THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED NIGERIAN MASKS AND HAUSA WALL DECORATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN EDUCATION

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BY

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ABSTRACT

THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED NIGERIAN MASKS
AND HAUSA WALL DECORATIONS: IMPLICATIONS

FOR CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN EDUCATION

Rufus Boboye Fatuyi

Under the supervision of Professor Ronald W. Neperud

In the past, Nigerian art was functional in the sense that it was an integral part of the traditional societies comprising Nigeria. Several factors have affected the once traditional roles of art in Nigerian society: colonialization, technological advance, and rapid urbanization. The socialization processes associated with **art** and its functions within Nigerian society, once perpetuated by custom and tradition, have been disrupted by rapid social changes. It was believed that formal education could reacquaint Nigerians with the social functions performed by traditional arts, thus serving to foster the social identity, cohesion, and cultural continuity that was formerly provided by art functioning in custom and traditional ways. The purpose of this study was to identify the social functions performed by a selected group of traditional Nigerian **art** forms and to suggest ways in which such material might be incorporated into contemporary Nigerian education.

Sixteen art forms, mostly masks and Hausa wall decorations. were described, the social categories in which they functioned identified, and analyzed for performance of social functions within traditional society using literary and personal sources of

information. Functioning within social categories such as religion, politics, law, entertainment, education, and decoration, it was found that the traditional art forms functioned: (1) to promote the perpetuation of communal association, (2) as technology, (3) to attract people's attention and reform their attitudes, (4) to promote conceptual knowledge, (5) to provide entertainment, and (6) to maintain social reality and enhance human aspirations. Against a view of society provided in Donald W. Oliver's Education and Community (1976) it is suggested that the social functions performed by traditional Nigerian art forms are in many ways a fulfillment of, or comparable to, the social functions outlined by Oliver as necessary for qualitative life in a society, particularly since Nigeria is, developmentally, at a point between the modern aspects of the human community and the state characterized by the existence of smaller traditional social units. Several suggestions are offered for reintroducing traditional art forms into contemporary Nigerian education, including art education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the past, Nigerian art was functional in the sense that it was an integral part of the traditional societies which comprised Nigeria. Historically, Nigeria had acquired a great reputation in the world of art long before attaining independence from colonization. Nigeria is singularly distinguished in Africa, south of the Sahara, as a rich and vast culture with its strong heritage of the past and the pride of the present generation. The masterpieces from the ancient kingdoms of Ife, Benin, and Nok, especially, contributed most significantly to this reputation. Some of these works, widely exhibited in leading museums and galleries all over the world, have thus become recognized as part of the total cultural heritage of mankind.

The Role of Art in Nigerian Tradition

In Nigerian tradition, art forms have been particularly associated with the gathering of people in ceremonial activities for religious purposes and for the maintenance of social order. Literary sources have revealed that the origin and importance of traditional arts in Nigeria are fundamentally religious. But the arts also fulfill socioeconomic, political, and psychological functions which are sometimes hidden and unknown to most people. For example, Odita (1970), in a doctoral dissertation on Igbo masks, suggests the

functional and aesthetic relationship of the (Nigerian) masks which seems to so overlap in function that it is difficult to tell a social role apart from a religious one. Odita emphasizes that the functional and aesthetic relationship, though inseparable, are identifiable; these he classifies into four major groups: entertainment, education, emotional release, and social control.

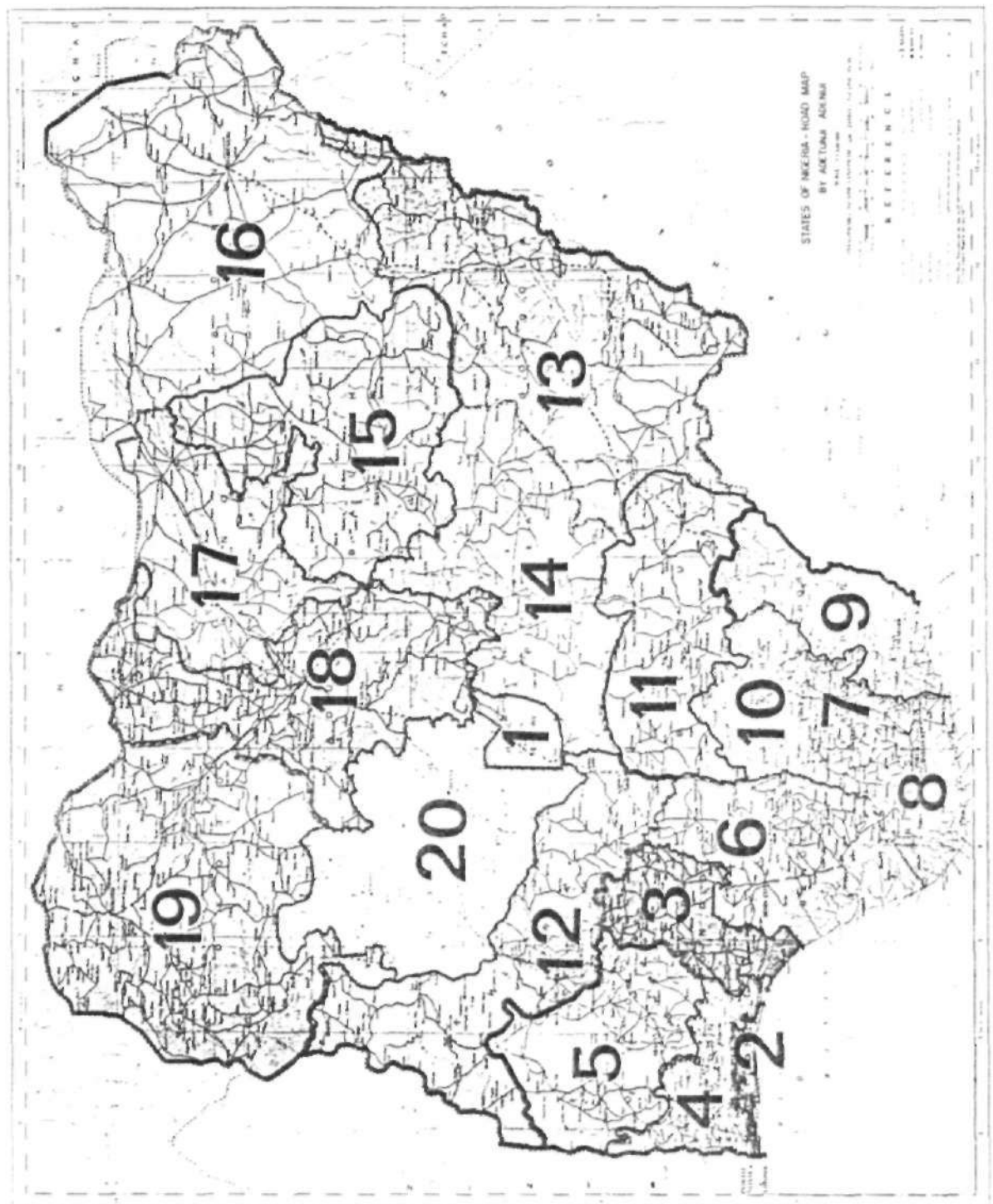
The functional categories suggested by Odita form the basis for an initial examination of the roles of art in Nigerian tradition. Odita's examples were drawn from a major form of Nigerian art--masking. Masking means more than wearing a mask, for it involves dances and music incorporated in a totally integrated ceremony.

Masking has been used by both Nigerian children and adults for amusement and entertainment in masquerades. In Yoruba masking tradition the Egungun was an interesting public figure that entertained the public in an annual masquerade before returning to his secret hiding place (Fatuyi, 1972, p. 47). Masking often plays a dual role, for children's masking is humorous to adults, but it is a serious affair for the children, involving dancing and celebrations in which people consumed food and refreshments. Through masking children develop a readiness for learning.

Masking is educative in that it is a didactic act which involves gestural and other forms of symbolic dances. Mask dances are evocative in that masks' images may represent animated figures of "animal heads and superstructures" of ancestral beings, and masking serves as a commemorative event. The masking rituals have promoted

Figure 1

State Map of Nigeria



Key to Index on Figure

1. Federal (Nigeria) Capital Territory
2. Lagos State
3. Ondo State
4. Ogun State
5. Oyo State
6. Bendel State
7. Imo State
8. Rivers State
9. Cross River State
10. Anambra State
11. Benue State
12. Kwara State
13. Gongola State
14. Plateau State
15. Bauchi State
16. Bornu State
17. Kano State
18. Kaduna State
19. Sokoto State
20. Niger State

uniformly collective relationships by creating, encouraging, and providing a peaceful means of communicating societal values. For example, the Nigerian maturity ceremony was an initiation rite in which art forms served as vehicles of instruction. Initiation is an important tradition for accepting youth into adulthood. For a period of time a child serves as an apprentice to the adult world; at the end of this period a graduation ceremony is scheduled. During this ceremony, art forms are used to instruct the youth about their religious and secular responsibilities.

Not only were the masks used during induction ceremonies, but they also guided the departed spirits of the dead into the spirit world, thus relieving the family's fear that evil spirits might return to harm them (Odita, 1970, pp. 90-91). Like the Yoruba masks, Gugu masks in Bida were used by the members of the Nupe Cult who sought to communicate with their dead relatives. These masks resemble huge drums, each mask being robed in decorated regalia consisting of cowry shells and beautifully colored beads and silk materials.

Also, the Owo people, like the other Yorubas, believed in the existence of the world after death. They worshipped the dead and invoked the spirits of their ancestors through the medium of wood carvings such as masks. For instance, in Egungun ceremonies at Isho within Owo District, masked individuals personified dead relatives who were believed to have come from heaven to offer generous blessings to those alive.

As already suggested, masking served as a means of social control. Ethnographic data have revealed that masking tradition in Nigeria was influenced by certain factors which controlled its performance. Odita indicates that "Igbo masks may assume authority of judgment and jury and mete out punishment, including the death sentence" (Odita, 1970, pp. 108-109). A similar use of masks in Yoruba traditional society is associated with punishing social offenses such as deviation from the common rules and regulations of the community, lack of good manners, and lack of respect for others.

Masking was used to impersonate the dead and this maintained conformity with accepted patterns of behavior because people believed that dead people were powerful. Masks also were used to ridicule members of society who were found guilty of bad behavior such as wickedness toward someone. Thus, in the past, Gugu masks in Bida were used by the Ndakogboza Cult for detecting and also punishing witches and wizards.

It is evident that art has fulfilled several functions in traditional Nigerian society; it has amused individuals and served to identify the aspirations of the people for whom it was made. Masquerade rituals aroused interest in ancestral worship which implied communication through prayers and sacrifices involving dance, recreation, and social interaction. This process served not only as a link between the living and the dead for purposes of spiritual satisfaction, but it also motivated the individual's humility and conformity to the social system. Masks were intended to be worn and

used for certain specific social functions; they were not intended to be displayed in public museums where this art form plays no active social role. As currently displayed, traditional art forms no longer serve the functional roles they were designed to play in traditional society.

Changes in Nigeria Affecting The Traditional Functions of Art

Several factors have affected the once traditional roles of art in Nigerian society. Most importantly, the colonization of Nigeria in the past and contemporary social changes have had the greatest effect on the role of the arts.

The effects of the colonization of African societies which occurred between 1860 and 1930, exemplified by the significant influence of British colonial education policy, has led to a cultural and social transformation of attitudes, aesthetic tastes, occupations, and shifts in religious orientation which led to the abandonment of traditional art functions. For instance, traditional wood masks no longer are used as frequently as they once had been in traditional Nigerian society.

Lawal (1972), a Nigerian art historian, remarked that traditional African sculpture was functional and had helped to preserve the social and artistic order. He emphasized that the form of African mask was inextricably tied to its religious context and it is true, as Lawal has noted, that: "Traditional African art...is a reflection

of the sociocultural climate of pre-colonial Africa." But he noted with regret that the old order has since been disrupted by all sorts of forces such as colonialism, Christianity, Islam, and modern technology.

Painfully, the new Africa which emerged from colonial emancipation was accompanied by chaotic political and social problems, such as those mentioned by the British social anthropologist, P. C. Lloyd. Lloyd observed, for instance, that the development of modern cities has led to the neglect of traditional towns and villages. The new towns are peopled by recent migrants who have begun to create completely new patterns of life. "Witchcraft is feared not only by those who fail but perhaps even more so by the successful" (Lloyd, 1975, p. 254). The major point here is that in the past art objects were associated with detecting and punishing crimes such as witchcraft. The use of art forms in such circumstances were obviously symbolic. It may be true today that contemporary socio-political problems are due in part to the neglect of tradition, for as Lloyd notes, "Many oaths, once greatly feared, are no longer employed; some of these were used in customary courts in the early decades of this century, but were subsequently banned by the colonial governments" (Lloyd, p. 255).

In Nigeria today technological advancements and rapid urbanization of communities are affecting not only the arts and crafts that uphold tradition, but are also affecting the fundamental ways of Nigerian life. In the nineteen state capitals, "Architects have designed some of the most exotic of modern buildings" (Lloyd, 1975,

p. 255). This environmentally significant reconstruction is leading to the neglect of traditional wall decorations and other visual arts that may lead to the deterioration of valuable social activities; because the traditional arts are disappearing, the educative, social, political, economic, and occupational activities that were associated with them are also disappearing. With the ever increasing influence of Western culture and urbanization, traditional arts are being abandoned in preference for the surging waves of modernization.

There are many Nigerian art forms still hidden and unknown. Quickly disappearing traditional art forms, like Hausa wall decorations, require immediate attention before they are lost completely. The Nigerian arts have suffered great reverses since the colonial era. Traditional wood carving is no longer practiced as a full-time profession. Newly introduced alien art forms have tended to supersede the traditional styles by relegating them to the background.

Certainly, colonialism and contemporary technological developments in Nigeria have had effects on traditional Nigerian societies. While the societies have been modernized in some positive ways, traditional social orders have been disrupted, and this has had a negative impact on Nigerian society and culture.

The Problem

The socialization practices and art styles as aspects of culture are perpetuated beyond the individual's life span by custom. Otten (1971) has discussed the functional relationship between art and

culture which was first noted by Ernest Grosse in 1874. In a remarkably 'modern' book, Grosse recognized the indispensable social elements in artistic behavior among non-literate people, and called for a scientific rather than an aesthetic study (Otten, 1971). It is this functional relationship between art and life as a system of human values that forms the broad framework for this dissertation.

Although culture is perpetuated beyond an individual's life through custom, if custom is interrupted by the introduction of alien practices and values, the socialization processes associated with art and its functions within society will also be handicapped or disrupted. As a result, citizens will be deprived of social values such as mutual understanding, honest behavior, love of society, and obedience to accepted patterns of behavior. Thus, social cohesion may be adversely affected.

In contemporary Nigeria, education can serve to provide the social identity, cohesion, and cultural continuity formerly provided by custom and tradition which have been undermined by outside influences under colonialism. Education can reacquaint the culture with its art and the social functions of traditional arts. By educating people in the social values of traditional Nigerian arts it is assumed that social cohesion and identity of the Nigerian people may be enhanced.

Unfortunately, as a continuous process of perpetuating social values, custom has been disrupted by forces alien to tradition. While the artifacts of custom remain, their social function has been all but lost to changing patterns of life. If education is to assume the role

of principal agent in perpetuating the social functions of art, these functions must be identified, documented, and interpreted. The purpose of this study is to identify, document, and interpret the social functions of selected traditional Nigerian art forms: wooden masks and Hausa wall decorations.

Although there is a considerable body of literature that deals with traditional Nigerian art, it has not been systematically surveyed from the point of examining the social functions that traditional art has performed. Further, the implications of the social functions of art for contemporary art education have not been examined. The problem, then, is to identify the social functions of selected traditional art forms as exemplified in pertinent literature and develop the implications of those functions for contemporary Nigerian education.

Need for The Study

The need for this study is based on the recognition of the importance of traditional arts to contemporary Nigerian society.

