

Role of Akan Traditional Dance Forms in Martin Owusu's the Legend of Aku Sika

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ABSTRACT:- This research examines the integration of Akan traditional dances in Martin Owusu's "The Legend of Aku Sika," a contemporary Ghanaian play situated within the Akan community. The study investigates how selected Akan dances enhance storytelling, cultural representation, and audience engagement. Using a qualitative methodology, including observations, interviews, audience surveys, and document analysis, the research explores the role, selection, teaching, and impact of Akan dances within the production. The study supports Performance Theory, Cultural Identity Theory, Audience Reception Theory, and Social Semiotics, demonstrating how Akan dances revisit cultural realities, affirm identity, engage audiences, and communicate narratives. Acknowledging potential bias due to the author's role as co-director, this research underscores the value of Akan dances in contemporary Ghanaian theatre, enriching storytelling, connecting with audiences, and preserving cultural heritage. The selection of Akan dances, as guided by the playwright's preference, reinforces the idea that identity is continuously constructed through cultural practices. Findings reveal that Akan dances functioned as a key narrative tool, shaping character motivations and reinforcing cultural authenticity. The pedagogical approach emphasized conveying Akan movements and expressions. Audience responses indicated that while awareness of specific dances varied, most felt the dances enhanced the storytelling and emotional connection.

Keywords: The legend of Aku Sika, Performance Theory, Cultural Identity, Ghanaian Theatre, Akan dances

I. INTRODUCTION

The integration of traditional dance into contemporary theatre serves not only as a means of cultural expression but also as a bridge connecting past and present narratives (Ayettey, 2022; Aquilina, 2019; Serlin, 2022; Wilson, & Moffett, 2017). This research paper seeks to address the question: How does the incorporation of traditional dance elements in Martin Owusu's 'The Legend of Aku Sika' enhance the storytelling and deepen audience engagement within the context of Ghanaian theatre? Ghanaian theatre has a rich history, deeply rooted in its diverse cultural heritage and oral traditions (Djisenu, 2000; Ismaila, & Akakpo, 2021). From the pre-colonial period to the present day, theatrical performances have evolved, incorporating various forms of storytelling, including drama, music, and dance. Theatrical traditions in Ghana are interwoven with the country's ethnic diversity, with each group contributing its unique narratives, languages, and performing arts practices. The Akan, Ewe, Mole-Dagbani, and Ga-Dangme communities, among others, all have distinct theatrical styles and traditions that reflect their historical experiences and cultural values (Alvarez, Knowles, Balint, & Farbridge, 2018; Ashley, & Wookey, 2024).

In this landscape, traditional dance emerges as a vital component, serving as a powerful medium for expressing cultural identity and communal stories. Dance is integral to many ceremonial events, festivals, and rituals in Ghana, often used to convey messages of joy, sorrow, spirituality, and social commentary (Green, 2012). These traditional dance forms are imbued with significant symbolic meanings, embodying the histories and spiritual beliefs of the communities they represent. For instance, certain dances may be performed to honor ancestors, celebrate life transitions, or invoke spiritual blessings. Thus, dance not only embellishes narrative elements within theatrical performances but also transforms the emotional landscape, allowing for a more immersive experience for the audiences.

Much of the existing scholarship tends to focus on general trends in Ghanaian theatre or specific cultural rituals associated with dance (Djisenu, 2000; Green, 2012). However, there is a lack of in-depth case studies that investigate how traditional dance is specifically integrated into contemporary theatrical productions like "The Legend of Aku Sika." This research will provide a detailed examination of this particular play, analyzing the

selection, teaching, and integration of traditional dance elements and their impact on narrative and performance. Also, current studies often discuss the role of dance in cultural expression but do not delve deeply into how audiences interact with and interpret these dance elements within the context of theatrical performances. There is a need for more empirical research on audience reception, particularly relating to traditional dance. This paper aims to gather audience feedback and reactions to "The Legend of Aku Sika," analyzing how traditional dance enhances emotional engagement and contributes to the overall understanding of the performance's themes. The primary objective of this research is to explore the role of traditional dance in "The Legend of Aku Sika," focusing on the selection, teaching, and integration of these dance elements in the production process. By examining how dance enhances narrative depth and emotional resonance, this paper aims to underscore the importance of preserving and adapting traditional art forms within contemporary settings (Ayettey, 2022; Green, 2012). The significance of this integration lies in its potential to foster a greater appreciation for Ghanaian culture while also addressing the challenges faced by modern practitioners in maintaining authenticity amidst evolving artistic landscapes. In essence, this research seeks to illuminate the intersection of tradition and modernity (Ismaila, & Akakpo, 2021), advocating for the continued relevance of traditional dance in the performance arts.

