

CHAPTER ONE

THE NIGERIAN PEOPLES AND CULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

The present composition of Nigeria as a nation State is a recent development. Until 1914 when Sir. Frederick Lugard amalgamated Northern and Southern Provinces into a single geo-political entity, the structures served the imperial designs of the Europeans. However, before the arrival of the Europeans the territories now comprising Nigeria had existed as different empires, kingdoms, clans, village, groups, and kindred groups. Archaeological studies from various parts of Nigeria have revealed that parts of the country have been inhabited by man since the Paleolithic-or-Old Stone Age period i.e. between 500,000 and 9000BC, (Andah, 1982). The 1952/53 census posited that there are more than 200 distinct ethnic groups (Udo, 1980). This, in our estimation, is rather conservative. Indeed, recent studies have revealed that only the middle belt of Nigeria has more than 180 ethnic groups. It is very likely that more ethnic groups will be identified in the next century. In the Cross River Basin, ethnic nationalities are so many that the area has been designated as a cultural watershed (Ayandele, 1983). Udo, (1980) has projected that by the year 2,050, the number of ethnic groupings in Nigeria might reach 850. This is because more ethnic groups are identified as previous studies give way to new ones.

The Nigerian Peoples

The larger and political dominant groups in Nigeria include the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. Other prominent but less numerous groups include Edo, Ibibio, Tiv, Nupe and Kanuri. These groups and the least numerous ones not mentioned here have distinct customs, traditions and languages or dialects. Nigeria is made up of different ethnic and cultural groups. The people of these groups are drawn together by different bonds, some of which could be blood, marriage, or population movement, the most important of which are time bound migration, colonialism and imperialism. Historical knowledge indicates that all peoples have been in constant motion. The probability of a homogenous ethnic group in contemporary Nigeria is near zero. If not for other reasons, the age long interbreeding of Nigerian peoples has resulted in great cultural mix. The advent of capitalism, western education and institutions furthered the mix as evident today (Ademie and Onuobia, 1994).

There are 36 political states in Nigeria, excluding Abuja, the Federal capital. The number of ethnic groups in Nigeria is estimated at about 360, with languages less than that number. According to Mboho and Ndaeyo (2017), culture affects everything people do in their society because of their ideas, values, attitudes, and normative or expected patterns of behaviour. Mutual intelligibility is high among the cultures. The major ethnic groups are the Hausa, Fulani, the Igbo and Yoruba. Other southern cultural groups include the Efik, Ekoi, the Yakur, Ibibio, the Edo, Esan, Isoko, Urhobo, Itshekiri, the Izon, and the Ogoni etc. In the North, we also have several groups, namely: the Nupe, Idoma, Igala, Chamba, the Mumuye, the Tiv, the Angas, the Igbirra, the Kanuri, the Bata, the Shuwa, Birom, Jukun, the Bassa, the Bariba, the Gwari, the Bura, Longuda, Idoma etc. some ethnic groups are located in different geopolitical locations (Ademie and Onuobia, 1994).

Peoples of the Forest Belt of Nigeria

The peoples of the Forest Belt are believed to be the oldest surviving groups in Nigeria (Andah 1982). The largest known peoples of this belt are the Yoruba and Edo who inhabit the western axis of the country; Igbo, Ibibio and Ejagham (formerly Ekoi) peoples of the Eastern and South Eastern regions of Nigeria. There are marked contrasts politically and socially between the Yoruba and Edo speaking peoples, and the Igbo, Ibibio and Ejagham peoples. While the Yoruba and Edo peoples built and lived in kingdoms (centralized states) during the medieval period, the Igbo, Ibibio and Ejagham lived in acephalous communities. However, despite these political and social contrasts, these people lived in the same physical environment and cultivated the same crops.

What accounts for the contrasts is probably that the empire building Yoruba and Edo had contacts with the empire building groups of the North notably, the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and Nupe. There is no record to show that the most southerly segmentary groups ever had direct contacts with those in the North except that the Ejagham and Bekwara of the then upper Cross River Region had interacted with the Idoma and Jukun (Afikpo, 1990). The Yoruba speaking people are concentrated in Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Kwara and Lagos States. In addition to linguistic homogeneity, however with slight dialectal differences, the Yoruba share common traditions and trace descent to a common ancestor called Oduduwa, who is believed to have established the Ife dynasty (Johnson, 1956). In the course of their existence, the Yoruba established powerful monarchical states like Ife, Oyo, Egba and Ijebu. This resulted in the emergence of certain Yoruba rulers like the Oni of Ife, who is believed to be the spiritual ruler of all Yoruba and the Alafin of Oyo who was seen as the political leader of the Yoruba kingdom by that name.

