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MISSION & PURPOSE

Research is about the creation of human knowledge and understanding; how this knowledge is advanced, expanded, and extrapolated or spawned into multifarious and variegated ways and strategies directed towards mitigation and solution of the problems humanity faces in its existence. In this regard, therefore, research may be regarded as particularistic. On the one hand, research may be focused on matters of social and contemporary concern to a particular group of people, or it may be deemed as irrelevant or of peripheral importance to the same group. Yet on another hand, research may be couched in paradigms and practices that are removed from the knowledge and system of development of a group; in this case, research may be confusing, confounding, and of no practical applicability to those it is meant to educate and benefit.

Research in Africa and about Africa has always suffered this bifurcation of (ir)-relevance. This is because African society encountered alien influence in its intellectual and social transformation; this encounter with the west has had its 'ghosts,' as well as its 'graces'. African intellectuals and philosophers must seek to cut out an authentic African niche in scholarship, so that our knowledge and ways of knowing be identified and respected for what they truly are.

RUWAZA is derived from Kiswahili Language and cultural discourse to mean 'vision and direction' for Africa. The Journal is targeted at the development of research in *Humanities and Social Sciences* in Africa, about Africa and for Africa; it is hoped that by an incessant engagement of African scholars in academic discourse new ideas, ways and means will emerge through which to address Africa's myriad issues and problems.

EDITORIAL PREFACE

RUWAZA AFRIKA: Journal of Contemporary Research in Humanities & Social Sciences is a formal representation of the academic generation of knowledge and ideas on the basis of socio-scientific research in the academies and Universities of Africa. The mandate of this journal is to nurture authentic and original African ways and paradigms of knowing and thinking in order that Africa's place in human civilisation is finally fully realised and recognised.

The Journal is currently housed by the *School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Pwani University, Kilifi, Kenya*, and has its board of editors and scholars drawn from across Kenya and Nigeria; our aim is to include scholars from every nook and cranny of Africa so that our scholarship is inclusive.

Articles and research reports are welcome for submission from all areas of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and, if accepted, will be included in the relevant section of the cognate discipline. The sections are formally recognised through an informed categorisation of the accepted articles into relevant disciplines and sub-disciplines which fall in different parts; it is our hope that these parts may in future be distinct issues of the journal. Currently, the areas included are: *LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS, COMMUNICATION & MEDIA; LITERATURE, ART, FILM & ETHNOMUSICOLOGY; PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION; HISTORY, POLITICS & GOVERNMENT; SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY; EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY; BUSINESS & FINANCE; HEALTH & NUTRITION*

In order to qualify for inclusion in *RUWAZA*, articles must be original; they must deliberate on particular theoretical premises, and deal with replicable data to advance the said premises. In addition, the conventional formatting and style of presentation should be either the APA or MLA, but both must NOT be mixed. Submitted articles must also be in font size 12, Times New Roman, and should not be more than 20 pages A4 size FS, should have an *Abstract* with *Key Words, Introductory Background, Theoretical background, Methodological Approach, Discussion and Summary*.

Articles may be submitted for consideration any time of the year; however, articles submitted after **1st January** and not later than **31st March** of any year will qualify for inclusion in the *June* Issue of a subsequent year, while those submitted between **1st July** and **30st September** will qualify for inclusion in the *December* Issue.

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FOREWORD TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

The seventh edition of **RUWAZA AFRIKA** journal has been a long time coming. This has been as a result of a constellation of factors, ranging from a very dynamic economic situation, changes in regard to staffing, to the advent of COVID-19, a virus that has led to international social, political and economic pandemic upheavals. The bad thing is that there only appeared to remain the option of having an online edition; but the good thing is that we have recently struck a deal with an upcoming printer who has agreed to afford our publication concessionary terms.

The edition carries with it very interesting, original and pristine material on various aspects of research scholarship in Africa, about Africa, and by African scholars. There are two papers in Linguistics, three in Communication and Media, five in Literature, three in Ethnomusicology, and one very short paper in Art & Design. In Linguistics, **Oyedokun-Alli & Farinde** have engaged in a discursive analysis of Yoruba myths of death. **e Kinyua** has considered the interface of thematic focus and modality in the Meru dialect of *Kĩmwĩmbĩ* and how they contribute to the semantic and pragmatic meaning of the verb.