Several seminars and conferences on education have been held in Nigeria, as a follow-up to the recommendation of the Phelps-Stoke Report of 1922 (Scanlon, 1964, pp. 51-89), which says that "Every teacher and native worker should be equipped with skills and knowledge to go out into the villages so as to teach the natives how to make better use of the environment," and also as a follow-up to the UNESCO International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education (1966) which has urged the promotion of life-long education. One such

conference was the Art Seminar/Workshop of March 23-26, 1972, held at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Among the papers was an article by T. A. Fasuyi (1972) which summarized most of the educational issues discussed at the seminar. He described the formal introduction and teaching of cultural subjects in Nigerian schools as a fairly recent development. He maintained that its lateness was due to a lack of interest and foresight by the colonial education planners in Nigeria.

Fasuyi emphasized that there were no government policies on the teaching of art and other cultural subjects. He pointed out that the teachers were left to teach in whatever ways they considered good, using any material they considered suitable. Fasuyi also noted that most of the European teachers used imported materials with which they were familiar, and exhibited the products from time to time for the Inspectors of Education who visited occasionally to give some encouragement. Unfortunately, the teachers' efforts were not fruitful enough to make the inspectors appreciate the need to make improvements in the teaching of arts. As Fasuyi revealed, cultural subjects were among the low priority lists of government, and the subjects were not taught in other schools and colleges.

Although the situation has improved considerably, Fasuyi has mentioned a number of problems which still face art education in the primary and secondary schools of Nigeria. First, there is a lack of qualified teachers; second, there is a lack of art rooms and materials; and third, there is a lack of visual aids and textbooks. Some teacher training colleges have made an effort to introduce art into their

curriculum as an aid for the training of primary school teachers. Fasuyi indicates that their effort has been, in general, unsuccessful. So Fasuyi emphasizes the lack of visual aids and textbooks, which poses serious problems for Nigerian schools. The available instructional materials for art teaching are relatively outdated.

In recognizing the importance of traditional arts to maintaining cultural identity in times of rapid social changes, this dissertation develops the basic framework from which to approach contemporary art education problems in Nigerian such as those identified by Fasuyi.

Methodology

As indicated earlier, one of the primary objectives of this study is to determine the social functions of certain traditional Nigerian art forms. It has been indicated, also, that while art objects such as masks exist as discrete objects created from particular materials, and defined in part by formal characteristics, they function in a broader sphere. Masks have been used in initiation rites and other ceremonies which may involve drama and dance and which hold meanings for participants that go far beyond the meaning of the mask as an isolated object. In recognition of this reality, the present research will 1) identify and describe certain traditional art forms, 2) indicate the social categories within which the art objects function, 3) analyze the functions of art within those categories, and 4) examine implications of the social functions of traditional arts for contemporary Nigerian art education.

The examination of the traditional arts is limited to Owo wooden masks and to Hausa wall decorations. These art forms have been chosen not only because they are representative of the social functions of traditional arts, but because they represent a unique group of visually dynamic and pragmatic traditional Nigerian art styles.

Sources of data. The following literary sources provide data on the social functions of selected Nigerian art: (1) Recent ahthropological or ethnographic dissertations, particularly those focusing on Nigerian masks; (2) Anthropological books and essays by reputable scholars which deal with social functions of art and with traditional *masks and Hausa traditional designs; and* (3) *Articles from Anthro*pological Journals that deal with Nigerian art.

Descriptions of art forms. Art historians and to some extent sociologists, anthropologists, and ethnographers have taken an active interest in documenting African art forms as a kind of "rescue operation. J. R. O. Ojo (1975) has provided a sociological study of Nigerian traditional art. His analysis is merely a broad categorization of values and it does not provide implications for contemporary Nigerian education. Previous authors had expressed similar views. Devereux (1971) emphasized the two major functions of art: sociocultural and psychological. These functions were further explained by D'Azevedo (1973) as the systematic study of art in the whole structure of the culture and the history of art in particular societies. Also, Sieber and Merriman (1973) have suggested that technical and structural aspects of art be studied, because an

understanding of the form, style, tools, techniques, and media of art objects will help in determining the role of art in the context of human societies. This suggestion was based on the assumption that societies are composed of related discrete behaviors and integrated entities which function in meaningful ways in relation to politics, social structure, religion, education, and economics.

In addition, traditional art may also be studied in a historical framework (Sieber & Merriman, 1973, pp. xix-xx). Mills (1971) suggested that art can be studied with reference to its techniques, materials, and style. This includes the way art objects function within the religious, economic, and social life of a particular society. The art object thus becomes a public object with a socio-cultural context, (Mills, 1971, pp. 73-83, F. J. Joplin, Carol F.).

According to Fagg, one should seek to determine dates, stylistic successions, origins of art styles and forms to ascertain through archaeological evidence the outside influences which contribute to the development of art (Fagg, 1960, p. 464). However, the present study is neither interested in aesthetic studies nor the history of art per se; rather the interest is in a discussion of the social role of art in Nigerian society.

Paul S. Wingert (1962) has emphasized the objective and subjective study of traditional art. The objective study emphasizes the need to focus on the stylistic features, visual characteristics, and special observable qualities, while the subjective stresses the importance of art and its functions and how it is used in relation to its meanings.

Charlotte M. Otten (1971) has suggested the systematic studies of the exact sources and nature of cultural pressures, the differential changes in various styles and functional categories, and the avenues and modes of transformation. Sieber advocates the analysis of art symbols, styles, and meanings, looking for the meanings of art events.

Following the suggestions of, especially Mills, Wingert, and to a certain extent, Sieber, the initial task is the identification and description of the selected Nigerian arts in terms of the materials from which they were created, their general formal characteristics, and their uses.

Social categories and functions. Following identification and description of the art works, an analysis will be made to determine to which social and functional categories the works may relate, if any.

Traditional arts are examined as instruments in broad social themes, such as politics, religion, law (traditional customs), education (the means for maintaining existing patterns of behavior). Two major issues are discussed: First, that art relates to an area considered social; second, that art performs some functions within the social categories.

This dissertation consists of six chapters. In Chapter one, Introduction, the physical setting and the social and cultural backgrounds of the Nigerian traditional arts have been described in order to give a brief account of the occasions for which traditional masks are used. This is accomplished by identifying several factors in Nigeria that are affecting the traditional functions of arts, and by

suggesting the need for education to reacquaint Nigerians with their arts and the social functions of these traditional arts.

In the second chapter, there will be a brief review of literature on the social functions of arts outlined in a general way and carefully analyzed to provide an external validity for the social functions that will be derived from the data on the Nigerian traditional arts in order to arrive at generalizations which will help define the social functions of Nigerian traditional arts. Four pertinent literary sources have been surveyed in the review of the literature: 1) Ph.D. dissertation, 2) anthropology books on art and ethnographic studies, 3) related anthropology journals, and finally 4) art education books.

In the third chapter the analytical methodology of this dissertation will be developed, including those definitions necessary to understanding the broad social themes from which the social functions of Nigerian traditional arts are derived.

In the fourth chapter the descriptions and social functions of sixteen traditional art objects will be analyzed towards defining the social functions of Nigerian traditional arts, typically the masks of Southern Nigeria and the Hausa wall decorations of Northern Nigeria. Individual art objects illustrate various tendencies within different villages and communities. Chapter Five is the summary of Findings.

In Chapter Six, the implications of the social functions of traditional arts for contemporary Nigerian education will be considered from the perspective of an appropriate educational theory.

It also contains a summary and concluding statements of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

ARTS AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

The basis for this study arises from the functioning of art in human society. In this context art functions as a symbol system evoking meaning among society's members.

Art as a symbolic form stands for or represents qualities and concepts beyond itself. The meaning of art is the significance or value of the ideas, theories, or things which are expressed to those who view it. This means that the social importance of art symbols lies within the meanings derived from them by groups, for example, as guidelines or exemplaries for social relationships.

The purpose of this chapter is to review pertinent literature on the social functions of art to serve two functions: 1) to enhance an understanding of the broader area to which this study belongs and 2) to serve as evidence that art performs social functions in many societies.

Three issues about the social functions of art are discussed as follows: 1) Art as a basis for social communication; 2) Art as technology; and 3) Art and political power. This review was derived from the previously mentioned four pertinent literary sources--relevant anthropological books and journals, Ph.D. dissertations, and art education books.

ART AS A BASIS FOR SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Mills (1961, p. 81) recognizes that for the very reason that art is methodological and structural "those who are not artists may profit from art." When we observe art "we perceive impacts of color, sound, form, movement, perceive relations among these, and entertain suggestions similar to those the artist experiences." Mills says that "Art is like the vision of Saul; there is a voice, a presence, and an impact. The basic aspect of art is in its presentation, in which 'suggestion' and 'structure' may come to viewers vividly, immediately, and sensuously."

Fraser (1971, pp. 34-35) suggests that art functions in oceanic culture to provide symbols "of acquired prestige according to the culturally recognized scale of values." He also emphasizes that masks were used in ceremonial activities.

Robert Redfield (1971, pp. 39-65) has pointed out that the Dogons perceived woodcarving as a representation of sacred beings which evoke ordered ideas. According to the Dogon's perception of art, "An icon is a sign standing for its subject." Redfield suggests that an icon may not be representational but an "analogy"--a similarity or agreement between one thing and another. Redfield explains that the wodden object that is our main focus can be seen as art or icon according to the kind of meaning that is attributed to or connected with it: social position, religious functions, and so on. What this means is that art forms symbolize different kinds of

meanings, knowledge, and experiences.

Like Redfield, George Kubler (1971) suggests that works of art are symbolic expressions:

> Works of art are symbolic expressions. They evoke a reality without being that reality. Buildings, statues, paintings, and tools all suggest too powerfully a specific time, place, and attitude, that they are among our most tangible and permanent manifestations of culture. "Enemy" works of art are destroyed during cultural conflicts. The triumph of one culture over another is usually marked by the virtual cessation of the art vanquished, and its replacement by the conqueror. (p. 213)

The fact that "enemy" works were destroyed during cultural conflicts gives testimony to the importance of art as a social force. Roy Sieber (1971) suggests that art possesses an affective character that arouses associations and responses from its audience. He further argues that although contemporary western aesthetics usually present art solely for its aesthetic and individual values, art can be and often is "utilitarian and plural" (p. 205). Sieber thus suggests that art has two basic aspects, the aesthetic or presentational context which comprises form and skill embodying style, while its meaning is comprised of subjects and symbolic associations. Sieber also believes that works of art are agents of social control, reflecting the ethics of the society and embodying, in aesthetic forms, spiritual forces that are believed to sustain law and order.

Duerden (1968) remarks that the African entertainment masquerade reflects the way in which life is regulated in traditional society even if it has no direct influence on the affairs of that society. This suggests that traditional arts effectively serve to make people

behave predictably even though they may not be consciously designed for that purpose.

We have seen then that art is presented among people in these instances as a visible, tangible object and is perceptually available to all or most societal members. In addition to appealing on an individual basis it functions in a social sense among individuals to establish prestige, social control, and common meanings through implied if not explicit means.

ART AS TECHNOLOGY

Art as technology, as serving in an instrumental sense, implies the use of art objects as tools for effecting desired objectives. Art serves as a tool facilitating certain common behaviors among individuals, thus qualifying as a 'social phenomenon'.

Odita's (1970) study of Igbo masks describes their role as a means of promoting communal association through ancestral worship. Odita is concerned with documenting dances in which Igbo masks function symbolically. He notes that masks of similar function have related elements of form, principles of design, and stylistics, and that certain elements of mask forms are derived from common sources. Odita's theory is that previous interpretations of Igbo masks distorted their role and significance because such interpretations lacked sufficient information about Nigerian traditional culture. Odita points out the Igbo art functions as a means of providing social integration through ancestor worship; a means of

entertainment in that it is amusing and dramatic; a means of educating children because it promotes children's initiatives and responsibilities; as conveying emotions as used in burial rites; and social control helping promote social cohesion. According to Odita, masqueraders served as law enforcement agents in Igbo traditional social settings.

Arnold G. Rubin's (1971) study on the arts of the Jukun-speaking people of Northern Nigeria provides comprehensive and useful details of the role art played in Jukun society to accomplish daily social needs. He maintains that the Jukun masks were primarily media of social and cultural integration, with spiritual qualities serving a secondary purpose. Rubin emphasizes that masks usually symbolize power, portrayed through animal images, such as hyenas, tusks of the warthog, horns of antelope or cape buffalo, leopard spots and others, which were used as anti-witchcraft devices. According to Rubin, masks were used periodically in the villages to drive out evil spirits which threatened social order and harmony in Jukun society. He emphasizes that the process generally involved the use of pragmatic and mechanistic attitudes. The pragmatic attitudes were based on utility or desired purpose, and the mechanistic implied an applied methodology by which an effect such as dance is produced, or a purpose accomplished.

Several stories and mythologies have been associated with the Jukun's spirit world of masks. Klippe, in a study of African folktales (1935) has revealed that such "Stories amuse and instruct...

children, stimulate their emotions and imaginations, and lead them to evaluate the acts and thus promote their concepts of behavior." Klippe notes that "Stories which interest grown-ups are tales of village life, anecdotes, fantastic tales, tales dealing with ogres and gnomes, legends, tales telling of visits to the land of the dead, and all sorts of personal interest stories" (p. 6). The author points out that a story is a narrative in which one happening grows out of another and a folktale is a story created by the folk moral precept, for the preservation of tradition or the amusement.

According to Klippe:

> The animal stories are usually beast tales in which animals live in houses, build houses as men do, cook and eat the food that belongs to men rather than to them, and participate in games and forms of amusement common to men. Animals of different species live together and lay out farms. Often one of them proves to be a dishonest partner. Sometimes an animal that walks steals the farm made by a bird, builds a road to it, and when accused of theft, points to the road as evidence that the farm is his. Often a man is one of the characters in a story and there is no demarcation between him and the humanized animals. Each animal usually keeps his dominant characteristic. The cunning of the spider makes him the romantic hero of a cycle of stories found among different tribes living on the Ivory Coast and on the Gold Coast. Among the Yoruba-speaking peoples--the spider's place is filled by the tortoise to whom is attributed superhuman powers and who is described as acting craftily and mischieviously. In Southern Africa the hare is a wise little creature; among the Hottentots the jackal outwits the more stupid animals. (Pp. 6-7)

Klippe has maintained that "The why stories seek to explain abstract ideas and natural phenomena as to how light and wisdom came into the world, how Lake Tanganyika was formed, how iron ore came into

existence, why the sky is far above the earth, why the zebra has stripes but no horns, why the spider is flat,"...and so on. He recalls that the first systematic collection of African folktales began in the second quarter of the nineteenth century when missionaries and government officials realized that an understanding of the folktales of that society would help them understand the people themselves. Folktales are associated with masks and carvings because masks and carvings externalized the means of experiencing the visual qualities of the tales; the masks represent the means of describing the content, style, and sequence of folktales' visionary illusion.

Nunley (1976) examines art's precarious role in the economy of the Sisala Community of Ghana, observing, "The making of twin sculpture figures carved to represent the spirit of decreased twins does not adequately support the carver, nor does it afford him the opportunity to develop a role as an artist" (P. 2). Nunley, therefore, has aimed "to establish and evaluate the factors which brought about the decline of traditional sculpture, the conditions responsible for the development of the new forms of carving, and finally the factors contributing to the present low status of carvers." He argues that:

> Sisala social fragmentation is partly to blame for the decline of traditional sculpture while the emergence of nontraditional carving is closely tied to the extent of artistic specialization, patronage, and political events that have occurred in Sisala-land since the 1950s. (P. 2)

Nunley supports Warren L. d'Azevedo's views that:

> ...the relation of artistry to religion, technology, and recreation is intimate. The differentiated role

> of the artist seems to appear only where there is a sufficient degree of social stratification to produce an unequal distribution of power and wealth. At the minimal level of differentiation the practice of artistry is the service of other ends than those of art and the artist is confirmed almost entirely to traditional forms and the application of his talent to enhancement of existing institutions. (P. 47)

Nunley suggests that art was used to serve purposes in three areas: 1) judiciary, 2) funenary, and 3) divination. Judiciary sticks, called chakilintolo, functioned like Ashanti message swords, instructing the individual about behavior in court proceedings when violations of Sisala law and custom were committed (p. 52).