The Edo speaking people were best known for their ability to build a strong and virile kingdom called the Benin Empire. They occupy a territory immediately east of Yoruba land. The Edo and Yoruba share much in common. Indeed, linguists are of the view that Edo language broke away from Yoruba (Alagoa, 1978). It is also speculated that an Edo prince from Benin founded the Yoruba town, Eko (Lagos).

Similarly, the founder of the present dynasty in Benin kingdom is reported to have been of Yoruba descent (Ryder, 1980). The Edo people were organized into a state with a political and cultural headquarters in Benin, the seat of the all-powerful Oba of Benin. The people have a deep sense of political unity. At the zenith of its power, Benin influence extended from the banks of the Lower Niger Valley to the present Republic of Benin. This implies that the empire exercised control over Western Igbo groups east of the Niger, for instance, Onitsha, Atani and Ossomari claim origin from Benin.

East of the Niger, two important ethnic groups, Igbo and Ibibio hold sway. These two groups are divided into several sub-groups. None of this group as organized into a centralized state in the mould of the Yoruba and Edo. Rather, the people were organized in clans and village groups. There were no monarchs as authority in the villages was never concentrated in the hands of any individual or family. Although there were chiefs usually elderly men, there was no ruling aristocracy, which wielded authority as a specialized full-time occupation. Instead, the village or village group was ruled by a council of elders, whose members were usually the heads of the major extended families. The people practiced gerontocratic democracy and were highly republican and egalitarian.

The Grassland Peoples of Nigeria

The Grassland or Savanna Peoples of Nigeria fall into two geographical groups namely, the Middle Belt Peoples and the peoples of the far North. The Middle Belt is noted for its numerous ethnic groups including the hill dwelling peoples of the Jos Plateau and the Eastern highlands of Adamawa. The peoples are mostly farmers who produce considerable surplus food crops for the consumption of urban dwellers. The two most numerous peoples of the Middle Belt of the Grassland Region are the Tiv of the Benue Valley in the East and the Nupe of the Middle Nigeria valley in the West. The Tiv were highly fragmented and political leadership revolved around the family head (Bohannon, 1962). It should be noted that the family head represented a domestic organization and not a political unit. In fact, during the period of colonialism, the absence of a political leader in Tiv land created problems for the British who found it extremely difficult to establish indirect rule in the place. However, although the Tiv lacked political organization in the sense of which it was found in other places, they never lacked political leaders because men of great affluence and impeccable personal qualities were readily recognized as political leaders (Baldwin, 1957). Land was the most important factor of production for the Tiv, and any family head who could not provide sufficient land for his people lost followership because his family members could migrate elsewhere to establish their compounds or reject his political leadership.

The Nupe, unlike the Tiv, have a rather integrated political organization, which is similar in some respects to the Yoruba system. They live in large nucleated villages and have daughter settlements, which consist of small farm hamlets, called *tunga*. The *tunga* have no social life of their own, instead, they are closely linked to their parent village and celebrate their feasts and ceremonies with the mother village (Baldwin, 1957).

The relationship between the *tunga* and mother village in the Yoruba Cocoa Belt or between the coastal towns and the fishing settlements on islands

The far North is inhabited by the Hausa who are more dominant in population. Following the Hausa are the Fulani and the Kanuri. They are also politically dominant. Prior to 1804, that is before the Sokoto Jihad, Hausa land was divided into seven legitimate and seven illegitimate states, (Mitchel, 1979). The legitimate Hausa States were collectively called Hausa Bakwai, while the illegitimate states were called Banza Bakwai or impure Hausa states (Strides and Ifeka, 1972).

Islam is the dominant religion of the peoples of the grassland. Although the religion was introduced into Hausa land in the 14th century, it was not until the 19th century, after the Fulani conquest, that it gained wider acceptance (Mitchel, 1979). Like all Muslim dominated regions, the social and political life of the Hausa is shaped and controlled by Islamic principles. This also extends to the fiscal policies and land tenure system of the people (Balogun, 1980). Before the advent of the Europeans, the Hausa were intensive farmers. They cultivated guineacorn, millet, maize and beans. Even today, Northern Nigeria is regarded as the major cultivators of grains and perishable crops like tomatoes, onions and pepper. Currently, it is difficult to distinguish from a distance the difference between an Hausa and a Fulani. This has made most people to believe that the Hausa are pastoralists. Although Hausa people own cattle, their cattle are entrusted to the Fulani, who are more experienced in animal husbandry. These are the cattle Fulani.