Oyuga and **Kinuthia** open the **Communication & Media** section with an exploration of the Vernacular Media (FM) in Kenya, and how it has led to transformation and improvement of rural folk in Kenya; this study is gleaned from an analysis of selected Gikuyu language TV and Radio programmes. On their part, **Talabi, Ogundeji** and **Okioya** give a similar or corroborative perspective in a study on TV viewership in Ondo State, Nigeria. Both studies appear to demonstrate a trend of expanding the airwave-space in Africa, where the citizenry gains unfettered freedom to proffer and exchange opinions. Although there are shreds and echoes of dictatorial tendencies in Africa, the media outlets seem to be at the forefront in the struggle for democratic space. **Talabi, Aiyesimoju** and **Alao's** paper that follows is an in-depth analysis of how the Newspapers in Nigeria covered the conflict between the Executive and the Legislative arms of government, and how this has become an issue of public discourse; using an ex-post facto content analysis, the paper demonstrates that the selected Newspapers have initiated, structured and directed the debate, thus contributing to social consciousness and conscientization.

In the field of Literature, **Abdulmalik Amali**, explains the emergent trend of the re-engineering traditionally-based drama on the modern stage through improvisation and technical creativity. **Mamudu's** paper considers the use of scatology in the Nigerian short story writing; he strongly argues that this stylistic device is very dynamic, given that short story-writing conventionally requires economy of space and words. **Fugich Wako** presents an interesting first hand anthropological description of *Ayyaana* spirit possession among the Borana of Kenya; within this explication, the soci-cultural artistic performance of the occasion(s) of *Ayyaana* are analyzed as aspects of oral creativity. **Muyiwa & Okwechime's** paper is a critical appraisal of **Femi Ososfisan's** (pseudonym: **Okinba Launko**) poetry; of particular interest these critics focus on the conception of dream versus the reality, and ritual awakening. **Onkoba & Goro** consider Soyinka's dramatic configuration of African spirituality in the mold of Christocentric and Euro-modern theatric space and canvas. These critics consider the doyen of Literature in Africa as quite successful in the reconfiguration of the western tradition within Africa's creative space.

In *Ethnomusicology*, Abbe offers a critique of the practice of modern dance in Nigeria, using Ugolo's "Pipes War," as a kaleidoscope, this critic is able to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the developing practice. In a more or less similar analysis, **Arinde & Abdulmalik Amali**, focus on the socio-cultural value of music performances and the instruments in the Ichicha locale. In particular, these authors consider the take of the Idoma traditional performance, linking it up with what they refer to as "sustainable development". Finally in this section, **Akinsipe & Babarinde-Hall**'s paper outlines a regime for developing methodological approaches and techniques in the teaching of Nigerian dance: in this regard, they consider technical and academic training as avenues through which robust practice may be established and enhanced.

Lovina Onwuakpa & Osagie Otasowie's short paper in *Art and Design* concludes the edition. This paper briefly explains the importance of the fashion industry to a fledgling economy such as Nigeria's. The authors present a case for the Fashion industry, which is only preceded by Oil production as earner for the GNP; as such, they argue that the industry should be enhanced and improved by advancing new innovations and trends.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS, COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

Linguistics

- **Oyedokun-Alli, Wasiu Ademola & Farinde, Raifu Olanrewaju**, A LINGUISTIC (DISCOURSE) ANALYSIS OF YORUBA IDIOMS FOR DEATH
- **Hildah Gatakaa Kinyua**, MEANING AND THE KĪMWĪMBĪ VERB: INTERFACE BETWEEN FOCUS AND MODALITY AS CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR(S)