Nunley explains that masks, stools, and fifes play crucial roles in the performances of funerals of important men and dead twins (P. 59). He reveals that fairy figures are also used for divination purposes. He recalls that:

> During the divination process the soothsayer holds the top of the wand with his left hand and the client grabs the bottom of the stick with his right hand and in this manner the wand moves in various directions indicating the responses to questions posed during the session, thus cueing the diviner and the client as to a proper course of action with respect to the client's problem... (p. 62)

M. K. Wittmer (1976) has discussed the misunderstood art and history of the Cameroon Grasslands. He says that "little account of the arts has been taken in the past and scholarship in general has been impaired by the lack of careful coordination of sources from the three ex-colonial powers: Germany, England, and France (p. 1).

Wittmer demonstrates that the head crest masks--the "Bamum"--served a definite political function. According to him:

> Bamum culture is largely an official political occasion, for not only did the PaKom come to court to report and turn in the tax they had gathered, but...a variety of the village type crest masks dancing in large scope between the palace and the market...These village masks come to pay tax and to dance at the summons of the king. In other words, what once was a local, quasi-religious harvest celebration had become by the time of Njoya (king) a political holiday demonstrating the unity of the villages under one chief and his control over them through the gathering of their traditional visible symbols and masks together with the royal symbols, the drums. This was also the time that the king, in his metal covered mask, danced the Uscha or Nja...and this was the time the secret societies met. The village masks are very like the forest village head crest masks which are symbols of the village or lineage level secret societies, and...that every Bamum lineage had its own secret society. (p. 38)

Loretta B. Reinhardt (1975) explains and documents the background and content of Mende carving, including its environment, politics, economics, kinship, and social life (e.g., the secret societies and their costumed spirits, and the general interrelations among the societies). Reinhardt postulates that art forms were used for initiation ceremonies in which all initiates undergo an initiation rite which trains them for their roles as adults, women, wives, and mothers; very often girls are married immediately upon completion of this initiation.

In a sense, art in the instance cited serves instrumentally as a sign the importance of which is noted by the art educator, Irving Kaufman (1966, p. 303):

> The sign itself is easily available more so than the object which required something to happen. The denoted object too is of more interest--of greater importance than the sign itself, for the sign is merely a neutral indication with no real intrinsic value. It has value

> primarily as significantion of something else which is of more immediate or necessary concern.

We have observed that art has served in these several examples to: provide social integration through ancestor worship, explain common moralistic phenomena, a medium in facilitating laws relating to judicial and supernaturalistic and political and educational roles. In all cases art functioned as a tool to accomplish ends or goals beyond itself.

ART AND POLITICAL POWER

There is also considerable evidence that art promotes a form of social integration by acting as a symbol of political power. Herskovits (1945, p. 18) suggests that art symbolizes the concepts of power, authority, and prestige. He explains that in many African countries elaborate cycles of rituals, both political and religious, have been associated with traditional art forms. On the political side these "rites were principally of the royal or chiefly ancestral cult" (p. 18). The art itself was a sign of the strength of the village, the district, or the kingdom.

Like Herskovits, Thompson (1972) discusses the political functions of art. Thompson notes that "The Yoruba beaded crown with veil blends the terror and splendor of kingship." He points out that the artistic symbols of kingship are indicative of the fact that a ruler must face dreadful evil: that the shapes on the crown of birds suggest evil and neutralization of evil flying out to destroy aversive

foreign and domestic and even the king himself should he prove to be fundamentally wicked--that the crown brings evil to the head of the man who does evil" (p. 256). Thompson argues convincingly that "The Yoruba provide an appropriate setting for the study of art and authority on the African Continent," where "Chieftancies are important and the chiefs are the political leaders and traditional leaders and traditional loyalties are strong."

Herbert Cole (1971, pp. 79-97) provides further illustrations of the fact that art is used to symbolize political authority and power. He maintains that Ibo arts portray the authority and power of village leaders and he demonstrates that "The Ozo insignia serves visibly to distinguish titled men from others and to differentiate between the members of various grades" (p. 84). "Such insignia include staff, stool, and tusk; carved wooden entrance. Art association with Ibo leadership though having its roots in the art of the common people may nevertheless be distinguished from popular art" (Herbert Cole, 1971, p. 84).

Leon Siroto (1972, pp. 57-58) adds that masks were used in competition for leadership among the Bakwele in Western Equatorial Africa and that art helped individuals attain as well as maintain leadership. Siroto emphasizes that "The cohesion of the Bakwele village ...depended upon its leaders' ability to anticipate social crisis, as well as upon having a means of diverting potential antagonists into interaction transcending the conflict of their personal interest." Such a diversion was attained through the rites of beete cult, their

strongest available magical power. The ceremony includes the consumption of magical stew cooked with antelope intestines; hence, "Many of the younger men of the village went into the forest to mount a net-hunt for antelopes, an undertaking that forced them to cooperate with each other and built up a temporary esprit de corps." The feasting, singing, dancing, and the intense and harmonious interaction that accompanied these activities further enhanced communal cohesion.

These varieties of the social function of art that are derived from the current literature review differ from a previously established historical generalization. The new varieties differentiate the typical forms of the species in character (i.e., the social functions are not identified as religious or political functions, etc.) because the historical generalizations are too trivial or too inconstant to justify the separation of functions as distinct species. The variety is appropriately selected to call attention to previous deviations without making any specific taxonomic suggestion that may be used specifically of any such divergent group. However, this literature review serves two purposes: 1) to provide a broader scope for understanding the larger anthropological area to which this dissertation relates, and 2) to provide external validity for the social functions of the Nigerian traditional arts. The social functions of Nigerian traditional arts will be determined as specified in the following chapter. The analytical-methodology--the interpetations and definitions of the terms used in the dissertation will be described.

This review of anthropological literature principally on Nigerian art and mostly relating to masking behavior, has supported the belief that art in these traditional societies functions in several ways to promote social values. Art functions to promote social cohesion through the communication of common beliefs and designation and maintenance of social structures. Art accomplishes this as a commonly perceived concrete artifact within most societies functioning as a form of technology in promoting values.

This review provides a basis for the further study of the social function of masking in Nigerian society and suggests something of the nature of the social functions of art.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify, document, and interpret the social functions of selected Nigerian traditional art forms. This information will be examined from appropriate educational theory for implication for contemporary Nigerian art education. In this dissertation, an anthropological approach has been used to identify and document art forms and to interpret their social functions.

The four main purposes of this study are to: 1) Select and document selected Nigerian traditional arts for a study of their social functions, 2) Determine the social categories in which the individual art objects function, 3) Determine the social functions of the art objects, and 4) Discuss the implications of these social functions of traditional arts for contemporary Nigerian Art Education.

Selection of Traditional Art Objects

There are various traditional art styles in many different parts of Nigeria, and their functions vary from place to place. In this study, sixteen Nigerian traditional art styles were selected: Kurudu Masks, Olibobo, Ede Masks, Ofere Masks, Agbala Sacred Drums, the Ugba-Ifa, and shrine decorations, all of which can be found in Isho, Ondo State; the Oba's Crown, from the palace of the King of Ondo Town; Olokun shrine figures found in Benin, Bendel State; and Gugu masks

found in Bida, Niger State. Six types of Hausa wall decorations, namely the scroll motif, the interlocking emblem, the semicircular motif, the multifarious motif, the mosque and camel motif, and finally the leaf and semicircular motif were all selected from three states: Kaduna, Kano, and Sokoto. Because of the similarities of the decorative motifs found in these three states, it is difficult to localize specific categories of styles, i.e., it is not possible in this study to categorize that specific motifs are typical of Kaduna, Kano, or Sokoto.

In this study, these traditional art objects were chosen on the basis that they functioned effectively in the past. In the past, the Nigerian traditional arts were functional because they were used as means of socialization. These art forms seemed to group quite naturally into two units. In the future it may be desirable to extend a study of social functions to other groups of traditional Nigerian arts.

Therefore, these art objects are chosen and examined on the basis that they performed some social functions in Nigerian society. The main question is, How do we determine that art is an instrument of social control? Two issues are discussed: First, that art relates to an area considered social, and second, that art performed some functions within the social categories.

The identification, documentation, and interpretation of selected art forms were exemplified by following an anthropological method,

using the objective and subjective approach previously mentioned by Paul S. Wingert (1962) and Mills (1971).

The objective approach emphasizes the description of those selected art forms. Mills (1961, p. 79) suggests that "The insistence upon materiality provides us with a public object or event in which relevant experiences of all possible observers remain potential." He discusses Thomas Munro's theory which differentiates three aspects of art as a public object: "The presented, the suggested, and the structural." According to Mills

> The first includes all that is present to the sense of the individual: shapes, colors, tones, textures... The second 'suggestion' achieves effects that are not immediately sensuous through the presentation of sensuous materials. Through its arrangement of shapes and colors a two-dimensional painting may suggest a three-dimensional object, and finally that structure is as significant expressively as the presented and suggested aspect of the object.

Mills emphasizes that one part of the object should be considered in relation to all the other parts of the object.

Using the above approach the sixteen art forms were described along with information on the possible social uses of the art forms. (These descriptions are found in Chapter Four.)

Determination of Social Categories

Art closely relates to people and their activities in society. In Nigerian tradition, art forms were closely associated with the gathering together of people in ceremonial activities. In the traditional sense, art was produced mostly by people who engaged in

agriculture and who led simple lives which promoted a continuity of culture. This continuity, in turn, became an important incentive in the development of the arts which were essentially functional in nature and in use, interwoven into the social fabrics of different ethnic groups.

Traditional arts functioned in several areas of life which in a broad sense may be considered social. These social categories will be discussed next as they related to traditional Nigerian life.

Religion: In the traditional Nigerian sense employed here, 'religion' means ancestral worship, in which

> There is a universal belief in survival and triumph over death, demonstrated by the countless death masks. Masks were used to represent living ancestors. The gods of the ancestors are believed to be serving certain protective guidance through masks. They believe in the supremacy of God, who is closely related to the lesser gods. They believe in the powers and miracles of God, and share such beliefs in the interrelationships of lesser gods with the supreme God. (Geoffrey Parrinder, 1969, p. 12.)

African religion is a structuralist concept of the universe; religion means power, vital energy, or dynamism (Odita, 1970; Segy, 1976). In traditional religion, Nigerian people believe in the interrelationship of lesser things to more important things in nature. There is a belief in the interrelationship of people in society helping one's neighbors and maintaining an equilibrium of behavior. Human activities are seen as the interaction of forces which act on one another and people try to keep on good terms with all of them, by not hurting their neighbors.

Politics: In the tradition sense, Nigerian politics can be described as the body of interconnected rights, duties, and sentiments, as expressed in the mystical values dramatized by the great public ceremonies which stand for the greatest common interest of the people of a community. The mystical values expressed in traditional politics are manifested through mystical sanctions--myths, dogma, ritual ceremonies--performed by the king. Thus, "mystical power" helps promote social and political relationships. The ceremonies emphasize the solidarity of the people and the sanctions evoke mystical values--fertility, health, prosperity, peace, and justice as political slogans (Evans-Pritchard & Fortes, 1961). Consequently, people operate and cooperate in a system of interconnected moral and legal norms through the Kingship system. The Kingship system, therefore, is the key political institution of traditional Nigerian society. The King is the chief executive of government to whom all other social groups are subordinate. There is a ranked class structure in this system:

The Kingship System

1. The King
2. Representatives or palace officials
3. First class chiefs
4. Second class chiefs
5. Ward heads
6. Street heads

7. Bale or village heads
8. Title holders - Priests
9. Age groups in seniority ranks
10. Lineage heads in seniority ranks

Law: Law means social control and punishment orientation. In traditional Nigerian society, law is custom--i.e., accepted patterns of behavior. Law is the standard for conformity to social normative values--manners, sanctioned by approval and disapproval; morality, sanctioned by religion; rules, sanctioned by rewards and punishments that make honesty the best policy. In the traditional sense, law includes presenting petitions, averting disaster, fighting sorcerers, detecting crimes such as witchcraft, theft, and settling disputes among warring groups of people.

The sanctions and public ceremonies support and help consolidate the social system, helping make people responsible and devoted to it. These conditions are the determinants of loyalty. Sanctions bring pressure to bear on people apart from their loyalties and convictions, and the pressures become a direct means of enforcement.

Education: Education is the cognitive orientation of children and the control of their behavior by instruction. Education is a socialization process. 'Initiation' is the traditional Nigerian meaning of "education." The process of initiation is like education--it includes a course of instruction and training through stories that are transmitted. It involves a breadth of information; the qualities

acquired through instruction and training further the development of the whole person--physically, mentally, and morally. "Initiation" deals with the principles and practice of social behavior, including ancestral worship, traditional politics (the kingship system) and customs. Initiation is a process of traditional socialization in which a youth undergoes rites of passage, passing from one phase of life to another. The process confers a new social status and brings about major psychological changes. The long-term social significance of initiation is that: "The youth willingly consents to pass along to the next generation the ancestral laws and customs of the tribe as the basic tenets of an integrated communal society; as a result, the individual's characteristic behavior is modified and refined" (Segy, 1976, pp. 1-10). Thus, the traditional society socially recognized safeguarded children and protected their transformation from childhood to adulthood (Segy, 1976). Education in this sense uses oral tradition which involves stories, myths, proverbs, and folklore about ancestors long forgotten.

Entertainment: In traditional Nigerian society, entertainment is the activity of others to provide amusement or diversion; the word suggests more or less formal circumstances usually involving dancing, acrobatic displays, and general merrymaking. Often considerable food is consumed during entertainment activities. Entertainment is designed to amuse, divert, or attract attention. Entertainment is pleasurable, and the pleasure localized in specific events often carries over to

create a generally positive mood or temperament. And this, of course, is part of the purpose of entertainment. Entertainment is a broad term which includes several related sub-categories such as amusement, diversion, and recreation.

Amusement is the engagement of one's attention, especially in a source of strange things, objects, or interests. Amusement does not necessarily imply play or sport; nevertheless, it often suggests light, purposeless, trivial, or laughter-provoking activities.

On the other hand, diversion stresses the distraction of the attention of people from their immediate engagement (i.e., their current routine interest or worry) which is occupying it and its capture by something different, especially by something different--e.g., to divert the attention of a group of workers from the boredom of a twelve-hour strenuous labor without sufficient rest is to engage in laughter-provoking behaviors--to shrill like a bird, to howl like a monkey, and to perform similar kinds of animation--shriek, shout, yell, scream, whoop--etc.

Recreation usually implies a change of occupation or an indulgence in diversions for the sake of relaxation or refreshment of body or mind. For example, it is necessary to relax after being fatigued, depressed, bored, or annoyed.

Medicine: In the traditional sense, medicine is the prevention and cure of illnesses by magical art, and this typically includes the use of colorful objects or painted materials. Magic is the belief in

the ability to control the natural world by supernatural forces. It is the ability to change situations, to shape things, and make them work the way we desire--e.g., to fell a tree without an axe, saw, or machine, or to travel by air from Africa to North America without boarding a plane.

The Nigerian traditional arts performed a variety of social functions in several broad social themes or categories which we have defined as: religion, politics, law, education, entertainment, and medicine.

Determination of Social Functions

One of the principal purposes of this study is to determine the social functions of traditional Nigerian art in the society of which it was a part. For the purpose of this study social is derived in part from the following note:

> Any system of interactive relationships of a plurality of individual actors is a social system. A society is the type of social system which contains within itself all the essential prerequisites for its maintenance as a self-subsistent system. (Parsons, Talcott, & Shils, E., edt. 1965, p.225)

In this sense each of the tribal groups from which the masks for this study were drawn were self-subsisting systems.