II. GHANAIAN THEATRE: THE ROLE OF DANCE IN PERFORMANCE

The intersection of dance and theatre has long been recognized as a fertile ground for artistic expression, particularly within African performing arts, where the two forms often intertwine to create powerful and multifaceted narratives (Krasner, 2003; Hermans, 2021). Within Ghanaian theatre, this dynamic interplay is particularly evident, with dance serving as a vital tool for enhancing narrative, facilitating cultural expression, and fostering communal identity (Ayettey, 2022; Kuwor, 2017; Diabah & Amfo, 2018). Ayettey (2022) underscores dance as a key expression of Ghanaian identity, while Kuwor (2017) emphasizes the importance of understanding these dance forms within their specific cultural contexts to fully appreciate their significance. This literature review aims to synthesize key findings on the role of dance in Ghanaian performance arts while identifying gaps that this research aims to address.

Friedler's (1997) early work highlights the need for comprehensive documentation and understanding of Ghana's diverse dance traditions, a call that resonates with the contemporary efforts of scholars like Nii-Yartey (2000, 2019). Nii-Yartey's work not only documents the evolution of Ghanaian dance but also positions it as a valuable lens through which to examine the human condition, moving beyond simple cultural preservation to explore deeper artistic and social meanings. However, while such efforts celebrate the artistic merit and cultural significance of Ghanaian dance, it is crucial to acknowledge the complex power dynamics that shape its presentation and interpretation.

Osei and Otoo (2024) provide a critical perspective on the role of state-sponsored dance troupes, raising important questions about the relationship between artistic expression and political agendas. This highlights the need to consider the potential for dance to be used as a tool for projecting national identity and reinforcing state power, rather than simply as a vehicle for cultural expression.

As we still walk the corridors of the role of dance in Ghanaian theatre performance, scholars like McCarthy-Brown (2018) and Nguyen & Strohl (2019) urge us to be mindful of the potential for cultural appropriation when engaging with dance forms from different cultural backgrounds. This necessitates a critical examination of teaching methods and performance practices to ensure that they are culturally sensitive, respectful, and avoid perpetuating harmful stereotypes or power imbalances (Kassing & Jay, 2020). Despite the wealth of literature on traditional dance within specific cultural contexts, there remains a need for more comprehensive studies focusing on the practical application of these dances in contemporary Ghanaian theatre. Existing research often examines individual dances or cultural rituals in isolation rather than their integration into theatrical narratives. This emphasis presents an opportunity for further exploration, particularly as it pertains to productions like "The Legend of Aku Sika."

This research addresses these gaps by providing an in-depth case study of Martin Owusu's work, specifically examining how the selection and integration of traditional Akan dance enhances the storytelling aspects of the performance within the context of Akan culture. By investigating the pedagogical approaches used in teaching these Akan dances and their impact on the audience's engagement with Akan cultural themes, this paper aims to contribute to a greater understanding of the interplay between dance and drama in contemporary Ghanaian theatre, as it reflects and reinforces Akan cultural identity.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

In exploring the integration of traditional dance in Ghanaian theatre, it is essential to draw on relevant theories from performance studies, cultural identity, and audience engagement. This section discusses key theoretical frameworks that inform the understanding of dance and performance in cultural contexts.

Performance Theory

Richard Schechner's Performance theory, as articulated by scholars such as Gillitt (2013) and Erika Fischer Lichte (2009), posits that performance is a complex social practice that encompasses not only the act of performing but also the contexts, rituals, and meanings associated with it. Schechner's concept of "restored behavior" refers to how performances can reflect or reinterpret social realities, making it relevant to the incorporation of traditional dance in contemporary settings. This theory suggests that performances serve as a mirror to societal norms and values, allowing for critical reflection and dialogue. In "The Legend of Aku Sika," traditional dance can be seen as a medium for restored behavior, where cultural narratives are revisited and expressed through movement, thereby enhancing the audience's understanding of the play's themes.

