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**Cultural Administration and Arts Management in
Nigeria: A Historical Insight**

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Abstract

There is a fine distinction between the two emphatic concepts – culture and the arts, though they are also related. Both the distinction and the seeming synonymity could be seen in their definitions. An American sculptor once said that art is something one does and culture is something that is done for one (as quoted by Hermann Glaser: 36). This close relationship between the arts and culture is analogous to that of a tree and its flowers. The arts are, therefore, a manifestation of culture. It follows that any art form is created and executed within a specific physical environment. It naturally interacts with the environment, is influenced by it, influences that environment

in turn and acts together with the environment in the larger and far more complex history of society. Hence when art forms are considered from the point of view of survival strategies, the dynamics of cultural interaction with society become even more aesthetically challenging and fulfilling. This paper attempts to examine historical trends in the cultural administration and arts management in Nigeria.

Key words: Culture, Arts, History, Nigeria.

Introduction

Culture is dynamic and it varies from one society to another. There is a distinct cultural system in each human society which makes the members of one society behave differently in some significant respects from members of another society. There are networks of values, attitudes, customs and behavioural patterns that define the way of life and world in which men and women act, decide and solve problems, secure food, clothing, shelter and whatever goods and services they require in every human society. Interestingly, there had been over 184 attempted definitions of culture by different scholars. Tylor as quoted by Umukoro (2002) had over a century ago defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (2). Culture is thus reflected in this definition as the integrated system of learned behaviour patterns characteristic of the members of a society.

Another definition of culture is that by Raymond Williams who regards the concept of culture as consisting of four jointly applicable meanings.

1. A general state or habit of mind, having close relations with the idea of human perfection;
2. A general state of intellectual development in a society as a whole;
3. The general body of the arts, and,

4. A whole way of life, i.e. material, intellectual and spiritual.
(In Umukoro 2002, p.2)

This definition by Raymond Williams clearly coincides with the one stipulated at the UNESCO World Conference held in Mexico City in 1982 that culture comprises the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. Among other definitions of culture which abound in the literature is that culture is behaviour; peculiar to Homo Sapiens, together with the material objects used as an integral part of this behaviour; specifically, culture consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, ceremonies, etc. This definition derives from the semantic origins of two related words “culture” and “civilization” whose original meaning is from the Latin words, cultural (the soil) and civis (the status of citizenship) and which were later extended to philosophy or learning, generally describing the aesthetic and intellectual civilization of the Roman citizenship over the primitive condition of the foreigner or barbarian. From this early usage of the term, the word culture came to be described as the learned portion of human behaviour, the ways of thinking, feeling, and doing those things that man in his own capacity has developed as part of his environment.

FRN (1988) in the Nigerian Cultural Policy also takes this into consideration in its definition of 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 neighbours. (p.5)

It is therefore not surprising that cultural development assumes different forms in different countries in accordance with the political fabric of the nation. Thus, in each country, culture is defined in

conjunction with the kind of socio-political system operating within that nation. The capitalist concept of culture, for instance, is mostly viewed as the right to and/or access to participation in the arts and, to a certain extent, to creating art itself; more expensive, to creative activity; whereas the socialist concept of culture involves the development of the whole personality; presupposing that the basic material conditions of the person must be secured before the person's cultural identity is insured. These basic material conditions include right of employment, social security, leisure and education, economic conditions, among others. In developing nations, culture is seen as the mobilization of a national consciousness which will reveal a new identity through a symbiosis of the old and the useful modern. It is against this backdrop that this paper attempts to examine this historical foray into the formative beginnings of cultural awareness in Nigeria from the pre-colonial period through the colonial era to the post-independence period.

