

UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN



THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTH (208TH) INAUGURAL LECTURE

DANCE IS LIFE, LIFE IS DANCE: A CYCLICAL NATURE OF MAN ON EARTH

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE PERFORMING ARTS,
FACULTY OF ARTS,
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Heads of Departments (particularly Head of the Performing Arts Department),
Members of Staff (Academic and Non – Academic especially those from PFA),
My Family members (both Nuclear and Extended),
My Kinsmen from the Source of Civilization and Cradle of the Yoruba Race (Ile - Ife, Okeigbo and Ifetedo),
Distinguished members of my Professional Bodies (SONTA, ADSPON, CID – UNESCO, NBA, IBA and others),
My amiable students of this citadel of learning (current and former) particularly those in the Performing Arts, other institutions within and outside Nigeria,
Members congregating this Audience (here present and those attending virtually),
Gentlemen of the Press,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Prelude

Mr. Vice - Chancellor Sir, today is indeed a remarkable one in the global dance space and annals. I feel greatly honored to be given the opportunity to share with you this evening, aspects of my engagements with Dance Studies and Practice over the years. There could not have been a better time, place and occasion than now, before this great audience at the 'Better By Far' University - the University of Ilorin – and on the occasion of her Two hundred and Eighth Inaugural Lecture that global attention is diverted physically and virtually to an aspect of us, a significant part of our rich culture, tradition, heritage, pride and indeed a universal language, 'Dance'.

My involvement or entanglement with Dance, I dare say, is accidental and providential. My case is that of an observer turned participant. I had my debut as a barely four and half year old toddler. It was at an event where my late father's performing troupe was invited. My curiosity to see or understand that 'language of the drum' at that dancing arena led me to the real 'dance theatre' from the sidelines where I was placed to sit quietly and watch the dance. Instinctively, the little boy innocently strolled in, jumping up and down to the rhythm of the 'Dundun' drums as professionally played by the duo of Baba Sowumi and Sobade Adedapo from Ifetedo (both of blessed memories). Alas, this act of the little boy was received with mixed feelings: shock, surprise, excitement, reservations, acceptance and even condemnation. This is not unexpected because as at that time in history, dance was seen as 'ise alagbe' – craft of and for beggars. Now, for a four and half year old to 'throw his hat; in the dance ring (when he should be preparing to go to school) was unheard of and perceived as a misnomer and patently abnormal. However, that occasion was my launch pad into a career that brought you all here today. I had my induction that day and was 'on – boarded' immediately into the Ojuade and His Performing Troupe.

My father, Late Alhaji Fatai Oladosu Adisa Ojuade, confessed in a discussion with me years later that my 'gamble'

of that day paid off handsomely because it became a potent strategy for ‘money making’ thus making ‘Dance part of his Life’. Why? Performance Proceeds tripled when benchmarked against earlier performances where I did not feature. It turned out to be a stellar performance which laid the foundation and opened up several other dance engagements and opportunities across regional, national and global spectra.

Suffice to say at this juncture that a foundational approach to dance culture as reflected in numerous ethnic dance escapades of the Yorubas (through the medium of ‘Gese’ and ‘Bata’) metamorphosed into a tri-cyclic and tri-podal phenomena of Teaching, Research and Community Development or Service to Humanity. This we shall see in the course of this ‘short’ interactive session.

Introduction

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir and Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I thought this Theme - Dance Is Life, Life Is Dance: A Cyclical Nature Of Man On Earth could be better told or showcased through ‘movements’ because Dance is voiceless, and operates functionally as “non verbal but practical communication art”, but academic tradition permits no such. I am compelled to present to colleagues, the campus community and the general public my works – past, present and future direction in teaching, learning and research within the Dance sub set of Performing Arts. And this I am excited to do.

My Presentation today is a double edged sword and I stand to be the link cord between ‘town’ and ‘ gown’ representing both of the dance worlds of a practitioner and an academic. It is gratifying to note that my participation in active dance could be traced back to Ile - Ife (the Source of Mankind, Centre of the Universe and the Origin of Civilization from where it diffused to other parts of the globe.)

Ife Ooye (x3)
Olori aaye gbogbo.

Ife the living (x3)
The supreme head of the universe.

Ile - Ife, also known as Ife, is an ancient city in the southwestern part of Nigeria, at present, a part of Osun State. Ile - Ife is said to date back to around 500 B.C, when it was founded and is the oldest Yoruba city. A city located at the centre of the universe, where the gods descended to the earth.

Hence, we can see the preponderance of Ile - Ife in the cycle of life especially within the context of the African Traditional and Religious belief system. A cursory excursion into Ifa Mythology, theology and Corpus lends credence to this assertion.

For me, Ori Olokun centre located at Arubiidi area in Ile – Ife, exerted a significant influence on me. It was a rendezvous for both the practitioners and those in the academia for collaborative research exercises and performances in the days of yore. I was a regular face there accompanying my father, occasionally, on performances, workshops, training tours etc. This afforded me the privilege of meeting and mingling with great minds, highly revered Professors, eminent scholars, culture promoters, practitioners of repute and emerging leaders of our various communities from diverse ethnic backgrounds and nationalities across the global spectrum under a convivial atmosphere of discussions and ideas exchanges on propagation and development of culture and traditions.

My dance expedition and experience horizons got wider afterwards. It became part of my learning curve which proved handy in all my life endeavors. Nostalgically, I could draw an example of a particular poem I composed for our end of year activities during my primary education (Pry. II) at the Ansar - Ud - Deen Primary School, Okeigbo (in present Ile - Oluji / Okeigbo

Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria) in the mid 70's where my Mum was a teacher.

F'ada g'era wo
Ki o to g'egi ni igbo
Fi kumo dan'ra wo
Ki o to na eranko
J'awe opoto k'o r'rija eerun
J'awe b'onu ki o ri ise odi
Ohun o fe ni ki o f'emi fe
Ohun o o fe, ma fi l'omi wo
Gbo'do ru
Ki n gbalapa ru o
Gun mi l'odo
Ki n lo o l'olo.

Attempt using a cutlass to cut yourself
Before cutting a tree in the forest
Attempt flogging yourself with a big whip
Before flogging an animal
Pick 'opoto' leave and experience the wrath of 'eerun'
Put leave in your mouth and see the other side of a deaf
Wish me what you would wish yourself
What you would not want, do not try it on me
Put mortal on my head
And I will help you to put a heavy load on you
Pound me with pestle and mortal, and
I will grind you.

Inaugural Lectures in the Performing Arts

In continuation of the cycle on earth, I was led to the academic world in phases (which at a point during this lecture, I will discuss). My area of interest in Performance Arts is Dance Studies and Practice, and with special emphasis on Bata and Dundun culture of the Yorubas.

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, permit me to pay homage to the initiators of this academic tradition and custom of giving

inaugural lectures by newly appointed Professors. It is an occasion of significance in an academic staff member's career. This lecture is the sixth from the Department of the Performing Arts. I am proud to follow in the tradition and line of erudite scholars like Professor Zulu Sofola who gave the maiden inaugural lecture in this department on 28th March 1991. Professors Ayobami Olubunmi Akinwale, Akanji Nasiru, AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye and Solomon O. Ikibe have followed the tradition of excellence by delivering at various times, insightful and thought provoking and academically challenging and ground breaking masterpieces. I am glad to stand on the shoulders of these great academics even as I present today. I wholly align with their culture and character of excellence.

My regret, however, is that two among them have gone to be with their maker. To Professors Zulu Sofola and Ayo Akinwale, shall we observe a minute's silence in their honour. May their souls rest in peace.

It is gratifying that I had the opportunity to be present and to listen with rapt attention to all my predecessors as they delivered their inaugural lectures. As fate would have it, I am here as the youngest of all giving the 208th in the series of the University of Ilorin inaugural lectures; the sixth from the Department of the Performing Arts and the very first in the area of Dance Studies and Practice in this University, if not the first of its kind in this country.

Genealogical Background

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, I seek your indulgence to review very briefly, my genealogy as the Yorubas say, notwithstanding the length of a rope it must have source or a beginning.

The life of every man on this planet earth is structured within a cycle, which must have a beginning, middle and eventual end, irrespective of his greatness or power. This is apt in capturing the life and the ultimate end of that great patriarch

and progenitor of the Ojuades, that patriotic son of Ile - Ife, Balogun Ojuade. William Shakespeare seemingly had him in mind when he wrote these lines in one of his books:

Cowards die many times before their deaths, the valiant never taste of death but once. Of all the wonders that I yet have heard it seems to me most strange that man should fear but seeing that death is a necessary end, it will come when it will come.

Balogun Ojuade was a blue - blood. Legend has it that he was born at Ogbon - Ido, Ile - Ife. His father's name was Mosusijopeyokun, the son of Ejesi Ogbon - Ido, a popular herbalist while his mother, Adebimpe Olajokun, a princess, was a direct descendant of the Agbedegbede dynasty, in Moore, Ile - Ife. Princess Adebimpe Olajokun was a popular, famous and wealthy trader during her time.

Balogun Ojuade was a selfless, patriotic and astute warlord of his era, For his valour and war exploits, he was rewarded with the chieftaincy title of 'Balogun' (a war chieftain). History has it that Kabiyesi Kurumbusu was the incumbent Ooni when Balogun Ojuade was born.

Ooni Kurumbusu was so elated when the young Ojuade was born because the princess had a delay in child bearing. Eventually when she gave birth, Ooni exclaimed that:

Haaa

L'ujuade mi yii lo bimo!

(So

You gave birth in the face of the crown).

That was how the young man got the name 'Ojuade'. In Kabiyesi's characteristic manner, he cut out a large portion of royal farmland and bequeathed as a gift to his grandson, Balogun Ojuade, with a curse on anyone that attempted to collect the land from him among his male descendants. Similar portion of this farmland were given to other grandsons of Ooni Kurumbusu.

Arowohe, Obaloran, Orunto Aga and Luobe; shared boundaries among themselves. The baby Ojuade grew up to become a brave warrior and eventually became the war commander during the reign of Ooni Olubuse 1. The patriotic efforts of Balogun Ojuade came to limelight for being honest, loyal and hardworking.