Cultural Identity Theory

Cultural identity theory, particularly as discussed by Stuart Hall, emphasizes the dynamic nature of identity as it relates to culture, heritage, and representation. Hall argues that identity is not fixed but is continuously constructed through cultural practices and performances (Yang, Zhao, & Lu, 2021). This framework is particularly applicable to Ghanaian theatre, where traditional dances serve as expressions of cultural identity, allowing performers to negotiate their heritage within a contemporary context. The dances selected for "The Legend of Aku Sika" can be viewed as a means of affirming and articulating Ghanaian identity, as they evoke shared histories and social realities while simultaneously addressing modern concerns.

Audience Reception Theory

Audience reception theory focuses on how different audiences interpret and engage with performances. Scholars like Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser have explored how the background, expectations, and experiences of an audience shape their responses to theatrical works (Ademolu, 2022). This theoretical framework highlights the active role of the audience in constructing meaning and emphasizes that engagement with performance is not a passive act but rather an interactive process. In the context of "The Legend of Aku Sika," the incorporation of traditional dance may elicit varied responses based on the audience's familiarity with those dances, their cultural backgrounds, and their personal connections to the themes presented. Understanding audience reception is crucial in analyzing the impact of dance on the overall performance, as it can enhance emotional engagement and resonance.

Social Semiotics

Social semiotics, as developed by theorists like Theo van Leeuwen and Gunther Kress, offers a framework for understanding how meaning is constructed through various modes of communication, including visual and performative elements. In theatrical contexts, dance serves as a semiotic system that communicates cultural narratives and emotional states. Traditional dances in "The Legend of Aku Sika" operate as symbols that carry specific meanings within Ghanaian culture, allowing for multifaceted interpretations by the audience. By utilizing social semiotics, this research can examine how the choreography, movements, and gestures of the dancers convey deeper cultural significances and enhance the storytelling process.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach to gather in-depth insights into the integration of traditional dance in Martin Owusu's "The Legend of Aku Sika." The study combines observational methods, interviews, and audience surveys to provide a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in the production, as well as the audience's reception of the performance. The primary method of data collection involved direct observation during rehearsals and performances of "The Legend of Aku Sika." This observational research provided firsthand insights into the integration of traditional dances into the production, allowing for critical reflection on how these elements enhanced the storytelling and emotional engagement within the performance. Observations focused on aspects such as the choreography, interactions between performers, and the overall atmosphere created by the incorporation of dance. Detailed notes were taken to capture specific instances where dance played a significant role in narrative development and audience response. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key participants involved in the production, including the co-director, choreographer, and cast members. This approach allowed for open-ended questions, enabling participants to share their perspectives on the selection and teaching of traditional dances, as well as their experiences during rehearsals and performances. Questions were designed to explore the significance of dance within the play, any challenges faced in integrating traditional elements, and their reflections on the audience's reception. The interviews were audio-recorded (with consent) and subsequently transcribed for analysis. To gauge the impact of traditional dance on audience engagement, surveys were administered to attendees following selected performances of "The Legend of Aku Sika." The surveys included both closed-ended and open-ended questions aimed at assessing audience awareness of the traditional dance elements, emotional reactions, and overall impressions of the production. Questions focused on how effectively the dance conveyed the themes of the play, the audience's prior experience with Ghanaian culture and dance, and their perspectives

on the integration of these elements in a contemporary theatre setting. Responses were analyzed to identify common themes and patterns that emerged from the audience's experiences.

Additionally, document analysis was conducted of related materials, including rehearsal notes, choreography outlines, and audience feedback collected from post-performance discussions. This analysis provided valuable context for the production process, revealing how decisions were made regarding the incorporation of traditional dances and their intended impact on the overall narrative. The data collected from observations, interviews, surveys, and document analysis were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved identifying recurring themes and patterns related to the role of traditional dance in enhancing storytelling, audience engagement, and cultural identity. Thematic coding was employed to categorize responses from interviews and surveys, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences.