Eras in the Formative beginnings of Cultural Awareness in Nigeria

1. The Pre-Colonial Era

Historically, cultural administration in Nigeria dates far back to the pre-colonial era when there existed many kingdoms found in the North and South of the country. These were independent and highly organized – politically, socially and culturally. Notable among these kingdoms were Ife, Benin, the Hausa States and Fulani apart from other smaller groups. At the helm of affairs were the traditional rulers, obas or emirs, who delegated powers to chief under them, and the local chiefs in turn – for convenience sake – assigned different people according to their abilities or talents. These abilities could be in carving, drumming, singing, dancing, dressmaking and black-smiting. The assignments included those of the priest who performed the religious obligation of a mediator between society and the gods. The fact that this traditional administration of cultural activities encouraged active and willing participation by the people in cultural

programmes made it a social obligation system. Talents used for the benefit of the society were appreciated because everybody was willing to contribute his quota to the success of the agreed socio-cultural programme.

Like the traditional ruler who was important in the chain of events in the administration of culture in the old kingdoms, so also were artists who formed the bulk in the structure of organization. In fact, both were said to have been given the pride of place. The cultural pace was dictated by the artists who also directed the social taste. It was quite possible for articles to be designed and produced by artists and craftsmen because they were skilled in one or more crafts and the works of the competent and talented were always in great demand. This gave the artists and craftsmen a measure of control in the economic life of the society. The appreciation of their work and worth was a motivating factor apart from compensation, in the willingness to participate in the overall social call to duty. Everybody was motivated more by the social honour gained in participation than the compensation, which was derived; and there was also room for specialization. One significant point worth noting is the conducive ambience created for cultural administration. Culture was seen as a communal responsibility, which is only possible as an element of democratic society, given the fact that democratic society can only remain a society with leisure and freedom if members are able to use their time wisely. Undoubtedly, this peaceful, democratic environment and the sense of patriotism on the part of the artists contributed immensely to the promotion of cultural activities in the pre-colonial societies.

2. The Colonial Period

Cultural promotion took a different turn, as Nigeria became truly a political unit in 1914 with the colonial government in place. This was when the two protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigerian were amalgamated by Sir Frederick Lugard. Historians have recorded that what was referred to as Nigeria was, until 1914, a mere geographical

expression. The year 1914 was when modern Nigeria came into being as a dependent territory of the British imperial system.

During the colonial period, cultural activities suffered a set-back as the missionaries considered them as inferior and primitive. From 1914 when Nigeria took the form in which it is today to 1946 onward when constitution after constitution was made, cultural development took an unprecedented turn for the worst with the missionaries curtailing all cultural activities formerly encouraged by the traditional rulers in most of the big towns.

There was an introduction of a new religious and educational system in lieu of the former traditional system. This was reflected in dance, poetry, religion, music and other strange cultural forms alien to the society. Young boys were trained in the ways of the white – man in schools set up for such a purpose and this meant abandoning all that was indigenous. In the place of the indigenous language was English, the effect of which can still be felt today, as the English Language is Nigeria's official language. This is also as reflected in the way of worship in many churches today. The aim of the missionaries and their professed religion and education was to wipe out completely the last vestiges of the cultural heritage of the people. Thus, cultural "agrounffairs" which used to be a vital part of communal living in the pre-colonial era became restricted to small villages during the colonial period. However, the people continued to carry on their traditional cultural pursuits in the smaller towns and villages where they still had a measure of control over their own affairs.

It is pertinent to recognize the fact that this dangerous attachment to the values of Western Europe and America, to the point where Third World functionaries fail to see anything good in their history, tradition and culture, has attracted the reaction of some scholars and critics. In his own reaction against the influence of Western Culture, Uya (1986) says:

...to speak of the culture of any ethnic group as being superior to another as we sometimes do in this

country... is not only totally nonsensical, but completely historical. (p.22)

Though Uya's view is on what is happening in Nigeria, yet it is applicable if seen against the background of the colonial period.

According to Okot L'Bitek (1973) and with particular reference to the behaviour of African leaders:

Many an African leader is split between his African background, of which he is secretly proud, but publicly ashamed, and the so-called modern way of life of which he is publicly proud but secretly unsure. (p.98)

Perhaps, this explains the reason why most African States, since gaining their independence, have been practising a political system that is not African, either in form or outlook as their national policies are not rooted within the indigenous aspirations of the people.