His efforts to defend the Ife territorial integrity during the era of intra - Yoruba warfare and skirmishes were second to none, hence the appellation; ‘Ojuade Baba-lo-gun’. These attributes and other leadership qualities of Balogun Ojuade encouraged Ooni Olubuse 1 to entrust and assign to him many vital duties. One of the major tasks was the monitoring and supervision of the construction of the major road that linked Ile - Ife with Ibadan. It was after he successfully carried out the assignment that Ooni Olubuse 1 rewarded him with the title of Asipa.

Due to his previous antecedents and proven and verifiable track record of performance, Ooni Olubuse 1 named him as a member of the boundary determination and demarcation committee assigned to define boundary lines between the Ijebus on one hand and the Ondos on the other side to prevent encroachment on Ife land and territory. Asipa Ojuade (as he then was), discharged his duties with absolute honesty, total dedication, selflessness and open heartedness. The pillars used in the construction of the demarcation are said to still be in existence till today.

His previous sterling performances, patriotism, honesty among others endeared him to the people. Ooni Olubuse 1 elevated him as the Balogun of Ife. Not too long after, Ooni Olubuse 1 joined his ancestors and was succeeded by Ooni Ajagun Ademiluyi. Ooni Ademiluyi duly recognized him as the Balogun of Ife. Ojuade’s fame became more pronounced when an English white man by the name Captain Ross visited Ile - Ife and commended Balogun Ojuade highly for his achievement on behalf of Ile - Ife. In order to show appreciation for his selflessness, Captain Ross gave him some gift of minerals to

decorate his horse. The visit of Captain Ross increased the love and respect to Balogun Ojuade.

With increased fame, honour and recognition came concomitant ill-wind of envy, jealousy, treachery and betrayal. It did not take long before he fell out with powers that be. He was eventually assassinated in a night operation with the active connivance of insiders. Investigations into the assassination by the colonialists found a certain prince culpable. The prince was subsequently sentenced.

In addition to Balogun Ojuade's war escapades, he mastermind the construction of a bunker at Orile-owu during the Owu wars where warriors from other cells within the Ife confederate army usually hide and sometimes launch attack on enemies. Balogun Ojuade, the great son of Ile - Ife left a treasured memory in these areas:

- (1) Opening up of roads linking Ile - Ife with Ibadan
- (2) Erecting pillars (Owon) to demarcate Ile - Ife from Ondo and Ijebu territories
- (3) Rejection of the second coming of the Modakekes to avoid incessant communal killings.

Okeigbo and Ifetedo Connections

Sanni Anamonilekewu (the one who whips pupils in koranic classes) shortened as 'Anamo', the second son of Balogun Ojuade was married to Ayisat from the Ologbenla ruling house in Ile - Ife. Ayisat Ojuade had an elder sister named Ekundore and they were both business women of repute in their days. Ekundore had no child from her marriage. So, she and her younger sister Ayisat nurtured and catered for Ayisat's two boys Saka Ojuade and Hussein Ojuade (popularly known as Oseni Ayilara Okero, my own grand-father). The bond between the two sisters was so strong that outsiders never knew who truly the biological mother of the two boys was.

In the early 20th century, there was a family feud amongst Sanni Anamo Ojuade's wives. The intensity and the seriousness of the crisis led the parent of Ayisat Ojuade to

request from Sanni Anamo Ojuade the permission of their daughter to come to Okeigbo to douse the existing tension. Some warriors among the Ologbenla ruling family had settled in Okeigbo after helping the Ondo's in a war against the Ikale. The then Ooni was advised not to allow the warriors including those warriors from Ologbenla ruling house who had gone to support the Ekins (Ondo) come back to Ile - Ife for fear of deposing the Ooni. The warriors then settled in Okeigbo. Ayisat Ojuade's father was among the warriors. So, Ayisat Ojuade and her sister took along the two sons to Okeigbo where they all lived till 1930.

Before Ooni Aderemi ascended the throne in 1930, there was a serious agitation against the heavy taxation of the regime before its own. However, one of the promises he made was the lessening of the tax burden if he became Oba and true to his words, Ooni Aderemi kept his promise. He fulfilled his promise by refunding part of the exhorbitant tax to Okeigbo community. Unfortunately, by the time his emissaries brought the money, some of the people had gone to farm at Okeodo, the name the present Ifetedo was called then. So when they arrived from the farm and they were given the news of the Ooni's kind gesture they were very happy and then demanded for their own share. But the whole money had been shared by those who were at home and they refused to make any refund for those who went to farm. In reaction to that, those who felt cheated decided to migrate to the other side of the river Oni to Okeodo and renamed it to Ifetedo, meaning 'a town founded with love'. Amongst the business people who migrated were Ayisat Ojuade and her sister Ekundore together with the children now men (Saka and Hussein). Saka and Hussein later became very influential and wealthy business men in Ifetedo with many farms and dealing in cocoa and other farm produce.

Ayisat Ojuade had her properties (land and houses) in Okeigbo. So, she and her sister went back to Okeigbo after staying for a few years. They took charge of caring for the eldest four grand children in Okeigbo. Hussein being a successful

businessman had a large polygamous family. Among his children was Fatai Oladosu, my own father. May Allah bless their memories for they have all departed to the great beyond.

My Walk and Work in the World of Dance

As earlier stated, I started dancing at about four and half years old. My father, Alhaji Fatai Oladosu Ojuade was a teacher at Okeigbo / Ifetedo Grammar School, where he taught Yoruba, History, Literature. He was involved in cultural activities and even formed a cultural group for the school aside his own dance troupe. He taught with the likes of Baba Enoch Adeboye (the General Overseer of Redeem Christian Church of God), Baba Colonel Rufus Ogundele, Baba Oludapo, Mr. Akinfesola and others. I followed him to virtually all the engagements ranging from house warming, chieftaincy conferment, demonstrative lectures, workshops, festivals, competitions and several other events. Also, I took active parts in dance activities while in the primary school alongside my sisters (Mrs Bashirat Folashade Muktar – Itai, Mrs Fausat Abiodun Ojudun) and my elder brother, Wajeed Ayodeji Ojuade - ours was a complete family troupe. It afforded us the platform to take part in series of dance competitions at the local levels where we won laurels.

Our troupe became so popular within the communities of Okeigbo, Ifetedo, Ile - Ife Osogbo, Ibadan, Akure, Ijeshaland and Ekiti. While our Dad played host to itinerant stage drama performers like Ishola Ogunsola (I-show pepper), Oyin Adejobi, Duro Ladipo, Funmilayo Ranco, Moses Olaiya (Baba Sala) and host of others. Our family troupe partook in some of the dance activities of that at time:

- (i) Representation of the Western Region of Nigeria at the National Festival of Arts and Culture, Lagos in 1970.
- (ii) Representation of the Western Region of Nigeria at the National Festival of Arts and Culture, Ibadan in 1971.
- (iii) Took part in a play ‘Ogun Onire’ at the then University of Ife in 1972.

- (iv) Took part in a dance drama to mark the 10th anniversary of the University of Ife, Ile - Ife.
- (v) Featured as a guest artiste in 'Gese Dance' on Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) and Western Nigeria Broadcasting Services (WNBS), Ibadan in 1976.
- (vi) Took part in a re – play of 'Ogun Onire', as a special guest at the University of Lagos in 1977.
- (vii) Took part in the Black Festival of Arts and Culture in 1977.
- (viii) Took part in a performance, 'Unity in diversity', a programme of selected Nigerian Dances at the National Theatre Main Hall, Iganmu, Lagos on 18th October, 1980.
- (ix) Took part in a command performance for the President and Commander – in – Chief of Armed Forces, Alhaji Aliyu Shehu Shagari at the Liberty Stadium, Ibadan on 18th November, 1980.
- (x) Took part in a command performance for the 21st Regular meeting of the then twelve progressive Governors in Nigeria at Enugu between 26th – 28th March, 1982.
- (xi) Took part in command performance for the President, General I. B. Babangida during his visit to Oyo State in August, 1991.
- (xii) Took part in the 2008 Ife International Festival of Arts at Institute of African Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile – Ife.

In the late 1970's, our Dad was transferred to Iwoye Ijesa to go and start a new school called Iwoye Ijesa Grammar School in Osun State. He propagated dance and theatre into this community and ensure that the school became known as the best in Ife / Ijesa zone. As part of his experiments, I played lead roles in different historical performances that he wrote which include; 'Oranfe', 'Obatala', 'Ogun Onire', 'Aje' and others. However in 1982, he requested to be transferred back to Ayanbeku Memorial

Grammar School in Ifetedo, where he further engaged the pupil in the propagation of our dance culture. He created a 'brand' out of Bata and Dundun among his people and enthusiasts. Branding, which Awodiya (2016) referred to as 'means to coordinate and package our culture like a product to make it appeal to our people who will appreciate it first before we ship it abroad for consumption by foreigners who will buy it'(25).

It was in 1982 while enjoying my usual holiday with my 'big' Aunty and the husband in Lagos, Prince and Mrs Albert Awofisayo, that my father came with the greatest news ever. He said we were to travel to represent Nigeria at the XII Commonwealth Games and Warana Festival in Brisbane, Australia. We were at the National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos for about three weeks rehearsing the dance theatre titled 'The Marriage of Princess Sidibe', scenario written and directed by Edith Uche Enem and the music was directed by Professor Akin Euba. I was the youngest in the troupe and that gave me the privilege of having close contact with the Queen of England and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh at the opening ceremony in Brisbane.

In 1983, another invitation came for a performance tour of the Federal Republic of South Korea (a cultural exchange visit), where we toured and performed in the cities of Kwangju, Pusan and Seoul. I got so entangled in these dance activities that it became worrisome for my Mum because of my education. She wanted me to pitch tent with career in the Legal profession rather than dancing while my father held on tenaciously that I followed the part of theatre.

The foggy situation got cleared when my Uncle, Saliu Olaolu Bello, an epitome of Islam and piety (of blessed memory), invited me over to Ilorin to see how i can secure a space having applied to study Performing Arts at the University of Ilorin in 1988. Unfortunately, the then Dean, Faculty of Arts, Professor Oludare Olajubu (The Sokoti of Ilare) who happens to be my fathers bosom friend told me that I was short of one mark to meet the cut off for Performing Arts. Rather than wasting

another year, Bro. Aliu Badmus stepped in and linked me up with Mr. D .F O. Abidoye at the then Kwara State College of Technology to assist in getting the Interim Joint Matriculation Board Examination (IJMB) form for Advanced Levels. I was able to get it and in 1990, I gained direct entry admission into the Performing Arts to join my new ‘family members’, ‘The prestigious class of 93’ (PASA).

