

SHALL OUR DANCE HEAL US? THEMATIC EXPLORATIONS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN SELECTED DANCES AT NAFEST 2012

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Abstract

Since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, managing its cultural diversity has proved to be onerous. Hence, one of the tasks imposed upon the handlers of the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST) is to position culture as a tool to negotiate national unity. This paper examines the thematic treatment of national unity and peace through cultural integration in selected dance performances of the 2012 edition of the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST) in Nigeria. The study adopts the participant observation research method for data collation, and borrows insight from the theory of multiculturalism to interrogate the selected dance pieces. A descriptive and interpretative analysis of four States' dance entries at the festival, reveal an exploration of the dynamics of the ethno-cultural and political interactions within each State. We also find that deliberate efforts were geared towards addressing the festival theme of peace and economic empowerment in the dance performances under study. The study, therefore, recognizes NAFEST as a viable platform to negotiate national unity. It also identifies that the artistic exploration that led to the creation of the dances under study, has positive implications for national cohesion, peace, and development. The study concludes by advocating a viable choreographic approach which could further entrench the ideology of NAFEST as a unity festival.

Keywords: Nigeria, NAFEST, Dance, Cultural Diversity, National Unity.

Introduction

Nigeria is unarguably the most populated country on the African continent. With over three hundred ethnic groups and clearly above six hundred distinct languages and dialects, Nigeria remains a culturally vibrant and variegated nation, and this makes her a melting point for

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plethora of cultural heritage materials. Though, identified as a source of strength, cultural diversity has also proved to be an impediment to national cohesion and development in Nigeria, and indeed other African nations. No doubt, the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria are composite nationalities in their own rights, which merely operate within a larger body of the nation. However, since Nigeria gained independence in 1960, crises arising from issues of ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity have been the bane of the national question in the nation. Resultantly, the pluralism and rich diversity in terms of human and cultural resources, which should have been a blessing and explored to the benefit of Nigeria, has become a major obstacle to nation building.

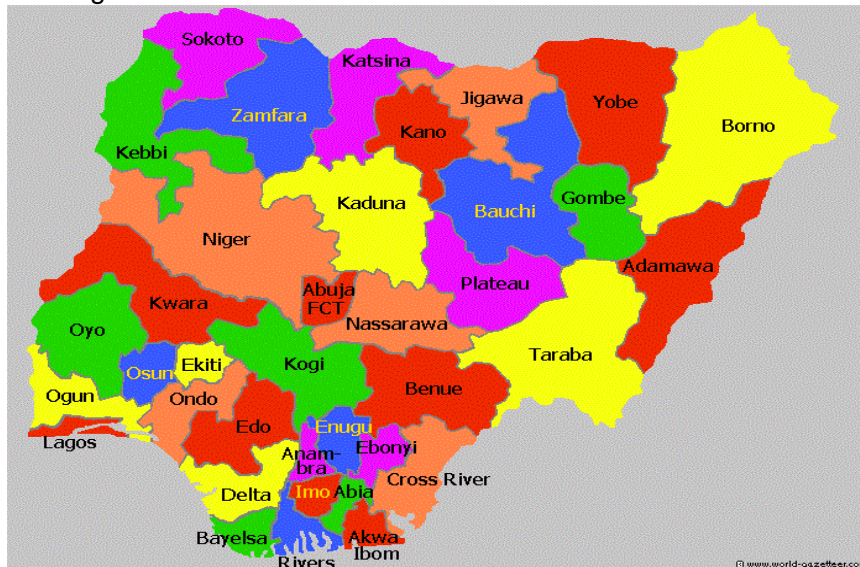


Figure 1
The map of Nigeria showing the thirty-six States and the Federal Capital Territory

Source: [Pinterest.com/pin/375698793888205340](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/375698793888205340)

The multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria, and the attendant search for national integration necessitated the establishment of the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST). The festival was devised as a cultural means to combat the many problems which cultural diversity poses to the nation. Between the years 1967 and 1970, Nigeria experienced a bitter civil war which threatened to tear the nation apart. After the war ended, the General Gowon-led Administration, conceived

and institutionalized the idea of a 'unity festival' as a soft-sell engineering mechanism to re-integrate the people from the war-torn zones of the Eastern Nigeria, and to further entrench the government's three Rs agenda; Reconciliation, Reintegration and Rehabilitation. Thus, as a post-civil war initiative, NAFEST made its debut in the year 1970 as the All Nigeria Festival of Arts and Culture (ANFAC) in 1970. The aim of the festival was to deploy culture as part of the reconciliation efforts of the government, and to make all Nigerian citizens see themselves as an indivisible people with one goal, while celebrating unity in the Nigerian diversity. For this reason, the byline of the festival was "a festival that unites the nation".