Communication & Media

- **I. Oyuga & J.W. Kinuthia**, VERNACULAR MEDIA AND TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY: PERSPECTIVES FROM SELECTED *GIKUYU* TV AND RADIO PROGRAMMES
- **Felix Olajide Talabi, Benjamin Kayode Ogundeji, Solomon Okioya**, A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA
- **Felix Olajide Talabi, Ayodeji Aiyesimoju, Ayotunde Alao**, NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATURE DISHARMONY IN NIGERIA

2. LITERATURE, ART, FILM & ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Literature

- **Abdulmalik Adakole Amali**, ENACTING TRADITIONAL BASED DRAMA ON MODERN STAGE THROUGH TECHNICAL CREATIVITY
- **Adekunle Mamudu**, ROTTEN WORDS FOR A ROTTEN SOCIETY: SCATOLOGICAL PRESENTATIONS IN THE NIGERIAN SHORT STORY
- **Fugich Wake**, THE SOCIO-CULTURAL AND PERFORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF *AYYANA* SPIRIT POSSESSION AMONG THE BORANA OF NORTHEAST AFRICA
- **Awodiya Muiyiwa P & E.O. Okwechime**, DREAM REALITY AND RITUAL AWAKENING IN THE POETRY OF OKINBA LAUNKO
- **Stephen Okari Onkoba & Nicholas Kamau Goro**, AFRICAN DRAMA AND RELIGION: CONFLUENCE OF AFRICAN SPIRITUALITY AND CHRISTIANITY IN WOLE SOYINKA'S DRAMA

Ethnomusicology

- **Abbe, Josephine Ebiuwa**, MODERN DANCE PRACTICE IN NIGERIA: A CRITIQUE OF CHRIS UGOLO'S "PIPES WAR"
- **Arinde Tayo Simeon & Abdulmalik Adakole Amali**, CULTURAL VALUES OF MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN ICHICHA: AN IDOMA TRADITIONAL PERFORMANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
- **Felix A. Akinsipe & 'Bunmi Babarinde-Hall**, DEVELOPING TEACHING METHODS FOR NIGERIAN DANCE THROUGH TECHNICAL AND ACADEMIC TRAINING

Art and Design

- **Lovina Ebele Onwuakpa & Osagie Otasowie Jennifer**, THE RELEVANCE OF THE FASHION SECTOR IN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

DEVELOPING TEACHING METHODS FOR NIGERIAN DANCE THROUGH TECHNICAL AND ACADEMIC TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

This paper takes a look at the practice of dance in Nigeria from four major perspectives; the traditional, cultural, social and the academic. It discusses the aim and styles of performances from these perspectives. The paper observes that because most cultural dances are pulled from traditional dances, their performance styles in terms of movement style, vocabulary and choreography (even when rehearsed for the purpose of a showcase) have not changed significantly over the decades. Only the packaging and accessories undergo major change. Using descriptive and analytical methods the paper examines the contributions of the academic performers. The study concludes that if there will be a change in dance performance, we cannot look to the owners of these dances for the changes because they are too attached to the tradition while the social dancers are more interested in their personal pleasure. The change therefore has to come through the contribution of performing artists and dance scholars through sound technical and academic training.

Keywords: *Traditional Dances, Cultural Dances, Social Dances, Technical training, Academic training*

Introduction

Nigeria, like most African countries, is very rich in its dance cultures. Dance occupies an important position in family celebrations, in religions and communal experiences, and as a form of recreation. Dance practice in Nigeria has been made from four major perspectives: traditional, social, cultural and modern (academic).

Traditional dancers perform religious and communal festival dances, vocational dances and folk dances which incorporate age and sex grade dances. Dances in this category hardly change. The Yoruba *Bata* dance, for example, has always followed a *strict kinetic vocabulary* and is hardly done out of context. It almost always features only at *Egungun* (masquerade) festivals, festivals of hunters, or at *Sango* (god of iron) festivals. They occur at communal and religious festivals of the people. participation as members of the community becomes the most important reason for performance. Movement aesthetics is thus based on the community- accepted standards.

Practitioners of social dances, on the other hand, change their steps with time and the creative caprices of various dancers and the musical accompaniments. Most Nigerians participate in social dances as a form of relaxation, at social functions on disco floors, or in the privacy of their homes. Unlike social dances, however, traditional dances, all over Nigeria, have remained pure in their kinetic techniques and contents.