In addition to farming, the Hausa were and are still shrewd traders. They are well known in West Africa as distributors of trade goods such as leather goods, wood carvings, blankets or camel hair, and perfumes. In Nigeria, they are popular as organizers of cattle and kolanut trade between Yoruba land and Northern Nigeria. The next group of people in the open grassland is the Fulani. There are two types of Fulani namely, the cattle Fulani, who are basically nomads; and the town or settled Fulani, who live in towns with the Hausa and practice agriculture. The cattle Fulani whose houses are made of grass always live in camps. These camps are easily deserted once any of them dies. Because they hardly marry outside their group, they have managed to preserve their identity despite long periods of sojourn with the Negro people in Northern Nigeria. The Kanuri are also a major ethnic group inhabiting the open grassland. Like the Hausa, the Kanuri are Muslims. Islam had already been entrenched in Borno, which is the traditional capital of the Kanuri, before the Fulani Jihad of 1804 (Soper, (1965). Members of the Mai dynasty

initially ruled the Kanuri before the Shuwa Arabs under El Kanemi conquered them. It is the latter, who established the Shehu dynasty which is still extant (Oduwobi and Iwuagwu, 1997). The Traditional Power Structure also existed in Annang Traditional Society (Mboho and Awak, 2013).

Ethnic Groups and their Locations

Ethnic groups are cultural or languages groups. People who have the same cultural practice including language belong to the same ethnic group. There are more than 100 million Nigerians now. These are grouped into over 200 ethnic groups. The large ones and where they live are shown on the map of Nigeria. These groups lived in independent kingdoms and city states before they were finally united in one country on the first of January, 1914 by a British man called Sir Frederick Lugard. This is popularly known *as the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates*.

The Historical Origins of Some Ethnic Groups

A lot of the account given below about the historical origin of some ethnic groups is *constructed from legends*. Legends are stories passed from one generation to the other. In the process of passing them down from generation to generation, many things which may not be completely true may have been added or taken away. But since our forefathers did not know how to keep their records in the written form, we can only rely on this form of account in *reconstructing* our past history. However, Muslim Arabs kept some stories about Bornu kingdom in written form.

The Hausa Story

According to the Hausa people, their group was started by a man called Bayajidda (he is sometimes called Abuyazidia). Bayajidda was the son of the king of Baghdad (Baghdad is now the capital of Modern Iraq). Bayajidda quarreled with his father, and he decided to leave home with his followers and start a new and peaceful life somewhere else. First he settled in Bornu, where he married the daughter of the Mai. But he soon left Bornu because the Mai tried to keep him apart from his followers. He left his wife in Biram, where she gave birth to a son. When Bayajidda reached Daura, he met a community of blacksmiths, who made a special *sword for him*.

With this sword, Bayajidda killed a troublesome snake, which had prevented the people of Daura from drawing water from the only well in the city. As a reward Bayajidda was allowed to marry Queen Daura and he become the *joint-ruler* of Daura. Bayajidda and Queen Daura had a son named Bawo, who become the ruler of Daura after Bayajidda's death. When Bawo became ruler of Daura, he married and had six children. The children became rulers of Kano, Zazzau (Zaria), and Gobir, Katsina, Kano, and Duara states. Bayajidda's first son was also the ruler of Biram State. And so, Bayajidda's son and grandson ruled seven Hausa states. These

states became known as the *Hausa Bakwai*. The Hausa story also says that Bayajidda had seven children by his secret marriage to a woman called Gwari. These seven children became rulers of Zamfara, Yauri, Nupe, Kebbi, Gwari, Kororofa (Jukun) and Yoruba states. These seven states became known as the Banza Bakwai.

The Yoruba Story

There are two main stories which describe the origin of the Yoruba people in Nigeria. In this unit we shall discuss one of these stories. Oduduwa is said to have started the Yoruba group. In this story, he is described as the son of Lamurudu, who was a prince of Mecca, in Saudi Arabia. The religion of Islam was started there many years ago by the Prophet Muhammed. Some people did not accept the new religion. They preferred to follow the traditional religions of ancestral worship. Oduduwa was one of these people and because of his beliefs; he was later forced to leave Mecca, together with many others by the Prophet Muhammed and his followers.