In common usage function refers to the end or purpose of a thing, or the action for which something is suited. In this sense, social function would refer to the social end or purpose of the art objects in these traditional societies. I assume that the art objects

in question or their uses in conjunction with ceremony or myths are, by function, related to an action such as promoting the maintenance of the society in such basic social areas as politics, religion, education, and the other social categories which we have discussed.

In effect, the social functions of traditional arts are derived in Neperud's terms by examining the society's:

> ...art objects for the assumptions about reality, by examining the society's value system as discussed in literary sources. Society is viewed from a structure of social categories: familiar, religious, educational, economical-occupational, political, and judicial. (1977:2)

One of the difficulties in determining the social functions of art is that very often the art form may serve a variety of functions, all of which are not equal in frequency of use or primacy of use. Since some of the functions were derived from another more immediate function, it was necessary to distinguish between primary and secondary functions. For example, a mask might first of all perform a religious function with this in turn having an educational use. Primary function means an action that comes first in the order of development, use, and progression of functions. A secondary function designates a use subordinate to the primary function in terms of intended purpose of the art object is normally derivative of the initial function. This is not intended to suggest that a secondary function is inferior, but merely that it follows and is based upon the primary function.

In order to determine the social functions that were performed by traditional Nigerian masks and Hausa wall decorations, the following procedures were followed:

1. Each of the traditional arts were: a) described, drawing information from anthropological journals, dissertations on Nigerian arts, periodicals and books, and the researcher's own knowledge of Nigerian art b) the social category within which it functioned was indicated along with c) a description of the art object's specific functions. (This material is contained in Chapter IV.)

2. The above data (descriptions of art objects) was analyzed for types of social functions, by the social categories, and then the functions were designated as primary or secondary in view of the context surrounding the art object's uses. (Findings reported in Chapter V.)

3. The primary and secondary social functions of traditional masks and Hausa wall decorations were summarized to determine patterns of functions. This was accomplished by a list of all functions, one each to separate cards. These cards were then grouped by similarity of functions.

4. In order to determine implications of findings for contemporary Nigerian art education, current educational theory appropriate to Nigerian contemporary society, Oliver's views, was compared to social functions derived from traditional Nigerian art forms for points of common or complementary functions. These points of commonality suggested, then,implications for contemporary Nigerian education, more specifically art education.

The descriptions of the art forms follow in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TRADITIONAL ART TYPES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

The sixteen traditional Nigerian art forms are reviewed in the following text in terms of: description, social categories, and social functions. These forms are of two main orders: 1) traditional art objects consisting mostly of masks and 2) Hausa wall decorations. These arts quite often vary in form and function according to the location where created. Their functions demonstrate the extent to which the art objects were used by the traditional people in ecclesiastical and secular functions serving to unite them through social activities.

This text will indicate how people used art forms as language to express their feelings and thoughts. But especially, the study will reveal how several art forms were associated with religion, politics, law, entertainment and education, and decorative purposes. The following art styles will be discussed in this study: Kurudu masks, Olibobo masks, Ede masks, Gugu masks, Ofere masks, Oba's Crown, Agbala Drums, shrine decorations, Olokun shrine figures, Ugba-Ifa; and six Hausa wall decorations which include the scroll motif, interlocking emblem, camel motif, multifarious motifs, leaf and semicircular motifs and finally the circular and interlocking motifs.

KURUDU MASKS

The Kurudu mask types are found in Isho, a town in Owo Administrative area. Isho is one of the most fertile places in Owo and it produces a great variety of agricultural products and other forest resources--timber, logs, and suitable wood for carvings.

Owo masks were created from a single block of wood. There are many different mask types in Owo, among which 'Kurudu' masks are most unique. Kurudu masks are carved in wood, and are approximately 15" (37 cm) in height. Kurudu mask craftsmanship is naive and crude, in that the marks of the tools used appear prominent on the surface of the masks.

Kurudu masks possess bold sculpturally-rigid but expressive features (see Figure 3). The masks possess a large simple nose without nostrils, and a large simple mouth without lips. The mouth consists of a row of long teeth widely segregated, thus permitting the wearer to see and breathe. Kurudu masks have two large ears and two horns with magical properties. The horns and head are painted in a frightful and ghostly manner using red and black pigments.

Social Category

In Owo, a center of traditional arts, Kurudu masks are important not only as ancestral images used for fighting witchcract, but they are valuable in accomplishing a variety of social functions. Like other Owo masks, 'Kurudu' is important as a headdress mask worn

LOCATION OF TRADITIONAL ART FORMS

Type of Art Forms	Index to Map
Hausa Wall Decorations	Northern Two-thirds of Nigeria
	Index
Kurudu Masks	3
Olibobo Masks	4
Ede Masks	5
Gugu Masks	6
Ofere Masks	7
Oba's Crown	8, 9
Agbala drums	10
Shrine decoration	11, 12
Olokun shrine figures	13, 14
Ugba-Ifa	15, 16

exclusively by men during ceremonial functions such as ancestral worship and entertainment festivals involving dance.

Commenting on the broad category of Yoruba masks to which Kurudu belong, Duerden states that "The expression of a mask has a certain inwardness in that the mask is the seat of the spirit who rides the dancer. The spirit is the mask and the mask looks as if it is restraining an intense force within itself." Further, he explains that "the entertainment mask reflects the way in which life is regulated in the society, even if it has no direct concern with the affairs of that society" (Duerden, 1958, p. 18).

Kurudu masks are associated with the institution of traditional kingship, the key political institution and the chiefs as the administrative leaders of the people of Isho.

The Social Functions of Kurudu Masks

Kurudu masks performed several functions within traditional society. Among such social categories were political, religious, legal, and educational uses.

Political functions: Kurudu masks immortalize power by perpetuating mythical values, which promote political relations. Kurudu masks functioned in traditional society as a unifying element of political life. They functioned through mystical powers bound up with the institution of divine traditional kingship in Isho. The masks were made to induce particular states of mind, and being sacred they were rarely seen in public except during important

political or ceremonial functions in which mandatory actions were required, especially community sanctions. It seems that the mystical powers are of the type described by Evans-Pritchard and Fortes (1961, p. 17). Evans-Pritchard and Fortes have shown that "mystical values in traditional Africa are dramatized in the great public ceremonies which stand for the greatest common interest of the widest political community to which a member of a particular African society belongs--that is, for the whole body of interconnected rights, duties, and sentiments, for this is what makes a single political community." At Isho, Kurudu masks were symbolically used exclusively by the king and his chiefs. The institution of kingship system rules by mystical sanctions, 'myths', 'dogma', 'ritual ceremonies', and 'mystical power' help promote social and political relationships. "The ceremonies emphasize the solidarity of the people and the sanctions evoke mystical social values--fertility, health, prosperity, peace, and justice as political slogans. Consequently, people operate and cooperate in a system of interconnected moral and legal norms" (Pritchard, 1961, p. 17).

Religious functions: The nature and purpose of Kurudu masks is apparently religious; the shrine is a sacred place of worship and ritual serves as a means of communication between the living and the dead. Kurudu masks are instrumental for maintaining social relationships through religion, which promotes social interaction through communal worship. It appears that communal worship is of the type mentioned by some anthropological literature, and it has been

discussed thoroughly. For example, Pritchard and Fortes (1961) explain that the "African sees ritual observances as the supreme safeguard of the basic needs of his existence and of the basic relations that make up his social order--land, cattle, bodily health, the family, the clan, the state" (Evans-Pritchard and Fortes, 1961, p. 18). Similarly, Parrinder observes that "The mystery of death is held to be against nature, and there is a universal belief in survival and triumph over death demonstrated by the countless death masks and by societies which represent the living ancestors." In this way, Kurudu masks promote and perpetuate religious orientation which regenerates social and communal relationships. Symbolically, Kurudu masks perform a safe and successful participation in their daily social life through religious worship of ancestral cults and heroes, "the gods, powers of heaven and earth, and the ancestors are all 'clouds of witness' which form the audience to man's career on earth, and the providence that helps him in trouble". (Parrinder, 1969, pp. 14-15). Kurudu masks were intended to induce the memory of ancestral relatives; Kurudu masks are the spirits whose abode is in the shrine--the sacred place of worship, and Kurudu masks were held sacred. Not only were the ancestors worshipped as heroes through the medium of Kurudu masks in shrines, but they were felt to be present watching over the households of the relatives. For instance, many homes, tombs, and burial places are still elaborately decorated as shrines. And the symbolic images of sacrificial objects, animal

skulls, the remainder of goats, sheep, dogs, and feathers served the functions of providing necessary environments for Kurudu mask ceremonies, and generous prayers and blessings were accomplished according to tradition as follows.

During such ritual ceremonial sanctions, Kurudu masks were worn by adult males who appeared in public places as sacred beings from heaven. Isho traditional people feared the obscure practices of evil sorcerers, witches, and demons which were believed to have disguised themselves in the forms of dangerous animals existing within the ecological environment; for instance, the thick forest was greatly feared, as were the mountains. Similarly, the rivers were also feared because they were subject to annual flooding which ruined needed food crops. These unexplained geographical phenomena were real sources of misery, because in the past people believed that evil spirits existed and that such spirits were capable of appearing at night to cause them harm and unrest, molesting the souls of their victims. So in order to avert such molestations, Kurudu masks were used to chase away evil spirits that were used as the repositories of ancestors who came to earth to rectify wrong doings and thus protect living relatives. In this process prayers were offered by the people during rituals to the ancestral figure for fertility. All agricultural people requested richly provided fields of yams and corn. Women desiring children offered presents to the ancestral figure, asking him to provide them with children and in the following year promised agricultural gifts to the ancestor would be fulfilled. These sacrifices were offered

annually to the carved figures of Kurudu to promote adequate means of communication between the living and the dead. In this way the souls of the departed relatives were believed to be in constant visitations with the sacrificial blood regularly poured over the figures and thus establishing themselves inside it. The first fruits during harvest, a share of the game from hunting expeditions, and part of the newly tapped palmwine had to be offered to the carved images of the ancestor. Kurudu masks were the media through which the people conversed with the ancestral spirits and charmed them to action in the time of great difficulties.

Legal functions: Kurudu masks perpetuate the traditional laws and customs of Nigerian society. During Kurudu ceremonial masquerade rituals, the audience is expected to behave orderly and to conform to prescribed rules and regulations--everyone is supposed to keep his/her distance considerably away from the masquerader. Also the identity of Kurudu mask wearers is usually kept secret to nonparticipants, and also to women, because women are not supposed to know such secrets, according to traditional law. Kurudu masks also mandate newly promulgated laws, and such activities take place annually during ceremonial festivals. Further, emergency laws such as curfews and restrictions are usually effected during the last few days of Kurudu mask ceremonies. Anyone who violates such laws may receive corporal punishment, forfeiture of personal property, or payment of fines in goats, rams, or by working for several days in the king's farmlands. Because of the penalties associated with the traditional laws very

rarely have they been violated. Obedience to law and order, in traditional society, was mandated by Kurudu masks.

The society in which Kurudu masks were used resembles the type described by Evans-Pritchard and Fortes:

> Members of an African society feel their unity and perceive their common interests in symbols and it is their attachment to these symbols which more than anything else gives their society cohesion and persistence. (Pp. 19-30)
>
> The sacred symbols which reflect the social system endow it with mystical values which evoke acceptance of the social order that goes far beyond the obedience exacted by the secular sanction of force. The social system is as it were removed to a mystical plane, where it figures as a system of sacred values beyond criticism or revision. Hence, people will overthrow a bad king but the kingship is never questioned...These values are common to the whole society, to rulers, and ruled alike, and to all segments and sections.
> (1961, pp. 17-18).

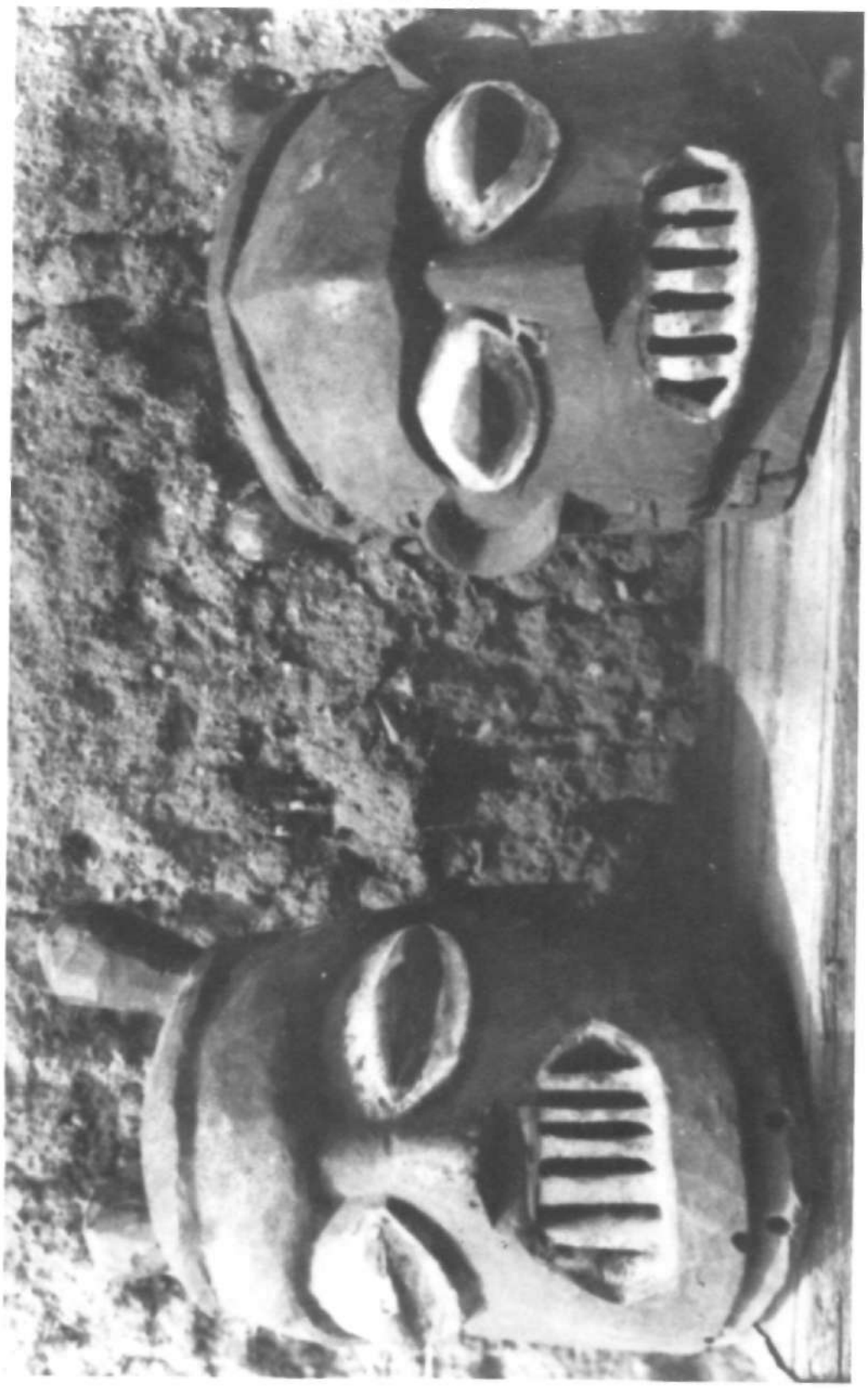
Educational functions: Kurudu masks perform educational functions such as initiation. Kurudu masks conclude the occasion, and the initiated are those that often perform communal duties such as making and mending roads, erecting communal shrines, and building markets, digging graves and burying the dead, organizing festivals, and making and enforcing laws because they are the executioners for the council of elders. Age-group sets were charged with the duties of prescribing traditional etiquette which governs ceremonial masking, and both are initiated and the uninitiated must show due respect and loyalty toward masqueraders. Also, initiated adults must keep aside when superior masqueraders appear. These social norms were inculcated into age-group sets. Education here is the process of rearing a child.