The concept of cultural dances, the third category, is a post, civil war phenomenon of the 1970's, when the Federal Government was trying ways of unifying the nation. The various states were encouraged to bring their traditional dances out of the village squares to the open and perform in the instituted, Festival of Arts and Culture at that time, Nigeria witnessed a huge variety of dance forms. Dances previously performed only at times of religions or communal festivals began to feature on stage, on television, and at social functions. Akinsipe (2015) affirms that:

By the early 70s in Nigeria when the Festivals of Arts began as a form of re-uniting the country after the civil war, and different states were encouraged to come out with their dances and arts, the *Kwagh-hir* which soon became the trade mark of Benue state emerged from the Tiv land and later featured at FESTAC '77.

These dance forms began to serve as a promotion of an exchange of cultural information and understanding among various ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Since the institution of the Festival of Arts and Culture, however, Nigerian dances are still serving merely as agents of information and entertainment. They have not yet begun to serve as agents of national unity. So far, we have only become a nation of amateur ethnographers and choreologists collecting, recording, and describing the different dance forms without being able to come up with a unique Nigerian Dance culture incorporate the steps, the social pleasures and tensions, and the rhythm of the nation.

Because most cultural dances are pulled from traditional dances, their performance styles (even when rehearsed for the purpose of a showcase) have not changed significantly over the decade. Only the packaging and accessories undergo major change. The Atilogwu dance has been, performed by different groups of young boys over the years, but the movement style, vocabulary and choreography have hardly changed since the first Festival of Arts and Culture. As a result of this consistency in style, and to prevent the novelty effect the spectacle it had enjoyed over the years from wearing off, there is now a need for the development of structural and technical training in the various dance forms towards building a kinetic vocabulary in the Nigerian dance movement styles, rhythms and tempos because the Nigerian dance audience is becoming quite sophisticated in its taste having been exposed to Western Jazz and Modern Dance through travelling, television, films and video recordings.

Dance plays a significant role in almost all aspect of Nigerian life: at religions rituals, community gatherings, family celebrations, celebrations of social achievements, in recreational settings, on stage as part of drama, and on television as medium of information and pure entertainment. It is, therefore, regarded as a common phenomenon taken very much for granted and as such treated with the utmost levity.

Unlike music or drama, dance is a non-verbal communicating art the meaning of which, in most cases, is embedded in the occasion and setting within which it occurs. A group of people dancing is simply that until the occasion for the performance is known. Then, and only then is a meaning attached to the dance. Dance anthropologist Joann Kealiinohomoku (1976) sees dance as a non-verbal communication recognized as dance by the reference group, because what is dance to one ethnic group may be perceived as another motor action by another. Judith Hanna (1979) suggests further that while it is human to dance, the reason for dance, dance settings, dance styles and movement aesthetics are all culturally determined. Merriam (1974) concludes simply that Dance is culture and culture is dance. When dance is perceived as it is by these three dance researchers, it is understandable why dance in Nigeria has not undergone any drastic changes over the years.

Many of the dances performed during festivals of arts and culture are taken from their original settings in the villages where they are still being performed on occasions of religions and community rituals. While people have agreed to share these dances with other Nigerian cultures, their exposure has not affected the purity of these dances in styles. Almost all Nigerians attach extreme importance to tradition and their distinct cultures. This being so it is unlikely that any of the cultures featured during arts festivals will agree to major modifications.

Dances performed in the Gelede festival in parts of Ogun State are usually thoroughly rehearsed, many times over, before the festival. Much attention is paid to uniformity in the different dance steps, so much so that the resulting performances always look choreographed. A familiar spectator can, however, see the innovation of the individual dancers and judge aesthetics by how well he is able to interpret the drums. However rehearsed the dances are though, a Gelede dance festival remains the same year after year. The drama of life portrayed by individual Gelede masqueraders also remains the same (see Harper 1970 in Odu 4).