It is important to acknowledge that my role as co-director of "The Legend of Aku Sika" presents a potential source of bias in this research. While my insider perspective provided valuable insights into the artistic intentions and production processes, it could also have influenced my interpretation of the data. To address this, I have attempted to remain mindful of my potential biases throughout the research process, actively seeking alternative explanations for the findings and acknowledging any limitations in the study. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, this research employed a triangulation approach, drawing on multiple data sources to support each conclusion. Observations of rehearsals and performances were compared with interview data from the cast and crew, audience surveys, and relevant production documents. This triangulation process helped to mitigate potential bias by providing a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

ROLE AS CO-DIRECTOR

As a co-director of "The Legend of Aku Sika," my role was pivotal in shaping the artistic vision of the production, particularly in incorporating traditional dance elements that resonate with the play's themes and cultural context. Collaborating closely with the lead director and the creative team, I was tasked with ensuring that the integration of dance not only complemented the narrative but also honored the cultural significance of the traditional forms being used. This dual focus on creative direction and cultural authenticity profoundly influenced my perspective on the role of dance in the performance. From the outset, my involvement during the play reading provided an opportunity to emphasize the power of Akan dance as a central storytelling device. Recognizing the profound significance of Akan dance traditions within the community, I welcomed the inclusion to enhance both the emotional depth and cultural authenticity of the performance. Working collaboratively with the script and other directors, I was able to articulate a vision that placed traditional Akan dance at the forefront of the storytelling process, ensuring that it was not merely an embellishment but an essential element reflecting the narrative structure and cultural values of the Akan community.

My role required me to be actively involved in selecting traditional Akan dances that would not only align with the themes of the play but also resonate with the audience's understanding of Akan culture. Guided by the playwright's vision of situating the story within the Akan community, I focused on identifying dances that authentically reflected Akan traditions and their relevance to the contemporary narrative. This selection process deepened my appreciation for the cultural intricacies and meanings inherent in each Akan dance form, reinforcing the idea that incorporating these elements was a form of cultural preservation and a celebration of Akan artistic innovation. In addition to overseeing the selection of dances, I was instrumental in teaching the dance moves to the cast. This hands-on experience informed my understanding of the challenges performers face in embodying traditional movements, particularly when balancing authenticity with accessibility. By facilitating dance workshops and rehearsals, I was able to convey the emotional essence and stories behind each dance, encouraging performers to connect deeply with the cultural significance of the movements they were portraying. This engagement reinforced my belief that dance can be a powerful means of expressing identity and facilitating cultural dialogue.

Collaboration with the choreography team and other artistic collaborators was essential in integrating dance seamlessly into the production. Through ongoing discussions and feedback sessions, I was able to reflect on the effectiveness of dance in driving the emotional narrative. This collaborative approach not only enriched my understanding of interdisciplinary connections within the arts but also allowed me to observe firsthand how dance could elevate the performance, engaging the audience on multiple sensory and emotional levels. My role as co-director also necessitated a focus on the audience's experience. By considering the cultural backgrounds and expectations of the audience, I aimed to create a performance that would resonate with both those familiar with traditional Ghanaian dances and those encountering them for the first time. This perspective underscored the importance of balancing authenticity with accessibility, ensuring that the traditional dance elements were presented in a way that honored their origins while remaining relatable to contemporary audiences.

FINDS AND RESULTS

The findings were derived from a multi-faceted qualitative investigation into the integration of Akan traditional dances within Martin Owusu's "The Legend of Aku Sika." Through a combination of observational analysis of rehearsals and performances, semi-structured interviews with key participants (including the co-director, choreographer, and cast members), audience surveys, and document analysis, this research sought to understand the specific role, selection, teaching, and overall performance impact of Akan dances within the context of this particular production. The results detailed below illuminate the ways in which Akan dances functioned not only as a decorative element but as a fundamental component of the storytelling process, contributing to the play's cultural authenticity and resonating with audiences on both emotional and intellectual levels. These findings will be presented across three main themes: the role of dance in the play, the selection and teaching of dance elements, and the overall performance impact.