Oduduwa made a long journey with his people across the River Nile through the Sudan, across Lake Chad and through Hausa land, before finally settling in a forest which seemed to be safe. Oduduwa called this place Ile-Ife, which means home of love. Oduduwa married a woman from the region and they had seven sons. The seven sons were sent out to start new settlements in the area around Ile-Ife. The settlements became known as: Owu, Sabe, PoPo, Ila, Ketu, Oyo and Ile-Ibinu (now called Benin).

The Kanuri Story

The Kanuri people are believed to have settled in the Lake Chad over one thousand years ago. They are believed to have belonged to the Zaghawa desert group, who moved to Lake Chad because the area around the lake was *fertile* and good for agriculture. Eventually, the Kanuri people married the local people and they developed a system of government where both men and women played important roles.

The Edo Story

Many historians believe that the Edo people have always lived in the forest area of Mid-Western Nigeria. In fact, the Edo story has been written down by Dr. P.A. Igbafe, who was a onetime commissioner for information in the then Bendel State. The story he told is as follows: Benin was the youngest child of the High God Osanobua. Those children of the High God were permitted to take whatever they wanted into the world. While others chose wealth, *magical skills* and material well-being, the youngest chose a small shell. These children of Osanobua arrived in a world covered with water.

On the *instruction* of a bird, the youngest child turned over the shell and sand fell out of it and covered large parts of the water to form land. Thus the first ruler of Benin became the owner of the land. Originally, the people of Benin were ruled by

kings, whom they called Ogisos. At one time in their history, however, there were so many quarrels between members of the ruling group, that the people of Benin allowed a change in the ruling system. At this time, Oduduwa is said to have sent Oranmiyan, his son, to rule Benin princess, by whom he had a son. Oranmiyan left Benin after twenty years and his son took over as ruler.

The Fulani Story

Originally, the Fulani lived in the area which is now divided into the countries of Mali and Senegal; they came to Nigeria from the north-west about five hundred years ago. The Fulani people are traditionally warriors and cattle-rearers. They were known as nomadic people, they *wandered* from one place to another to find land where their cattle could graze and markets where they could sell their cattle. Today, there are two groups of Fulani. Those who have settled in towns are called town Fulani, or *Fulani Gida*. Those who are still nomads are called cattle Fulani, or *Fulani Bororoje*. Many Fulani have now settled in northern Nigeria.

The Tiv Story

Many historians believe that the Tiv people have always lived in what is known as the Benue area of Nigeria. In the Tiv story, this area was believed to be the first settlement of mankind. The first person to have lived there was a man called Takuruku, who had two sons named Ipusu and Ichongo. Ipusu and Ichongo married women from neighboring areas; Ipusu's wife gave birth to a boy named Tiv, and Ichongo's wife gave birth to a boy named Uke. Tiv eventually led the areas of conquest and defeated a number of neighbouring communities. Uke brought all strangers together and gave them a place in Tivland. It is also believed that a group of people later joined and mixed with the Tiv. These people came from the area which is now known as Cameroon, and from among the Jukun people in the north. It is said that a group of Ibo people in the south joined Tiv communities while looking for good farmland.

The Ijaw Story

The tradition of the origin of the Ijaw people can be told in three *phases of migration* and settlements.

1. **The Nembe Tradition:** According to tradition, Nembe was founded by three friends, Onyo, Obolo and Olodia. The friends were brave men from Benin, Warri and the Delta region, who wanted new homes in the riverine areas. That is, they wanted to live by the banks of a River.
2. **The Kalabari Tradition:** The Kalabari people are said to be a group of Ijaw people who were led to an area near Calabar River. They were later joined by another group led by Opu-Kor -Ye from Ibibioland.

3. **The Bonny Tradition:** The tradition says that this group of Ijaw-Ndokki people came in the eighteenth century to trade in salt and slaves. They were originally a fishing community from the lower Imo River.

The Efik-Ibibio Story

The Efik and Ibibio people were originally one group. Their home has always been in the south-eastern and Cross River areas of Nigeria. However, because of a large increase in the number of their people, the Efik group needed more land for agriculture. They also needed large parts of Cross River for fishing. This is the main reason why, about two hundred years ago, they moved south and settled in Creek Town. As trade along the coast in salt and slaves was becoming more important, the Efik people founded Old Town, another group founded Duke Town and soon the three main Efik towns of Creek Town, Old Town and Duke Town were established.

