu started playing the Bata drums for Egungun and it became a routine that is being played annually during the Egungun festival or any other ceremony done in honour of Egungun. As time went on, Ayanagalu gave birth to more children who started playing the rest of the Bata Drums and it became an ensemble. Shortly after, Sango descended upon the earth, he craved for a music that could best suit his vigorous and strong nature as a means of entertainment and accompaniment whenever he proceeds for war. But he couldn't find any compatible music aside Bata. Sango headed to the place of Ayanagalu to request her to play the Bata drums for him during his festival, and Ayanagalu accepted. Coincidentally, the festival of Egungun and Sango fall into the same period of time. Ayanagalu who is said to be the wife of all the Yoruba pantheons fell into a state of confusion as regards who to entertain with the Bata drum. So she decided that two of her children including her, should perform for Egungun, while the other two of her children should perform for Sango during their festival. Egungun disagreed to the idea of Ayanagalu and this led to a clash between the two deities. Sango and Egungun proposed a fight in which was fixed at the point where three footpath meets. The two deities met and fought vigorously because the winner of the fight will be in full possession of Bata. They fought for a long time but no winner emerged, until Sango choked Egungun in his neck and Egungun lost its usual voice. That is why when Egungun speaks, his voice usually sound deep and scary. Since no winner emerged and the fight was getting tougher, Eledumare descended from heaven to settle

the fight by telling both deities to fix their festival for different period so that Ayanagalu will be able to beat the drum for both parties. Hence, Sango and Egungun agreed and reconciled.

The deities started doing their festivals at different time, so Ayanagalu was able to beat the drum for the both of them. But the reason why Bata is more associated and recognized with Sango is because, unlike Egungun who utilized the Bata drum only during his festival annually, Sango utilized it during his festival and after the festival. He dances around the community with Bata music even after his annual festival, and also uses Bata music as a means to stimulate his mood for war.

3.2 TYPES OF BATA DANCE

According to the history of Bata dance, it is said to have originated from these two deified gods (Sango and Egungun) as enumerated above. Sango (the god of thunder and lightning) is associated with Bata because of his frequent use of the drum outside the festival. As a result of this, most people who involve in Bata dance are those that have something to do with Sango worship or Masquerades (Egungun). It is important to note that most beautiful dancers of Bata Music are those that do not have anything to do with Sango worship or masquerades. They do Bata for its aesthetic purpose. However, all these controversies gave rise to the dance of Bata done in different ways.

To the general observers of Bata dance, the belief is that there are two types of Bata dances. These are the fast-tempo dance known as Gbamu, with the sharp shoulder and head movements, and the very slow, soft mid-tempo dance known as Ego. Although, the two types of Bata dance exist, there are many other types that are based on experience, or the limits of the lead drummer or dancer's knowledge of Bata. They can be identified based on the rhythm of the

drum and dance movements that accompany them. Some of the existing Bata dance types are as follows:

Ewo: this is a type of Bata dance movement, that involves various degrees of body movement in a subtle manner, without the usual jerking of the body. It is the transition from this movement to another form of mid-tempo dance that is known as Ego.

Gbamu: This involves quick light footed leg-movement coupled with extensive use of jerks (Jija Bata) which involves shoulder jerks once, twice or thrice depending on the drummer's instruction. All these can be interpreted by the dancer's movement of the heads, shoulders, and hands or by jumping up and landing on their feet. It is the most popular of the Bata movements' variants, and widely used in Bata dance performances in Yoruba land and beyond.

Esa: The movement here involves dancers wriggling their bodies at the same time interpreting the drum language with alternating toe-foot movement.

Kogba: This is a variation of Gbamu, which is also a dignified movement. It is usually slower in tempo, than Gbamu.

Arabitiko: The movements here are full of beauty and fun fare. It usually serves as entrance dance movements for younger dancers, which they usually perform with delight.

