

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

### ALL FOR WAR?<sup>1</sup>

(A dance adaptation of Bakare Ojo Rasaki's *Drums of War*)

KEHINDE ADEDAMOLA OLALUSI

#### DANCERS

King

Queen Otubu

Prince Orighoye

Jeje

Gbeje

Osifo

Haruna

Beleku

Akogun (chief warrior)

Women/mourners

Abakpa warriors

Ibuji warriors

Abakpa god

Ibuji god

Dancers

Drummers

#### MOVEMENT ONE

Warriors dance in with different kinds of instruments, they position themselves in different stage directions as they sharpen the instruments in synchronized dance movements, Akogun the leader of the warriors dance around to inspect as he occasionally make corrections on





the sharpening. Later, he blows his whistle to signify time for training, the warriors pick their instruments and fight in different choreographies, Akogun blows his whistle again as they drop their instruments to begin physical combat, they also do some strategic formations of battle in dance and choreography.

King Onome and his little boy (Orighoye) who is dressed like a warrior, dance to the training ground. Akogun beckons on Orighoye and place him among the warriors. The King dances around in happiness and contentment till he is positioned at centre stage centre. The king is satisfied with the training process, he dances in. Soon after, Akogun blows his whistle and dance in with Orighoye, as the warriors pack the instruments in.

## MOVEMENT TWO

A group of Orighoye's friends dance in to play with Orighoye, Orighoye join them in the play and dances. As they play, one of the friends mistakenly steps on him, he is angry and he beats him up as other friends try to separate them. The queen dances in hurriedly to separate them and draw Orighoye's ears as they dance in. The friends help the beaten friend as they dance out of the stage.



130

## MOVEMENT THREE

Abakpa warriors rush into the stage with different dance movements and war songs. They do different dances in different patterns. Soon, the women dance in with a plea song to appeal to the warriors not to go to war, Queen Otubu dance in with Nigerian flags which she distributes to the warriors as they sing a unity song. Akogun is convinced, he drops his weapon and greets the queen, and he then blows his whistle as they all dance out singing the unity song.

## MOVEMENT FOUR

It is the ten years anniversary of king Onome, Villagers dance in with a celebrative song, different dancers follow with their unique dances, then the chief's dance in with the king, his wife and only son. The groups of dancers take turn to entertain the king; an Igbo masquerade caps it up with scintillating acrobatic dance movements. Akogun dances in and towards the king as he relinquishes his authority and weapon, the king rise in anger and orders the guards to tie him and take him inside, Beleku rises and dance to the king in objection, he points at the king derogatively, the king strikes him and beckons on the guards who take him out and return with his head.

131



The king then picks Akogun's symbol of authority and approach the chief's one after the other, each of them rejects the offer, the king moves to Orighoye to give him the symbol of authority. Orighoye is delighted, he charges to downstage left and down stage right while the queen kneels close to the king in tears, the guards dance forward to take her in, then Orighoye kneels as the king cloths him in Akogun's war cloth. As the villagers and the chiefs dance out, Orighoye and the king dance in.

#### MOVEMENT FIVE

Ibuji warriors dance in and to the stage left which is the shrine where the god of their land is, it is a tree (to be constructed) from which the god dance out and bless them, he places a sacred bead on each of them as a powerful weapon and spiritual guide as they go to war. He dances back into the tree, the warriors do a dance that signifies that they have been vested with powers, and they try charms on themselves to show the solidity of the powers, they nod to ascertain the effectiveness of the power and dance out.

Immediately, the Abakpa warriors led by Orighoye dance in energetically to the stage right where the shrine of the god they worship is located, it is a rock from which

the god dances out to bless them and as he emerge from the rock, an effect of fire and smoke accompany him. The god touches all of them as he dance round them and then bestow on Orighoye a sacred short apron which has been decorated with cowries and charms. Orighoye tests the effectiveness of the apron on a warrior who immediately begin to roll on the floor, the god then revive the warrior and dance back into the rock. They do an energetic dance and carry Orighoye as they dance out.

#### MOVEMENT SIX

People from different angle rush in and out of the stage as the light flickers amidst songs and drums of war. There is blood all over some of the victims, there is a reflection of smoke and fire back stage to signify burnings, an Ibuji warrior dance on stage as he drags a dead man across the wings of the flats, an Abakpa warrior carries an Ibuji warrior from the isle to the stage and all other warriors of Abakpa and Ibuji rush to the stage and begin to fight in different ways and at different positions.

Orighoye dances in with blood on his hands and weapon, he is confronted by the chief warrior of ibuji and they engage in a fight. Orighoye takes the lead in the fight but the Ibuji chief warrior is strong and resilient, Orighoye tries to kill him but he fails at every attempt, once the Ibuji chief warrior regain some strength, Orighoye is no match





for him again, he strikes him down with the sacred bead and then pierce a sword into his stomach.

*[Ibuji warriors shout, sing and dance for the victory and they exit the stage].*

## MOVEMENT SEVEN

The king and the chief's dance out of the palace, the guards follow. Each chief is holding a bag of money, and as the king sits, they do a dance. Before they end the dance, some villagers shout and wail as they register their complain. One comes with bad harvest from the farm, another come in with a convulsing child, others with different problems. The king is not happy, a chief moves to them to console them and immediately, a dirge rents the air as villagers accompany dead bodies to the stage.

The dead bodies are placed at the upstage centre with Orighoye in the centre, the queen is apprehensive and she moves close to the dead bodies, she opens each one in fear and when she opens the one in the centre and it is Orighoye's dead body, she shouts and rush inside, the king is broken to see his only son dead, soon a shout is heard from back stage and a maid brings a knife with blood all over in tears. The Chiefs gather to discuss and afterwards a song is raised and the king is de-robbd and sent out of the village in a choreographed dance.

*[A song against war is raised to end the dance].*

1. Reworked version of PFA 499 Production of 2004/2005 session

## Section CURTAIN CALL.

### SONGS

- 1  
Ogbo ogwu mamunedo  
Ibuji enola wa mamunedo  
Ogbo ogwu mamunedo  
*(A war song in Igala)*  
It is in the war front  
we know who is strong
- 2  
Eju mudo kpa koko  
Aja mo maye ge  
*(A war song in Igala)*  
The eye is red  
we know no friend
- 3  
Enu paripa enumarima enu  
Enusemanima-  
Enu paripa enumarima enu  
Eye re ani yeye  
Enuparipa enumarima enu  
*(A war song in Ebira)*  
This is a yam that  
has not been seen before  
what specie of yam is this
- 4  
Lumana yee (2ce)  
Ba muso yaki  
Lumana mukesu  
Lumana yee ee  
Lumana mukesu (2ce)  
Lumana mukesu  
*(a peace song in Hausa)*  
Peace  
we want no war  
peace is what we want  
peace  
we want no war
- 5  
Nigeria cho okete kane oo (2ce)  
Uwe hausa uwe idoma  
we have only one Nigeria  
(2ce)  
no matter your tribe and  
tongue  
Nigeria is only one
- 6  
Dagba kechi igbo kpa Yoruba  
Nigeria oh eh  
Nigeria cho okete kane  
*(a song in Igala)*  
Nigeria kan loni wa o(2ce)  
Hausa ni e tabi igbo  
Yoruba ni e tabi idoma  
Nigeria kan eh  
Nigeria kan loni wa