Historical Origins of some Cultural Patterns: Igbo Example

The Igbo people live mainly in the eastern part of Nigeria, particularly in Imo, Anambra, Abia, Enugu, Ebonyi and some parts of Rivers and Delta States. The presentation and breaking of kolanut is a unique aspect of the Igbo culture we want to examine here. The kolanut has been described as nut of unity because the Yoruba produce it; the Hausa commercialize and eat it while the Igbo revere it. In his novels, (*Arrow of God* and *Things Fall Apart*), Chinua Achebe stresses the spiritual importance of the kolanut in Igbo traditions. The concept that “he who brings kola brings life” sums up the importance the Igbo attach to the kolanut and the protocol underlying it. Usually, in attending to a multiple of guests, a host gives his closest relation kolanuts to present to the guests. Such close relation shows the kolanuts round and hands them over to the next person also close to the host family or community who shows the kolanuts round and hands them to the next close relation or community.

At the end of it all, when the presence and importance of every guest have been recognized, the kolanut goes back to the host because “the king’s kola is the king’s hand” (“*Oji Eze di eze n’aka*”). That way, the degree of relationship among persons and communities is maintained and, where in doubt, explained. At a wedding ceremony, kolanuts are used to say some prayers for the couple and all guests. Other nuts are given out to be taken away so that on reaching home, the recipients would have an opportunity to present them to their own guests and, by so doing, tell the story of the same occasion and pray for the same couple (“*Oji luo uno, Kwue ebe osibia*”). At the kolanut breaking ceremony aspect of the wedding, the Master of Ceremony (MC) greets the people present in the (Igbo-Kwenu” fashion. He then directs that the people from various clans should come forward and pick a nut each. He directs the father of the bride and that of the groom to each pick a kolanut. He directs the chairman of the occasion to pick a nut. When the nuts are taken, broken, distributed and eaten.

Population of Migration in Nigeria

Migration refers to the movement of people from one place to another. People have been moving from one place to another for a very long time. People move for many reasons, some of which we have already discussed. Some people, such as the Fulani Bororoje, move to find good land for their cows, sheep and goats to *graze*. Farmers often move to find soil that is fertile, and which has not been overused for planting crops. Some people move to look for work. They may, for example, move to cities, to work in industries, or government offices, others move to find work in farming; for example, in the cocoa belt of western Nigeria, there are often available when it is time to spray against insects, or harvest the cocoa.

Some people move to places where there are good secondary schools and colleges for the education of their children. For example, the Federal Government has built Unity Schools in certain areas, where children from all over the country can meet, learn about many subjects and get to know each other and about their country and its people. Many state governments are now building similar unity schools for all Nigerians. Local, State and the Federal Governments encourage migration in various ways, for example, they build roads and bridges to link places together; they encourage industries, which attract people to a neighbouring village, they build markets where people from surrounding areas can trade: they provide social services, such as hospitals, in suitable centers for local communities.

The Effects of Migration in Nigeria

Migration has helped to bring together many people from various cultural backgrounds. Today, for example, in many towns there are people from one part of the country living in new homes. In fact, there are so many migrant people that sometimes special communities are made for those who have just arrived from other parts of the country. Hausa people call these places *sabon-gari*, which means migrant settlement; as well as encouraging the different groups to share aspects of their cultures, migration also helps to bring the different groups of Nigerians.

Many immigrants, who move to areas where they can find work and earn good money, are able to provide for the need of their families. They are also able to fulfill civic responsibilities, such as the paying of rates and taxes for the development of the community. Migration encourages trade between different parts of the country. For example, many migrants from the northern states buy fruits and kola nuts from the southern states. Migration also helps people to get to know their environment better and talk about other people and other countries with greater knowledge.

Traditional Technology of the Nigerian Peoples

Traditional technology refers to indigenous technology of the Nigerian peoples which were conceived and produced before the arrival of the Europeans in Africa.

Technology as conceived by this text is the transformation of technical skills into material wealth. In Nigeria, this was largely determined by the physical environment which produced the raw materials as well as encouraged the development of specialization. Although all Nigerian peoples were involved in almost all the vocations such as pottery, fishing, carving, weaving, metallurgy, etc. Some groups were highly specialized and therefore enjoyed comparative advantage. In this section of our text, we shall concentrate on metallurgy.