It is the act or process of training youth for their social and political role in life. It is the implementation or acquisition of knowledge, skill, or discipline of character. To prepare youth for complete living is the function of education. And it is viewed that age-grades in traditional society need to be educated, especially through 'initiation'--the traditional educational process. The process of initiation, like education, includes a course of instruction and training. It implies the totality of the information and qualities acquired through instruction and training which further the development of an individual physically, mentally, and morally. Initiation deals with the principles and practice of social behavior, including political and customary roles.

In traditional social life, initiation is a process in which the youth undergoes various rites de passage because the candidate is passing from one phase to another in his life stages, especially among the age groups. The process confers new social status and brings about major psychological changes. During initiation ceremonies, the candidate is isolated in a camp with others of his age group; the candidate is secluded, receives instruction in traditional doctrines--respect for elders, the prescribed details of various rituals. In addition, the candidate will take an oath of secrecy as a protection against degeneration of the tradition; the candidate will submit in silence to initiatory tests or trials including circumcision to show the candidate's ability to endure.

Figure 3

Kurudu Masks



OLIBOBO MASKS

Description

Olibobo masks, carved from wood, are about 15½" high. Some symbolic feathers of sacrificial fowl stock are usually attached to the head (see Figure 4). After searching documents on Nigerian iconography, it appears that this particular mask has never been documented before except by the researcher (1969). Olibobo masks are rather elongated human shapes. They have two bold and protruding eyes painted black without eyelids, a long simplified nose without nostrils, a rectangular shaped false mouth without teeth, and two elongated ears. The masks are usually monochromatic in color. Certain Olibobo masks are painted white ghostlike, as images which symbolize imaginary beings. Olibobo masks usually have frightening expressions, generally abstracted, thus revealing certain forceful and vigorous visual characteristics. Olibobo masks do not merely cover the face but the entire head as well. The masks described are vigorous, wild, powerful, and strong in appearance; they are carved to represent nightmarish beast-like merciless images. These masks terrorize the audience into unquestionable obedience. Olibobo masks consist of nonnaturalistic abstracted forms. Hidden powers are said to create unique individualistic expressions for Olibobo masks. For the purpose of making the large Olibobo headdress mask, strong and durable wood is used because the masquerader is required to perform strenuous acrobatic displays during the ceremonial festivals.

Social category: The Olibobo mask functions in the social categories of traditional law and politics and religion.

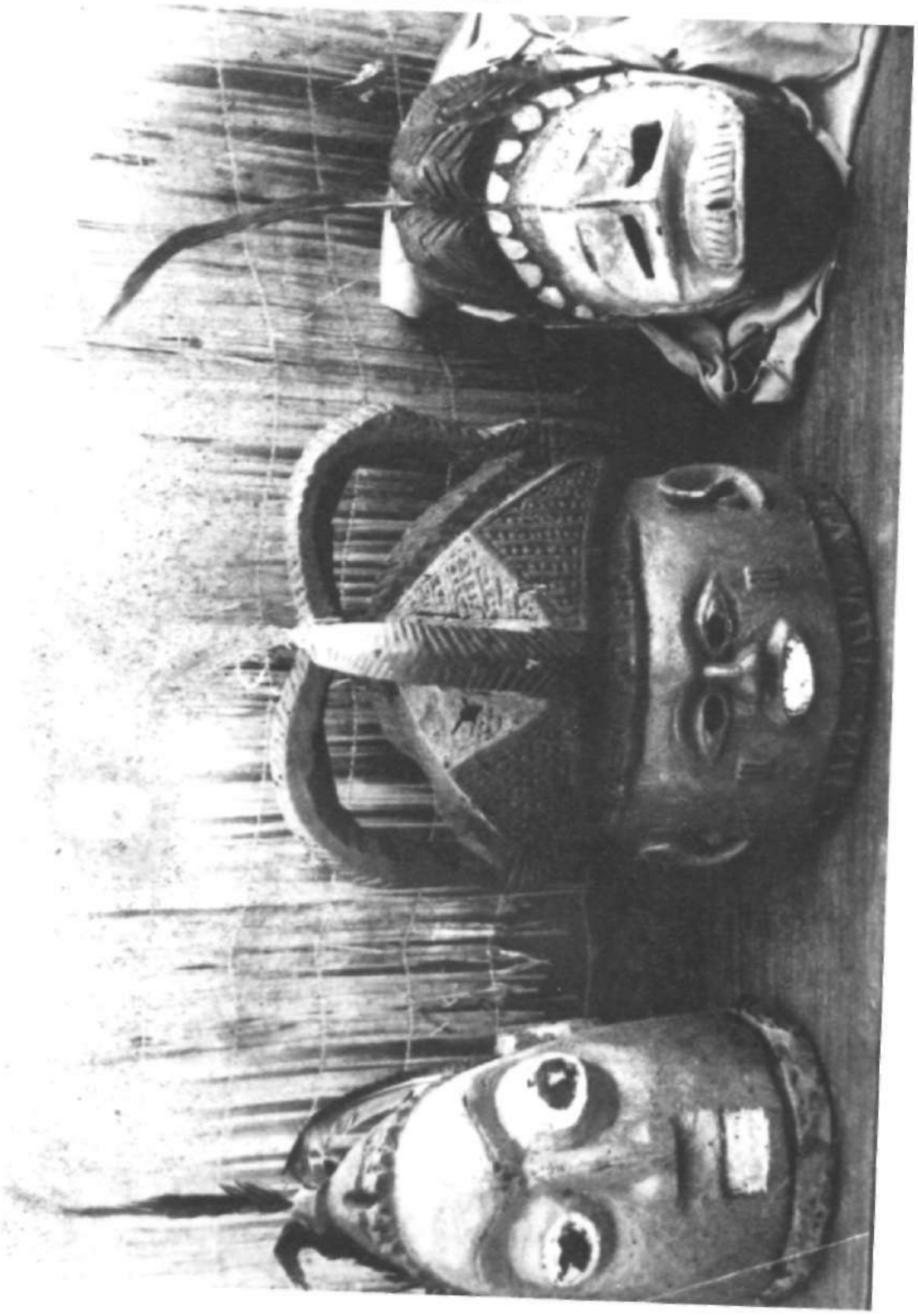
Social functions: Olibobo masks perform legal functions. Olibobo is a police mask which serves mainly to enforce rules. It is used as a law enforcement agent and for punishment because the masqueraders are sent to enforce rules, by seizure of property or by caning or flogging the offenders. The masquerader communicates social and political values through mythical dances and rituals. It is true, as Michael E. Sadler (1935) also says, that "The mask is the central point in the paraphernalia of the ritual dance or professional ceremony. Its characteristics are a clue to the temperament of the tribe or society which used it." Consequently, during ceremonial festivals and whenever drumming begins, masqueraders "must respond with the correct salute to the ancestors" (Duerden, 1968). Duerden indicates that a mask accompanied by gestural dances was supposed to symbolize the attitude which the individual members of traditional society were expected to have toward life. It is also true, as Horton points out, that during ceremonial festivals, a new masquerader who fails to perform accurately according to the accepted patterns will forfeit his rights to other houses of masqueraders (Ed. Duerden, 1968).

Political functions: In Isho, Olibobo masks are associated with the initiated age group of the warrior class (between the ages of thirty and fifty years of age). Initiated age groups--male adults--serve as organizing agents who exploit some political

functions or the social role of masquerade ritual, and in turn make ethnic life enjoyable because the initiated age grades are the most active people in the society. Initiated age grades often performed communal duties such as the construction and renovating of roads, erecting public buildings such as markets, digging graves, organizing funeral rites and festivals, and enforcing laws, because they are the executioners for the council of elders and such a political post is exceedingly powerful.

Women are excluded from showing secrets, especially those relating to masking. Isho traditional society is stratified into age categories which tend to affect behavior. The age-set system has a disciplinary purpose of importance. It cuts across the kingship rules to a certain extent. The age sets serve two major customary purposes in an interrelated normative system centered around people's activity and social behavior, maintaining order and harmony, and a variety of norms that govern social etiquette and political relations. Age sets provide the tribe with a source of manpower of the right age for military purposes and, second, the stratification thus produced influences the normal rules of behavior because each set of individuals is subordinate, both in theory and in practice, to its senior set. The actual effect of this seniority is felt most forcibly in the three lowest sets consisting of the warriors, initiates, and small boys.

Figure 4
Olibobo Masks



EDE MASKS

Description

Ede masks are made of rope tightly interwoven and perforated to permit the wearer to see and breathe. They are life-sized masks which cover the head of the wearers completely, and each mask is sewn together with the decorated garment dress. Ede masks are gaily adorned and decorated with colorful feathers, animal tusks, animal horns, colorful garments made of textile materials, and innumerable necklaces and buckles, (See Figure 5). The mask is wonderfully decorated with pieces of mirror which flash in the sun and is ornamented with cowry shells. Ede masquerade is the central focus in a traditional ceremonial dance. Its characteristics become a clue to the nature of the people in that society.

Social Category

The Ede masquerade performs functions in the following social categories: religion, entertainment, religious funeral rites, and curative functions.

Social Functions

Religious functions: The Ede is a talking masquerade which represents a unique ancestor image because, unlike other masks, it possesses the supernatural ability to communicate with living relatives --the people in that society. Ede masquerade relates closely not only to the kingship system, but also to all the members of the

society. Its specific aim is its representation of the ancestor, the dead leader, a chief, a political figure, a head of a family, or someone holding an important position during his lifetime. The Ede masquerade thus relates to all the members of the society. The main focus is upon the family, the dead ancestors to whom the land is supposed to belong. The welfare of the living, including the yet unborn who will hopefully maintain the system, and all living people of all ages whose social behaviors are governed by symbols, depends on ancestors. Since the souls of the departed relatives are believed to be in constant contact with the sacrificial blood regularly poured over the masks of Ede in the shrines, the dead are believed to be present and watching over the households of the keeper of the shrine. It has been observed that the social structure and social category being discussed is within the same broad framework of African lineage systems as described by Melville J. Herskovits (1945: 19). Herskovits observed that "The heads of the kinship group are regarded by Africans everywhere as the most important, because they are the most powerful members of their families. This belief gives stability to the kinship structure by giving the elders power over members of their family, since they administer the cult of the family dead, and are thus in a position to bring down the wrath of the ancestors on erring juniors."

Entertainment functions: The Ede masquerade dance provides gestural and symbolic forms of cohesion. The dance is entertaining and amusing; it is also legally oriented, in that the control is indirect but effective because people are aware of the threat of

consequences and punishment in the event of disorderly behaviors--violaters will receive appropriate punishments.

Masquerade dance is amusing and entertaining and it provides emotional satisfaction for the people. The situation is similar to the type described by D. Duerden (1969, p. 19):

> It would not be a correct interpretation of African religious ceremonies if we made the same distinctions between the sacred and the profane as those which exist in European societies. It would be more accurate to regard the gods (such as Ede masks) as the play-fellows of the ancestors and of the people living in the lineage group. The religious ceremonies often take the form of plays which go on for several days, and which are recast to amuse and entertain as well as to provide the mounting psychological tension which occurs before a sacrifice...a particular play may be adopted by another group of people as much as a hundred miles away, in the same way that masks or sculptures may be the Pantheons of African religion are like a collection of characters in a play, and a new god may be adopted not only because he is thought to be powerful but because he is entertaining.

In Ede masquerade entertainment dances, the dancer is the "most important feature." The predominant features of the dancer's movements include "rhythmic gestures" dictated by the drum. It is true, as Duerden (1968, p. 19) has said, that "Apart from the preliminary offerings and invocations which are crucial the important characteristics of a good masquerade are a good orchestra of drums and a dancer who can translate the drum rhythms smoothly into the gestures of the dance.

Funeral functions: The Egungun Ede talking masquerade in Isho was used to complete ancestral funeral rites. Functionally, the talking masquerade was used for induction ceremonies such as burial.

In burial ceremonies, masquerade is intended to guide the departed spirit of the dead into the spirit world, and this process has helped relieve the family of the dead person from the fear of migrating spirits. At the end of the ceremony, in which animals--goats or snails--are killed, a feeling of relief is usually achieved. Emotional relief is also achieved through the process of the masquerade dancing, mimicking, and satirizing people. In this way the talking masquerade includes mixed feelings of sadness and joy.

The funerary rituals being described here are similar to those mentioned by Segy (1976). Segy points out that:

> The African constantly endeavored to maintain relations with the immortal souls of their ancestors, to petition him and to gain his benediction. A blood sacrifice made to the mask incarnating the spirit of the deceased aimed to nourish the spirit so as to increase its vitality and efficacy in helping the living.
>
> Most of the funerary rites took place at burial and were based upon the concepts that after death a man's spirit was liberated from his body and had to be induced to join his previous ancestors in the land of the dead; otherwise, it might harm the living... (Ladislav Segy, 1976, p. 26).

So it is true that traditional masks were used at the end of mourning, especially in Isho, to limit the period of sorrow by announcing with ritualistic approbation that people have to forget about death, but maintain relationship with the spirit of the dead; hence ancestral worship thus provides the important elaborate aspect of induction ceremonies. Commenting on the burial rites of Owo, Frank Willet reveals that

> Here the second-burial effigy...called 'Ako' is not so restricted as in Benin. The Owo Ako has become in part

> a display of wealth and affection on the part of the mourners, who increase their own prestige by performing the expensive sacrifices associated with it...the purpose of the ceremonies involving Ako figures was to raise the status of the decreased in the afterworld, and thereby to ensure his continued benevolence. Evidently, in about a decade there has been a considerable relaxation of attitude toward the ceremony and a significant loss of social meanings. (Frank Willet, 1972, p. 219)

Ede masks perform magical functions. They were used for casting spells. The victim went into a trance of temporary silence and it was assumed that the gods were the forces behind the show. The art of exorcising evil spirits which includes a solemn ceremony of adjuration was commonly practiced in traditional Yoruba society, especially in Owo. This kind of exorcism is, in fact, similar to the one commonly practiced among the Jewish people and which is still used in church baptisms. Exorcism in traditional (Yoruba) Isho society involves invocation by charms and incantation pronounced by the masquerader. The incantation consists of obscure and mysterious sacred sentences which were supposed to aid the process of exorcism.

Medicinal or curative functions: The Ede performs therapeutic functions by its use in curing illness. Sometimes cure is achieved after the masquerader has prescribed some 'juju' or magic including the ritual offering of a goat, a cock, a chicken of a particular color. Such offerings were to be made to the ancestral spirits. And it is believed that when a cure is achieved, the gods have yielded, but when a cure has failed, the gods were thought to be angry, while the basic source of illness still remained unresolved. However, life continued on the same pattern due to a strong unshakable religious

belief. Allgedly, the masks were used as a means of warding off evil spirits, epidemics, diseases such as small pox, chicken pox, measles, and a host of others. Thus, during the outbreak of an epidemic disease, ceremonial masqueraders were known to have danced along the streets, visiting houses, offering generous prayers, and sprinkling water from the magic pot, a medicine for preventing diseases.

However, all small pox victims were immediately isolated from the community and usually into distant places in the bush into houses built for such purposes. Whenever a smallpox victim died, the burial place was in the bush, and the properties of the victim: clothes, cooking utensils, and other articles became the gift of Oluaiye (Shonponno), the god of small pox who has no specific abode but is supposed to be in the sun. This implies that there is a belief that there are personalities in things such as the sun or the moon or even stones and rocks. And so it is true as Duerden has noted that "The African in traditional society believed that there were personalities in things, in the world around him, which could behave in surprising and unpredictable ways. To make them behave a little more predictably was to produce a work of art" (Duerden, 1968, p. 19).

Figure 5 Ede Masquerade



GUGU MASKS

Description

Gugu masks are used in the Ndakogboza cult from the Bida area. The mask is similar to the Yoruba cult mask called Igunu. Characteristically, Gugu masqueraders resemble the shape of huge drums, each masquerader being more than fourteen feet tall and robed in cloth dresses from head to toe. The only recognizable feature which looks like a face mask is located high on top near the head of the mask. Other kinds of Gugu masks exist in Bida, elaborately decorated on the head with cowry shells and other beautfiul ornamentation such as beads and silk cotton thread. Gugu mask regalia consists of costly woven and decorated traditional textiles. The decorations include linear and curvilinear motifs, (See Figure 6).