Unlike in the pre-colonial era when cultural activities were a way of life of the people, indigenous cultural activities suffered suppression and repression during the colonial period. Consequent upon the need for the preservation of the arts and crafts of the people, the colonial masters made some efforts towards the artistic development of the country. Two people in the colonial Ministry of Education, E. H. Duckworth and K. C. Murray were said to have inspired the colonial government in this direction having solicited for the preservation of the arts and crafts of the people which they considered might disappear.

To facilitate the development of the arts, the *Nigeria Magazine*, which was the organ of the colonial administration to publish information on educational and cultural matters, was established in 1923. Formerly known as the *Nigerian Teacher*, the *Nigeria Magazine* served as a source of promoting the arts and culture of the country.

As part of the efforts of E. H. Duckworth and K. C. Murray towards the preservation of the arts and crafts of the people, the colonial government also established Museums. The need to preserve valuable art treasures necessitated this idea. Later in 1953, and consequent upon the establishment of the Museums, the Department of Antiquity and Fine Arts was established in order to train graduates in the discipline and also provide art education that was of European standards and values. The colonial administration further created the post of Art Supervisor in their bid to promote art in their own way. Ben Enwonwu (now late) a Nigerian trained in London, was the first on the post, which later became known as Federal Art Adviser, attached to the Ministry of Education, where his duties included teaching and supervising the arts in schools as well as exhibitions both locally and internationally. His works had been exhibited in Zweemer Gallery, London 1937, Glasgow Empire Exhibition, 1948; Museum of Modern Art, Paris, 1946; Berkeley Galleries Appolinaire, New York, Boston and Washington, U.S.A. 1950; his last known exhibition was in commemoration of his 70th birthday in 1991 at the National Museum, Onikan, Lagos. His most known work in public in Nigeria is the NEPA's Sango Statues at the Marina, Lagos. Notwithstanding, cultural development stagnated in the real sense of the word during the colonial period which perhaps could be described as an era of bitter-sweet.

3. The Post-Colonial Period

The 1954 Constitution marks the end of the nationalist struggle with Britain. Fortunately, on 1st October 1960, despite many difficulties, focusing mainly on the differences among its various component groups, Nigerian became a sovereign federation. However, there had been a great deal of cultural activities before Independence in 1960. The exact date was in 1950 when the first Nigerian Festival of the Arts was held; the second and third were held in 1951 and 1952 respectively. It was thus designed to be an annual event. In a simple explanation on the festival of the Arts in the Daily Times, the then

festival secretary, while preparing for the third Nigerian festival of the Arts in 1952, stated as follows: (as quoted by Umukoro, 2002)

The primary object of the festival is to encourage people living in Nigeria to take an active part in the Arts – that is, painting or drawing pictures; writing poems, stories and plays in any major Nigerian language or in English; improving spoken English by reciting; increasing the number of amateur dramatists group by the performance of plays, fostering musical talent by singing songs or playing musical instruments: giving Nigerian Dance groups opportunities for displaying their talent in that direction; and developing the creative talent of craftsmen, and craftswomen. (p.68)

The festival itself was a series of competitions in all of these subjects and anyone living in Nigeria was free to enter for any of the competitions. The competitions or events were each divided into various age groups, so that children, youth, adults, the old and the elderly might all take part and compete against people of their own potential ability. In a country such as ours, where customs differ so widely and culture takes different forms from village to village, the greatest practical effort to direct attention to the cultural meaning of crafts, arts and music has been put forward by the Nigerian Festival of the Arts. It will also go a long way towards solving the problems, which the diversity of cultural outlook naturally creates. It might be interesting to note that everybody particularly women were encouraged to participate.

The women were reported to have participated actively, especially in dancing. It is not accidental, therefore, that during one of the Festival of the Arts, the “Daily Times” Silver Cup was awarded to the Warri Ladies Club, second prize went to the Nembe Dancers, the Owerri Abigolo dancers coming third while Queen’s College girls were awarded a Certificate of Merit.