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, I tried my best in hiding my ‘street dancing’ identity all through! Why? I realized that there was the need to concentrate on the scholarship aspect of the dance rather than the earlier posture. I tried to avoid distractions and acquire more knowledge academically. Though, Mama Sofola, Professors Akinwale, Nasiru and Oyewo knew my antecedents. I opted to major in Drama during my first degree and had exposure to ‘total theatre’, where dance was used as a support to stage productions whether it is traditional, modern or post modern dance. The training gave us the opportunity to blend the traditional dance steps with the modern oriented ones and western choreographies as well under the tutorship of Professor Chris Ugolo.

After graduation and completion of the mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) at the Ministry of Information, Secretariat, Ibadan, Oyo State, I proceeded to the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, for my Masters programme and PhD in Dance Studies and Practice. I need to express my gratitude to the Late Professor Zulu Sofola who encouraged me to explore other areas of the arts. In fact, she was instrumental to my majoring in Drama in the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin and signed my reference forms to study Dance at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan where I had the privilege of being taught by Dr Fidelma Okwesa and Professor Oladele Layiwola (who supervised my PhD). My research topic at Master’s level was ‘The Secularization of Bata Dance in Southwestern Nigeria: A Study of some Bata Dance and Theatre Groups’. The main thrust of the thesis is to unravel the mysteries surrounding the ‘Bata’ culture, bringing it out of its

enclave, the corridors of the 'gods' or rituals (the worship of Yoruba gods and the masquerade "egungun" tradition, for the general populace or increasing participation. Bata as a secular art form with wider application outside religious / ritual context as expressed by the Alarinjo Travelling Theatre (2002). The major aim and achievement of this study was to put Bata Dance within the reach of every enthusiast and would - be performer. The research covered ample examples of some Bata music ensemble and dance types.

The academic circle created an inroad for a better exposure to dance scholarship within the confine of teaching, research and community services. Aside teaching of dance courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, engagement in research activities assisted the students and would - be dancers as well. Prior exposure to dance and the experiences of research informed my middle way approach of bridging the gap between 'town' and 'gown'.

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, my first regularization exercise (interview) was one that will continue to linger in my memory. We had a long wait and filling in as arranged by the Registry. I remember when I was called in to meet the panel headed by the then Vice - Chancellor, Professor Shuaib Oba AbdulRaheem and I was told to introduce myself. After that, my file was scanned through to see the documents therein and Mrs Ololade from the registry looked at me and said 'what is in dance that you went to study? Professor Oba cuts in to say 'Now, I am back home to my comfort zone. All those previously interviewed in the Sciences, Engineering, Medicine sound strange to me but this is the literary world...'. The encounter of that day at the University of Ilorin further strengthened and propelled me. Despite my other degrees in Law (LL.B & LL.M) and Business Administration (MBA), I remained in performance circle, creating a nest in Dance Studies and Practice.

In doing this, i identified three major problems endangering culture preservation and growth in Nigeria, which are lack of documentation (historically and through archival

storage), research support and the impending stigma attached to the profession and the practitioners. My background had nullified the 'feelings' of such stigma and many thank to my father...He trained us 'not to listen to the oozing noises from the market but to be focused and get what brought you into such market in peace'. As a young lecturer and researcher, i got engaged in series of activities bothering on teaching, research, performances within and outside Nigeria. Out of my meager salary, I enlisted in professional membership in local, national and international bodies. This is to facilitate platforms for the exchange of ideas on Dance culture and practices. I got engaged in sensitization programmes on the radio, television and newspaper talking and writing about dance (Bata and Dundun). I facilitated lecture series and workshops, performances and discussions between and among experts, scholars and practitioners as well as my students for better comprehension and understanding of the arts of dance.

I invited over to the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, Professor David Whitton in 2009 (who was the Secretary General of the International Federation for Theatre Research FIRT/IFTR) from Lancaster University, United Kingdom, where he gave a Faculty lecture titled 'Lifting the Curse of Barbel. Language Identity and at a theatre in a Post-colonial Global Context" After the faculty lecture, he had workshops and discussions with the students of the Performing Arts Department. In similar vein, I facilitated a workshop / training and performance by the famous itinerant Ayanagalu International Group from Erin Osun, Osun State, Nigeria and many others. These workshops and trainings further exposed our students and staff to Music and Dance tradition. It was at the peak of building my career in the academic that death struck and took away a dear sister and mother, who was instrumental to my plans, Mrs Faoziyat Lola Kehinde Ali (May Allah SWT be pleased with her and grant her aljannah fridaous).

Dance is Life and Life is Dance: A Cyclical Nature of Man on Earth

Mr. Vice – Chancellor, Sir, the ubiquitous nature of ‘Man’ on earth motivated and propelled my interest in this topic. It simply encapsulates the journey of Man within the Universe using Dance Allegory. Unequivocally, I have been able to view and distill ‘Dance’ as a universal phenomenon practiced by all irrespective of colour, race, profession, culture, religion, ethnicity, geographical location, boundaries, political affiliation, society and others. This lecture, therefore, highlights some of my contributions to scholarship and growth in the field of Dance with reference to Yoruba Bata and Dundun focusing on the transformations that have occurred in its applications.

Culture in Africa includes the totality of the arts, of which music and dance form a significant part. Culture is equally regarded as the way of life of a people (Eagleton, 2000). It has been emphasized that the greatness of Africa lies in its culture and not in its science or technology (Nketia, 2001). The Cultural Policy Document for Nigeria succinctly captured Culture as the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization thus distinguishing a people from their neighbors (1988). Among Yoruba people, this way of life is inseparably bound up with music and dance.

Music and Dance are like Siamese twins, inseparable and symbiotically serving each other. Can there be Music without Dance? Without music and dance, the people cannot properly create poetry, record history, educate or train children, celebrate at festivals, praise or abuse, entertain, instruct, disagree, marry, or bury their dead. Music and Dance in performance particularly among the Yoruba constitute a primary site for the production of knowledge.

Dance is regarded as an important aspect of any culture. It is a very strong device for identifying the culture of a people.

Kaepler asserts that “an adequate description of a culture should place the same emphasis on dance as that given it by the members of that society” (1967:iii). It is thus notable that in traditional African culture and societies, dance is life. It gives meaning to virtually all daily activities that human beings are involved in. It is an integral aspect of their life span; coming into this world, living in this world, and the consequent exit of humans from this world. This is succinctly captured by Ojuade (2004) in his description of dance situations in Nigeria:

Thus, before a child is brought into this world, the mother feels or experiences internal movement of the yet-to-be-born baby, therefore, the baby’s arrival into this world elicits dancing activities of joyful movements (238). In African societies, participation in music / dance may be a voluntary activity or an obligation by one’s membership of a social group (Nketia, 1975: 35). Public performance is required on social occasions, where members of a group or a community assemble for the purpose of leisure, recreation, performance of a rite, ceremony, festival or any collective activity.

Music tradition in traditional Yoruba culture features in every aspect of human life right from childhood to adulthood. The combination of music and dance in Yoruba culture gives life to the people. From the moment of birth, the young individual is exposed to strong musical stimuli. Cradle songs are sung to babies when they are on their mothers’ back; these are accompanied by simple dance steps, giving meaning to the rhythm. The infant is thereby introduced from the earliest age to vocal and instrumental music in addition to the movement that accompanies it. As soon as the child is old enough, he or she is encouraged to sing and imitate simple dance movements. Smith (1962, 75 - 77) observes:

Most West African children are encouraged to dance as soon as they can walk. By the age five, they have learned the primary elements of festival dances, and by six they are able to dance with adolescents with accurate rhythm, dance patterns and song.

The above asserts clearly that music and dance performance among the Yoruba, constitute a primary site for the production of knowledge. Bakare (1994:2) looks at dance as “the rhythmic movement of the human body in time and space to make statements”. Essentially, dance thrives on living experiences. Thus, it paves ways for its transmission from generation to generation which reflects the changes in social conditions.

Since we know that music and dance are Siamese twins, it goes without saying that musical instruments have a role to play in dance. Musical instruments can be classified into varying forms; such as **Idiophones** (self sounding instruments when struck), **Aerophone** (blown instruments which require use of air through the opening of the musical instrument, **Chordophones** (stringed instruments with string attached to the body of the instrument which are plucked or strummed with the hand to produce sound, and **Membranophones** (instruments with membrane). For the purpose of this lecture, analysis of music and dance culture will be premised on the Yoruba Bata and Dundun.

The Phenomena Dance Culture

What exactly is Dance? In African societies, dance serves as a major aspect of the people’s modes of expression. Dance emanated from the ritual or religious worship or recreational/social activities. It is regarded as a major art and an essential element in the celebration of events connected with every aspect of human life. The events range from the birth of a new baby to growing up and display of last respect for the dead. It thus symbolizes the profound truths about the complexity of human existence and gives meaning to life. Dance activities in Nigeria are communal - oriented, participatory by all and natural. From a historical perspective, dance is one of the first human activities which did not directly serve the mere survival of man. The experience of dance came as man’s effort of expressing

individual and collective feelings. Such existence of dance in the early periods of man may be witnessed only by pictorial representations, carved images of primitive people on the walls of the caves. The pictures were created in phases, showing the developmental stages of man within his cultural environment.

The developmental processes of human societies have shown that their survival is predicated on a functional association in which men became a part of the broad communities and their activities were regulated by their social needs. The individual dances ceded place to group dances according to the needs of the people in that community. For instance, in Nigeria, the Ogun dance of the South-western zone, specifically Ondo, grew out of individual display of nuances to organize Obitun dance. Also, the Yoruba Bata dancer's virtuoso display of arms, body and adroit leg movements show a resemblance of the Yoruba god of thunder's (Sango) movement idiom.

Dance applications in Nigeria transcend 'the unborn', 'the living' and 'the dead' as illustrated with Soyinka's schema on the cycle of life (1976:148). It is held that a baby dances in the womb of a pregnant woman during the gestation period. When the young individual is born alive, dancing journey continues. Growing up to adulthood, the baby naturally or through learning, as part of the village life or environment, is exposed to dancing. Also, as he completes his cycle in life, he dances on to the grave (based on the activities which involve dancing). That is why Africans have continued to express their very being in dances, which encapsulate their fears, relationships, anxieties, joys and sorrows. Hence, Gorer (1962) observes in his studies of some ethnic groups in West Africa that:

Africans dance for joy, and they dance for grief; they dance for love and they dance for hate; they dance to bring prosperity and they dance to avert calamity; they dance for religion and they dance to pass the time (213).