Social Categories

Gugu masks are associated with politics, law, and education. Functionally Gugu masks in Bida are like the Yoruba masks, and serve similar ancestral purposes. Gugu masks were used by the members of the Nupe Royal cult in Bida who seek to communicate with their dead relatives. Bida ceremonial festivals of Gugu feature elaborate dancing by the masqueraders amidst a company of women outside the palace of Etsu Nupe, the Bida traditional ruler.

Social Functions

Legal functions: In the past Gugu masks were known to have been used for identifying and punishing witches and wizards, and the

legends associated with the masks help promote moral education.

Social Functions

Political functions: Gugu masks are associated with the origin of Bida's royal house. The mask has been used as an instrument of power. Etsu Nupe is the traditional ruler of Bida and is the political and administrative leader of the people. Some historical accounts about Bida are available in Coleman's (1950) "Nigeria: Background to Nationalism" and also in Frank Willet's (1971) "African Art," and in Leusinger's (1971) document.

Gugu masks are documents and as sacred records they promote knowledge. Valuable historical legends have been documented and preserved because the masks manifest and convey the legends and information about their origins associated from generation to generation.

Gugu masks are associated with the origin of Bida's royal house and migration legends: "Whether the Nupe ancestors were themselves migrants from the East no one knows, but for many centuries they have commanded a great length of the River Niger in the area where strangers were most likely to cross..." (Nigerian Magazine, 1956, p. 260). As the literature reveals, Nupe people were militantly powerful. They were expert canoemen and expert horse riders. Their tribal history appears to have started on water. The Nigerian Historical Magazine (1956, p. 260) says that "During the last century, it was the Nupe calvalry which plundered the Niger Valley from Jebba below Lokoja, and this long series of raids did much to shape the histories of

people." The story of their ancestral link with the people of Igala is particularly interesting. It was recorded that the Attah of Igala often sent his emmissary to trade with the people of Bida. This was necessary to avoid unpleasant conflicts and possible friction among the two tribes. The Prince was said to have impregnated a woman during one of these trips. Because of the language difference the Prince had left the woman to live with her people, but gave her some charms with which to identify the child when it became ten years of age, at which time the prince hoped to take the child along with him. Shortly, the King of Igala died and the Prince succeeded to the title of his father as the Attah of Igala; for this reason he could no longer make his annual visit to Nupeko in the Bida area. He later requested that the child be brought to him at Idah where he was a king. The child, Mammsaba, lived with his father at Idah and became exceedingly popular and happy. But jealousy arose within the royal family and the child was discriminated against by the other wives. The other wives of the king (Attah) disfavored the child since his mother did not live in Idah; therefore, the child was neglected by others, except his father.

Currently, there is a legend in Pategi which reveals that during the earliest time Nupe was under the control of the Attah of Igala and his capital was located at Idah in the neighboring province. The lgend reveals that after a few years the king became very ill, and no one knew the cause of his illness or how to cure him. The soothsayers were called, and after consulting the oracles they

prescribed a cure, emphasizing that the Attah would be cured only if someone could climb an oil-palm tree and cut off a palm fruit, and that a child of the royal line would have to catch the fruit as it fell without hitting the ground. Of course, a palm fruit weighs ten to twenty-five pounds, and is also covered with hard, spiky scales with sharp edges. No one was prepared for this job except the lonely Mammsaba. All the king's wives dissuaded their children from taking the risk which obviously would involve injury, if not death; however, when Mammsaba volunteered, no one objected. So Mammsaba caught the palm fruit, and was badly injured. He was scratched on his face, chest, and stomach. As a result of this, Attah was reported to have recovered well afterwards. And when Attah recovered from his illness, he became more friendly with Mammsaba. Mammsaba was nicknamed "Isoede," which means a man with facial scars, which eventually became symbolic of the royal house of Nupe until 1915. However, the story concludes with the claim that when Attah became exceedingly old and knew he was going to die, he warned his beloved Mammsaba and advised him to move away because his half brothers would kill him.

Educational function: The story associated with Gugu masks serves certain educational functions. The preceding legend contains wise statements which are socially relevant. For instance, on his death bed King Attah was said to have warned his beloved son Mammsaba: "On the night of the day when I die, take my bronze canoe and go quickly up the River Niger to your mother's place (at Nupeko). Do

Do not wait for my burial ceremonies but go at once for if you do not go, your brothers will surely kill you" (Nigerian Magazine, 1956, p. 272). The story suggests some of the evils of polygamy in traditional settings--jealousy, avarice, and unhealthy rivalry. It also serves to warn children about what to expect in their society and encourages them to love life situations, with reality and courage.

Figure 6

Gugu Masks



OFERE MASKS

Ofere masks are life-sized headdress masks which cover the head of the wearer completely. They are made of rope tightly and simply interwoven and perforated (like Ede masks) to permit the wearer to see and breathe. Each mask is attached to rafia leaves commonly used by the wearer for masquerade ceremonial dresses. The mask's sole structural makeup involves the elaborate perforation of holes. Sometimes the masks are painted or dyed with either red, blue, yellow, or green colors. In most cases, monochrome seems to prevail. The Ofere masks incorporate rafia or yellow palm leaves as dress materials in addition to other cloth structures, such as "Agbada" (a large floating gown), (See Figure 7).

Social Category

Ofere masks function in the following social categories: education and entertainment. Ofere masks are children's masks and closely associate with male children and young adults.

Social Functions

Ofere masks functioned as a means of educating children, especially in promoting children's imitation of adult ways. This process encouraged children's creativity by developing leadership roles, individual initiatives, interpersonal relationships, collective behavior, and group cooperation, and a sense of responsibility and maturity.

Children's masking is humorous, involving the child's attempts to imitate adults, since this is the way they develop and become initiates. Odita (1971, p. 90) reveals similar functions of children's masking in Ibo traditional society. The author says that children's masking is essentially humorous to adults but an extremely serious affair to the children. The author suggests that children's "enthusiasm which is hardly surpassed in later life, is so intense that it would appear they conceive life after childhood very uneventful." During children's masking, children fend for themselves, chase each other about the streets, dodging and engaging in most physical activities. A fine sense of humor accompanies such activities in which other children trail the masqueraders, teasing them and providing fun and pleasure.

Figure 7

A Drawing of Ofere Masquerade



OBA ONDO's CROWN

Description

Oba's crowns in Yoruba tradition are sacred objects which may not be worn by a common person, privately or publicly, unless such a person becomes an Oba by virtue of inheritance. Oba Ondo's crown is a headdress cap. Unlike common caps, a crown is rare and very highly valued. The crown consists of numerous decorative elements, symbolic shapes and forms, such as appear on masks and zigzag decorative motifs carefully knitted together with brightly colored bead materials. Other materials used include some elements of fashion, such as beautiful ostrich feathers and silk materials. The crown combines beauty with elegance and finally portrays deified mask-like images of a supernatural being, (see Figures 8 and 9).

Social Category

Only people born in the traditional royal family have the right and honor to wear the crown as a royal leader of the Ondo people. Oba's crown is associated with the concept of power and belief in supernatural and supreme forces. The crown is associated with the historical origin and political leadership of the group. Ulli Beier (1956) notes that the custom of traditional Oba is zealously guided in spite of the effects of colonialism, eliticism, social stratification, and other modern trends, which have drastically influenced the political institution of Obaship. Crowns deal with

the concept of social classification, and the Oba and chiefs assume both the political and administrative leadership of their society. Similarly, women and young men also play roles, although they are significantly differentiated.

Social Functions

The crown symbolizes power, authority, and leadership. It is the law, because the wearer proclaims judgment and metes out punishment to those contradicting societal norms or customs. Literary sources reveal that the Yoruba Oba's crown is associated with historical origin and political leadership of the society that possesses it. Functionally, the crown communicates visual image of power, but it is an historical document. It is a source of knowledge because valuable historical ideas can be inferred from several myths and legends of the origin of the crown. For instance, ethnographic sources revealed that Ondo is an ancient Yoruba kingdom situated some forty miles south-east of Ile-Ife.

Ulli Beier (1956) elaborates on Johnson's claims that Ondo was founded from old Oyo, but a local tradition claimed that Ondo people emigrated from Ife. One of Odudua's wives bore twins. According to traditional beliefs, twins were killed in Yorubaland, and Odudua, fearing for the safety of his children and his wife, had sent them away from Ife to a secret hiding place. Consequently the woman wandered about in the forest for many years. The twins grew up and finally the eldest male child allegedly founded the town of Epe, and the other, known as Pupupu, allegedly founded the town of Ondo. The

social significance of this legend is that women are not deprived of their political rights. Every Yoruba town has a woman chief or Iyalode, who is more or less the recognized administrative head of the market women and who can at times exercise considerable influence. However, in Ondo women have a complete council of chiefs, with titles more or less corresponding to the male titles. They do not only hold their council of women chiefs, but have access to the men's council as well. In fact, according to tradition, the king is supposed to be installed by the woman head chief. This extraordinary position of the women in the political and social life of Ondo has been attributed to the achievement of Pupupu, one of the two abandoned twins.

Currently, many of the traditional festivals have been abandoned in Ondo due to the influence of Christianity. But one festival seems to have survived all modern influences. This is the feast of the Osemawe, the King. On this day the chiefs and people pay homage while the Oba, in turn, prays for his people and blesses his town. Several accounts of the significance of an Oba's crown can be obtained from existing ethnographic data on Yoruba culture. Commenting on the Yoruba bead embroidered crowns with veil and bird decorations, Robert F. Thompson says that

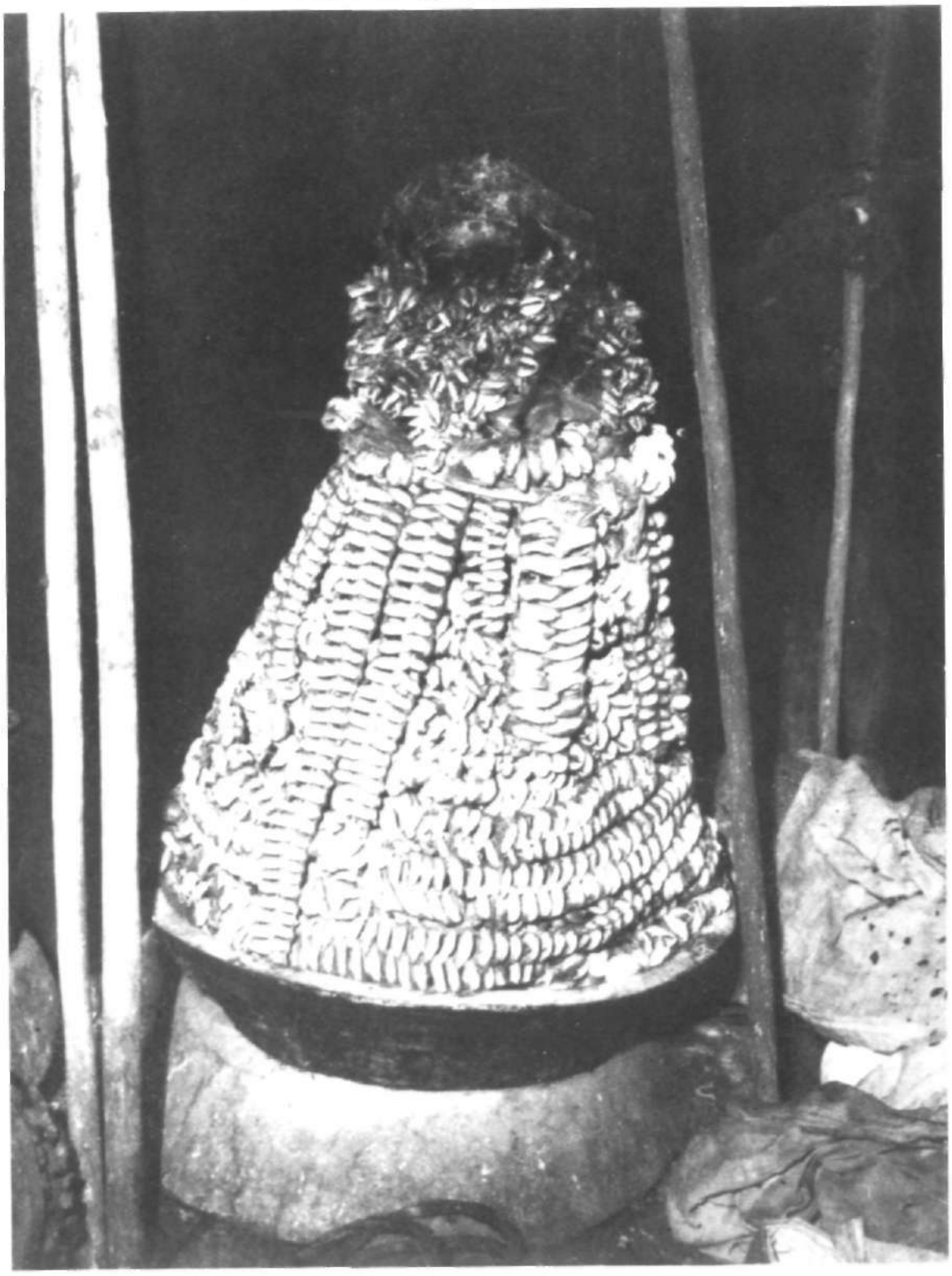
> The bead-embroidered crown with beaded veil, foremost attribute of the traditional leaders (Oba) of the Yoruba people of West Africa, symbolizes the aspirations of a civilization at the highest level of authority. The crown incarnates the intuition of royal ancestral force, the revelation of great moral insight in the person of the king, and the glitter of aesthetic experience.

> The Yoruba provide an appropriate setting for the study of art and authority on the African Continent. Chieftancies remain important here...
>
> (Robert F. Thompson, Ed. Fraser D. & Cole, H. M., 1972, p. 226)

Figure 8
Oba's Crown



Figure 9
A Woman's Cowry Crown at Ondo



AGBALA SACRED DRUMS

Description

Agbala drums are large sacred drums decorated in low relief carvings which depict mythical beings and snakes. The drums are made of hollow wood with the upper part covered with goatskin, while the base is sealed with light wood except for a small hole. Pegs on the drum's sides are used for adjusting the goat skin surface to keep it firm, (see Figure 10). In this way it may be possible for drummers to vary the sounds of the drums when used during ceremonial festivals. Three colors predominate on the drums, mostly black, but with white and red used to help identify the shapes of mythical beings. The mythological beings are abstract, disproportionate, and simple figures. Agbala drums measure about four feet high and about one and a half feet in diameter. The drums can be found in the possession of the "Oloba" (king) of Isho, the political head of the town. Functionally, Agbala drums are important as the musical instrument used during the Oba's annual ceremonial festivals of Aheregbe-ancestral ritual worship.

Social Category

Agbala drums are associated exclusively with the annual traditional ancestral ritual offerings of the Oloba of Isho, the political head. This suggests that the sacred drums are associated exclusively with religion, politics, and entertainment.

Social Functions

The festival in which the drums are used is an ancestral cult in which the Oba offers generous blessings to his subjects throughout the Isho area, and on the day of the festival, the king will provide food for all the people in the town and traditionally serve bean cakes. Bean cake is served first to all the chiefs and their relatives through special emissaries or messengers of the king. In return, the chiefs respond by sending gifts to the king on the festival day. Gifts include foodstuffs such as yams, bananas, and oranges, and goats, cocks, and money.