Elekoto: This is basically a female dance, with astonishing jerks that develop into sets of three as the dance progresses.

IjoOge: Another female variation. In this particular dance, it is the Omele Abo that does a lot of work. The dancer wriggles her waist to the dance.

Abida: It is purely a male dance style. It is a movement in which the dancer makes use of his hands jerking them in sets of two or three depending on the instruction of the lead drummer.

Woro: This is a soft, gentle, mid-tempo Bata dance performed by both male and female dancers. Here, the leg movements are generally slow and the dancers gravitate towards the earth. It is a replica of Ija-fafa-ti-fafa (rhythm of the drum).

Afasegbejo and Salaja Koko: The nature of this type is fast tempo; faster dance movements which can be danced in varying ways.

Elsee: Oral evidence shows that an Oba (King) in Igbaja, a Yoruba town in the present Kwara State, was adept with the art of dancing this particular Bata dance style. According to the narrative, after the towns people might have entertained the Oba with series of Bata dance movements, the lead drummer use to call on the Oba on his drum that it is His Royal Majesty's turn to entertain his subjects too, saying:

Elésèé dide k'óójó	stand up and dance
Ajijolá dide k'óójó	stand up and dance
Oba k'óójó	King Dance
Dide k'óójó	Stand up and dance
Oba Ìgbàjà	King of Ibaja

The Oba would start his movements right from his sitting position on the throne and rise up thrilling the audience with slow, regal and dignified movements. Some other Bata dances are Jalasin, Etiketi, Siko, Gbandikan, which are not too energetic and are created out of contemporary innovations of the dance.

3.3 NATURE OF BATA DANCE

Africa is rich in oral literature, which often culminate in performance and, as already mentioned, traditional African performing art is total in its nature. This holistic concept derives from its origin in traditional festivals which are primarily religious in nature. But in reality the festivals go beyond the religious and according to Ogunba, become a carnival of dance, drama and celebration (4). Ogunba further describes a festival as an integral, dynamic part of the culture of an unalienated African, an occasion to which he responds spontaneously (5).

The orality derives from these extemporaneous characteristics as well as the mode of performance and transmission from generation to generation. According to Finnegan, "oral art circulates by oral means, in contrast to written art, and is identified by three features. These are its composition before and during performance, its mode of transmission and its performance" (17). It transcends mere speech and includes the totality of theatrical performance, in this instance the dances. The concept of orality is not only limited to Africans, it exists in all the worlds culture, since no culture could deny having a folk tradition that it inherited from its forebears. The major difference has to do with the present nature of this orality. There is a primary and secondary orality. Secondary orality is the area, where the developed world has gone ahead and surpassed many other countries. This has to do, according to Dasylva "with the recording of the old oral arts on celluloid, in video tapes, on audio tapes and so on" (163). Primary orality on the other hand is the primary work of traditional performances that invariably gets transmitted into secondary work through the mediation mentioned above. The change in status is an indication of this mediation. The live performance of traditional theatrical dances still retains its primary oral nature. A work of arts that was recorded decades ago remains a secondary orality while a performance of the same work now, even without reference to the recordings still

bears the toga of primary orality. Finnegan also opines that "performance is always important in oral literature as an element in all oral art" (118).

Like most traditional dances, Bata dance which is associated with the Yoruba people of Oyo state is said to be oral in nature. It has been performed and done right from the time of Sango, the god thunder. Bata is attributed to Sango and entirely dedicated to him. At such, the dance is said to be oral in nature due to its origin and practice up till date. The People who witnessed Bata during the reign of Sango started engaging in Bata dance and practice it in order to emulate Sango's personality. As a result of this, Bata dance was being passed on from generation to generation and has become part of the people of Oyo and every other tribe in the Yoruba kingdom.