As such, from birth, the African people are introduced into a world of body language, rhythm, patterned awareness and structured expressions which help their communion with the environment (ecology). Dance, to the Yoruba, is one of the attributes that defines a person and which integrates one fully as a member of the society (Ajayi, 1998:4).

According to Drewal (1991), this raises fundamental issues about body praxis, human agency, temporality, and discursive knowledge and calls into question conventional understanding of tradition, repetition, mechanical reproduction, and ontological definitions of social order and reality. Baxter (1970) noted that through eye-to-eye contact between the otherwise isolated island populations, dance and music performances easily overcame the colonial language divide in terms of a shared performance heritage that had successfully resisted and survived imperial oppression. Dance, therefore, is popular, widespread and universal to all, regardless of age, sex and social status.

There are always new development in dance with the expression of abstract ideas and possibility it gives to man for physical relaxation as well as emotional release. Scientists have observed that movement is essential to both human beings and animals for the release of emotional tension caused by both joyful and painful events. Dancing, this is one of the most dynamic and popular art forms in Nigeria, serves a vital function in human society in order to achieve social cohesion or togetherness, causing human beings to feel a deep sense of communion with one another. Dance is an integral part of African life in the real and metaphysical spheres of existence. It is an aesthetic, non - verbal expression continually created and re - created by countless performers and interpreters for several generations. It is however embodied in human action.

The social and cultural occasions at which these dances are performed have to do with individual or group celebrations. For example, most rite of passage dances deal with individuals who move from one status of life to another. It may be

accompanied by friends and relations. Also, dance takes place at naming ceremonies, coronations, festivals, feasts, communal purification and cleansing. Thus, Strine et al. (1989:183) state that performance as a concept is contentious, “which indicates that its existence is bound up in disagreement about what it is, and that disagreement over its essence is itself part of the essence”. In Nigeria context, dance performance is conceived as a primary site for the production of knowledge, where philosophy is enacted and a means by which people reflect on their current conditions, divine or re-invents themselves and their social world.

Dance forms could also be classified and analyzed in varying categories - those that survived and thrived within the communities, those making waves in the academic environment (modern oriented) and the prototype of the western world that is in vogue now, which is a mixture of both the traditional and the modern. Considering the above, dance performance may be regarded as an artistic expression predicated on movement; it has also been aptly described as a dramatic phenomenon induced by a psychological state (Layiwola, 1991:19-27).

The various ethnic dances in Nigeria could be recognized functionally within a homogenous society as religious ritual, as an expression of social organization, and a recreative process. Religion or ritual, which is one of the major sources of dance in Nigeria, regulates the relationship between the members of the society and the supernatural powers which are strongly believed to be in control of human activities. Such could be exemplified in the famous Osun Osogbo festival, Olojo festival in Ile - Ife, Sango (god of thunder and lightning) worship, Obatala worship, Egungun (masquerade) festival etc. It is a central element in a ceremony or festival and it is seen as an act of worship by members of religious cults.

Social dances, on the other hand, change with time, based on the creativity of the various artists. In its function as an expression of social organization, dance safeguards the traditionally established social and political hierarchy and

equally emphasizes the standard of behavior and instructs on morals within the society. Such examples are dances that are purely restricted to the royal personalities, cult dances and age grade dances. It is often performed by groups or teams of dancers, which clearly states their status in the enabling society. It may be a part of a festival performance or simply for entertainment. Re-creative process dance could be an expression of talent or display of expertise. The dance gives room for improvisation. Such dancers are usually found at various relaxation centers and social functions, or in their private homes.

Nigeria encompasses a profusion of ethnic groups (with over four hundred (400) ethnic groups), though classified traditional under the three dominant groups of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Today, Nigeria as a nation houses thirty -six states with different dances in their cultural environments. However, each of the societies predominantly depends on oral tradition, with human sounds, gesticulations, shapes, patterns and symbols as their primary tools for communication (Yerima, 2003{216). This is because dance reflects the socio-political, religious, economic, philosophical and aesthetic life of a people. It thus becomes obvious that there are specific dances tailored to specific occasions in Nigeria. Every major stage of human development ranging from birth of a baby, growing up and his eventual exit from a given society has dances which are done not just for dance's sake. The dances are associated with ceremonies, rites and festivities which characterize such stages. Therefore, traditional dance forms a major part of society's religious, social, ancestral and existential reality.

The history of dance art in Nigeria indicates its passage through three major phases as observed and identified by Amankulor (1986:3) and Ajayi (1986:1). Prior to the arrival of Europeans in Nigeria, the ethnic groups that make up its present political entity lived in relative isolation. The art of dance permeated all important events in the society, be it political, religious, social or economical. The traditional dances of the people developed, while creativity was freely encouraged within

the limits of the norms and conventions of the people. The dances at this period can be divided into five main categories as identified by Enem (1975): 115-116, 68-115), namely; Religious / Ritual Dances, Rite of Passage Dances, Vocational Dances, Recreational Dances and Political Themes.

The dances in Nigeria that we can claim ownership to can be viewed from three basic phases of the nation's development - these are the pre-colonial, the colonial and the post-colonial phases (Ojuade, 2005:367). The illustration showing the development of dance clearly indicates that dances could be classified and analyzed in varying categories. They involve those dances that survived and thrived within individual communities (traditional) and which are experienced raw; those making waves in the academic environment (modern oriented); and those that are prototypes of the western world, that is very prominent in use, and which are considered as the blending of both traditional and modern, based on the creative ability of the dancers or practitioners. Each of the phases has recorded success in dance. Currently, the dance culture in Nigeria is gradually drifting into a mixture of the phases. The colonial experience in Nigeria's history brought a heavy influence on Nigerian dances. It actually gave a dual face to the existing dances, which makes them to reflect the dance culture of the Europeans, the Americans or Latin Americans rather than that of the traditional Nigerian. The inclusion of Western oriented instruments in Nigerian music, equally informs changes in Nigerian dance patterns as well as dance costumes.

The Yoruba Bata and Dundun in Performance:

The Myth - Historical Origin of Bata

Bata, belongs exclusively to the Yoruba. It is a difficult, calculative, energy-sapping, indigenous Yoruba dance, which in the remote past, was associated exclusively with the worship of different deities, especially Sango, the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning. Evidence from research on Yoruba origin revealed that there are many theories and myths surrounding it. Idowu

(1962:4) observes that the Yoruba comprise several clans which are bound together by language, traditions, and religious beliefs and practices. He states further that “the question of their origin is still a debatable subject, since we do not yet possess adequate materials out of which we can build up the history of their beginnings”.

Stories relating to origin of the Yoruba have been described in books written by scholars such as Johnson (1921), Biobaku (1971) and Omosade (1979), based on individual sources and retentive memory of events derived from folktales, mythologies of creation, fables and moral stories. Bata is a music culture that extends beyond the phenomenon of dance. Ogunba and Irele (1978) claim that Sango was an ancestor, deified and worshipped by the people. Bata was used to accompany Sango and Egungun who were both relations and inseparable.

Baderinwa Abefe Oladosu (in an interview) explained that Sango, who was referred to as ‘Oba ko so’ (The King did not hang) was once a traditional king in Old Oyo Ajaka. During his reign, Timi and Gbonka were his warriors. He noted that Sango and Egungun were friends, but Egungun was older. Interestingly, Bata music accompanied both of them on social occasions. After the death of Egungun, Bata, as an accompaniment, became solely associated with Sango. Later, Sango ascended to heaven to avoid an impending humiliation from his rebellious warriors. Gbonka plotted to overthrow and annihilate him. On his final journey, Sango summoned the Bata drummer, who accompanied him to the point of demise.

Gbadamosi Adebisi claimed that it was one ace - drummer known as ‘Saate’ who made an innovation in the musical instruments used in Bata dance performance. It is also to him that we owe the information on Bata Koto (an original form of Bata instrument, which consisted of a set of calabashes, each covered with animal membrane and each having a cloth strap by which it was hung around the drummer’s neck with the drum resting in front of him. It was beaten with one hand and a stick).



Complete set of *Bàtá* drums.

Sango was a beautiful and skillful dancer, and Saate an expert drummer. Their acquaintance blossomed into a beautiful relationship of mutual dependence. They always performed together at festivals and other public ceremonies so much so that people came to associate them with each other and always looked out for their joint performance.

However, as the oral tradition has it, Sango and Saate fell out over the sharing of some gifts obtained at a performance. Saate felt he had been cheated and withdrew his services. At first, Sango thought he could go it alone and began to run away from him, taking him for a mad man; “Sango has gone mad”! They said. It was not long before he sent his wife, Oya, to make peace between him and his friend and drummer, Saate. Truly they say “a lover’s quarrel is but the renewal of love.” So much sweeter and stronger did Sango and Saate’s friendship become that it was said that whenever they were eating together (usually from the same bowl) Sango would say;

‘Iwo onibata a mi, meran
Ti mo ba ti ri iyonu re
Mo ti mo pe eko ni’.

(My Bata drummer, pick a piece of meat,
When I behold your softened heart
I know it is a lesson).

It was obvious that he (Sango) discovered that it was Saate's drums that added glamour to his dancing.

So closely associated did Sango become with Bata music that later on, after his deification, his adherents claimed, whenever they heard the clap of thunder, that it was Omele Ako's sound that Saate was drumming for Sango's delight and Sango was dancing up there, by the flashes of lightning. So, not even death could separate Sango from his Bata music.

Saate's mastery of Bata is legendary; sometimes he used his drums to warn people of Sango's magical power and to praise him due to his ability to move his body accordingly too. Such lines are :

A f'eni ti kogila kolu
A f'eni Esu n se
L'ole ko lu Esu
L'ole ko lu Sango
A f'eni ti Sango o pa,

(It's only someone who has been bedeviled
It's only someone who has been possessed by Esu
That will attack Esu
That will attack Sango
Only he who wants to be killed.)

Saate reported that Sango loved Bata dearly, so much so that if he was eating his best food, and the sound of Bata music is heard, he would abandon the food and prefer to dance.