The whole point of the Nigerian Festival of the Arts, according to D. A. Cannon then festival president (as quoted by Umukoro, 2002) “is to encourage Nigerian artists, craftsmen and musicians, to try and to keep on trying, to produce articles of artistic value which are truly Nigerian” (p.69). It was indeed an opportunity for Nigerians to show to the world what they can do. Consequently, upon the realization of the important role the festival of the arts plays in the lives of the community, not only for the participants but also for the general public, a council known as Nigerian Arts Council was established in 1956. As a voluntary organization, the responsibility of the council was to cater for the administration of Nigerian arts and culture, with membership drawn from all the states of the federation. The Nigerian Arts Council was financed from contributions from its members and donations from individuals from various walks of life and bodies noted for their interest and participation in traditional cultural activities. This is also to mean that the organization and its later established regional branches were completely independent of government. However, by 1960, the Arts Council had started receiving an annual grant of five thousand pounds (£5,000) from the government for personal emolument and office maintenance. Following an increase in the interest and awareness of the government on the promotion of arts and culture, the council was made the agent of the federal government on all cultural matters, while its annual grant was increased to twenty thousand naira (₦20,000) about 1970, aside from other grants received for the organization of the All Nigeria Festival of Arts in 1971 and 1972.

The administration of the Nigerian Arts Council as contained in its constitution, was by an elected executive committee made up of a president, two vice presidents, an honorary secretary, a treasurer, a publicity secretary and four unofficial members of the council. This executive committee was vested with the power to appoint committees to carry out on its behalf such functions as the daily administration of the council’s affairs, finance, staff matters and the management and

organization of the festival of the arts. Besides, there were other sub-committees including:

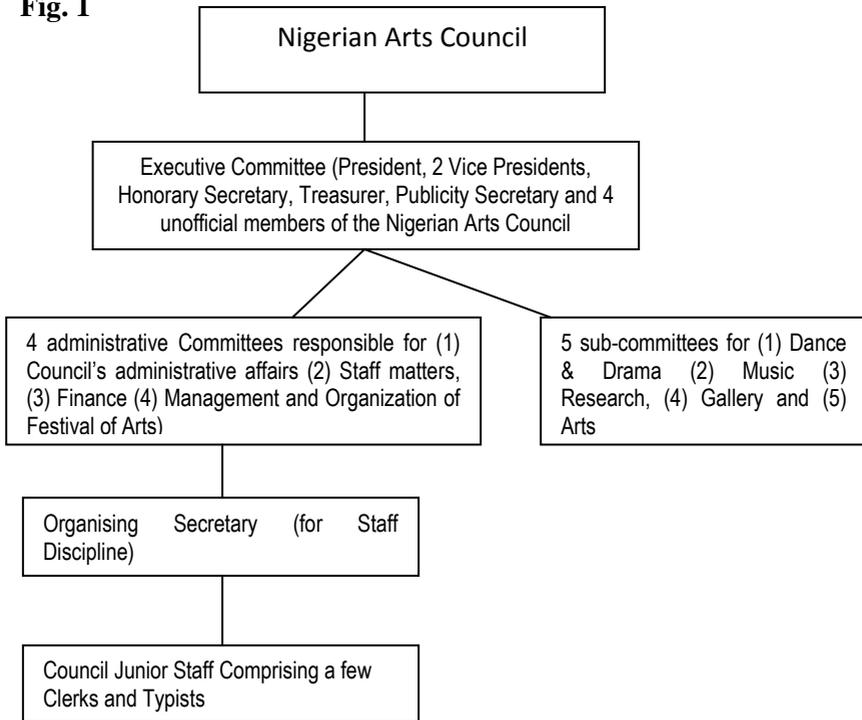
- a) dance and drama in charge of all performing arts.
- b) music – in charge of music, folklores and recordings.
- c) research – in charge of research into various fields of Nigerian arts and culture. The committee comprised a member from each of the sub-committees.
- d) gallery – which took care of museum, galleries and cultural centres and
- e) arts – taking charge of exhibition, art education, artistes society and collection of artistic works.

There was provision for the post of a salaried organizing secretary whose responsibility was to discipline the small staff of the council; the actual administrative duties were in the hands of the executive committee and the various sub-committees of the council.