After Nigeria's successful outing at the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture in 1977 (FESTAC '77), ANFAC metamorphosed into NAFEST, and has come to be known as an annual national festival, which is rotationally hosted by all the States of the Federation. The primary aim of the festival is to engender national cohesion and solidarity, through the celebration, documentation and preservation of the various Nigerian indigenous arts and cultural heritage. Usually lasting for ten days, NAFEST features various competitive, non-competitive, and demonstrative artistic events including dance. Dance is a vital component of the Nigerian indigenous arts. It has been identified as a strong tie capable of binding communities, and has remained an important aspect of NAFEST. It is a pivotal aspect of the Nigerian cultural heritage, which features prominently either as a competitive or non-competitive event under diverse nomenclatures in the various editions of NAFEST. As a result, several cultural dances are being churned out from the various States in Nigeria and the F.C.T. on an annual basis through the NAFEST platform.

The NAFEST 2012 theme addresses the nexus between culture, peace and economic empowerment. Since independence, Nigeria has witnessed incessant ethno-religious and political crises due to cultural diversity. These crises usually come with attendant wanton destruction of lives and properties, leading to the decimation of the economic power and development of the nation. This paper, therefore, concerns itself with the expression of the NAFEST philosophy in the dances performed on the platform, with specific reference to the 2012 edition of the festival. The paper investigates the thematic execution of cultural integration, national solidarity, unity, and economic empowerment in four selected dance entries at the 2012 event.

Conceptual Clarifications

Cultural diversity is perceived to mean the presence of an "array of differences that exist among groups of people with definable and unique

cultural background(s)" (Diller, 2004, p. 4). The consideration of Deng (1997, p.28) that ethnicity is an "African predicament", is echoed in Yerima's (2011, p. 32) observation that "issues of individuality, national identities, cultural diversities, and ethnicity...have become constraints to the development process of the African world". However, As Okagbue (2012, p. 12) rightly notes:

Africa is blessed with a rich and diverse cultural wealth and it is precisely and perhaps only in the domain of culture that African nations are going to be able to compete favourably with the rest of the world... Africa is endowed with immense cultural capital and the goal of education and policy should be to develop structures and mechanisms for studying, understanding, and maximising the huge potential benefits that can accrue from our immense cultural endowment... this can only happen through our attitudes to our cultures, art practices, and forms.

Certainly, instead of capitalising on unhealthy dichotomies, the focus should be on the positives which cultural diversity represents. It is also the opinion of Onwuejeogwu (2007, p. 3) that ethnic differences are "wholly learned" and "nurtured", though they are thought of as 'natural'. This implies that with diligent engineering towards attitudinal change, ethnic differences can be understood and tolerated. Such that when ethnic distrust and intolerance is 'unlearned', a national culture can evolve from cultural diversity. Thus, we totally agree with Okagbue and Onwuejeogwu that, if properly managed, the inherent common themes in the rich cultural heritage of the Nigerian diverse ethnic groupings are the basics and fragments from which a national culture could evolve. A national culture has the tendency to give every stakeholder a sense of belonging, and this has tremendous implications for national unity, and globally viable cultural products.

The Cultural Policy of Nigeria recognises festivals as "periodic celebrations, marking significant events in the life of the community, for the transmission of perceptions, ideals, aspirations and philosophies of the people for meaningful living" (Aig-Imokhuede, 1991, p. 173). The spontaneous quality and participatory nature of festivals equip them with the ability to encourage communal cohesion. There are several categories of festivals; however, national festivals are solely committed to connecting the people of a nation with the aim of solidifying patriotic spirits in the society. Usually drawing participants

from the entire nation, national festivals are aimed at promoting national orientation and unity, and cementing the cultural basis of the country's development. It achieves this by providing a platform to exhibit, appraise and celebrate cultural works of the nation.