Meanwhile, each time Sango went on a dancing tour, Saate would keep warning and informing people where to meet and see Sango in action. For instance:

Sango de e fie nu mo enu
Ero oja p'ara mo
Inu oja la nlo
Ero oja p'ara mo
Oju oja la nlo

P'ara mo, p'ara mo, p'ara mo

(Sango is here!

Let everyone keep mute

Market men and women take cover

We are advancing to the marketplace

Market men and women take cover

We are proceeding to the centre of the market

Hide yourself, hide yourself, hide yourself!!!)

Bode Osanyin (1996) posited that the foundation of Bata in Nigeria was more of a mythological and even religious than factual history. He claimed that Bata is attributed to Sango and the music is dedicated to the worship of certain gods or orishas.

Anthony King (1961:1 - 4) believes that the variety of dialects among the Yoruba people is a factor for the versions of traditional music and songs in use.

Alhaji Fatai Ojuade (1996) explained that Sango in his lifetime was a warrior and any time he wanted to go to war, he liked dancing to fast music in preparation for war. It was as if Bata rhythms prepared him for war. He revealed that Sango used to call for a drum (music) that could stimulate him and suit his purpose. At the initial stage, Gangan (hour glass drum) was brought for him but it failed until the sound of Omele meji gave Sango the expected stimulation he needed.

Yoruba Dundun:

Dundun ensembles exist functionally and in practically all parts of Yorubaland. In affirmation of this, Oba Laoye (1959, 10 -11) included Dundun drums to be among “those drums that are found in use anywhere in Yorubaland”. The Dundun is part of the geographical belt of hourglass drums in West Africa, which in turn have links with hourglass drum areas in other parts of the world. The West African distribution of Dundun has been amply documented by Hause (1948) and Thieme (1969) and defines the West African area as “stretching from Senegal at

least as far south as the Cameroon Republic". In Nigeria, the tension drums are popular and in use in the North particularly among the Hausa Fulani. It also exists among the Edo people but seems to be unknown to the people of Eastern Nigeria.

The myths surrounding the origin of Dundun are of varying ones as relayed and handed over with different versions. Oba Laoye 1 (1959,10) submits that:

Dundun was first used by Ayan, a native of Saworo in Ibaribaland. He taught some Yoruba families the art of drumming and he was so loved by them that they deified him after his death.

In support of Kabiyesi's assertion, Yesufu Ayankunle, the leader of his personal Dundun ensemble claimed that dundun originated from Saworo and from there went to Oyo and from there spread to other parts of Yorubaland.

However another version by Laisi Ayansola affirmed that Dundun started in Oyo and that it came to Oyo from Ile - Ife because Ife was the place of origin of the entire Yoruba race. On his part, Salami Ladokun, one of the drummers of the Alaafin of Oyo, stated that it was Alaafin Atiba who introduced Dundun to Oyo and, apparently, to other Yoruba towns.

Darius Thieme reported on the myth of Dundun origin a direct conversation with Oba Laoye 1, and which states that the introduction of the Dundun dates from the time of the Yoruba migration into their present homeland, prior to the founding of Ife, their migratory route having crossed the territory inhabited by the Ibariba.

Meanwhile, the symbiotic relationships between music and dance are premised on the conversations that go on among the drums (instruments) which the dancer aesthetically interprets. So, what then is the language of the drums?

The Language of the Drums

A glimpse into the life of African people indicates that they have used drum telegraphy to communicate with each other

from far away for centuries. The European expeditions of Africa into the jungles to explore the local forest were reported prior to their arrival, through message of their coming and their intention was carried through the woods. An African message can be transmitted at the speed of 100 miles in an hour (Davis, 2011). Leonard Bloomfield, a linguist, simply defined language as the ‘totality of utterances that can be made in a speech community (cited in Chomsky, 1986:16).

While Edward Sapir, a language scholar of repute defined language as “a purely human, non – instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols” (Crystal, 1997:400).

The above definitions implies that language is an asset to man, and is by far one of the greatest, most complex and most enigmatic possessions, the quintessence of his humanity, without which individuals and nations lose their mental and cultural heritage (Essien, 1990: 168). The transferred effect of complexities of language as it relates to drums is the root cause of the varying forms of dances in use today. What then is the language of the drums?

In application, the language of the drums can take different forms, which are:

- (a) The Direct Language of the drum
- (b) The Drum Language that comes as a Metaphor
- (c) The Indirect Language of the drum

In Africa, language creates a typical identity which is a source of distinction. It has been observed especially in Nigeria that the difference in language from one ethnic configuration to another is very prominent. Such is a reflection of their culture and ways of life.

In other words, the inherent methodologies involved in the trade, which leads to linguistically mode of communication, are essential to language formations. This aspect can be compared with a learner of a new language or a baby who is in the stage of making statements or forming sentences. There are

basic steps to follow in such situations, which includes identification of alphabets, syllables, words and sentences. The steps as enumerated here, if adhered to, will assist the drummer in his direction and will afford him the competence to fully take charge of the performance(s).

Description of Fatai Oladosu Ojuade and his group in performance

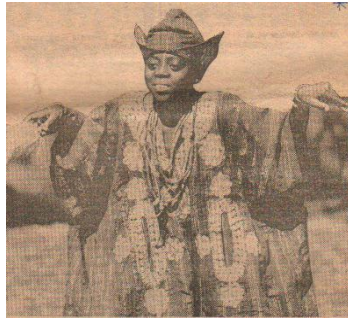
Ojuade's International troupe was headed by Late Alhaji (Chief) Fatai Oladosu Adisa Ojuade, who doubles as the founder and owner of the troupe. The troupe specializes in both bata and dundun dance culture of the Yoruba people. Alhaji Ojuade was the director, manager / lead dancer of the group. He equally holds decision making power as it relates to the group in his hands. The group comprises of male and female, dancers and drummers as well. They are Chief Mayowa O. Adewoyin (dancer), Tumbi Teroko (dancer), Bashirat F. Ojuade (now Mrs Folashade Muktar – Itai), Fausat A. Ojuade (now Mrs Fausat Ojudun), Wajeed A. Ojuade (dancer), Jeleel O. Ojuade (dancer), Oladosu Abefe (lead drummer, Bata), Oladokun (drummer), Kareem (drummer), Yekeen (drummer), Sowumi Adedapo (lead drummer, Dundun), Sobade Adedapo (drummer), Alhaji Rasheed Adedapo (drummer) and Lateef Adedapo (drummer). The young Ojuade developed an interest in Yoruba cultural heritage early in life. This was occasioned by his acquaintance with an expert bata drummer whose name was Okunlola, who occasionally visits Ifetedo from his home base in Ibadan.

Okunlola was reputed to have taught many expert bata drummers in the South-West of Nigeria. The young Ojuade was greatly inspired by him. He never missed an opportunity to watch his bata performance anytime the drummer was in town. From listening or merely watching, he graduated to dancing to Okunlola's bata drumming anytime he was around. Later, Ojuade was to groom his own bata master drummer – Late Baderinwa Abefe Oladosu, who was then under the training of Okunlola.

However, his father the (older Ojuade) did not cherish the idea of a career in dance for his young son, mostly because of Islamic injunctions against dance. But an uncle of his, Mr. J. A. Gbadebo who saw the boy's interest, enthusiasm, dancing skill and prowess was instrumental in encouraging and spurring him on. Later, the elder Ojuade yielded, prayed for his son and even bought him the costume and paraphernalia needed for this art. In 1970, he formed a bata and dundun dance troupe built around members of his own family, with a handful of outsiders. He started a troupe consisting of eight drummers and eight dancers including himself. The Ojuade performing troupe has a style of presentation that is flexible and variable. On account of his wide experience of joint performances with other performing groups, it is quite at home wherever it is placed in the programme of events. In this type of situation, it is the organizers who determine the order in which the group will appear. For example, Ojuade's troupe entertained Kabiyesi Ooni Adesoji Aderemi regularly in his palace and had prestigious outing in 1980 when Oba Okunade Sijuwade was crowned the Ooni of Ife. On that occasion, the Ojuade performing troupe had the pride of place of being the first to perform, to usher in the ruler from the inner chambers of the palace to Enuwa square.



Ojúadé & his International Troupe in Performance



Young Jeleel Ojúadé demonstrating Ìjà-fáfá-ti-fáfá (at middle & low level), a replica of Àbìdà form of *Bàtá*, at the XXII Commonwealth Games & Warana Festival in Brisbane, Australia in 1982.

At the Progressive Governor's performance in Enugu (as earlier referred to in this lecture), the group was placed fourth in the order of performance. Again, it is not always the case that the full complement of the Ojuade performing troupe is called to perform in such joint performances. A demand can be made by

the organizers for the group to supply a few drummers and dancers to join other artistes for a special performance.

The climax of the troupe's performance was on the invitation of the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the National Theatre of Nigeria to represent the country in a performance. We had the privilege of working with experts from the field of dance and music and artistes drawn from different parts of the country which include; the Oji Anya Lere dancers from Amasiri, Afikpo, Rambo Dancers from then Kwara but now Kogi, Nkim Nkat from Cross River State and Atta Dabai Group from Katsina.

However, when it is performing by itself in a programme where it is possibly the sole or major performer, it has a regular style of presentation. The Ara-bi-n-ti-nko dance is always the first item on the programme. This item features the youngest members of the bata troupe. The lead drummer ushers in with Ara-bi-n-ti-nko drum beat. They enter in a single file demonstrating various patterns of bata movements. They go into a frontal formation i.e. in a single line facing the audience. After this frontal formation has taken place, lead drummer signals the beginning of the solo items. The dancers who are trained to listen for signals are ready. So, the lead drummer now commences to call forth the dancers one after the other to perform their various solos. There can be between two and four Ija-fafa-ti-faafa performance to go on. When it pleases him, he can stop the Ija-fafa-ti-faafa and call out the next one tela-tele-tijala-tela-tijala.

There is no fixed time and there is no fixed order. The lead drummer on Iya Ilu is completely at liberty to invite whichever dancer he wants on stage. But he controls every moment of their performance. It is the sum total of the Ija-fafa-ti-faafa and tela-tela-tijala-tela-tijala dances that make up the Ara-bi-ti-nko.