A continuous process of interaction exists within the society because gifts are given by the king to his chiefs and others. The ceremonial festival is significant not only to the king but also to all the members of Isho community, because the king's festival precedes various individual ancestral rituals. This suggests that the king, as the authoritative leader of the people, is supposed to initiate ancestral worship before anyone else. The king's will is supreme and the Aheregbe ancestral worship is intended to renew his mystical authority and powers by the ritual offering of a ram to his dead fathers in their burial place at the Igbo-Nla Shrine (the Great Gove). Igbo-Nla Shrine is the sacred burial place of the kings of Isho, and it is to this place that the king must annually go to offer prayers and rituals not only for himself but also for all of his subjects. There he wishes them good returns for their farm

products, blesses childless women, and proclaims death to those who go against the kingship system.

Agbala drums promote social interaction by aiding the gathering together of a large number of people. Agbala drums provide the music which attracts all members of the community for ceremonial purposes. The drumming is entertaining and is satisfying to the audience, because its rhythms are unusual, sacred, and religious. The uses of entertainment in society cannot but be fully enumerated, because the functions of entertainment are psychological, social, and also political. Entertainment activities such as the acrobatic displays during ceremonial activities were intended politically and socially to provide temporary satisfaction for people in traditional Yoruba society. This is especially true in Isho as reflected in the Aheregbe festival in which Agbala drums are important musically and sociologically.

Figure 10 Agbala Drums



TRADITIONAL SHRINE DECORATIONS

In the past, shrines belonged to the dead and the spirit of the gods. There were family ancestral shrines, such as the burial places of dead relatives. During their lifetime they had played significant roles in community and social affairs, and the burial places of such important heroic persons, family heads, or important chiefs were usually declared sacred shrines where sacrifices were annually offered. Such places were thus elaborately decorated with various symbolic kinds of objects. For instance, mud sculpture, iron, or carved abstract shapes of ancestral spirits, skulls, and remainders of animal bones and other sacrificial objects were used elaborately as decorative artifacts on the surface of the shrines.

Decorative motifs in shrines appear simple and unsophisticated. Human forms, circles, and triangular shapes are commonly abstractly expressed and incised on the walls in most shrine decorations. Some colored shapes depict animal images such as cattle, other wild animals, lions, leopards, and religious figures whose shapes or meanings may not be easily interpreted (see Figures 11 and 12).

In traditional shrine decorations, the designs on the walls are linear, and may be considerably limited in color. A large proportion of the wall surface is sometimes colored with red, white, and blue patterns. In some cases, a collection of sculptural objects, such as decorated cooking or domestic utensils, calabashes with magical implications, and decorated pots were also common (Figure 11). Drums

were usually among the most important religious art objects found in the Isho community.

Social Categories

Shrines function principally in the religious category. Community shrines are directly under the guidance of the important traditional chiefs or the most senior religious priests of the society. For instance, in Isho the Aro Shrine is personally administered by Chief Aro. Similarly there is the Olulale Ancestral Shrine at Owo Town, which is similar to the Aro's Shrine. It consists of Uwa; in Yoruba traditional architecture Uwa is a large living apartment in the traditional chief's home or in the Oba's place where all meetings of chiefs and ceremonial occasions are held.

Most shrine paintings and wall decorations are associated with legends, mythology, morals, and religious beliefs. Their meanings transcend mere representations of symbols and geometric shapes, but invoke ecclesiastical and secular beliefs. Shrine decorations perform several functions.

Social Functions

Shrines served four principal functions. 1) They served as a place of worship. 2) They promoted communal associations. 3) They communicated social moral values to the worshippers. 4) The legends associated with the shrines helped educate the newly initiated children about how to cope with life situations.

The most important functions of shrine decorations were to revitalize the mind of the people and to transmit the messages of the priest and belief in the gods. In this way, shrine paintings and decorations express the philosophy of the people and the artist partly shared in the belief.

The stories and legends associated with shrines are metaphorically sensible, and most of them depict legends of origins and heroic achievements--in fact, some of them are almost similar to the Biblical wisdom of King Solomon.

Figure 11

Shrine Priestess and Decoration



Figure 12

Shrine Objects



OLOKUN MUD FIGURES OF BENIN

Description

Olokun shrine figures are found among Benin art as mud sculptures both in the round and in low reliefs. The figures possess massive structural qualities such as strikingly crude surfaces, which portray cruel and frightful images of supernatural beings. The crudeness is probably due to the nature of the material used. Mud figures are possessed with expressive, rigid, almost abstract visual qualities: bold expressive eyes, elongated hands and legs (see Figures 13 and 14).

Some of the figures are fully clothed and dressed in royal kingship regalia similar to that of the Oba of Benin's dress. The majority of the figures are painted black and white. Some mud figures are striped with white color marks, while others have white color lining the eyeballs and mouth. Some figures wear helmets or mud hats, while other figures are dressed with cowry shells which are indications of their wealth. Olokun shrines are still in existence due to the amount of care and financial expense annually spent on the building. The Olokun is seated at the center of the shrine enthroned and dressed like an Oba (king). She is supported on both arms by two servants. In the past important kings like the Oba of Benin were usually supported on both arms by servants amidst many women and sword bearers. In the same way the Olokun shrine-masked-mud figures are surrounded by other images of gods. There is the figure of

"Osanoboa" whose image represents the Supreme God.

Social Category

The Olokun figures function principally in the religious and educational categories.

Social Functions

Functionally, mud shrines serve as sacred places of worship where people offer sacrifices and prayers to the goddesses of Olokun in Benin. In Benin, Olokun mud masks closely relate to her devotees and priests. Olokun is a religious belief in the unknown environmental images such as of the sea. Olokun is a sea goddest, and the mud sculptures represent the images of a Supreme God in relation to lesser gods. This God is the supreme, omnipotent, supernatural power, having authority over all creatures. He is portrayed as the Osanoba. His second in command is the Olokun, who is equally great.

In Benin, Olokun mud masks are closely related to the devotees and priests of Olokun worship. Traditionally, the people believed in the idea of environmental forces. Thus, the followers of Olokun religion believe in the supernatural forces of the deified rapidly flowing rivers and the sea. The Olokun sea goddest is believed to have handed down her powers only to her devotees and whoever may be initiated into the Olokun religious worship. Olokun worship is associated with the initiation and indoctrination of youth. The priest of Olokun is the only rightful person who could initiate a child by performing necessary rituals and thus accepting the child

into the sacred worship of the Olokun. In Olokun ceremonial worship, such rules and regulations and punishments for disobeying are included in prayer. In this way people are made adequately aware of the consequences of the committing of crimes.

Finally, Olokun worshippers' initiation process is educationally-oriented. The child becomes indoctrinated because the Olokun priest teaches the children or their parents spirtual and moral codes. From their early years children are indoctrinated and imbued with particular beliefs about life and how life must be patiently tolerated.

The initiation process also perpetuates stories and legends containing the wisdom of the tribe, e.g., the story of the Olokun god who once challenged the supremacy of Osamoboa, a leading god in Benin. In order to verify who was the greater, these gods both agreed to a beauty contest. The chameleon played a significant role in this story because the Osanoboa's messenger changed his attire several times in the process of delivering Osanaboa's message to the Olokun goddest. The situation infuriated Olokun who also changed clothes several times; finally, Olokun gave up the contest because she was unable to detect why Osanoboa's messenger, the chameleon, possessed the same types of dresses as she did. Her assumption was that if the Osanoboa's messenger had the same dresses as she did, the master 'Osanoboa' must be greater. Even since, the Olokun was believed to have been satisfied as second in rank to the great Osanoboa, "The Almighty God" (Nig. Mag., 1956, p. 254).

Olokun is associated with wealth and the wealthy. It is believed to be the giver of wealth and all good things on this earth; it is not surprising to observe that Olokun is associated with the wealth of the sea, sea trading, and fishing.

Abundant ethnographic data on Benin art reveal that all of the art of Benin essentially belongs to the kingship system because most figures symbolize the authority and power of the king; hence, some goddesses are decorated in a Royal Regalia similar to that of the king. Commenting on Benin art, Tibor Bodrogi (1968), says that The high artistic level of Benin sculpture is striking and is represented not only in domestic objects but in various forms such as statues. He observes that such statues of life-size formed part of the cult of female royal ancestors (queen mothers) and belonged to the furnishings of royal altars, the use of bronze animal figures, was the almost exclusive privilege of the king (oba) and the queen mother (iyoba).

A. and B. Forman and Philip Dark (1959, 11) emphasize that:

> Benin art is essentially a court art; it is not an art of the people. Its principal functions are commemorative, ritual, and ceremonial. The court is the center of an elaborate state organization. At the focal point of the court is the Oba, the sacred divine king. Hence the art is first and foremost a prerogative of the Oba. The focus of the art in Bini culture can therefore only be understood against the background of the complex state organization and ceremonial and religious beliefs and practices of the people.

Similarly, Michel Leiris J. Delange (1967, p. 303) says the following:

> In Benin and Dahomey and other parts of Africa a 'royal' art was developed by craftsmen (metal founders, sculptors, etc.) who were directly employed by the sovereign. It was primarily the urge to enhance their prestige that led the rulers of these states to patronize the arts as it was in Europe too. Yet we can also cite the names of African rulers who appear to have been genuinely interested in art, and even letters, or who were sufficiently enlightened for tradition to ascribe to them an important cultural role in history.

However, the membership of Olokun worship is not restricted to any specific social class. It is open not only to the rich and successful, but to any person willing to be initiated. Olokun is believed to have the powers not only to heal the ill but also to create. She is the supposed supreme goddest, believed to be greater than all the kings on earth. During the ceremonial festivals of Olokun, prayers are offered by her devotees and priests. In Benin, most shrines of Olokun are owned by private individuals and their families who have been traditionally involved with the customary ceremonies. Annually, a state festival of Olokun shrine worshippers takes place at Usonigbe, a small town about sixty miles south of Benin, because it is believed that Usonigbe claims to have possessed the 'original' Olokun shrine from which all others have derived. However, the true position of this legend is indeed obscure.

Traditionally, Benin, with its old powerful empire, is a great art center. Art works--bronzes, iron, and wood sculptures--have flourished in the place before and during the British Colonial rule. More than 2,400 Benin bronze pieces were known to have left Nigeria in 1919, but mud sculptures remained behind because of their

immovable nature. However, the most important issue is the fact that Benin art is essentially a court art.

The Olokun shrine figures serve three major social functions. First, the shrine is a place of religious worship and communal associations and a place for curing the sick. Second, the mud figures provide communication between the people and the spirits of the river goddesses of Olokun, and in this way spiritual satisfaction is attained. Third, the Olokun worshippers' initiation process helps promote and inculcate a sense of awareness and responsibility.

Educational Function

The religious functions of Olokun worship aim at the indoctrination of youth. The process indoctrinates children in the social and ethical values motivated by a belief in predestination. Predestination lies deeply in the religious worship of Olokun, which includes sacred rituals, magic, and curative activities. For instance, during such worship, a pregnant woman would be asked to appear before the Olokun so that the future of the unborn child can be predicted; it is believed that everyone is predestined from the womb. Because of this belief, an unborn child's future can be predicted by the Olokun worshipper, devotee, and priest; such predictions may include a revelation of those things the child is likely to encounter when it is born--wealth, good luck, and life span. Beliefs in predestination have largely influenced the process of life not only in traditional Benin, but in many places in

Nigeria. If a child dies young, it is believed that such a death has been predestined. The process of Olokun worship has largely promoted communal association, and social relationships. The ceremonies of Olokun annual worship generally involve eating, recreational activities, and dance, in which almost all members are involved.

People are aware of the consequence of committing crimes, since Olokun is believed to punish offenders swiftly and seriously. Offenses against the state or against its ruler--the king--are punishable.

Figure 13

Olokun Shrine Figures



Figure 14

Olokun Shrine Figures



THE UGBA IFA

Description

The Ugba-Ifa in Isho is a decorated carved wooden kneeling figure. It represents a woman holding a decorated pot in front of her. The lid of the pot portrays the image of a rooster, one of the most important sacrificial animals in the traditional social life in Isho. Functionally, the vessel holds the kolanuts used during Ifa divination (Figures 15 and 16).

The Ugba-Ifa in Isho is painted with a ghostlike white pigment with contrasting black lines which suggest the plating of the hair of the kneeling woman. The Ugba-Ifa is similar to the type described by Phil Habil Dietrich Drost (1966, p. 122). He says that Ugba-Ifa is a female figure with bowls. It is made from a dark brown wood and the head, face, and breasts are blue, and the remains of a light brown clay coating appear on the body and bowl; the height is 11 inches. He says that "The kneeling woman is holding with both hands a large hemispherical bowl which is standing on the legs of a cock. The woman's cheeks, chin, upper arms, and breasts are decorated with geometric tatoo-like markings. Figures are often shown carrying such bowls which served as receptables for kolanuts which are used in divination.

Another important sculptural piece associated with Ifa divination is the Ifa-board which is edged with 'geometric and figurative motifs'. This decoration is a stylistic 'chip-carving

technique in a flat relief'. The relief carvings of stylized shapes, such as the face of a mythological being, images of birds and mud-fish, are a border on the decorated board. The decoration also includes border zigzag designs.

Social Category

The Ugba-Ifa functions in five social categories: Religion, Medicine, Politics, Education, and Law.

Social functions: The Ugba-Ifa aids religious worship. Anthropological literature on Yoruba culture reveals that the 'Ifa-Board' and other works of art such as the kneeling figure are the 'utensils' commonly in the possession of the priest of Ifa with which he performs the "oracular divinity" of Ifa, which is associated with religion. The surface of the board is filled with a flour, a special powder from magic wood, and the priest draws the marks on the flour. The drawing is then followed by incantations.

Ugba-Ifa is important to the priests of Ifa as the sacred container in which the sixteen characteristic palm nuts are kept. Ugba-Ifa is associated with the 'Babalawos' (otherwise known as medicine men, or Ifa priests, who are believed to have derived their supernatural healing powers from the Ifa oracle). Mythologically, Ifa is the great consulting oracle in Yoruba tradition. The Yoruba oral tradition reveals that Ifa was introduced into Yoruba Land by a man known as Setilu, a native of Nupe (the natives who live around the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers). After staying in many

Yoruba towns, Setilu was known to have finally settled at Ile-Ife where he resided. However, the origin of Ifa is obscure as there are many conflicting stories. But, it was inferred from the series of legends of Ifa that Setilu was probably a popular hero who attracted many followers and educated them in the mystical powers of Ifa divination and worship. However, Ifa is a professional consultant not only in medical affairs but in political, religious, and legal issues in Yoruba traditional custom. The Ifa priest is a shrewd psychologist whose official regalia is a special white costume associated with purity and mystery. In traditional Yoruba society, the Babalawo, 'Ifa priest', is a consultant and the adviser to the kingship system because the Babalawo can determine and predict solutions to major problems such as social unrest, uprising, famine, and drought through the divination system.

Ifa is the personal savior of the diviner (babalawo) and the protector of his relatives and devotees and all those who may seek protection through the Ifa divination system. The Babalawo (Ifa priest) is a philosopher, and in some cases, he is also an artist who decorates his own shrine and carves ritual images. His functions include upholding the social values and customs of the people, as a custodian of the societal ideals. The position of the Babalawo is unique in his community because he is familiar with the problems of the people and thus "able to provide more appropriate remedies for private and public ills." He is emphatic, highly intelligent in his suggestions, and all this helps in protecting and healing sick people.

Fraser explains that there is a link between Eshu (devil) and Ifa divination as reflected "in certain pieces of a Babalawo's equipment, and it is expressed in associated myths and practices." It is true, according to Fraser's (1974, p. 5) description, that:

> A small ivory human head, variously known as Ela or Irin Ifa, is kept and displayed with the sixteen palm nuts used in divining, and a long-tailed headdress identifies many of these pieces as Eshu (Froebenius, 1913). The palm nuts are ritually consecrated; sacrifices to Ifa are made to make them the most sacred part of the diviner's equipment (Bascom, 1969, pp. 26-27). Eshuaffirms his tie to Ifa and divination in his own contradictory way by having crushed palm kernels as his tabooed food, and palm oil as his libation (Westcott, 1962, p. 343) and by accompanying the diviner's nuts.