Undeniably, NAFEST is one of such national festivals. Speaking at the 2009 edition of NAFEST held at Minna, Niger State, the former First Lady of Nigeria, Hajiya Turai Yar'Adua described cultural festivals as tools for bridge-building and national unity. She noted that: NAFEST provides a platform where stakeholders from diverse backgrounds interact and showcase their rich heritage in a creative, friendly, and celebrative mood. Such interactions lead to the building of bridges of understanding, harmony, and peace that is dear to us in our efforts to grow as one and indivisible nation. Towards this, all hands must, therefore, be on deck to support the lofty ideals of the festival which are geared towards harnessing our cultural resources in our quest to uplift the quality of life of Nigerians. Going by the NAFEST ideology, one of the requisites of the performances created for the festival is that they should aspire to nationhood from the sub-national perspectives. Thus, the NAFEST dance events are designed to fulfill specific expectations of national unity and integration. This implies that some theoretical and technical factors must influence the choreography of these dances. Certainly, these factors are expected to firmly establish the ideology of NAFEST as a festival which unites the nation.

NAFEST features holistic performances of dance theatres that are narrative in nature, incorporating movements, dramatic actions, music, mimetic actions, chants, costumes, props, and other theatrical elements for communication. For NAFEST, dance compositions are crafted within a stipulated time frame, round the themes of each edition of the festival. Though the origins of these dances can be traced to the pure dances which are produced at the various indigenous cultural festivals, for NAFEST they take on the form of dance theatre. From the raw forms which they are produced, the dances undergo a process of refinement before they fit on the NAFEST stage. Remarkably, the efforts directed at national unity have made multiculturalism increasingly evident in the choreographic structures of the dances produced by several States on the NAFEST platform. This choreographic trend makes it an apt concept for studying and exploring cultural dances for a culturally diverse nation like Nigeria.

In cultural studies, the theory of multiculturalism is the existence, acceptance, or promotion of multiple cultural traditions within a single society. It is a policy of promoting the maintenance of cultural diversity, by advocating for equal respect to the various cultures existent in a society. The concept advocates the maintenance of distinctiveness

and uniqueness of each culture within the same social space in what Chua (2007, p. 1) refers to as the salad bowl manner. Tompskin (qtd. in Musa 2004, p. 67) elucidates that “with the public acknowledgement of the existence of different cultures living together...multiculturalism is designed to integrate... a new but generally unified... identity”. Thus, this study adopts the theory of multiculturalism as theoretical framework for this study.

NAFEST 2012: Theme and Selected Dance Entries

The 26th edition of NAFEST was hosted at the Kwara State Council for Arts and Culture, Ilorin, from 13 to 20 of October, 2012, with the theme ‘Culture, Peace, and Economic Empowerment’. We already stated that NAFEST is established towards national integration and unity, through the celebration of the diverse Nigerian arts and culture. This forms the basis of the various artistic events at the festival, dance inclusive. Given the national outlook and elevated status of NAFEST, the various events are adjudicated by a panel of academics and experts in each of the sub-fields of the indigenous arts. For the dance events, the onus lies on these tried, tested, and trusted adjudicators to determine the artistic merits of the entries based on the stipulated criteria. Although Nigeria comprises 36 States, the 26th edition of NAFEST had only 25 States in participation. This was largely due to the insurgency and security challenges in some zones of the country. Thus, for the sake of due representation, this paper will study and discuss four dance entries which represent the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western zones of Nigeria.

Synopses of the Selected Entries

***Dance Bridges* - Nasarawa State, Northern Nigeria**

Created out of the old Plateau State on the 1st of October, 1996, Nasarawa is one of the youngest States in Nigeria. It is located in the North-Central region of Nigeria, and also known as the ‘Home of Solid Minerals’. With her thirty (31) ethnic groups, and over forty (40) languages and dialects, Nasarawa remains one of the most culturally variegated States in Nigeria. The State has become a household name in the Nigerian cultural industry, having performed the remarkable feat of winning the Overall Best State award at NAFEST for five (5) consecutive years (2007 -2011).

The piece from the Nasarawa State Performing Troupe enacts the experiences of two neighbouring communities. They engage in activities such as trading, farming, and hunting in a friendly and harmonious atmosphere. Both communities also organise and enjoy various recreational activities together. However, during an inter-

community wedding ceremony, a man mistakenly steps on another man from the other community. The kinsmen of the aggrieved man take up the fight, and this leads to an inter-community crisis. The crisis lingers and cripples the economic and socio-cultural activities which both communities mutually benefited from. Resultantly, there is famine in the land, yet both parties remain adamant towards dialogue.