In 1960, Nigeria inherited a constitution with a strong federal character and three regions. Later in 1963, the number of regions was increased to four-North, West, East and the Mid West region being the last created. Then, cultural matters were the responsibilities of four ministries, viz, Ministry of Information; Ministry of Education; Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Trade and Industry. While the Ministry of Information was in charge of government's major cultural programmes, it was the cultural division in the ministry that handled the bulk of the responsibilities; planned and executed major cultural programmes of the federal government such as the organization of local and international festivals of arts, cultural exchanges, art exhibitions and annual independence celebrations.

For the purpose of clarity, below is the organizational chart of the arts administration in Nigeria as reflected from early 50s to early 70s.

Fig. 1



Also, it was the editor of the *Nigeria Magazine* who headed the cultural division from independence to 1968 after which the need to give the necessary guidance necessitated the creation of the post of Federal Cultural Adviser. The ministry of Information made available the publication of books and other materials through newspapers, film, photography, broadcasting media and libraries.

Through cultural exchanges, culture was promoted by the Ministry of External Affairs. The education ministry did its fair share of cultural propagation through arts education and arts exhibitions in schools. In the case of Trade and Industries ministry, cultural promotion was

through the organization of trade fairs, sale and promotion of arts and crafts; and cultural and arts displays. All the four ministries were in charge of cultural promotion in their own peculiar ways as there was yet to be a cultural policy document to really give the expected direction in cultural matters – be it at the federal or state levels.

Museums also formed one of the earlier cultural institutions in the country after independence. The importance attached to museums, as inherited from the colonial era, was in promoting creative thoughts and enhancing economic and technological development. They exhibit the instrument of culture (art works, crafts and antiquities).

In this period under review, Fasuyi (1973) notes that difficulty in quantifying accurately the fund allocated to cultural matters:

It is very difficult to know how much exactly the federal government spent annually on art and culture. As already indicated four ministries are involved and even within them more than one division may be dealing with cultural matters (p.31).

The point being made is that financial allocation to arts and culture was mainly through the federal government and via the four ministries mentioned earlier.

Between 1952 and 1967, cultural matters became a local affair at the state level as the component units in the country implemented their cultural programmes as deemed proper. The state government also placed responsibilities of cultural matters in more than one ministry, though operating without any cultural policy document to guide their steps. The states provided library services in their local councils, organized festivals of arts, provided cultural information through the mass media and gave subvention to local councils and museums. The local councils had a major role in planning and executing cultural programmes.

During this early period of independence, there existed many arts and cultural agencies involved in cultural matters in the country. These

were institutions neither directly under the federal nor state governments. Rather they were autonomous agencies established by private bodies or individuals and foreigners to promote Nigerian arts. One of such organizations has already been mentioned earlier on – that is, the Nigerian Arts Council, established in 1956, and whose responsibilities included mounting exhibitions of Nigerian arts and crafts and organizing annual national festivals. The other organization involved in the cultural promotion then were the Orisun Theatre (formed in 1964 as a foster child of the 1960 Masks), the 1960 Masks, Unibadan masques, (which came in the mid 1970s), the Yoruba travelling theatre troupes, artistes’ societies, and many more smaller cultural groups that existed in the towns and villages which were involved in the promotion of culture in their ethnic fashion. It is, however, regrettable to note that the history of the performing arts industry in Nigeria is littered with ephemeral groups which come together on a wave of enthusiasm, work energetically for a period, and eventually fall victim to economic pressures or interpersonal wrangling or both.

A significant improvement in cultural promotion emerged in the 70s as our political authorities began to assert our cultural identity as a means of bringing about positive changes in our national outlook, as well as establishing greater confidence in our national values and aspirations. The post – independence period (1970s onwards) witnessed a rigorous effort to promote culture by both the stage and federal governments. It was obvious that in order to achieve real development, a resort to the culture was necessary in reversing the damage that the slave trade, colonization and foreign domination have inflicted on Africa’s cultural and spiritual values, on the African identity and on the African Soul.