Metallurgy in this respect represents bone, stone, bronze, brass and iron workings. In a normal or more modern expression, we are aware that the concept should have applied specifically to metal working or what was traditionally called blacksmithing. However, the concept has been accepted to include those mentioned above for lack of any collective terminology. A leading scholar in archaeology, Thurstan Shaw, in an attempt to distinguish the development of the metallurgical industry in Nigeria has divided the stages of development into epochs. These include the Early Stone Age, under which he identifies two salient periods namely Acheulian and Sangoan; the middle stone age, and the late stone age. During the early Stone Age period, the Nigerian peoples were involved in bone and stone technologies. Although bone products hardly survived because of soil conditions, it is recorded that in Nigeria, roughly-trimmed flakes, made of stones, pebbles or slumps laked by percussion to form crude chopping and cutting tools with edges from 3cm to 12cm long; were produced (Shaw, 1980). These tools were collectively called the Olduvai; type tools, named after Olduvai George in Tanzania. In Nigeria, these tools were largely found at Beli on River Taraba.

The Oldowan industrial complex was replaced by that known as Acheulian named after the site of St. Acheul in Northern France. It was here that hand axe was first found. The archeulian tools are oval in shape with a cutting edge, carefully trimmed from both sides. These instruments were probably used in cutting and skinning game animals killed in the hunt. It was towards the end of the Acheulian period that fire was discovered. In Nigeria, the area around the Sahara and the Jos Plateau is believed to have produced Acheulian tools. Specifically, Maildon Toro on the Jos Plateau is believed to be the site for Acheulian products. The Sangoan is an industrial complex named after Sango Bay in the Werten Shores on Lake Victoria in East Africa. In Nigeria, Sangoan tools were found in Upper Sokoto valley and in the stretch of country south of the Jos Plateau and north of the tropical rainforest. The Sangoan tools are reputed to date after 50,000 BC and are associated with arid conditions.

Middle Stone Age

This term was first used in South Africa, but, it is generally used to refer to the period covering between 35,000 B.C. and 12,999 B.C. The industries of the middle stone age reveal greater localization and specialization than before. However, their characteristics vary from one region to another. The products of the age, especially the group referred to as lupemban are located in the woodland of the equatorial forests. They are believed to have developed from the Sangoan

technology. In Nigeria, lupemban tools have been found in Afikpo. However, doubts still exist as to whether they were produced during the Middle Stone Age Period. Be that as it may, lupemban tools have been found in the region of Jos Plateau and in Lirue Hills, north of the Plateau and are clearly classified as belonging to the Middle Stone Age Period. In Nok valley, the tools are found as deposits between the Acheulian tools and the Nok style terracotta. This type of technology does not belong to the lupemban industrial complex but rather to the middle palcolithic industrial complex of the open savanna.

The Late Stone Age and the Coming of Metal

This is also called the Neolithic age. This age in addition to stone technology, produced bronze and iron technology. In Nigeria, the earliest site of iron industry is Nok on the Jos plateau. Initially, scholars had believed that knowledge of iron working had diffused to Nok from Meroe, a famous iron working city on the Nile, but recent researches have shown that Nok iron technology predates Meroe's. The date for Nok iron work is reported to be 500 BC or earlier (Isichei 1976). In fact, Mauny (1961) believes that 500 BC knowledge of iron working had already spread to the Guinea forest. Nok iron working is therefore traceable to Carthage and not Meroe. It is believed that iron technology diffused Nok to Yoruba land in 300 BC (William, 1973) and Igbo land, specifically Afikpo and Nri (Igbo Ukwu) (Isichie 1976). In addition to iron terracottas, the Nok, Yoruba and Igbo iron workers produced products to meet their socio-political, cultural and economic needs. Indeed, these people's evolved cultures closely linked iron working to their cosmologies and created a pantheon of god to represent iron and its working. This was evident in Yoruba god of iron called Ogun.

Apart from iron, Igbo Ukwu, Benin and Ife specialized in bronze work. The Igbo Ukwu bronzes were entirely different from those of Benin and Ife in style and Metallic content. The bronzes of Ife and Benin were made of brass (copper and zinc). They were naturalistic in style and humanistic in emphasis. The Ife people specialized in the portrayal of the human face, and in the case of Benin, of social relationships (normally, a ruler with his attendants). But the Igbo Ukwu bronzes were truly bronze, consisting of copper, tin and lead. The Igbo Ukwu bronze workers specialized in the production of human faces as well as in duplicating objects from the natural world (Isichei, 1976).