At the end of this performance, the lead drummer signals the exit of the Ara-bi-ti-nko dancers, they move to the corner of the stage to let in the main bata dancers – the adults. These are ushered in with more vigorous dance beats than that of the Ara-

bi-ti-nko dance. Once on stage, the Ara-bi-ti-nko dancers team up with the principal bata dancers for a joint dance which is brought to a climax after which the group salute the audience either by prostrating in the Yoruba fashion or giving a military salute. Thereafter, the lead drummer signals to the dancers to move backstage. Then the lead drummer, as he has previously done with Ara-bi-ti-nko dancers, commences to call forth the principal bata solo dancers for their various / individual performances, in which the leader of the troupe perform last. The principal dancers perform essentially the same item with the difference only that their performance is more detailed and professional. In other words, it is more skilled, polished and professional version of Ara-bi-n- ti n ko dancers that is exhibited.

When the principal dancers have all had their solo, the Ara-bi-n-ti nko dancers now team up with them for the final dance. This signals the end of the performance. Again, they salute the audience as they exit, usually accomplished with a tumultuous applause.

In all, a performance can take a few minutes as the leader, Alhaji Fatai Oladosu Adisa Ojuade does not like longer performances. This is not to say that occasions do not occur when the whole array of bata dance forms like Gbamu, Elekoto, Elesee are displayed, but such occasions are rare.

Incidentally, his last major performance (Gese dance) before his death was at the book presentation of Professor Jacob Kehinde Olupona NNOM of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA).

Performance Description of Lamidi Ayankunle (Ayanagalu) and his group

Ayanagalu International group was headed by Alhaji Lamidi Ayankunle, an expert drummer who hails from Iyaloja's compound in Erin Osun. Erin Osun is a small rural town about five kilometers from Osoogbo. He was the founder and the leader of the group. Alhaji Lamidi Ayankunle was born to a

father who migrated from Erin - Ile in the present day Kwara State. He was born into the art of drumming.

It has been observed that since the 1950's, Erin Osun artists (drummers and dancers) have been involved in the propagation, practice and the preservation of arts in Osogbo. It was believed to have been an off – shoot of an organized network of Yoruba theatre companies (see Adekola 1995; Barber and Ogundijo 1994) made up of series of workshops and a number of lively local performances.

Ayanagalu International Group comprises of seasoned and experienced dancers and drummers. It consists of male and female artists, namely Alhaji Lamidi Ayankunle – the lead drummer / leader and founder of the group. The next in rank is the leader of the dancers, Ojetunde Ajayi, Kazeem Adurolu (drummer), Rafiu Ayankunle (drummer), Taofeek Ajangila (dancer), Busayo Ajangila Ojekunle (dancer), Sherif Ajangila (a young boy who is also a dancer), Wahab Ayankunle (drummer), Muyideen Ayankunle (drummer), Musiliyu Ayankunle (drummer) and Musefiu Ayankunle (drummer).

This group started their career (drumming and dancing) around the towns and neighbouring villages especially during the worships of the Yoruba deities. They did not only graduate to performances beyond the local terrain, but with training and teaching of drumming and dancing bata and dundun specifically. This particular ‘act’ has taken the group members to virtually all the corners of the world in order to participate in organized workshops, seminars, festivals, command performances and training and teaching people (would – be bata and dundun dancers and musicians).

Every performance of Ayanagalu group is a variety show, dance, spectacle, and revue. Ayanagalu group in performance takes the form of the famous Alarinjo masquerade dancers but with a little difference. In the popular Alarinjo Travelling theatre, bata was virtually represented as an accompaniment for their dances and dramas as presented by the troupes like *Eiyeba*, *Adeogun* and *Aladokun* from Ikirun (whose

main drum was *Igbin*, but who often used bata), *Aiyelabola*, *Lebe*, *Ajangila* from *Iragberi*, *Lasisi Alijonnu* from Oyo, and later *Agbegijo* and *Ajof'eebo*. They are renowned bata dancers and drummers, whose families, and lineages are linked with the worship of Sango and / or the Egungun (masquerades). The activities of the Alarinjo Troupes support Williams J. and Judith Hannah's (1972:238) in their views that:

African dance introduces and maintains the cultural patterns; eases socio-psychological tension; encourages the fulfillment of such goals as reproduction work and military activities, expresses the religious order and strengthens the feeling of social solidarity.

Joel Adedeji's (1978:44) perception of bata in performances of the Alarinjo troupes shows its numerous duties and a special order is followed in every program. The performance opens with scintillating drum texts and powerful introduction of the group (*Ayanagalu*) to the audience. The drum roll brings the dancers (both old and young) on to the stage with a free-for-all dance (improvised steps). It continues for a while, giving the audience varieties of styles and forms of Yoruba dance movements. At a particular point, during the performance, the lead drummer, (Alhaji Lamidi Ayankunle) picks up the *Iya – Ilu*, praises, communicates deeply calling on or at times praying for a successful outing. This consists of the *Ijuba*, the homage and the pledge, followed by a period of dancing, acrobatic displays and ballad singing.

The lead drummer goes into a familiar tune, and the other drummers, having dropped *Dundun* for *Bata*, join in what can be referred to as the 'introductory dance'. The aforementioned praises serve as stop – gaps for the dancers to get ready costume – wise and take their cues. As the dance progresses, the lead drummer goes into another interesting tune, which depends on the arrangement agreed on with the dancers on who comes first. Here, the drummers bring one after the other different dance steps / forms / styles of the Yoruba gods and their

nuances are paraded to the audience. Moreover, different types of Bata movements such as Gbamu, Eja, Elesee and Elekoto are exhibited and clearly demonstrated in dance and music.

In performance, the individual dancers face the audience, thereby displaying their knowledge of the drums and the interpretation of such in movements in form of solo performance. This style gives the audience the opportunity to formally assess the dancers and probably criticize each of the dancers. At the same time, the drummers engage in a series of cultural / talent displays on their drums. The drummers seemingly break the tradition of Bata or the convention guiding Yoruba language speakers. It is a rule that the younger ones should accord the elderly respect when talking and not interject or interfere. But in performance, Ayanagalu group has experimented with the drummer on Omele meji, using his medium to make clear and audible statements on the drum.

This method is very common among the musicians, and it is employed for aesthetic purposes. The acquisition of skills in the art of Bata and Dundun drumming and the subsequent expertise is based on one's readiness. Alhaji Ayankunle stated that in order to learn fast, there is a need for such a learner to:

- (i) Set his / her mind into the 'art' or 'act'
- (ii) Be versatile in the art of drumming and
- (iii) Get improvement through trial of different drums (bata and dundun ensemble).

Bata dancer naturally is athletic and gives a good shape to the human frame. The dance is difficult in practice, but aesthetically pleasing to the watching audience. The dance is predicated on talents. It is a gift, which can equally be acquired as a skill through teaching.

Ayanagalu group has trained a lot of people in the arts of drumming and dancing including foreigners who are interested in Yoruba bata and dundun dance culture, including Professor (Chief) Debra Klein in the United States of America and Ayantunde Anselm Ramacher in Germany. The philosophers

have tried to decipher the cyclic nature of the earth, while this lecture takes a total approach in looking at the concept of 'Man's entire journey through life. Looking at the cycle, Man at will join in the cycle but with a time frame determined only by the Supreme Being. It is a movement that has a beginning, middle and an end.

However, Dance is the only universal language of expression irrespective of the profession, society, group, organization, government and all but with least attention. Dance exudes happiness, promotes unity, attracts followers, douses tension, heals, educates and functions positively in other applications. How come we do not recon with our dances? We only remember 'Dance' when we are desperate to achieve a task! Such example is during religious /ritual events and socio – cultural activities. During campaign for elections, our politicians dance till eternity. How come it is difficult to preserve our dances, to create archives for the documentation of this rich cultural aspect of our life? A people's dance forms part of their histories. Have we pondered to ask or answer the question: What is your dance in Life? Unfortunately, the period of human dance on earth is 'short' but within a cycle. Therefore, 'Dance is Life and Life is Dance'.

My Contributions to the Development and Growth of Dance in Nigeria

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, prior to my employment at the University of Ilorin, I have had the privilege and honour to contribute largely to the growth and development of Dance culture in Nigeria through my late Dad's troupe (Ojuade and his International Group) at the local, national and international levels. At different times from the early 1970's, we represented the western region in competitions which won several laurels. In addition, the troupe participated in theatrical activities at the state and federal levels between 80's and early 90's, particularly at the National Theatre of Nigeria where we performed with artistes from different parts of Nigeria. We had collaborative

performance with the Institute of Cultural Studies at the then University of Ife, where we worked with Peggy Harper and her team. Also, we were part of representation of Nigeria internationally particularly at the XII Commonwealth Games and Warana Festival in Brisbane, Australia in 1982 and at another cultural exchange performance tour of the Republic of South Korea in 1983. Here, we performed a dance drama titled, 'The Marriage of Princess Sidibe' written and choreographed by Edith Uche Enem.

I joined the services of the University of Ilorin at a critical point in time. The department was on the verge of being merged with the English department due to the fact that there was no one to teach the dance arm of the Performing Arts. I was like the umbilical cord that saved the department at that moment. I taught all the courses in Dance with supervision across all levels, Undergraduate, Master's and Doctorate. The teaching experience transcends the University of Ilorin. As a guest scholar, I taught and presented academic papers at different part of the world including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), MA, Boston University, Boston, MA, USA; Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA; Swansea Metropolitan University (UK); Johannes Gutenberg University at Mainz (Germany); Indiana University, Indianapolis, USA; University of Warwick, UK; University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; Kingston, Jamaica; Maryland, USA; Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto, Canada; University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA; University of Bahia (UNEB), Salvador - Bahia, Brazil; University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana; Osaka University, Toyonaka Campus, Osaka, Japan; Goldsmiths, University of London, UK; York University, Toronto, Canada; University of Stellenbosch, South Africa; Brasilia, Brazil; University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana; Georgia Centre for Continuing Education, Africa Studies Institute, University of Georgia, Athens, USA; University of Texas at Austin, USA; Division of Performing Arts

and Film, Video, Chung - Ang University, Seoul, Republic of Korea; Helsinki, Finland; Athens, Greece among others.

I got myself actively involved in research and publication especially in my specialized field of dance, using the medium of Yoruba Bata and Dundun to produce, publish and present academic papers at local, national and international media in form of Journal articles and chapters in books by outstanding publishing houses.

In adding value to the growth and development of the University, I facilitated a free donation of a 40 foot container of medical equipment that worth over Four Hundred Million of naira by Project cure with their headquarters in Denver, Colorado, USA. In the same vein, I got a Two Million dollars donation from the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) for the construction of Engineering Laboratory and got free books at different times into the University Library among others.