A further step taken by the federal government in providing a modern basis for cultural action by the state is the promulgation of legislation relating to the various cultural organizations with the main purpose of strengthening and broadening the basis for the promotion of various aspects of Nigerian cultural life. These are essentially to be found in

the decrees setting up the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) 1979; the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA); the National Film Corporation (NFC) 1979; the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN); the Central for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC) 1979; National Library of Nigeria; the Federal Department of Culture, 1972, the National Archives; and the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) 1975. Other examples are the National Theatre and the National Troupe, Galleries and all the cultural institutions necessary for cultural management. The existence of the Federal Department of Culture and the National Council for Arts and Culture led to the creation of State Arts Councils at all state levels and thus formed the basis for the establishment and development of the machinery for cultural administration in Nigeria.

Cultural administration in the 70s especially at the federal level was under the Cultural Division of the Federal Ministry of Information with its office complex originally at the Exhibition Centre at Marina in Lagos. Later they moved to Obalende car park in the premises of Conference Visitors' Unit (CVU) from where they finally moved to the National Theatre where they operate and function as the Federal Department of Culture, being the supreme ministerial body responsible for the administration of arts and culture. On its establishment in 1972, its main role was to formulate, advise and execute some of government's policies on culture. The Department of Culture may be seen as the successor to the *Nigeria Magazine* unit whose responsibility then was to disseminate and publish research findings on Nigerian culture. *The Nigeria Magazine* which was established in 1923 thus became the intellectual bedrock and professional foundation upon which the Federal Department of Culture is built.

It is pertinent to note that while the Federal Department of Culture is a ministerial body responsible for the administration of arts and culture, the National Council for Arts and Culture is also the federal corporate body saddled with responsibilities similar to those of the former. The National Council for arts and Culture (NCAC) was established by the

NCAC Decree No. 3 of 1975 as the body responsible for the national co-ordination of cultural and artistic promotion and development in Nigeria. By this instrument, the Council inherited the assets and liabilities of the defunct Nigerian Arts Council including the National Festivals of Arts and Culture and its gong trophies, a national art collection, a crafts shop and an art gallery. The conversion of the Nigerian Arts Council into the National Council for Arts and Culture was probably necessitated by the federal government's intention to have a body which would be fully representative of all interests concerned with arts and culture in the country and which would be charged with the function and objectives of the federal government's overall commitment to the promotion of arts and culture.

As amended by the National Council for Arts and Culture Amendment Decree of 1987, the functions of the Council are to:

- a) promote and foster the appreciation, revival and development of Nigerian arts and culture;
- b) plan and co-ordinate cultural activities in Nigeria and foster the development of literary, visual and the performing arts in Nigeria;
- c) assist the Antiquities Commission established under section 3 of the Antiquities Act in the creation, acquisition and preservation of artistic works, cultural monuments and depositories;
- d) organize and promote exhibitions in visual, performing and literary arts as may be determined from time to time by the minister;
- e) co-ordinate inter-state cultural exchange activities;
- f) render assistance to the states in the field of arts and culture; and
- g) promote the development of music, traditional dancing, drama, opera, cinema, films, photography, folklore, oral

tradition, literature, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, town planning and general arts-works, woodwork, embroidery, weaving and similar crafts.

The council is further empowered by the Decree to:

- a) establish, with the approval of the minister, cultural centres, theatres, art galleries and craft centres for the promotion of arts and culture;
- b) establish, for purposes of carrying out its functions, under this Act, a national endowment fund for art;
- c) acquire, hold and manage movable or immovable property with the approval of the minister;
- d) sell, let, lease or otherwise dispose of any property vested in the council,
- e) vest its fund in such manner and to such extent as it thinks fit; and
- f) anything which in its opinion is calculated to facilitate the carrying out of its functions under this Act.

The Governing Board of the Council is composed as follows:

- (i) A chairman and four other persons, at least one of whom shall be a woman to be appointed by the president.
- (ii) The chairman of the Arts Council of each state of the federation;
- (iii) Five persons to present the universities in Nigeria, being persons qualified or having special interest in Nigerian arts and culture, to be appointed by the president.
- (iv) One representative of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria;

- (v) One representative of the federal ministry charged with the responsibility for matters relating to education;
- (vi) One representative of the federal ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to the council;
- (vii) Two persons to be appointed by the president to represent traditional institutions in Nigeria; and
- (viii) The Director of the Council.