Traditional Agriculture

Traditional agriculture in Nigeria began with the domestication of crops by the Homo sapiens. It is quite curious here to talk about the domestication of crops in Nigeria. This is because most people have often believed that agriculture diffused from the Arab and Asian World. But recent researches have been that Nigerian groups evolved the cultivation of crops conditioned by their climatic conditions. The domestication of crops does not in any way suggest that agriculture as an economic vocation and as a technology was borrowed from outside. Rather, in accordance with the theory of independent evolution and development, Nigerian people were

able to devise means of subsistence and livelihood through agricultural practices. In Nigeria, agriculture did not only enhance man's ability to control his natural environment, it also ushered in what today can be honestly called civilization (Shaw, 1980). It began with the domestication of wild grasses in the Savanna (grassland) belt. These include millets, the most important being guinea corn (*sorghum bicolor*): which was domesticated by the middle of the second millennium B.C. (Shaw, 1970).

African rice was domesticated in the area of the inland Delta of the Niger (Shaw, 1980). According to Elizabeth Isichei, (1976), species of yam such as *Dioscorea rotundata* and *Dioscorea cayenensis* are indigenous to Nigeria. Other species such as *Dioscorea dumetorum* widely grown in southern Nigeria are in the process of ennoblement. She concludes that yam cultivation was invented by the 'Yam belt' of West African. Shaw (1980), has noted that oil palm was domesticated by the peoples of southern Nigeria. This does not mean that Nigerian peoples did not borrow crops from outside. In fact, as a result of trade contacts, such crops as wheat and barley were imported from the Nile region. Similarly, cocoyam, banana and plantain found their way to Nigeria from Asia. Tomatoes, cassava, maize and chili pepper though American in origin, were brought to Nigeria by the Portuguese. In the 19th century, officials of the Royal Nigeria Company (RNC) introduced guavas, cashew nuts and cola-nuts to Nigerians (Shaw 1970).

The Concept of Culture

Culture is a broad concept, which is essential in analysing the ways human beings are relate to one another. It is a concept common in many disciplines including Anthropology, Sociology, Humanities, Biology and the Medical Sciences. Consequently, it has been variously defined. In ordinary language, culture has some emotive connotation. It is common for example, to describe some people as cultured while others are seen and described as uncultured. This is an indication of whether or not such persons are socially integrated or are social misfits or cultural deviants within a given social organization or setting (Ekpenyong, 2014). Social scientists use the term quite differently from most other people.

To understand a people, it is necessary to understand their cultures. It is in understanding the origin, link with man, the nature or characteristics, the patterns or configurations and, its universals and diversities that a clear perception emerges. Many approaches to culture exist. Those who organized the Festac in Nigeria abstracted the expressive elements and fall into the functional group. Another approach is the anthropological approach and holistic perspective which focuses on culture as an integrated system. The first approach which is functional or behavioural limits culture to things done and the ways in which humans carry out activities of daily living. The second approach conceives culture as a total device or design for living, that is, a perception of culture as a plan or programme of action. Looking at Festac and other media expressions of peoples and cultures of Nigeria, we get the impression that culture refers to such things as music, paintings, drama, sculpture, songs, other arts, past times. The Nigerian Trade Fairs and other

materialist media emphasize the tools or equipment, crafts and other artifacts (Atamie, and Onuobia, 1994).

The idealist cum moral perception of culture lays emphasis on beliefs, values, norms and systems of rationalizations, explanations or justifications including philosophy. Indeed, this is the perspective that informed the Festivals of Arts and Culture in Nigeria. Tylor in 1871 defined culture as: *...that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society*. Tylor's definition is most quoted by anthropologists for its brevity and implications. Yet, it must be pointed out that Tylor attached more emphasis on the idealist conception. It is only when we discuss the meaning of "other capacities" that we may include other elements.

An anthropologist, Pidginton (1978), adopting a techno-economic and functionalist view defines culture as:

...the sum total of the material and intellectual equipment used by people to satisfy their biological and social needs and adapt themselves to their environment.

Pidginton views culture as a technical device for satisfying needs and adjusting to the vagaries of changes in man's environment. Thus, culture here is represented as the epiphenomenon of environmental and bio-social needs, not as the dynamic instrument in the structuring of the bio-social and environmental aspects. The interdependence of both sides of this equation is not manifested. Other scholars, such as Burges *et al.* (1963) and Andah (1982) define culture from much broader perspectives.

According to Andah (1982), culture embraces all of the material and non-material expressions of people as well as the processes with which these expressions are communicated. It has to do with all the social, ethical, intellectual, scientific, artistic, and technological expressions and processes of a people usually ethnically, and/or nationally living in a geographically contiguous area; what they pass on to their successors and how these are passed on.

Kluchkhohn and Kelly (1945) view culture thus:

A historically derived system of explicit and implicit designs for living, which tends to be shared by all or specifically designated members of a group.