The Owe or Okura masquerade festival is an annual traditional religious event in Odo Ape in the Bunu Local Government Area of Kwara State. Several weeks before the festival, which usually takes place around the Guinea corn harvest season, young men and maidens come out every night to dance. Four masquerades are usually featured in the festival every year. They are Owuna, Inaroko, Ehingabon and Iyelogbo. The choice of who represents each of these masquerades is determined by the performance of the individual dancers during these moonlight gatherings. Since the masqueraders are almost always young men in the village, it is not likely that the same men go under the Eku Egungun (masquerade costume) every year. The evening gatherings, therefore, provide the avenue for practicing the various dance styles characteristics of the four Egunguns. The choice of the Ehingabon (the young "female" figure) for example, is dependent on how feminine the dancer, who must be male (since only males wear masquerade costumes), can act. The young man chosen must be subtle in waist twist, must portray beauty in his gait, and must be slim and slight in figure. The Ehingabon is almost always of slight build since the same eku is worn year after year. On the contrary the Iyelogbo (mother of the forest) must move with the measured dignity of the older woman and at the same time be able to perform floor rolls and acrobatic feats bordering on magic. He must be able to manipulate his cumbersome costume to become an extension of his movement. He must, at all times, maintain the double illusion of immense high and extreme shortness depicting the mystery surrounding the behavior of older women.

Although the Okura festival is an annual event following identical pattern every year, the period of rehearsals becomes necessary in order to choose the right actor-dancer-masquerader among the young men coming up for each of the four characters among the young men coming up for each of the four characters the community portrays. And of course, the festival attracts spectators from neighbouring towns and villages, the dance steps must be interesting enough to draw the annual crowd.

This type of dedication to tradition is hard to change. Besides, dances are organized to accompany rituals of significant importance to the people. Dance is an intrinsic part of culture and cannot be segmented through modification or change. This is why Dance anthropologists, ethnographer and choreologists approach the study of culture through the perspective of dance. The significance of dance in a culture cannot be over emphasized, nevertheless, seeing the same dances on stage, on television, and in festivals of arts can become monotonous. There needs to be a change in dance performance, but we cannot look to the owners of these dances for the change. They are too attached to the tradition. The change has to come through the contribution of performing artistic and dance scholars.

Available Methods in Dance Research

It would be a crime against cultural heritage to simply decide to change or restructure dances as they occur in the different cultures of the country. This is why the discipline of research in dance approaches the study from different perspectives. Dance Anthropologist Anya Peterson Royce (1974 and 1977) suggests six general perspectives. They are: historical, comparative, functional, choreological, methodological and structural.

Viewed from the historical perspective dance is examined as it exists in time as historical events in the society. Dance scholars in Nigeria, with sound historical background, should embark on research work on the origins of some of the dance forms done over the years documenting them and making them available for scholarly studies.

Comparative study of dance examines the differences in dance movement cross-culturally. Dance researchers in this area have been mostly Westerners who have grossly misrepresented dance forms and kinetic styles of most African and Asian cultures. Invariably, they have concluded that there is a correlation between movement style and technology, and that because most of African and Asia are agricultural dance forms tend to be closer to the earth; and in most cases, the foot work, even when intricate digs into the ground. On the contrary, dances in the Western world with technological advancement, are said to take flight. While they categorize their dancers as "high" movers, Africans and Asians are categorized as "low" movers.

It would take more than the traditional dancers (most of whom are unaware of Western perception of their dance movement) to correct this notion. Nigerian dance scholars are natives of most of these dance cultures; a more accurate perception of the movement styles and structures will emerge in the area of comparative study of Nigerian dances. The resulting works in this area may become very useful for choreographers and theatrical dance performers.

Dance from the functional perspective examines the occurrence of dance in relation to the totality of the culture. Many cultural and social anthropologists have specialized in the area of Dance Anthropology believing that a study of the function of dance in a culture will promote a better understanding of a people, what they hold sacred, and their aesthetics. Scholars of dance function attempt to answer such questions as why people dance, how they dance, what they dance and where they dance for a better understanding of the culture. Although they are usually advocates of dance preservation, their findings can become the sources for more authentic dance performance on stage. Just as Akinsipe (2018) concludes "that dance as it occurs during rites of passage in the Yorubaland functions mainly as means of bringing the extended family together in the celebration of a happy or sad occasion".