I have attended several conferences, trainings and workshops and made over fifty presentations. I have attracted research grants from within and outside the country in furtherance of my passion to contribute to and expand my frontiers of knowledge through research. I benefited from the African Humanities Program (AHP) of the American Council for Learned Societies - ACLS in 2014 for a Post – Doctoral Fellowship and research program. With this grant, I was able to facilitate a partnership between my department, the Performing Arts and the National Theatre of Ghana and initiated and facilitated the visit of HE President John Dramani Mahama (former President of the Republic of Ghana) to the University of Ilorin where he delivered the 40th Anniversary Convocation Address on the 23rd October, 2015. Also, facilitated a bilateral relationship between the National Troupe of Nigeria and the National Theatre of Ghana. As a matter of fact, the National Theatre of Ghana on my request sent their troupe to come and perform at that year's convocation ceremony free of charge. I also facilitated and won the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program (ADF) in 2014. I need to recognize the

personal efforts of Professor Bayo Lawal (who was the Deputy Vice – Chancellor, Academic at this time and ensuring that all the documents got signed despite the timing.

I have been able to use my publications with particular emphasis on Dance to dwell on topical issues ranging from religion issues (Ojuade, 2008); to Issues in Security, Peace and Conflict Management (2017); to the Development of music and Dance (2006); Music and Dance as instruments of political communication (2005); Music and Dance viewed as Tools in the Attainment of Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria (2010); observed the Change and Continuity in Bata Performance (2010); Sustenance of Dance Development and its Performance in the Western part of Nigeria (2005); The Secularization of Bata Dance in Nigeria (2002); Negotiating the ‘Nexus’ in the Teaching of Nigerian Yoruba Bata History and Culture to the Diaspora and Africa (2010); Traditional Psychotherapy: Ifa Divination Orientation (2013); Performing Folklore in Nigerian Society: Challenges and Prospects (2011); The Nigerian Dance and the National Question (2004); Dance and Music as a Catalyst for Democratic Freedom In Nigeria (2003); The Theatre Option in the Management of Radicalisation and Radicalised Groups in Nigeria (2013); The Multicultural Nature of Yoruba Bata Culture and its Development in Africa (Nigeria) and the Diaspora (2012); Democratic Governance in Nigeria: A Calculated Theatrical Performance or a Fantasy? (2011), The Roles of Arts and Culture in the Management of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria (2010); Dance in the Service of Humanity (2006); African Dance in Diaspora: Examples of Nigerian Yoruba Bata and Dundun (2011); Interpreting the Language of the Drums: A Case Study of Yoruba Traditional Bata and Dundun (2009); Dance Culture and Development in Nigeria: A Study of Gese Dance of Yorubas (2006) Interrelationship between Voice, Instruments and Movements in Dadakuada Music among the Ilorin people of Nigeria (2017); African Dance in Diaspora: The Yoruba

Example from Nigeria (2004); Rhythm of life: Interview with Hon. Justice MMA Akanbi CFR, PCA (Rtd.), among others.

Epilogue (Conclusion)

Concerted efforts were made by earlier practitioners for the dances of that period to enjoy the patronage of the people. Their troupes moved from one town, cities and countries to another educating and mentoring people. Research efforts were stepped up through documentations, conferences, seminars, symposia and trainings in the Universities where theatre related courses were taught.

Currently, dance studies and practice have taken another dimension. The study of dance is well structured and has layers in scholarship. Hence, we have dance schools with equivalent degrees and awards in practice. There are professional groups / troupes and bodies like GOND, ADSPON, Dr. Kafayat Shafau - Ameh's Imagneto Dance Company, Liadi Adedayo's Ijodee Dance Company, Segun Adefila's Oriade Dance Group and others ensuring the sustenance of the dance profession.

Over the years, I have created platforms within my teaching and research to accommodate the practitioners through workshops and trainings. It gives the students direct opportunities and access to the professionals, while in turn, the professionals use their expertise to train within short period of time some techniques, styles, forms, traditional dance steps and other relevant aspects of their trade.

The experience have yielded positive results in terms of skill acquisitions, self discovery, talent haunts, documentations, academic paper writings and added knowledge. Of course, dance is globally capturing the attention of the audience in performances and theories. The contemporary forms of dance is widely spreading with the assistance of technology, people can easily learn such forms and accommodate them for subsequent applications and usage.

However, my experience at the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University (Performing Arts Department) where I

teach shows the astronomical growth in the numbers students enrolling for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies in dance. A peep into the outside world of the academia equally filled with dancers of repute or would - be dancers, who constantly get engaged in dance practices.

Mr. Vice – Chancellor, Sir, it was a joyful and fulfilling moment for me at the last convocation ceremonies; where the Performing Arts Department produced four PhD graduates, out of which i supervised the trio of Drs. Tosin Kooshima Tume, Peter Adeiza Bello and Esther Petra Apata in Dance. Also, in the last couple of months, I have been travelling (as external examiner) to examine candidates in other sister universities who defended their thesis in dance. Therefore, Dance is Life and Life is Danc

Recommendations

Mr. Vice –Chancellor, Sir, distinguished invited guests, ladies and gentlemen, I consider this elaborate, solemn but classic event which is globally academic accepted norm, a rare privilege for me to address issues bothering on our dances. In view of the prevailing state, this inaugural lecture recommends as follows:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria to reconsider the separation of the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism from being merged with another entity. It will be plausible to create a tripod stand involving our traditional institutions and the academia. Such partnership will enhance the preservation of our culture including the dance.
2. The Federal Ministry of Education and other organ agencies should reconsider the teaching and study of history, culture, museum and monuments as part of the curriculum. A society devoid of history is on the verge of collapse.

3. Government at various levels should ensure the documentation of our cultural dances through the establishment of documentation centres.
4. Let us desist from debasing our dance culture. It has been flagrantly reduced to campaign activities or pleasurable ‘acts’. ‘Our dances represent our life’ and deserves better treatment.
5. Government should establish ‘Dance hubs’ at the different strata of the societies. It will generate revenue through tourists.
6. Do let us take the advantage of the health benefits accrued to dancing to stay healthy through regular dance activities which will; improve the condition of human heart and lungs; increase muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness; increase aerobic fitness; improve muscle tone and strength; gives one better coordination, agility and flexibility.
7. Dance experts and practitioners should be accorded diplomatic treatment in order to reduce in procuring travelling documents.
8. There is the need for research funding in the areas of dance studies and practice.
9. This lecture serves as a wake- up call to the agencies of culture to act as ‘store – house’ and ably document African Arts and Culture in order to be able to ‘train the trainers’ in the Diaspora based on ‘authentic documentations’.
10. Efforts should be made to further organize international festivals, performances, exhibition where our dances can be showcased.

MY LAST LINE

Mr. Vice – Chancellor, Sir, Ladies and gentlemen, indeed, the human life is in cycles of highs and lows. Today, he is on the mountain top, tomorrow, he is in the valley of life. Once the wheel turns full circle, a cycle is gone. However, whether in your highs or Lows, Dance accompanies you all through the cycle and circle: when you are happy, you dance, you also dance away your sorrows at your trying moments. So we can conclude without equivocation that life is dance and dance is life,

As a matter of fact, if we have an expanded definition of the dance concept and definition is to be a rhythmic gyration of parts of the body to certain stimulations. Then, even copulation which precedes conception is a dance activity. Then, the entire life cycle of a man is full of dance in one form or the other. From copulation to conception; birth to celebration of birth anniversaries and /other life achievements; even unto death, man dances all through the cycles and circles. Dance, therefore, is Life and Life is Dance. We live to dance, we dance to live.

Mr. Vice – Chancellor, Sir, distinguished Ladies and gentlemen, when the drummer stops at the tail end of a performance, the dancer reclines, but anxiously waiting for the next opportunity to show his dexterity at his beckoning. I recline for now while waiting for the next beckoning signal. Have my sincere gratitude and appreciation. For making this event possible and a huge success, I say, God bless you all. I wish you all journey mercies back to your destinations.

Thank you.

Acknowledgements

Mr. Vice – Chancellor, Sir, It is very essential and of paramount importance to show gratitude to Allah SWT, the Lord of the Universe, He who created all for us to dwell in and He who is the sustainer of Heaven and Earth. All glory to Him and I say *Alhamdhulillah robili alamina*, for granting me the honour and privilege to dance through life up to this moment without

any regret. He has been sufficient for me at every stage of my life.

Baami, Olofin Adimula, Arole Oodua, Ooni Adeyeye Enitan Babatunde Ogunwusi, Ooni of Ife. Baba, I'm really grateful for your kindness, affection and love for me. Long may you live on the throne of your fore bearers. HRM Oba Akinola Oyetade Akinrera, Latiiri 1, Olubosin of Ifetedo Kingdom, Kabiyesi Oba Lawrence Olu Babajide, Bamgbala 1, Oluoke of Okeigbo, Kabiyesi Olugbon, Ajero, Timi, Aseyin, Orangun of Oke - Ila, Kabiyesi Osogun Aro (the god iron and warrior incarnate), Kabiyesi Obaluru (Oranfe Onile'na, the fiery thunder-like), High Chief Adekola Adeyeye (Lowa Adimula of Ife) and other kings from Ile-Ife, Sooko and the entire Ajilesoro family and other kings here present, I'm indeed honoured with your presence.

My ceaseless gratitude to my dear Daddy, a great teacher, 'the best friend ever', gist partner, trainer, an orator per excellence, dancer of repute and a pious being, my late father – Alhaji Fatai Oladosu Adisa Ojuade – The immediate Aare Alasa of Ifetedo Kingdom for all you were to everyone of us that we succeed in life. Of course, I know you would have broken academic protocol today to challenge the drummers with your adroit steps on the dance floor to do what you know best. May Aljanah Firdaus be his final abode. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to my dear Mum, Mrs Hamdalat Emilola Akanke Ojuade, '*Iya Bashirat*', for your stringent virtues, motherly care, love and the training that we received from you. May the Almighty Allah grant you good health and long life to enjoy the fruits of your hard labour.

I equally appreciate my father's friends, Chief Rufus Ogundele, Baba Enoch Adejare Adeboye, Professor Wole Soyinka, Chief Olatubosun Oladapo, Chief Alabi Ogundepo and others.