Like the Nigerian Arts Council, one of the main functions of the National Council for Arts and Culture is to organize the National Festival of Arts and Culture tagged “NAFEST” annually with the following objectives; namely to:

- (i) promote national unity and solidarity through inter – state cultural exchange;
- (ii) create a forum for cultural and artistic promotion and development through healthy competitions amongst the states;
- (iii) promote the adaptation of Nigeria’s indigenous design for its modern development requirement and enhance national self – reliance;
- (iv) stimulate and promote tourism; and
- (v) provide a platform for national talent – hunt in art and design.

A discussion of cultural trends in the 1970s will however remain incomplete without mentioning Nigeria’s hosting, on an unprecedented scale, of the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC ’77) from January 15th to February 12th 1977. As it were, Nigeria played a dual role in the World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture – as participants in the line-up of events for the festival and as host to the numerous guests from different parts of the world. It was, indeed, an opportunity for Nigerians to do Nigeria proud. The four – week festive feast provided a rallying point for all Black and African peoples the world over.

More than 80,000 people, including twelve heads of state, watched the opening ceremony which was performed by the then Nigerian Head of State, Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo, at the National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos on Saturday, January 15th 1977. The festival proper took place at the National Theatre in addition to the National Stadium, which was also used.

The twenty – nine day cultural entertainment featured the best in dancing, singing, drama, literature and scholarship. The colloquium, which also featured as the ‘heart and blood’ of the festival and which was to serve as a means of achieving mental liberation, was declared open on Monday, January 17th, 1977 at the National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos by the then Head of State, Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo.

Other prominent features during the FESTAC period were the traditional Boat Regatta and the Durbar. The Regatta, which was also opened by the FESTAC grand patron, Olusegun Obasanjo, was one of the highlights and main entries by Nigeria to lend colour to the festival. Representatives from seventy-five countries and communities attended this “Africa’s Great Cultural Indaba”.

Among other things, the festival was being staged to ensure the revival, resurgence, propagation and promotion of black and African cultural values and civilization. It also brought to light to diverse contributions of black and African peoples to the universal currents of thought and the arts. Throughout the period, Africa was the focus of attention not of Black and African peoples, but of all the peoples of the world to whom we are linked in our common humanity. It would therefore not be an overstatement to describe FESTAC’77 as the Blackman’s cultural fiesta of the century. Apart from the tremendous cultural awareness, and the relative upsurge in cultural expenditure, which the festival generated, FESTAC’77 left behind two important legacies towards the promotion and development of Nigerian and African Culture. These are the National Theatre Complex and the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilizations which acts as the custodian of all the relics of FESTAC’77.

Conclusion

The state of cultural administration in Nigeria at the moment has come a long way from what it used to be. The federal and state governments continue to put in place a comprehensive programme of arts management, governed by these central principles; preservation of culture, promotion of culture, presentation of culture and administration and financing of culture. The Cultural Policy for Nigeria was formulated in 1988 to achieve these objectives. Several other policies which have been formulated by the government with the objective of encouraging the flourishing and appreciation of the arts include the Antiquities Law Act No. 43 of 1957, the Film Censorship Board, National Policy on Education, Communication Policy formally launched in 1990, and the Copyright Law of 1988. An attempt has also been made to ensure the sustenance of the annual National Festival of Arts (NAFEST).

The Nigerian National Cultural Policy is a strong statement of good intentions and with clearly stated objectives, though weakened by poor execution. Thus for it to achieve the desired goals and also to have an impact on the people for whom it is meant, it is absolutely imperative that a conducive ambience is created for its successful implementation. Linking policy intention with implementation is a test of sincerity of the government towards a successful policy. So long as we are prepared to imbibe the culture of sincerity toward linking policy intention and implementation, the future is not too bleak.

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