THE ROLE OF DANCE IN "THE LEGEND OF AKU SIKA"

Theme 1: Dance as Narrative Enhancement: The analysis revealed that Akan dances served as powerful tools for narrative enhancement throughout "The Legend of Aku Sika." Notably, the opening durbar (ceremonial gathering) prominently featured the *Kete* dance, traditionally performed by the Akan during royal events and celebrations. Rather than simply serving as a spectacle, the *Kete* in this scene established the power and authority of the ruling class right from the outset. The rhythmic drumming, elaborate costumes, and precise movements of the dancers conveyed a sense of order and tradition, immediately immersing the audience in the world of the play (Fig. 1). This integration of *Kete* dance in the opening scene functioned as a pivotal narrative device, introducing key themes and setting the tone for the entire performance. The *Kete* serves as the foundation on the Akan tradition being emphasized in the play. While my observations suggested that the *Kete* dance effectively conveyed the power of the ruling class, audience survey data revealed that some viewers were less aware of the dance's cultural significance. As one audience member commented, 'I enjoyed the dance, but I didn't really understand what it was supposed to represent.' This divergent perspective highlights the importance of considering multiple viewpoints when evaluating the impact of cultural elements in performance.



Figure 1: The integration of *Kete* dance in the opening scene introduced key themes and set the tone for the entire performance. Source: Department of Theatre Arts, University of Education

Theme 2: Dance and Character Motivation: Beyond literal storytelling, movement and dance patterns were strategically employed in the mystical world scene to foreshadow the character motivations that would unfold later in "The Legend of Aku Sika." While the scene appeared abstract and symbolic, the individual gestures and interactions between the dancers hinted at the inner desires and conflicts driving the main characters. For instance, the protagonist's hesitant and searching movements, contrasted with the decisive and assertive steps of

the antagonist, suggested their differing approaches to power and destiny. As lead actor Kojo explained, "Even though the audience might not consciously recognize it at the time, the movements in the mystical world scene planted seeds. They subtly revealed our characters' underlying ambitions and fears, which would later manifest in our actions." The use of Akan-influenced dance patterns in this scene, therefore, served as a powerful and symbolic means of communicating character motivations that resonated throughout the play. This further highlighted the Akan perspective that was being emphasized.

SELECTION AND TEACHING OF DANCE ELEMENTS

Theme 1: Criteria for Dance Selection: The primary criterion for the selection of dances in "The Legend of Aku Sika" was the playwright's explicit preference for Akan traditional dances. This artistic choice stemmed from the story's deep roots within the Akan community and the desire to create a culturally authentic and cohesive theatrical experience. While other Ghanaian ethnic groups possess rich dance traditions, the playwright's decision to focus solely on Akan dances ensured that the performance remained true to the specific cultural context of the narrative. This decision provided a framework for the dancers to showcase the depth of the traditions. One of the co-directors stated, "The focus was always Akan because the story itself is so firmly planted in that culture. It wouldn't have felt right to incorporate dances from other groups, even if they were thematically relevant. Authenticity was paramount."

Theme 2: Pedagogical Approach: The pedagogical approach to teaching the cast the Akan traditional dances was a combination of workshops, demonstrations, and individual coaching, all carefully guided by the dance instructor. The instructor focused on conveying the specific movements, rhythms, and emotional expressions associated with each dance. Performers participated in group workshops to learn the basic steps and formations, followed by individualized coaching sessions to refine their technique and interpretation. As one performer, Abena, noted, "The instructor was very patient and attentive, helping us to understand the nuances of each dance and how to embody its meaning." Rehearsal observations confirmed the instructor's emphasis on precision and artistry in the execution of the dances.

Theme 3: Authenticity vs. Adaptation: A central tension was the balance between respecting the dances' traditions and adapting them for a modern audience. For example, dances like *Adowa* and *Siki* (See figure 2) were used to depict the social settings, but the traditional elements were kept. A response from one of the co-directors was "...the idea of dance in the play is to interpret the Akan culture, not change it, the balance is key."



Figure 2: *Siki* being used to depict the social settings of the play. Source: Department of Theatre Arts, University of Education

This statement implies a commitment to preserving the essence of the Akan dances while allowing for creative interpretations that resonate with contemporary audiences. The co-director's emphasis on balance highlights the delicate process of adapting traditional art forms without sacrificing their cultural significance. This approach

ensured that the dances remained both authentic and accessible, fostering a deeper appreciation for Akan culture among viewers.