After some time the new couple deliver a baby. Surprisingly, the arrival of the new-born dissipates the atmosphere of hate, and both communities reconcile. During the naming ceremony, the two friends who clashed earlier reunite and perform a hybrid of dance movements from both communities. Everyone is taken by the new dance, and it soon becomes a money-spinner as guests enthusiastically spray the dancers with cash. Consequently, both communities are pulled into the dance arena once more in harmony.

Ketolokolo (The Palm Tree) – Cross River State, Southern Nigeria

Cross River State is located in the South-South region of Nigeria. It is famed for its many tourist attractions, hence, the nickname 'The People's Paradise'. The State capital city, Calabar, is widely known as the leading tourism city of Nigeria. The coastal State plays home to many ethnic groups like Efik, Bekwarra, Yakurr, Ejagham, Yala, among others.

The piece from the Cross River State Cultural Troupe tells the story of three families who symbolically represent the three geo-political and senatorial zones of Cross-River State. In the event of his earthly departure, their father bequeaths to them the heritage of a large expanse of palm tree plantation. It soon becomes apparent, however, that there is no love lost between the three families. In their discordant and selfish nature, the heads of the three families try to acquire the palm tree plantation for themselves alone. However, their father who has transformed into an ancestor and their immortal guidance, stops them. He places an unusual condition that unless the three palm trees which they are to tap from move four steps forward, they will be unable to access their inheritance. At this point, each of the families begin to devise means of outdoing and outwitting the other in a bid to either steal the inheritance, or forcefully move the trees of their own accord. Alas, on each occasion they meet with some form of obstacle. The conflict heightens as the families begin to openly display their mistrust, suspicion, bitterness, and hatred for one another. The unfolding events finally culminate into chaos and war.

In the midst of the war the grandchildren from each of the families dance on stage, waving the 'ketolokolo' (newly sprouted palm frond).

The newly sprouted palm fronds symbolize peace and a new beginning. The entrance of the grandchildren brings the fight to an end. This aspect of the resolution of the conflict is predicated on the cultural practice and belief system of the warring parties that when different factions engage in a fight and their grandchildren step into the scene, the factions must disengage. Significantly, the grandchildren in this story represent the youths who can be pivotal to the institution of peace in communities, instead of allowing them to be used to perpetrate evil.

After their reconciliation, the families suddenly realise that the palm trees had moved as commanded by their late father. At which point the spirit of their father speaks out again. He reminds them that development can only be achieved in an atmosphere devoid of rancour and chaos, and that their much needed growth is largely dependent on the peace that must exist amongst them. He reiterates that if they embrace peace, the palm oil plantation which is their heritage, will become their source of strength and greatness, and a rich economic resource which shall make them the cynosure of all eyes. The story ends with a celebration and unity dance from all members of the families.

Echi Eteka (Tomorrow is too far) – Ebonyi State, Eastern Nigeria

Ebonyi State is located in the South-Eastern part of Nigeria. It is a State known for its large salt deposits, hence the nickname 'Salt of the Nation'. Apart from the slight variance in their local dialects, the Ebonyi people are primarily Igbo. This dance piece from the Ebonyi State Cultural Troupe narrates the story of three ethnic groups who cohabit in the same community. Intending investors visit the community, and are impressed with the economic prospects of the land. Suddenly, chaos erupts as three women lay claims that their children had been kidnapped, maimed and murdered respectively. Each woman accuses a member of the other ethnic group of being responsible for her predicament. Resultantly, there is mutual distrust and suspicion, leading to uncontrollable fracas. Observing the happenings in the land, the investors hold a quick meeting, and agree that investing in the land is a huge risk. Subsequently, the investors hurriedly pack their luggage and leave.

The community leader is at a loss on how to resolve the issue, until a woman whispers to him a suggestion. Following the woman's whispered suggestion, the community leader then chooses a man each from the three ethnic groups, and taxes them to go in search of a lasting solution to the problems of the land. Through the initiative of the woman, the real perpetrators of the crimes are captured. When unmasked, it is revealed that the evil doers are indeed unemployed

youths of the land, who in turn blame their evil acts on joblessness and poverty. After a brief consultation among the elders of the land, it is agreed that cultural tourism will solve the problem of unemployment. Having overcome their mutual distrust, the people reunite once again and celebrate their victory over what could have torn them apart. The fanfare of their celebration attracts the investors. Thereafter, the investors return and again indicate interest in doing business with the people of the land.