The nature of Bata dance stems down to different strands. Unlike most traditional dances, Bata possesses high level of energy, both in terms of the drum and the dance performance. Bata dance can be traced back to its energetic nature due to its rigorous movements which warrants the utilization of almost all the parts of the body. The nature of Bata encompasses jerking of the hand, jumping, kicking of the leg and the use of every other parts of the body. According to the researchers informant/ interviewee, Mr. BamijiOlaiya, the artistic director of Oyo state troupe cultural centre, he said an adage that says "Oni batatobajoti o tapa, abunkunenikanko, abunkunaraareni". This simply means "A Bata dancer that dances without kicking his leg did not ridicule anybody but ridicules himself".

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 FORM AND CONTENT OF BATA DANCE

This chapter will look into the following; form in Bata dance, and content in Bata dance. In order to further comprehend the purpose of this study, the meaning of form and content in a dance will be discussed below;

- i. What is a form in dance?
- ii. What is a content in dance?

The commencement of the definition of form and content in dance can easily be arrived at if one analyse both terms from the general sense.

Wikipedia online states that:

In art and art criticism, form and content are considered distinct aspects of a work of art. The term form refers to the work's style, techniques and media used, and how the elements of design are implemented. Content, on the other hand refers to a work's essence, or what is being depicted (www.wikipedia.org).

Form in a dance simply talks about the structure, nature and physical utilization of a specific dance. In other words justifying the way the dance is done. The form in a dance determines whether the dance is an indigenous dance or not. It is simply the overview of the dance as a whole. In addition, a form in a dance simply indicates how the dance is being performed, and also the type and nature of movement the dance possesses.

Content in a dance simply captures the temperament of a specific dance. In other words, it simply talks about what the dance entails, however, expressing what is needed for the dance to be performed and these may include the historical background of the dance, what instigated the dance, the purpose of the dance, the nature of the dance and the theatrical elements that the dance encompass.

In this stead, the structure and appearance of the dance, choreography, music (songs, instrumentation and idioms), gestures (techniques and energy/dynamics) will help us elucidate the form and content as they apply to Bata dance performance.

4.2 STRUCTURE AND APPEARANCE OF BATA DANCE

The discussion or analysis of Bata dance performance transcends from the early performances of the dance that is done by the Yoruba pantheons such as Egungun and Sango who are said to be the pioneer that engineered the art of Bata dance. The dance, shroud in myth dating back to the period inception of the Yoruba existence.

The performance is done within a conducive stipulated space by any number of dance artiste and five drummers. The need for song is not compulsory but can also be utilized. Back in the days, each dancer comes out to display individually because of the different interpretation of the idioms as punctuated by the drums while dancing. But due to the innovation of modern choreographic ideas, two or more people perform Bata dance in Unisom to the drums.

The performance of Bata are usually accompanied with music and songs, and punctuated with chants. These songs and chants depend on the nature of occasion. For instance, it is a purely secular occasion it incorporates less of "Sango" and more of the praise poems of prominent people present at the occasion. In its traditional setting however, it places much emphasis on its religious origins by focusing essentially on the praise names and chants of "Sango", the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning. The last segment is the departure, which also entails thanks to the elemental force for a performance free of hitches, and so it is a variant of the "ijuba" The group then comes with a recession song and dance.

Bata dance is structured in such a way that it possesses high level of energy. Every part of the body plays a role in Bata dance, but the most pivotal part of the body that is consistent in Bata dance is the hand (shoulder inclusive). From the research gathered, Bata dance is embedded with rigorous movements that involves the utilization of the whole part of the body, but one thing must be constant to make sure the dance still maintains its originality, and that is the jerking of the hands and shoulder blade. As a choreographer or dancer, one can recreate the dance but should endeavor to be consistent with the jerking of the hand in order not to go outside the confines of the dance.

A typical bata dance takes the structure of a, b, c, d, e. a - is the arrival with songs and dances, b - signifies "ijuba" which means salutation and homage, which is achieved through chants and dances. C - is the section of entertainment, it is the period when a variety of dances are performed. This section takes different forms; the ABACADA rondo form can be identifiable as well as the tenancy form and various other forms. This section of the entertainment could also be programmed to include traditional acrobatics as part of the dances.