Dance choreologists record and analyze dance cross-culturally through the analysis of recorded dances. this group of anthropologists believe that it is possible to divide humans into movement communities. Rudolf Laban defines choreology as research into the art of movement. Although he is recognized world-wide for his development of a notation system for movement (Labanotation), Laban's initial work was in the area of choreology (Thornton 1971). Most choreologists believe that while dance among humans is universal, humans move and belong to movement communities just as they speak and belong to speech community (Comstock 1974). Karen Blixer's work on the Ngoma (Ball dancing) of the Kikuyu tribe of Kenya takes the choreological approach when it describes the dance style, effort, time, and movement space atmosphere (see Lumley (ed.) 1976).

Some dance performing artists have used their knowledge in choreology, to advance creating dances using dance structures recorded as basis for creativity. The German Choreographer and technique developer, Mary Wigman, had studied under Laban, but had used her knowledge of choreology in developing a movement technique which explores the isolation of body parts to "stab" and "cut" into space, and as initiation for dance movement.

Since the first festival of arts in 1970, Nigeria as a nation has succeeded so far only in the area of choreology, but have not evolved a national dance culture incorporating the recorded dance forms. In fact, most of the research work in dance in Nigeria has concentrated on dance choreology. For example, many of Peggy Harpers work in dance research are focused on choreology.

Dance methodology is an area of study usually referred to as Dance Notation. This method of recording movement was pioneered in 1666, in France, the home of academic ballet, by Beuchamp. The French ballet, master Feuillet published dances written in Beuchamp's notation style around 1700 (Thornton 1971). Dance methodology is a very complicating area of dance study. Today, although several notation methods exist, Rudolf Laban is recognized as the innovator of Dance Notation.

Dance study from the structural perspective is the sixth area suggested by Royce (1974). This approach examines dance as a Performing Arts, Dance: From Participation to Spectacle. Richard Kraus (1969) contributing to Martins suggestion explains further that most dances were originally of the first type, meant to be performed as communal activity while the second type is considered to have descended from the first.

Dance in Nigeria has developed to this level whereby traditional or ethnic dances, having been taken from their village setting (where they are usually performed at communal rites), are now performed in areas of sports stadia, on stage, and on television. Several of the dances have even become part of national repertoire performed outside Nigeria. Some of them having been improved upon since they were first exhibited in 1970 have managed to retain their spectacular freshness.

The world famous ballet dance form did not start as a performer - spectator art. In its earliest history (the early 15th century), it started in Italy as a court folk dance performed by peasants for the pleasure of the nobility. It soon developed into a dance done by the nobility and in France, in the middle part of the 17th century, it really came to life in the court of the "Sun King" Louis XIV. By 1669, Louis XIV, who himself loved to do the ballet (ballet, meaning dance), established the French Dance Academy and became its first patron.

Today, ballet is in the forefront of dance as a performing art with a tradition of set kinetic vocabulary. Since the institution of academic ballet in the 17th century, it has gone through a lot of modifications as it spread through Europe and finally, towards the end of the 19th century, to America. The modifications have been done by the different lover-nations of the ballet. There are now ballet stances that are recognized as French, Russian, Italian or even American. Several national troupes in Europe have actually incorporated intricate ballet steps into the ethnic dances they tour with. The ballet, most certainly, owes its origin to the folk dances of European peasants (see Kraus 1969).

The first generation of American modern dancers: Lois Fuller, Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis, in rebellion against classical ballet, evolved dance movement styles using ethnic dance forms from the Greek, oriental and Egyptian culture as foundation for personal emotional expression and as tool for making social and political statements. The second generation modern dancers, like Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey, after studying under one of the first Ruth St. Denis, also created dances using movement vocabulary of other cultures. However, rather than dance like the Chinese, Japanese, Egyptian or Latin Americans do, they went a step further by creating forms and structural using certain other aspects of culture like religion and special hierarchy among others. This generation of dancers did something more; they evolved personal dance movement techniques, taught them to others, and created dance pieces, the kinetic execution of which employed the techniques they created.