PERFORMANCE IMPACT

Theme 1: Audience Awareness and Recognition: Audience surveys indicated varying levels of awareness and recognition of the Akan traditional dance elements. While a significant portion of the audience (65%) reported having some familiarity with Ghanaian culture, 30% specifically recognized the Akan dances performed in the play. However, the majority of audience members (85%) felt that the dances effectively enhanced the storytelling, even if they didn't recognize the specific forms.



Figure 3: Audience during the live performance of *The Legend of Aku Sika*. Source: Department of Theatre Arts, University of Education

Theme 2: Emotional Engagement: The emotional engagement of the audience with the Akan dance sequences was evident in both survey responses and critical reviews. The surveys revealed that over 70% of respondents reported feeling a strong emotional connection to the characters and themes portrayed through dance. One audience member wrote, “The Akan dance sequences were so powerful, they made me feel the characters' joy, sorrow, and anger as if I were experiencing it myself.”

Theme 3: Overall Impressions: The overall audience response to the integration of Akan traditional dance in “The Legend of Aku Sika” was overwhelmingly positive. Audience Surveys showed that more than 95% of the audience liked the dance sequences, and felt their connection of the drama to the Akan culture. Others suggested that the Akan music and the moves were an authentic way of showcasing the culture.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study strongly support the application of Performance Theory, particularly Schechner's concept of “restored behavior,” to the use of Akan dance in “The Legend of Aku Sika.” This study is subject to certain limitations. The audience surveys were conducted with a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, as a co-director of the production, it was challenging to remain completely objective throughout the research process. Future research could benefit from involving researchers who are not directly affiliated with the production to provide a more independent assessment.

The dances, especially the *Kete* performed during the opening durbar, clearly functioned as a way to revisit and re-enact social realities and power dynamics within Akan culture. The performance wasn't simply a replication of tradition but a reinterpretation of it for a contemporary audience. Furthermore, the success of dance on the audience as observed via the results, validates performance as a mirror of societal norms, allowing critical reflection and dialogue. Cultural Identity Theory, as articulated by Stuart Hall, provides a valuable lens through which to understand the impact of Akan dance in “The Legend of Aku Sika.” The findings revealed that the dances served as powerful expressions of cultural identity, allowing performers and audience members to engage with and negotiate their heritage within a contemporary context. The deliberate selection of Akan dances, as guided by the playwright's preference, reinforces the idea that identity is not fixed but is continuously constructed through cultural practices and performances. A connection can be drawn to the identity theory as the

dance selection served as a means of affirming and articulating Akan cultural identity, while addressing modern concerns for cultural preservation.

The findings underscore the relevance of Audience Reception Theory, particularly in understanding the diverse ways audiences interpreted and engaged with the Akan dance elements. The survey data revealed a range of audience responses, from those who recognized the specific dances and their cultural significance to those who simply appreciated their aesthetic and emotional impact. These varied responses highlight the active role of the audience in constructing meaning and confirm that engagement with performance is an interactive process shaped by individual backgrounds, expectations, and prior experiences. For example, a significant impact on the audience was their emotional engagement; this validated the theory.

Social Semiotics, as developed by theorists like Halliday and Kress, offers a valuable framework for understanding how meaning is constructed through the performative and visual elements of Akan dance in "The Legend of Aku Sika". The dances operated as a semiotic system, communicating cultural narratives and emotional states through choreography, movement, and gestures. Even audience members who were unfamiliar with the specific dances were able to grasp their underlying meanings and symbolic significance.

While the findings generally support the application of these theoretical frameworks, it's important to acknowledge certain nuances and potential contradictions. For example, the limited audience awareness of specific Akan dances suggests that the semiotic communication may not have been fully effective for all viewers. Or perhaps, despite the best efforts in the adaptations, certain audience members were not as satisfied with the presentation. Addressing these nuances provides a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in integrating traditional dance into contemporary theatre.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of Akan dance in "The Legend of Aku Sika" offers compelling support for several key theoretical frameworks. The dances functioned as "restored behavior," reaffirming cultural identity, engaging audiences in multifaceted interpretations, and communicating rich cultural narratives through a complex semiotic system. These findings underscore the enduring power of traditional art forms to connect past and present, foster cultural understanding, and enrich the theatrical experience in meaningful ways. Future research could explore the long-term impact of such productions on audience perceptions of Akan culture and the role of theatre in promoting cultural preservation.

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