4.3 BATA CHOREOGRAPHY

According to Mr. Bamiji Olaiya, he explains that the choreography of Bata as it is today was instigated by the drums. However, Bata choreography maintains an informal style of choreography. This simply means that it does not possess any specific style of choreography due to its oral nature and history. This then goes that, Bata dance as it is done in those days does not encompass floor patterns. The dance was performed that way as a result of the fact that the deities (Sango and Egungun) are the lead performer of the dance. It is after their performance that every other dancer takes the floor one after the other.

Creating or recreating Bata dance as a routine that requires utmost intellectual and artistic engagement. The ability to choreograph Bata dance includes all the elements of dance composition. Bata dance can be choreographed in any style the choreographer intends to choreograph it. From the inception, Bata dance is performed individually, but in present times, it is done by two or more dancers in unison in order to achieve aesthetical view in totality. The infusion of acrobatics would not be invalid if it is properly choreographed by the choreographer and utilized by the dancer.

4.3.1 Bata Movements

Bata dance movements encompass the use of almost all the whole part of the body. The movements as embedded in Bata dance are movements that are rigorous and energy consuming. This goes that a lazy man cannot engage in Bata dance movements due to its nature. Bata dance movement encompass actions such as jumping, kicking of the leg, and the important of all that must be dominant in Bata, irrespective of how it is created or recreated is the jerking of the hand. According to researcher's interviewer Mr. Musibao, he explained that according to myth, the way Bata movements are done is as result of the nature of Sango. He further explained that, the jerking of the hand depicts Sango's lightning.

Due to paradigm shift and the innovation of this era in dance which is the contemporary era, one can explore and recreate the incepted movements of Bata as far as one still maintains the dominant movement which is the jerking of the hand. As such, one would not transcend the confines of the dance in question. This can be easily achieved if the dancer or choreographer follows the idioms of the Bata drums.

4.3.2 Bata Gesture

In Bata dance performance, every part of the body are used to make gesture, but Bata gesture is stipulated majorly to two part of the body which are the legs and the shoulder down to the hands. These gestures are done in accordance to the idiom sound that the drum produces. According to Bata myth, the gestures which include jerking of the hand, shoulder blade, kicking of the leg and jumping is a representation of strength and vigour. This is so because Bata is recognized to Egungun and Sango and they are two strong deities who believe in strength, especially Sangō.

4.4 THEATRICAL ELEMENT IN BATA PERFORMANCE

The theatrical elements that are utilized in Bata dance performance varies. In recent times, Bata dance is embedded with theatrical elements like other traditional African dances. In order for a Bata dance performance to take place, these theatrical elements are needed to further aid the dance performance for the purpose of aesthetics.

4.4.1 The Music of Bata

Music from the general sense is the realisation of a sound that is produced through the means of playing or singing a particular tune. It is referred to as a sound or the study of such sounds organized in time to arrive at or produce a melody or rhythm. Music tends to serve as an accompaniment to almost every aspect in performance, especially dance. According to dictionary.com, “dance is a sequence of rhythmic steps or movements usually performed to music, for pleasure or as a form of social interaction”. The just concluded definition of dance

tends to justify the pivotal essence of music in dance. For a dance to emerge as a complete performance there is the need for music, rhythm or melodious sound.

Traditional dances of Africa (Nigeria inclusive) adopt the utilization of music. Music plays a huge role in the performance of African traditional dance. Specifically, music makes up the performance of traditional dances in Nigeria.

Vidal observed that:

The south-west of Nigeria is dominated by two principal medium of musical expression; drum and voice, although, there are other instruments like flute, gong and rattles but drumming and singing constitute the major form of musical expression(621).