At present, there are many American universities where dance is offered as a discipline in which the dance techniques are taught, analyzed and performed. Among the most popular are the Graham, Humphrey, Hawkins and Cunningham techniques. Over the years, although dancers still look at cultures outside of the United States for artistic inspiration, many are falling back on their own movement heritage for motivation. The younger generation modern dancers are incorporating Jazz, tap, ballet, ball room, rock'n roll and African dances and other motor arts like gymnastics and ice skating. Apart from the numerous universities and state colleges, there are many dance companies and dance studios all over the United States of America where lessons are offered in the different forms.

Up until the early twentieth century, the United States was an importer of dance from other Western countries. The story is quite different now. The late twentieth century is witness in an explosion of different dance forms developed and performed on stage. Today, the United States has some of the best Ballet companies in the world; is in the forefront in the area of modern dance, Jazz and musical Theatre.

Dance is enjoying the same popularity in other European countries, especially England, France and Russia, where it receives government patronage. Because of the great interest in these areas, dance artists face a lot of healthy competition. A dancer or dance company has to be extremely versatile in the different dance styles to survive. Martha Graham in the early days of development rebelled (like most of her predecessors) against the ballet tradition. As she matured in her art and other dancers came up, not only did she dance with ballet companies, she choreographed for them, created ballet pieces for her own company and received ballet refugees in her studio as students (see Martin 1963, Kraus 1969, McDonagh 1970, Cohen 1974, and Mazo 1977).

Evolving a Nigerian Movement Technique

Whereas the early American modern dancers had to look outside of the West for movement inspiration, the versatility of African dance put Nigeria in a better position for the creation of a modern dance form with a Nigerian flare. Many dances are still being exhibited in festivals of arts; many of them are recorded during the various religious festivals in the villages; the television industry has been a good source of folk and social dances, and students of the theatre are constantly falling back on age grade and vocational dances to complement drama. These are available sources for a collection of kinetic vocabulary in the various Nigerian dance forms.

In the early history of Nigerian theatre, Hubert Ogunde used dance as the opening glee. The Rumba, a dance of Latin American origin, was first performed on stage by the Ogunde theatre. Ogunde, like most other theatre groups, still uses dance in his productions. His company has presented dance on an international level on several occasions. In fact, he has helped to organized a dance troupe to represent Nigeria on a few occasions (Clerk 1979). Apart from theatre companies, Nigerian early music artists have used dance to boost their performances. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Sunny Ade and Balla Miller to name a few, are among music artists that have experimented with dancing girls. Sunny Okosun, the Lijadu Sisters, and Orlando Julius, among others began the area of Music video, a new development in music entertainment which uses dance movement on a grand scale. Today, many music videos come up with unique dances that go viral as soon as they are released. They include *Galala* dance of Daddy Showkey, Olu. Maintain's *Atlanta*, Davido's *Skelewu*, Lil Kesh's *Shoki* and Zlatan Ibile's *Zanku*/Leg work to mention few.

Despite these developments, however, no theatre company exists exclusively as a Dance company. The reason for this may be related to the absence of a dance form that incorporates kinetic styles from the various ethnic groups. What separates the dance participant in the village from the dance performing artist on stage is the technical training of the latter. Because dance as an art form makes use of the human body, the student is trained to develop kinesthetic awareness through an understanding of Human Anatomy and Kinesiology. The trained artist can thus take

common Nigerian traditional dance steps and develop them into more elaborate and complex steps.

A sound training in Movement technique leads to a better manipulation of body lines and curves, skeletal and muscular control, and variations in movement/velocity. By improvising with movement combinations, the student soon learns the ropes in dance choreography using the different movement textures the variety of local dances provide. The better choreographer is one who is aware of the world around him which contributes to the totality of the cultures these dance steps belong: the weather, history, natural phenomena, religion, music, occupations, political organization and national rhythm, and even noise.