This is Lagos - Lagos State, Western Nigeria

Lagos State is located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. Also known as the 'Centre of Excellence', Lagos State is widely acknowledged as the commercial nerve of Nigeria, and one of the largest economies in Africa. Apart from being a home to the Yoruba, Awori, and Egun people, Lagos State is known to accommodate people from all over the country, regardless of their ethnicity. This singular fact accounts for its diversified economy.

The piece from the stables of the Lagos State Council for Arts and Culture starts with the visual images of people from diverse Nigerian cultures who are symbolically brought together under the Eyo masquerade staff. Eyo is the foremost masquerade of the Lagos people. While under the Eyo staff, peace reigns in the land, as everyone went about their businesses: fishing, farming, and trading, without rancour. Then, a land tussle breaks out, and crisis erupts. The community leader resolves the crises by strategically mapping out territories according to the ethnic groups. Finally, the people forget their earlier differences, and they engage in a unity dance to celebrate their newfound peace. They perform in unison the various dances which portray the cultural variety and beauty of Lagos State. Their dance performance attracts foreigners who come to patronise them, admire their tourist sites, and buy their cultural materials. Once again, Lagos economy booms and everyone is happy.

Thematic Treatment of Cultural Integration, National Unity, and Peace in the Selected Dance Entries

Danceturgy refers to "the study of the craft and techniques of dance composition, and the representation of the main elements of choreography in performance" (Tume, 2019, p. 23). Therefore, the form and structure of NAFEST danceturgy has been established to occur within regimented timeframes, and the cultural confines of the State space. According to the provisions of the NAFEST 2012 syllabus, the characteristic features of the dance entries are expected to conform to the following: thematic relevance, dance theatre form, short time

frame, limited cast, state identity, and cultural integration. The salient compositional elements which are identified in the entries under study are: creative concept, kinesics, proxemics, and adornments.

Creative Concept: The creative concept refers to the overriding idea which drives each dance story. In this study, the thematic preoccupation of unity is consistent in all the dance pieces. The pieces affirm the essentiality of full ethnic and gender representation and participation in crisis resolution. Ebonyi State's dance piece particularly clamours for more female representation in government and decision making. In concordance with the festival theme of 'Culture, Peace, and Economic Empowerment', the thematic preoccupations in the dance pieces reiterate that a people can thrive economically only when they embrace the culture of peace. The storylines illustrate that concerted efforts at communal participation will reduce inter-ethnic distrust, foster peace, and boost cultural tourism which will in turn translate to meaningful national development. They also explore the indigenous vocations as viable avenues for wealth creation and economic empowerment.







The dance pieces which allude to the past and current inter-ethnic crises within each of the states also identify inter-ethnic marriage, inclusivity in policy making, mutual respect, and tolerance as effective catalysts to fostering national peace and unity. They also suggest effective marketing of heritage materials, towards boosting cultural tourism and economic development in Nigeria. Through the message of all the dance pieces there is a unanimous agreement that the traditional values of any people are significant in conflict resolution. It is also stressed that to transform Nigeria into a tourist destination, there is the need to tend cultural heritage with peace and harmony. Each of the dance stories recognises the pluralism and creativity of the various Nigerian cultures as a source of strength yet untapped. The stories symbolically depict Nigeria as a melting pot which harbours people from diverse cultures and ethnicities. Borrowing from the experiences and socio-political realities of the States whose dance entries are studied, issues such as intolerance, interpersonal clashes, land tussle, greed, suspicion, and false accusations are identified as the leading causes of inter-communal crises. The stories which allude to the fact that communal clashes are inevitable, also prescribe fair and prompt solutions to such clashes whenever they arise.