Specifically, the use of drum in traditional dances of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized due to the fact that it tends to serve as the platform of ensembles. Drum in traditional dances of Nigeria plays a pivotal role. Most drums are being utilized as a group instrument to make the music. As such, it could be the combination of different drums or same drum. In reference to Bata, Bata Ensemble is one of the most recognized and popular Ensemble among the people of the Yoruba Kingdom. Right from the inception, the Bata drum ensemble is strictly attached to Egungun and Sango and their devotees. The music as used in the dance of Bata is barely the utilization of drums which is referred to as Ilu Bata (Bata drums). Unlike other indigenous dance which utilizes the use of songs and instruments as an accompaniment to the dances, Bata music is best known for the utilization of the drums. The five drum ensemble makes the music of Bata dance and this can be referenced to the history and origin of the dance. Hence, it can be said that the song of Bata dance is being sang by the five Bata drum ensemble.

However, due to paradigm shift and modern convention, some choreographers and Bata dancers infuse the utilization of songs alongside the drum ensemble to further enhance and beautify the

music of Bata. Although songs can be used in Bata dance but it is not compulsory or necessary, and it has to go in accordance with the Bata drums because the pattern of beating the drums cannot be changed for the song. Suffice to say that Bata drum possesses the ability to speak out idioms, in which the dancer comprehends, interprets and dances to it. The sound or rhythm that emanates from the beating of Bata drums tends to speak various idioms which definitely have its interpretation. These idioms can only be understood and interpreted by those who practice Bata as a whole.

At this juncture, it is important to put into cognizance what makes up the music of Bata. Since the Bata drum ensemble makes up the music, the need for highlighting the drums is pivotal. According to Mr. Taiwo Musibao Ayanlere, there are five drum ensembles that make up Bata music and they are namely:

1. Iyailu (The lead drum)
2. Ijin (supporting lead drum)
3. Omele abo (third supporting drum)
4. Omelemeta (Triple small drum)
5. Konkolo (last back up drum)

4.4.2 Origin of Bata Drums Ensemble

The difficulties which beset historians of Yoruba music is similar to those confronting the historians of Yoruba culture in general. In the absence of literary tradition among the Yoruba before now, the use and reliance on oral tradition and on artifacts for information pertaining to the earliest history of Yoruba becomes inevitable. There are different versions of the origin of

Bata drum in Yoruba land, but one of them will be highlighted. According to the documentation in Ojuade's "Secularization of Bata Dance in Nigeria", he narrates that, according to Falolu, a bata drummer from Igbo-Ora, there was a man called 'Bata' in Igbo-Ora area of Oyo State in Yoruba land many years ago. He was known to be a very powerful man in the town. He became aggrieved because of the way he was treated by the people around him. One day he got angry and transformed himself to drums of different sizes. The drums he transformed to were later named after him and were adopted by the Egungun and Sango devotees. The composition of bata drum ensemble of Oyo people are:

1. Iyailu
2. Omele abo
3. Omeleako
4. Kudi

Bata drums produce the music to the bata dances of which there are as many variants as there are bata beats and rhythms. Some of these varieties are "gbamu", "elese", "affasegbojo", "elekoto", "ijooje", "ogese" e.t.c. The "Gbamamu" variant happens to be the most popular and at the same time the most bastardised and abused. Bata music produced by the drums is usually associated with the worship of Sango, the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning. The ferocious sound of the beats and the intimidating shape of the drums together with the rigorous beating are attuned to the ferocious disposition attributed to Sango himself. Gbamamu is a very rigorous dance executed with mathematically accurate expressive movements and usually accompanied with praise poems and chants. The tempo of the dance is dictated by the lead drum (Iya Ilu), followed by the gentle caressing rhythmic sound of the small drum (Omele Abo) and backed by the sharp sound of the

male or triple drums (OmeleAko or Omele Meta) and a flat drum called "kudi". A base drum (Ijin) might be played to lessen the work of the lead drum.