My Paternal grandparents, Alhaji Oseni Ayilara Okero and his brother, Baba Zakariyawu Aderibigbe Ojuade (alias Baba Okeigbo) and Mama Alimotu Olayanju Obuyun Ojuade

with her sister, Mama Sifawu Ebunoluwa Eludolapo Adeosun (Mama Oke Alaafia), it's only Allah that can thank you enough for me. I know that I had the best of time with you before your departure.

My Maternal grandparent, Imam Hussain Akindunni (Late Chief Imam of Ifetedo) and Mama Sabitiyu Gbemsola Akindunni (Iya Etio), Chief A.M.S. Arawole, pray Allah SWT keep granting you the best part of Aljana.

I need to thank all my teachers at every phase of my growth and development. Some taught me physically in class rooms, while some were remote and discreet in their approach. I need to thank my big aunties, Mrs Muibat Temilola Oguntola (Nee Akindunni) and Mrs Fausat Olateju Ojudun (Nee Ojuade) for being our 'teachers', trainers, cooks, house help, etc when we young. We love you dearly and pray that you live to enjoy us with good health and sound minds.

I need to thank the entire Balogun Ojuade family for all the support and love always. The Akindunnis, I appreciate you. In appreciating the labours over me by my teachers, I will simply categorize them under each caption as follows:

a. Primary Education

These are the molders of human brains right from toddler. I thank those at the Ansar - Ud - Deen primary school, Okeigbo and those at St. Thomas primary School, Iwoye – Ijesa. God Almighty will reward you abundantly.

b. Secondary Education

All my teachers at Iwoye Ijesa Grammar School, Iwoye – Ijesa and Ayanbeku Memeorial Grammar School, sincere thanks for the love and strictness of handling us. Also, my classmates and former students of IIGS and Ayanbeku (Class of 84), I thank you.

c. Polytechnic, Ilorin

I had the opportunity of being taught by the best brains ever at the then Kwara State College of Technology (Institute of Basic and Advanced Studies – IBAS), Ilorin, for the IJMB Advanced Levels. Of particular mentioning are Professors Victoria Adunola Alabi, Oyinkan Medubi (now with the University of Ilorin) and Mrs Olubunmi Olayinka Ajibade. I appreciate you all.

d. University Education

My appreciation goes to all my teachers at the University of Ilorin and at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Of particular mentioning are Professor (Mrs) Zulu Sofola, Professor Akanji Nasiru, Professor Bode Omojola, Professor Ayobami Olubunmi Akinwale, of blessed memory (who supervised my first degree); Professor Cornelius Adepegba, Professor (Mrs) Mosunmola Omibiyi – Obidike, Dr (Mrs) Fidelma Okwesa (who supervised my Masters), Professor Oladele Layiwola (who supervised my Ph.D); all my teachers at the Faculty of Law and MBA, particularly Professor (Mrs) Sidiqat Adeyemi (who supervised my project) class at the University of Ilorin. I thank you immensely.

Of course, my class of 93 and the entire graduates of the Performing Arts Department from inception till date, I love you dearly and sincerely. Thank and God bless you. I need to thank Dr. Abdullah Jibril Oyekan, the immediate past Pro - Chancellor and Chairman Governing Council, former Vice Chancellors, Professors Shuaib Oba AbdulRaheem, Shamsudeen O.O.Amali, Is - haq O. Oloyede and AbdulGaniyu Ambali. Really grateful, Sirs.

My sincere gratitude to the Vice - Chancellor, Professor Sulyman Age AbdulKareem under whose tenure that I got elevated into this ‘Chair’ and who approved my nomination to deliver this inaugural lecture today. I wish to also express my

appreciation to the Principal Officers of this great University of Ilorin.

My sincere appreciation goes to Professor Muhammed Mustapha Akanbi SAN, the Vice – Chancellor, Kwara State University, Malete – Ilorin; Professor Eyitope Ogunbodede, the Vice – Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile – Ife; Professor Charles Arizechukwu Igwe, the Vice – Chancellor, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and others here present. I thank all the Professors, senate members, academic and non academic staff and entire university community for their love. I appreciate you.

I equally thank the entire management and staff of the Kwara State University, Malete - Ilorin. I also acknowledge the roles of my Uncles and Aunties, Professor AbdulRashid Aderinoye, Daddy Sikiru Ojuade, Professor Jacob Kehinde Olupona NNOM and his wife, Daddy Yunus Hussain Akindunni, Bro, Gafar Ojuade, Bro. Nurudeen Ojuade, Bro. Musediq Ojuade, Professor and Mrs Wahab Johnson, Bro. Yekeen Ojuade, Bro. Jabaar Akindunni, Bro. Bade Ojuade, Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali SAN, Pastor Ituah Olajide Ighodalo, Bro. Aliu Badmus, Aunty Laremi Sowole, Professor Abdulwahab Olasupo Egbewole SAN, Prince Albert and Mrs Rosaline Olayemi Awofisayo, Dr. and Mrs Waheed Idowu Olanrewaju, Chief Jamiu Ekungba, Alhaji Liad Tella, Mr. Gbadega Adedapo, Alhaji Hassan Mohammed Bello, Chief Olu Faseyitan, Dr. Kola Faseyitan, Mrs. Foluke Adesope, Dr Sadat Olaide Hamzat, Uncle Peter Badejo OBE, Alhaji and Alhaja Muibat Shola Khalil Bolaji Professor Omofolabo Ajayi - Soyinka and others.

I must not forget in appreciating my friends, who are my brothers and sisters: Eng. Femi Atoyebi, Dr. Razaq Adedayo, Alhaji Shittu Mohammed, Bode Olayemi, Abdulmumin Jimoh, Kehinde James Akintide, Emma Ehimoro, Kayode Babatunde, Adekunle Mohammed Idiagbon, Barrister Ronke Adeyemi, Niyi Ige, Lawrence Adebowale Oyetunji, ‘Mide Adegbite, Olanrewaju Alli, Prince Jide Fadairo, Barristers Ayanyemi Kasali and Niran Adedokun, Debo Atunwa, Hon. Bolaji Oyeleye

,Luqman Yahaya, Sarafa Onaolapo, Dayo Fadumila, Mr. Segun Adebayo, Mr. Jibola Ojedele, Gbenga Osinjolu, Kola Oyewale, Mrs Tomi Odumeru, Chief Moshood Ogunlowo, Dr. Bunmi Ogunlade, Yemisi Adeyeye, Pastor Niyi Oladokun, Bayo and Bola Akinfemi, Biodun Adegbite, Pastor Stanley Adeyemi, Evangelist Biodun Adekola, Anisah Titilayo Lawal, Mrs Abosede Olu Bello, Mrs Toyin Dada, Princess Florence Feyikemi Ayoola Egbeyemi, Mrs Iyabo Adebisi, Akin Adesola, Pastor Abiola Adeboye Samuel, Pastor David Tunde Oloruntola, Pastor Wale Ajibade, , Deaconess Adeji Paul Roseline, Mrs Olayinka Idowu, Mrs Ronke Smith, Amaka Gogo - Ibiama, Bose Olumontanmi, Mrs Anoko Moriamo Adeshiyan, Dr. Bose Awodola, Mrs Oluwakemi Abolaji, Mr and Mrs Kemi Akin - Ajayi, Mariam Shola Idowu, Mrs Oro Juliet Olalekan, Gbenga Rotimi, Mrs Victoria Chinyere Nwankwo, Mrs Nelly Iroko Olanlokun, Mrs Rosemary Elue Ashinze, Mrs Joyce Adeleye Aghomon, Clifford Onyenakporo, Maruf Atunse, Pastor Kayode Oguta, Babatunde Akinola, Mrs Tope Omoloye, Adesola Olamijulo, Ismael Bello, Ibraheem Bello, Suraj Bello, Taofeeq Ojuade, Dapo Ojuade, Temitope Amusa, Mojeed Bello, Professor Chief Debbie Klein, Late Kameel Olubukola Azeez (May Allah be pleased with your soul) and others.

I appreciate with great respect my dear senior colleagues and friends through the leadership of our professional bodies, Professor Alex Asigbo (The President, SONTA and the entire members), President, GOND and members, President, AfTA and members, President, IFTR and members, NBA and particularly Kwara State chapter, President, CID - UNESCO and members, the entire members of ADSPON and others.

My dear students (former and those that we are still together) at the University of Ilorin, Kwara State University and others, I appreciate you and really grateful. I sincerely appreciate the affection and love that I get daily from the people of my communities, Ile - Ife, Okeigbo and Ifetedo.

With the kind permission of the Vice - Chancellor and Olofin Adimula, I need to thank Kabiyesi, Olubosin of Ifetedo

and his chief - in - council for the honour done our Late father, Alhaji Fatai Ojuade, for returning his tilte ‘Aare Alasa of Ifetedo Kingdom’ back to the Balogun Ojuade dynasty and unanimously, they nominated me for that role, which you graciously approved and chalked me in June, 2021. The installation ceremony comes up at your palace on Saturday 13th November, 2021 (10:00am). We are indeed grateful for the honour, sir.

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, permit me to eulogize my siblings, thanking them for the unflinching support they have been giving me since birth, even those who joined after me, and the affection that they randomly radiate. Looking at the number that I’m occupying, at the middle, but they conceded the leadership to me as the youngest (from the top and bottom). I just need to let you know that I love you and your spouses with your children.

Finally, let me thank the duo of Amber and Jamaal (Limba and JBoy) that the Almighty have gifted me with, for growing up to understand the reasons why their Dad stay the nights behind the computers, reading or writing, while they go to sleep and wake up to meet him in same position. This inaugural lecture of today doused your curiosity and probably informed you more about ‘hard work’. I love you always.

Mr. Vice - Chancellor, Sir, distinguished audience, this inaugural lecture as presented and mentioned at the beginning, that it is the first of its kind coming from Dance arm of the Performing Arts Department, Faculty of Arts, the University community and if I’m correct, the very first from a University in Nigeria in the area of dance studies and practice. Then, there is that need to take on the dance floor as I thank you all for your rapt attention. Gracia...

E pe, Bata la’wa n jo
Bata la’wa n jo
Eni ba wu ooo
Eni ba wu
Ko ki wa l’ode

Bata la wa n jo o jare...

E tun pe

Dundun la wa n jo

Dundun la wa n jo

Eni ba wu ooo

Eni ba wu

Ko bu wa l'ode

Dundun la wa n jo o jare...

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