Kinesics: Movement is the primary ingredient in dance creation. Hence, this segment discusses the art of sourcing movement materials for the dances under study. The dance pieces feature an exploration

of dance movements from various cultures of the states under investigation. The dance movements are performed in unison to the same music, to portray the multicultural nature of each State, and indeed the nation. For instance, at some point, the Lagos State performers dance in unison as in the Galala movements of the Ajegunle people, Akoto movements of the Egun people, the Apeja movements of the Lagos Island people, and the Apepe movements of the Epe and Ikorodu people. In the same vein, using what can be referred to as a code-switching technique in choreography, the Nasarawa State performers executed the Mada, Alago, and Eggon movements to the music of the Gwandara and Migili ethnic groups. The crouching, bouncing, swaying, kneeling, vibrating and swinging movements in the dance entries are sourced from the various ethnic groups within each State. These choreographic experiments buttress the NAFEST ideology of unity in diversity. They illustrate that it is indeed possible for people from diverse cultural backgrounds to cohabit peacefully, maintain their distinct individual ethnic identities, and at the same time share a national identity.

Proxemics: This refers to the use of spatial designs and patterns for communication and interaction within the performance space. In reference to the use of space in the choreographies under study, it is observed that there is a conscious use of the circle and linear floor patterns. Bakare (2004, p. 34-35) observes that “dancing in a circle indicates that the dancers have something in common”. Thus, the circle floor pattern, which is a continuous curved line, is used in the dance pieces as a symbol for communality, wholeness and perfection. The linear floor patterns, on the other hand, are used to depict and communicate solidarity, determination and unity of purpose. Below are examples of situations where circle and straight line floor patterns are employed in the dance entries under consideration.

Key for Floor Patterns in the Dance Entries:

-  - Elders
-  - Male dancers/members of the community
-  - Female dancers/members of the community
-  - Instrumentalists
-  - Audience
-  - Movement

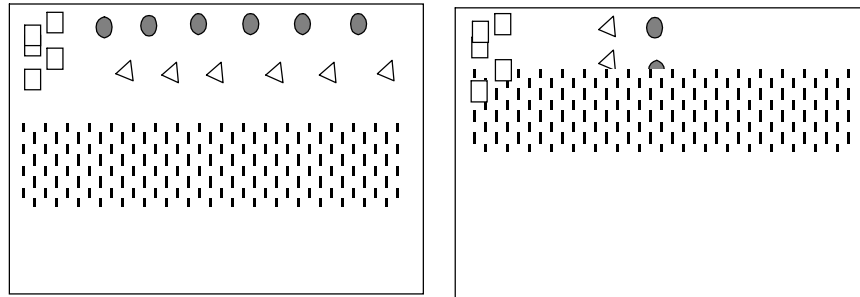


Plate 1&2: Variants of vertical and horizontal linear floor patterns as the family members in *Ketolokolo* perform the various ethnic movements in Cross River State.

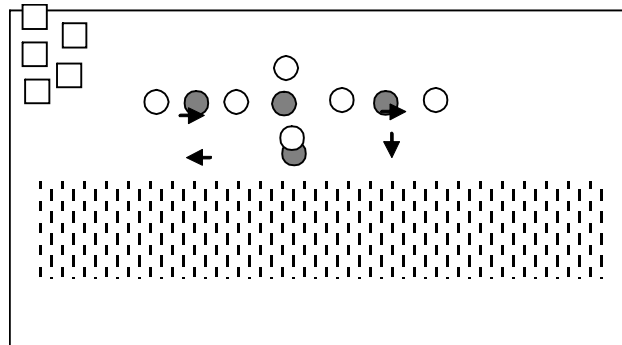


Plate 3: An illustration of the perpendicular linear floor pattern used to express division of labour and unity in diversity while the farmers worked on their farm in *This is Lagos*.

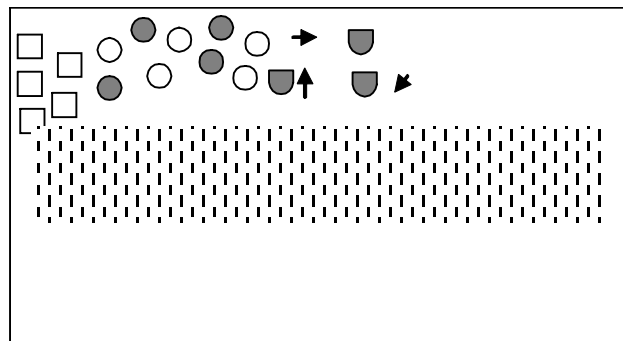


Plate 4: An illustration of elders of the land as they form a circle to consult among themselves, while the townspeople wait and observe in *Echi Eteka*.