4.4.3 Idioms in Bata

Bata is embedded with so many idioms in which these idioms have their specific meaning and essence. These idioms are played through the medium of the lead Bata drum which is called Iyailu. The dancer who is already conversant with the idioms interprets it with the Bata movements. Hence, the essence of this idiom is for the drummer to communicate with the dancer, especially when the drummer wants to pass across an important message. Some of these idioms include:

- A kií fi bàtà jó Bàtá One does not dance Bàtá with shoes
- Af'eni kogilá kolu It is only someone who have been bedeviled
 Af'eni Èsù n se It is only someone who has been possessed by Esu
 L'olè ko lu Sango That will attack Sango
 Af'eni ti Sàngó o pa Only he who wants to be killed
- Toba she pemi ni woni If I were you
 Maa fi apajo I will dance with my hand
 To ba she pemi ni woni If I were you
 Maa fesejo I will dance with my leg
 To ba she pe mi ni woni If I were you
 Maa fi gbogboarajo I will dance with the whole of my body

4.4.4 Bata Costume and Make-up

The costume as used in Bata dance performance does not strictly adhere to a specific type of costume. Since Bata is of the Yoruba people, the costume that is used in the course of the performance could be any Yoruba attire that can portray the aesthetic nature of dance when it is being performed. According to my interviewee Mr. Bamiji Olaiya, he said there is no specific costume that is stipulated for Bata dance. He further explained that the costume utilized in Bata

dance could be any Yoruba native attire such as Ofi, Adire, Ankara and Asooke. He said, due to the innovation, convention and improvement in culture, some dancers tend to utilize modern fabrics as costume for Bata dance. According to him, he stated that right from the inception, the costume used and known for Bata is Ofi.

Furthermore, Bata does warrant the utilization of any special make up. Dating back to its origin, the pioneers of the dance did not apply any form of make up on their faces besides from the costume worn. And that has been the routine up till date. Although, some dancers decide to make use of costume in other further enhance their look while dancing, but it is not a necessary commodity.

4.5 BATA IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

4.5.1 The Space

The use of space tends to be a pre dominant factor that cannot be excluded or left out in the platform of art and performance. On a general note, performance cannot take place without the space or designated area. During the reign of Sango, Bata dance was performed in an open arena. According to the research gathered, there is no specific place that is designated for the performance of Bata dance; it can be performed anywhere depending on the nature or purpose of the performance.

Conventionally, Bata dance is performed on the stage in the theatre. It is backed up with so many other theatrical elements such as props, light, set design and so on.

4.5.2 The Use of Props and Accessories

The use of props and costume tends to increase the level of aestheticism in Bata performance. However, the use of props and accessories in Bata performance is not a basic necessity. In the contemporary times, dancers and choreographers utilize them during Bata performance as part of its paraphernalia. In most cases, the prop used in Bata dance is a horse tail and beads. While the men wear the neck and hand beads, the women wear same and can add the ankle beads too, though this is not compulsory. The fact is that it adds to the glamour and aesthetic value in the dance/performance

4.5.3 The Use of Light

The use of light in Bata performance has been in existence right from the inception of the dance till this modern day. Far back as when Bata originated and took its place, it has always been performed in an open arena in which the natural light illuminates the arena for the purpose of proper visibility. As such, Bata dance were performed during the day.

In this contemporary era whereby the use of electrical light is in existence, Bata dance can be performed at any place that has space at any time. Irrespective of the emergence of electrical light, Bata dance can be performed at night.