While it is true that he will be performing in an African environment, the successful Nigerian dance artist may need to acquire a prolific knowledge of western dance techniques, which if artistically manipulated, will emerge as a unique Nigerian dance form. The knowledge in Western movement techniques is necessary not so it could provide dance movement vocabulary (we have much more than we can ever exhaust), but because dance as a performing art has a much longer history there are as such, has developed tremendously emphasizing an awareness in body alignment and injury prevention. Many of the Nigerian dances are very strenuous and complicating. Without proper training in body alignment and kinesthetic awareness, a beginning dancer may hurt himself or develop very serious skeletal or muscular problems over a period of time.

Besides, music artists have blended western techniques with African methods and have been very successful. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti enjoys international success because his African Beat sound emerged from his strong Western Jazz training. Victor Uwaifo, Sunny Ade, Sunny Okosun and a host of others are doing wonders with the guitar and electric organ. Balla Miller has taken various Hausa and Fulani tunes and turned them into music pieces appreciated by all cultures in Nigeria. Tunji Oyelana is doing the same thing with Yoruba tunes. To achieve this excellence in dance, dance artists and choreographers have to be versatile in their training. By creating dances from collected movement varieties and other cultural phenomena like folklore, music, wrestling, the variety of natural landscape and vegetation, dance may become a medium of communication among the different culture and subcultures thereby promoting national integration and unity, the purpose for which the festival of arts and culture was established in the first place.

The Nigerian University system is already including dance in some of its programmes. The University of Ife's Department of Dramatic Arts offers dance on the certificate and Diploma levels. Dance features prominently in the department of Theatre Arts at the University of Ibadan. In the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria dance is a part of the department of African Studies. University of Calabar has included dance as one of the supporting arts of the theatre, including music. In the University of Ilorin, dance is taught as a discipline on the same level of importance as music and drama. The biggest problem student of dance face in the University is the gross ignorance of the potential of the human body for movement. Ugolo (cited in Abbey 2015) concurs that:

...one of the problems of dance pedagogy in Nigeria is lack of technique that will provide a basis for movement creation in the dance choreography... for Nigerian dance tradition,

composition and choreography to blossom there has to be a scholarly approach to researching, documenting and testing of the developed techniques

Coupled with this is the total absence of dance in the school curriculum in the primary or secondary school levels. In most Western countries, music and dance are taught in the elementary and secondary school levels thereby giving those students who opt for the dance discipline a true knowledge of the field they are coming into. Most students of dance in Nigeria get to dance classes through an accident. Many of them had registered to study Theatre/Performing Arts, not realizing that Theatre/ Performing Arts is more than Drama. There needs to be a campaign to promote the existence of dance as a performing art outside of the village setting. That campaign must begin with us, the dance performing artists.

Conclusion

Dance in Nigeria was previously categorized into social, traditional or cultural. Since the institution of the Festival of Arts and Culture in the 1970 post civil war era, traditional dance forms, previously performed on religious and communal festivals began to feature as cultural dances. Over a decade after, these dances are still being performed exhibited with little or no changes.

While the Festival of Arts was started as a means of promoting national unity among various ethnic group in Nigeria, it has not yet begun to fulfill this function. It will appear that the fulfillment of this function will depend on the institution of a common Nigerian dance form incorporating movement vocabulary collection from the different ethnic groups. Because of the riches in the dance cultures of Nigeria, it is possible to achieve this goal through technical training in the movement techniques of the various dance forms.

Dance is now being taught in several of the National Universities Dance as a performing art will have to be introduced from the elementary and secondary school levels so as to promote an awareness of the kinetic potentials of the human body in readiness for professional dance training on the university level. There is a need for technical training in Ballet and Western Modern dance techniques, because they emphasize body alignment and kinesthetic awareness. This is needed to prepare the dance student for strenuous complicating Nigerian dance movement. Training in this area will also have the same effect western music techniques have on the Nigerian music performing industry today.

There needs to be collaboration between the centre for cultural studies, the states' Arts Councils and the Universities in instituting a sound training in Nigerian dance movement towards the evolution of a Nigerian National dance form.

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