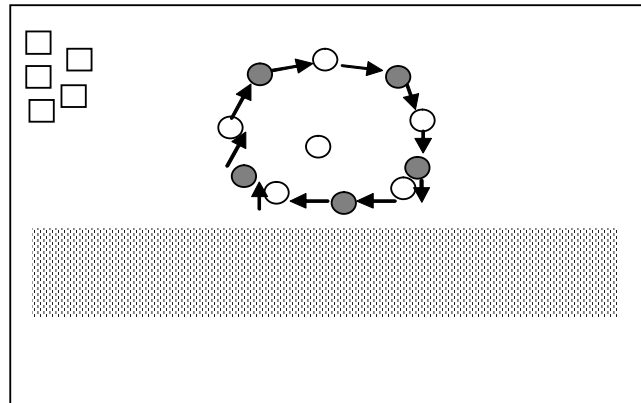


Plate 5: An illustration of the members of both communities in *Dance Bridges* as they perform the reunion and celebration dance.

Adornments: Adornments such as costumes, accessories, make-up, and props play a crucial role in dance performances. The adornments function beyond being a covering for the performers. They identify the diverse ethnic cultures, and exhibit the material culture of the states. In the dance pieces under study, cultural materials such as costumes, make-up, and props from diverse cultures are harnessed to project unity and solidarity for each state. For instance, the yellow colour which is popularly identified with the Mbaya dancers of the Mada ethnic group is mix-matched with the Afo traditional costumes for some of the male dancers in *Dance Bridges* by Nasarawa State.



Figure 2

Women catering to their husbands on the farm in Dance Bridges

Source: Still pictures from the Dance Bridges DVD, produced by the Nasarawa State Performing Troupe, 2012.

Also, in Ketolokolo, the diverse costumes of the major ethnic groups in Cross River are adorned by the performers in what Chua (2007, p.1.) coins as the salad bowl manner.



Figure 3

The people robed in the diverse costumes of the Efik, Ejagham, Igede, Yakurr and Bekwarra ethnic groups as they perform a victory dance in Ketolokolo

Source: Still pictures from the Ketoloko DVD, produced by the Cross River State Performing Troupe, 2012.

Similarly, the basic and fragments technique is adopted to costume the performers in *This is Lagos*, to represent the various ethnic groups resident in Lagos State. This symbolises cultural integration and cohesion.



Figure 4

In This Is Lagos, the performers don caps from the Tiv, Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba cultures while they engage in a land tussle

Source: *Still pictures from the This is Lagos DVD, produced by the Lagos State Performing Troupe, 2012.*

Towards a Choreographic Theory for NAFEST Dance Performances: A Conclusion

This paper set out to explore the essence and ideology of national healing, unity and peace in selected dances at the 2012 edition of NAFEST. The paper unravels the connection between culture, peace and economic empowerment, and how it is demonstrated in the dance pieces under study. It has shown that the mandate of NAFEST is to solidify national unity through the promotion of the diverse Nigerian arts and culture. Evidential results from the selected dance entries, establish dance as a vibrant art which is imbued with the soft power of healing and orientating a people. Multiculturalism is identified as a recurrent theme in the choreographic styles adopted in all the selected dances. We also find that the thematic concern of the 2012 edition of the festival is found to be properly articulated in the selected dance entries. The dance pieces deployed cultural diversity as a positive tool to drive national unity whereby multiple ethnic groups can coexist and thrive within the same state space.

In spite of the successful outing of the selected State entries under study, we noticed that several other States grappled with actuating the festival theme in their dance entries. We observe the

reasons for this to be a lack of proper understanding of the NAFEST ideology and the stipulated thematic preoccupation, and a deficiency in the choreographic approaches employed. It is discovered that, in spite of the popularity of the dance art and its relevance to NAFEST, there is no visibly stipulated choreographic approach with which the State Arts Councils are supposed to produce dance entries which could effectively reflect the NAFEST ideologies of cultural integration and national unity. The study, therefore, concludes by advocating a choreographic theory which will facilitate an intercultural dialogue within each state in Nigeria. We believe that ingraining such a choreographic policy for NAFEST dance performances will not only effectively reflect the cultural peculiarities of the States, but also further entrench the ideologies of NAFEST as a unity festival.

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