4.5.4 The Use of Set Design

The use of set design in the performance of Bata is a modern innovation that is adopted by choreographers and dancers. From the onset, the use of set is not embedded in the performance of Bata, but in most cases, especially in the conventional theatre, the use of set is adopted to further increase the level of aestheticism as regards visualization.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 SUMMARY

The compilation of this research work encapsulates the analysis of Bata dance of the Western people of Nigeria. As a result, this research captures the discussion of the form and content of Bata dance specifically from the people of Oyo state in Nigeria. However, the practice of Bata dance is a glee towards entertainment and efficacious purpose such as ritual and festival. According to research and information gathered, Bata dance is popularly adopted into existence through the deity Sango (the god thunder and lightning), who heavily championed Bata dance performance and steadily spread it across the Yoruba kingdom.

The practice and mastery of Bata dance is highly achievable if one maintains the rudiments within the confines of the dance. This then goes that, every traditional or indigenous dances in Nigeria possess its own form and content in which must be put into cognizance when heading towards the practice of the dance. This work connotes the aestheticism and nature of Bata dance, paying rapt attention to the form and content of the dance.

5.2 RECOMMENDATION

The aesthetics of a performance in all strata is dependent on the level of effort inculcated into the performance. Therefore, when one engages in the practice of Bata dance performance, it is pivotal for one to put into consideration all the necessary elements that make up Bata dance as a whole. Generally, identifying the form and content of indigenous dances in Nigeria is pivotal due to the fact that it helps to further communicate and enhance the idea of the choreographer, the dancer and the audience. When performing or engaging in Bata dance, the form and content has to be critically looked into for further comprehension of the dance. This will aid the dancer,

choreographer, or the audience to vividly understand the essence, rudiment and nature of the Bata dance.

Hence, it is of cordial recommendation that Bata dance should not be practiced without the knowledge of the form and content, so as not to practice what is outside the confines of the dance. And also, to give one a more comprehending knowledge of Bata dance.

Finally, being a master piece in the art of dancing Bata is not enough. The mastery of Bata on field and off field is recommended for theatre practitioner.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Through the in-depth study of Bata dance and its cultural undertone, it shows that the form and content of Bata dance of the western people of Nigeria is embedded with various points to look out for. Generally, traditional dances have strong influence in our society because of the power such dance entails, these dances are most spectacular and are representative of any art form which calls for the highest participation in African indigenous life.

Form and content constitutes the basic and/ or integral part of any art work generally and dance in particular. It is obvious from the findings that one cannot take the place of the other. A thorough study of both (form and content) elucidates and brings to the fore, the proper understanding of the dance in question. Form complements content and vice versa. Africa dances generally (Nigeria) inclusive must be studied in both their form and content. The information generated /or gathered from this study is a testament to this.

The form in Bata includes; rhythm, floor patterns/choreography, gestures, energy/dynamics including techniques. It also involves make-up, music (instrumentation and songs), costume and other of such. On the other hand, the content which is informed by form,

explains the rise of these cultural idioms in Bata dance and/or performance. Such explanations can only be imagined. It includes but not limited to the meaning of particular movements, gestures, songs and chants in the dance. The use and meaning of certain costumes and any other that makes meaning discernable.

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INTERVIEWS

Interview with Mr. Taiwo Musibao Ayanlere, A.K.A Musi Alasi Onibata a 50

year old theatre practitioner at the Cultural centre Ibadan. 29th June, 2015.

Interview with Mr. Adeniyi Eric, in his 40's and a Theatre practitioner, Akure: 29th

June 2015.

Interview with Mr. Bamiji Olaiya, a 37 year old artistic director of Ibadan state

Troupe. 29th June, 2015.

APPENDIX



PLATE I THE RESEARCHER AND THE INTERVIEWEE, MR ERIC



PLATE II THE RESEARCHER AND THE INTERVIEWEE, MR MUSIBAO



PLATE III

IYA ILU (The lead drum)



PLATE IV

IJIN (A back up to the lead drum)



PLATE V

OMELE ABO (THIRD SUPPORTING DRUM)



PLATE VI OMELE META (TRIPLE SMALL DRUM)



PLATE VII A TRADITIONAL BATA DANCER WITH ORIGINAL BATA COSTUME