Culture, according to Mitchel G. D. (1979), refers to that part of the total repertoire of human action (and its products) which is socially as opposed to genetically transmitted.

Ekpenyong (2014) and Modo (2016) observed that culture represents the material and non-material activities and creativities of man (expressed in the techno-social, economic, political, religious, linguistic, symbolic, ideological, familial, legal and normative institutions,) It is the means through which these are expressed and sustained, and the media of their communication and adaptation over time.

Several characteristics of culture are discernible as follows:

- Culture is a group product, share by all, or intended to be shared by all.

- Culture is universal to the group, but some aspects are specific too.
- Culture is learned. It is socially transmitted, not instinctive or genetically derived.
- Culture is created by man, and therefore subject to man's manipulation. It is adaptive.
- Culture is dynamic; it (certain aspect) is also static.
- Culture is abstracted – that is, it is a construct, never a neat entity.
- Culture is real, representing all things – people do and think, excluding their idiosyncrasies.
- Culture is also an idea – i.e. the members expressed values and codes that may or not be eventually transmitted into normal behaviour in their entirety.
- Culture is selective and integrated.

Selection results from the possibility of unlimited patterns of behaviour in any culture and integration creates some order or regularity and ensures the elimination of contradictory patterns of behaviour (an ideals however).

Components of Culture and the Cultural System

Three components are embodied in our definition of culture namely the elements, complexes and institutions.

Elements of Culture

These are referred to as the traits, or behavioural norms. An element is a pattern of behaviour or material product of man's behaviour which could be considered as the smallest unit of the culture. The riverine Nigerians have boats. The boat is a material product. Both rowing is behaviour. Throwing the paddle is one trait, bending the elbow before the throw is another trait, dipping the paddle is another. Each of these is an element of the canoeing activity. There are many more (Atemie, and Onuobia, 1994).

Culture Complex

A culture complex represents an integration of culture traits systematically to achieve one specific objective. A description of the traits is rowing a boat from a spot to another desired spot in a desired manner defines the canoe rowing complex. The application of the canoe to achieve other single purposes defines other complexes. We think of hunting complex, horse complex etc (Modo, 2016).

Institutions

Culture institutions refer to a system of complexes so interwoven in relation to basic interests of social living. An institution is a system of accepted and standardized procedures and rules surrounding the attainment of a basic social goal, e.g. marriage and legal institutions. It is "a relatively stable configuration of norms, statuses, roles, groups, organizations and values that provides a structure for

patterning human behaviour to meet social needs... in a particular society” (Goodman and Marx, 1978).

Cultural System

Our discussion so far reveals that culture is an integrated whole, a device expressing a complex network of elements, complexes and institutions. The major components of this cultural system including the group – that is members of a society, an environment, material culture, immaterial culture – expressing the traditions, customs, the cognitive-normative elements and institutions, and human activities and behaviours arising from the above. A cultural system is an expression of the link among components of the system and underscores the patterning of the culture – that is what Ruth Benedict refers to as the configuration of the patterns. Patterning refers to the idea that in any culture there are innumerable possibilities of behaviour but each culture selects among these behaviours which serves its purpose. The selection according to Benedict is guided by the cultures’ existential and normative postulates. Based on these postulates (idealistic theories of the nature of existence and ideas about values) the rest of the content, structure and links between the elements and institutions of the culture are determined (Atemie, and Onuobia, 1994).

The Link between Culture and Society

Culture represents our beliefs, knowledge, morals, laws, customs and habits, the things we do, activities like work, politics, marriages, warfares, dances, religious practices, etc. and the way we do them. The things are created by man in his interaction with man, nature and the institutions created by man. Man influences nature and his environment which also exercises further influence on man. Man’s capacity to influence nature is the joint effect of the impact of nature on man’s inherited characteristics. The constraint of the environment elicits responses from man which alter the man-environment balances. The character and outcome of this man-man-environment relationship varies from society to society, and over time. Hausa Fulani transhumance patterns and migrations are shaped by its climate and vegetation which induce movement’s south in dry season and northwards in wet season by herders. Fishing, canoe culture and adoration to water divinities result from the coastal people experiences and constraints from their water world. Igbo yam rituals and titles reflect their economic pillars and need to encourage industry in relatively harsher, and, perhaps more populated environment. The marriage of close blood relations among the Ibibios during its earlier foundation must have arisen from the need to survive in an island then devoid of neighbours. The so-called matriliney among them could be a historical result of this temporary cultural constraint.

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