Although the shape of the Ugba-Ifa varies from place to place, the pot in front of the figure of Ugba-Ifa of Isho is beautifully decorated to enable the Ifa ancestral spirit to appreciate it and then accept it joyfully as his abode. Symbolically and functionally, the Ugba-Ifa is supposed to be the seat of the supernatural power of Ifa-Oracle, because there is a conceptual belief that the Ifa ancestral god has placed his power at the disposal of the living and carved wooden figure representing a living testimony. Other objects used for Ifa divination include palm nuts, pieces of iron, and ivory balls. In order to consult the Ifa-Oracle, sixteen palm nuts are to be shaken together in the hollow of both hands. The marks of divination will then follow along with incantations.

Ethnographic data on Yoruba culture recall several useful definitions of Ifa. To mention a few, Geoffrey Parringer (1969,

88-89) observes that "Ifa is a spirit often identified with a god called Orunminla--heaven knows salvation". In some versions it was he who directed creation under the orders of God. Similarly, Fraser (1974) observes that "Ifa is the oracle who transmits the wishes of Olorun (God) to man" (p. 5).

Because Ifa divination is essentially a system of interdependent dualism, Eshu--the devil--is alternatively opposing and complementary. It is true as Fraser (1974, p. 5) has said, that

> Eshu has a more pungent character. As the trickster he is disruptive, defiant, and erotic; as the god's messenger he brings their justice to man. His shrines are in the market place, at crossroads, and by doorways; all places of change and potential conflict. His devotees and priests, while forming a cult, reflect his disregard for titled hierarchies" (Morton and Williams, 1964, p. 666) are said to have chosen his worship through divination rather than family ties (Bascom 1944, p. 37). It is Ifa divination that pairs Ifa and Eshu; both serve Olorun, the sky god, who assigns men their destinies.

Ifa promotes knowledge, order, and personal satisfaction. Ifa serves the social function of providing knowledge. Ifa is a body of knowledge and technology lost through the ages, because in Ifa there is education, divinity, and medicine--the techniques of curing various forms of diseases, detecting witchcract, witches, and wizards.

Ifa promotes social order and peace through a religious worship. Ifa perpetuates religion which promotes peace, and Ifa is also therapeutic, providing cures for the sick in Yoruba society. The highest form of Yoruba religion can be seen in Ifa divination.

Through the divination process, the future of individuals and also the future of the entire society are investigated by the Ifa priest; thus, Ifa performs a psychological function in that divination promotes a sense of individual satisfaction and security against evil. Substantial evidence for this protective function of Ifa is provided in Fraser's African Art, in which he comments on Ifa divination in Yoruba religion.

Figure 15
Ifa Priest



Figure 16

Ugba-Ifa



HAUSA WALL DECORATIONS

The next six forms of traditional arts are examples of Hausa wall decorations which are found in the Moslem northern two-thirds of Nigeria. These decorations are found on large sections of house walls, made of mud, laso (local cement), or factory cement materials.

The earliest forms of wall decorations probably came into existence shortly before the 1930s as derived from ethnographic sources. For instance, Heathcote (1976, p. 75) also explains that

> The rapid development of exterior decoration that took place from the 1940s to the 1960s was largely the work of men living in Kano and Zaria. Many of those in Kano also traveled to other places, such as Zinder, Katsina, and even Zaria to carry out commissions and the new style coincided with a more general use of factory-made cement which for those who could afford it replaced locally-made laso as a protective layer for exterior mud surfaces. Its strength and appearance encouraged wall decorators to undertake far more ambitious projects since it provided not only long-term protection but also an alternative finish for their work.

Comparatively, decorative motifs similar to those used in wall decorations also appear in Hausa embroidery. Heathcote (1976) notes the presence of decorative elements as used in embroidery designs, which include two distinct types of patterns: first, there is the interlacing form, characteristically oriental; the second was described as angular and spiral shapes and a more indigenous type of decoration commonly found on pots, wooden food bowls, and baskets.

THE SCROLL MOTIF DECORATIONS

Scroll work is an ornamentation which makes elaborate use of circular motifs, leaf patterns, triangular, and rectangular shapes. These can be found in front of many houses, especially those in Zaria. Heathcote (1975, p. 75) notes that

> Since the mid 1960s, there has been a general withdrawal from the more adventurous type of decoration that was produced particularly in Zaria with a preference for plaster work in which damp cement is cut and scraped and then often painted, giving a repetitive all-over effect. Plant shapes used as basic motifs repeated within an irregular checker-board pattern are common in this kind of work, which is often used for covering entire walls.

The predominant colors used for these decorations range between grey and white. The interlocking scrolls are elaborately spread throughout the entire doorway and may extend towards the upper part of the wall (See Figure 17).

Some accounts of wall decorations can be found in the works of H. M. A. Kirk-Green (1966, p. 4), in which he describes the architectural planning of typical Hausa houses. According to Kirk-Green

> These houses have usually a large two-story block at the front which is used by the head of the house. At the back projects a series of low buildings which form accommodations for the wives, and house the kitchen, latrines...and from which access is obtained to the wives' courtyard. The entrance to the front block in this case leads directly into a zaure, the hall where the owner of the house meets his guests and friends, and beyond which they are seldom allowed to enter...

Also, Coleman (1958, pp. 22-24) remarks that "The Hausa possess an intense cultural consciousness, and no matter where they travel

abroad, or how long they remain, they retain a profound pride in being Hausa. They have displayed little desire to emulate, or imitate, the white man...many features of Hausa culture give it dignity, status, and prestige: a comparatively rich historical tradition, a distinctive architecture; the pompous splendor of its ruling class; language and the Islamic faith." Heathcote also suggests that "Some of the established Hausa ornamental motifs and techniques such as the embedding of colored enamel-ware into a wall or ceiling have come from foreign sources. Hausa builders have also made their own special contributions." (1976, p. 75)

Social Category

The scroll decorative motif functions as an architectural pattern and it is also associated with politics.

This type of design--'scrolls'--is commonly found in the houses of wealthy traders and important chiefs. The design is thoroughly associated with wealth, and the wealthy. It is observed that wealthy Hausa traders have had delightful demand for new and striking designs and their curious esthetic tastes have produced such expensive decorations because they could meet the expenses involved. There appears to be no specific religious significance of symbolism associated with these decorations other than their aesthetic qualities. The size of a decoration varies from house to house. In certain cases, decorative designs may cover the outer surface of houses completely, but in a variety of cases scroll decoration which includes the circular and leaf motifs may appear sparingly on the wall surface.

Social function: The scroll decorations serve two principal functions: the decorations fulfill aesthetic functions as well as portraying the political dignity and prestige of the house owner. Elaborately expressive designs may suggest the relative amount of wealth possessed by the house owner. This implies that decorative motifs do not merely convey enigmatic visual characteristics but they are socially symbolic as visual symbols of 'authority and power'.

The scrolls decorative motifs provide a beautiful living environment as well as protecting the outer surfaces of the walls from rain. Typical examples of sculptured wall decorations such as the type being discussed can be found in Zaria, especially among the old Hausa chiefs' houses. The materials used include clay or cement, the latter being a recent development. Clay is known to have been used for interior designs before cement was introduced into Nigeria, and such clay decorations are known to have survived a long period of weathering due to rain. The architectural shape of the house on which the design is circular seems to coincide with scroll and circular decorative motifs. It is also observed that the roof of the building is not visible from the sides because it is flat. The reason for this is probably to make the designs prominent, thereby revealing its beauty, which is visually satisfying.

According to my sources, "It is not so much the choice of pattern that indicates prestige as the medium in which it is cast and, of course, the luxuriance of the decoration" (Kirk-Green, 1966, p. 7).

Figure 17

The Scroll Motif Decorations Found in Front of the Emir of Zaria's Palace in Zaria City



INTERLOCKING AND INTERIOR ANGLE EMBLEM MOTIF

The overall picture of each motif is a starlike shape in which two parallel lines intersect at the center superimposed on a rectangular shape with interior angles and with pointed edges, thus resulting in a star shape. The medium is cement, and the design utilizes sculptured reliefs which consist of incised interlocking lines joining at each of the four end points in a semicircular shape. The design may be spread over a wide range of the wall surface in certain cases, but the size and final appearance of a wall decoration generally depends on the amount of money invested by the home owner. Commonly found on textiles and other applied art forms such as leatherworks are similar decorative interlocking elements whose functions are purely aesthetic (see Figure 18).

Social Category

Elaborately decorated interlocking motifs are found on the ceremonial dresses of the "Emirs", the traditional political leaders of Hausaland. The interlocking motifs are associated with politics; hence their association with ceremonial dresses and the houses of the Emirs, or important chiefs, who are the political and administrative executives of the Hausa. Lieuzinger (1971, p. 74) reveals that

> The Chad region was the most important getaway for the caravans that streamed by way of Korodofan-Dafur from the Nile Valley and Ethiopia, bringing new impulses into the Bebur and Oliglo Valleys...As a result Nigeria in particular could soon boast important kingdoms--Nupe, Jukun, Bonu, and the states of the Fulani and Hausa. Although in the course of time these states...collapsed...they nevertheless

> give a fillip to cultural development in the Sudan, both in the intellectual and in the material sphere.

Social Functions

The interlocking emblem in Hausa wall decoration is essentially a court art. This design can be found on other objects such as the king's ceremonial gowns. Wall decoration of this sort portrays authority, power, and wealth. The decorations signify, beautify, glorify, and project the important image of the Emir as the ruler with authority and power in the Hausa community. Also, the decorations protect the outer walls of houses from rain and thereby fulfill protective and aesthetic functions of beautifying the environment.

Commenting on the materials of Hausa wall decorations, Lieuzinger observes that wall decorations consist of 'ornamental wattle, painted back'. She says that "With its relatively extensive mural surfaces, the gable-roofed (old) dwelling affords ample opportunity for artistic decoration..with oriental, and later, Islamic influences, palaces, mosques, even whole settlements of flat box-like dwellings are built of clay" (p. 72).

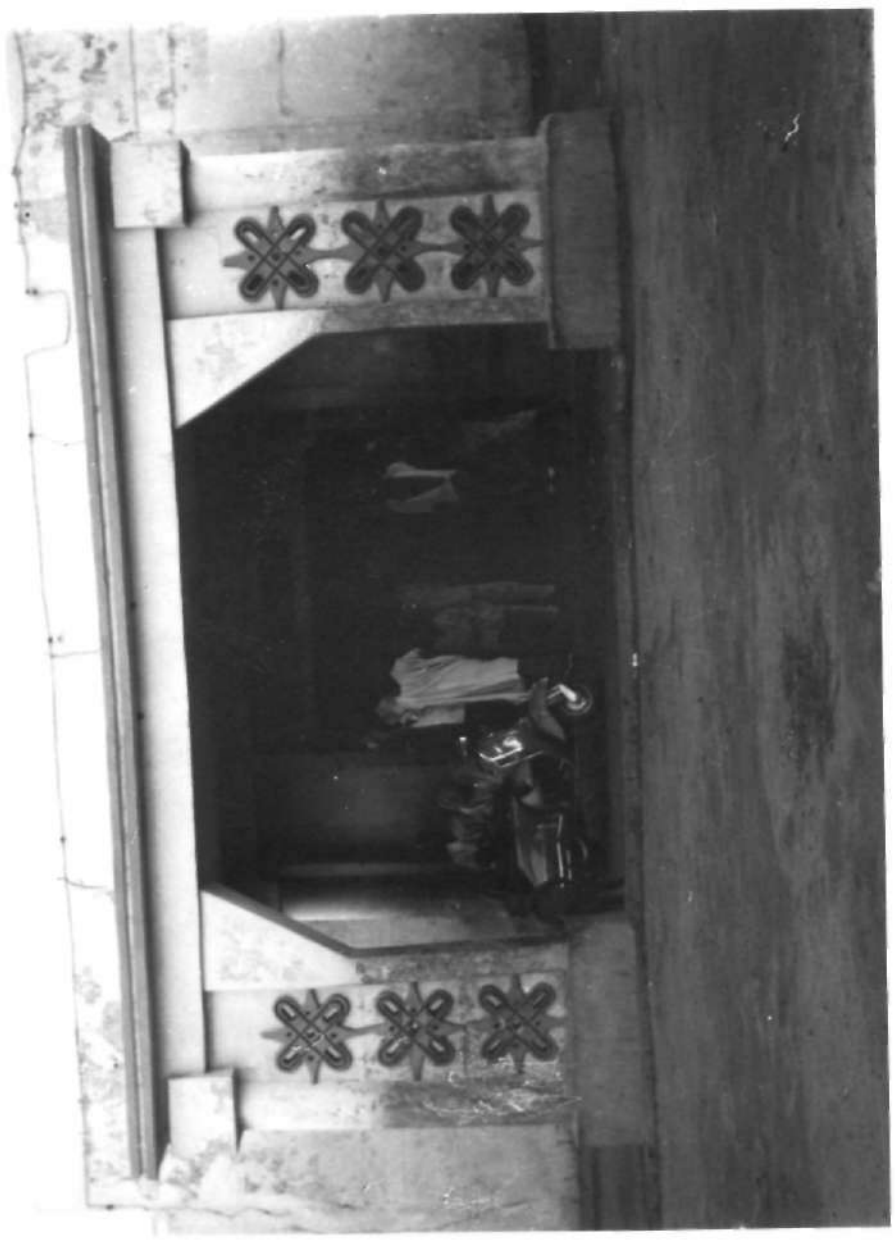
The interlocking motifs which are commonly seen on ceremonial dresses also suggest industry. The art of decoration promotes industrial enterprise, providing meaningful occupation which encourages workers of aesthetic beauty. Anthropological sources reveal that "In larger towns the artisans formed closed corporations; they married only women from within their own guild" (Lieuzinger, 1971, p. 74). Similarly, it is true that Hausa wall decorative motifs appear in

varying visual contexts, similar to their weaving which is made with two types of looms, those used by women and those used by men. Heathcote, for instance, reveals that women work with simple vertical structures and produce cloths that are about a half meter wide and two meters long, often made in pairs, one for use as a wrapper, and one to go over the head. Men's weaving consists of plain white speckled designs together with indigo and white, or light blue threads.

Other woven textiles, such as blankets and casual dresses are also embroidered with one type of decoration or the other. In fact, what generally prevails on major designs is the interlocking motifs which appear on the walls of houses. Functionally, the interlocking emblem on the outer walls of houses seems purely decorative just like the similar decorative designs of artifacts such as woven ceremonial dresses, leather works, and calabashes; however, they also portray significant social symbols which will be discussed later. Commenting on Hausa traditional wall decoration, Willet (1971, p. 122) recalls that "The interiors of buildings in the Muslim North of Nigeria have been decorated for a long time, but it seems to have been only in the late nineteenth century that the outer walls began to be decorated." Similarly, certain documentary accounts about Hausa wall decorations can be found in the ethnographic data of Lieuzinger. Lieuzinger (1971) says that the "pomp and splendor of the courts (of the Emirs) encouraged the development of applied arts and crafts and the practice of ingenious techniques (brass casting by the waste form method, embossing, and so on" (p. 75).

Figure 18

Interlocking Emblem Found In Sokoto



THE MOSQUE AND CAMEL MOTIF

Description

In the mosque and camel motif, images of the camel, mosque, aircraft, semicircles, interlocking and interior angle shapes are painted white which contrast sharply with the predominantly brown walls. The design is prominently displayed in the outer wall of the outdoor recreational area of Bagauda International Lake Hotel (see Figure 19). The designs are arranged in various sizes of rectangle shapes and complementary manner, because small sizes of the rectangular shapes are arranged in a balanced manner. The overall picture of the entire wall surface presents a vertical arrangement of decorative motifs enclosed within vertically arranged various rectangular sizes. Unfortunately, the position of the windows which appear in the lower part of the decoration is aesthetically distracting. Nevertheless, the prevailing visual impression is realistically expressive and pleasing.

Social Category

The mosque and camel motifs closely relate to the social categories of decoration and education.

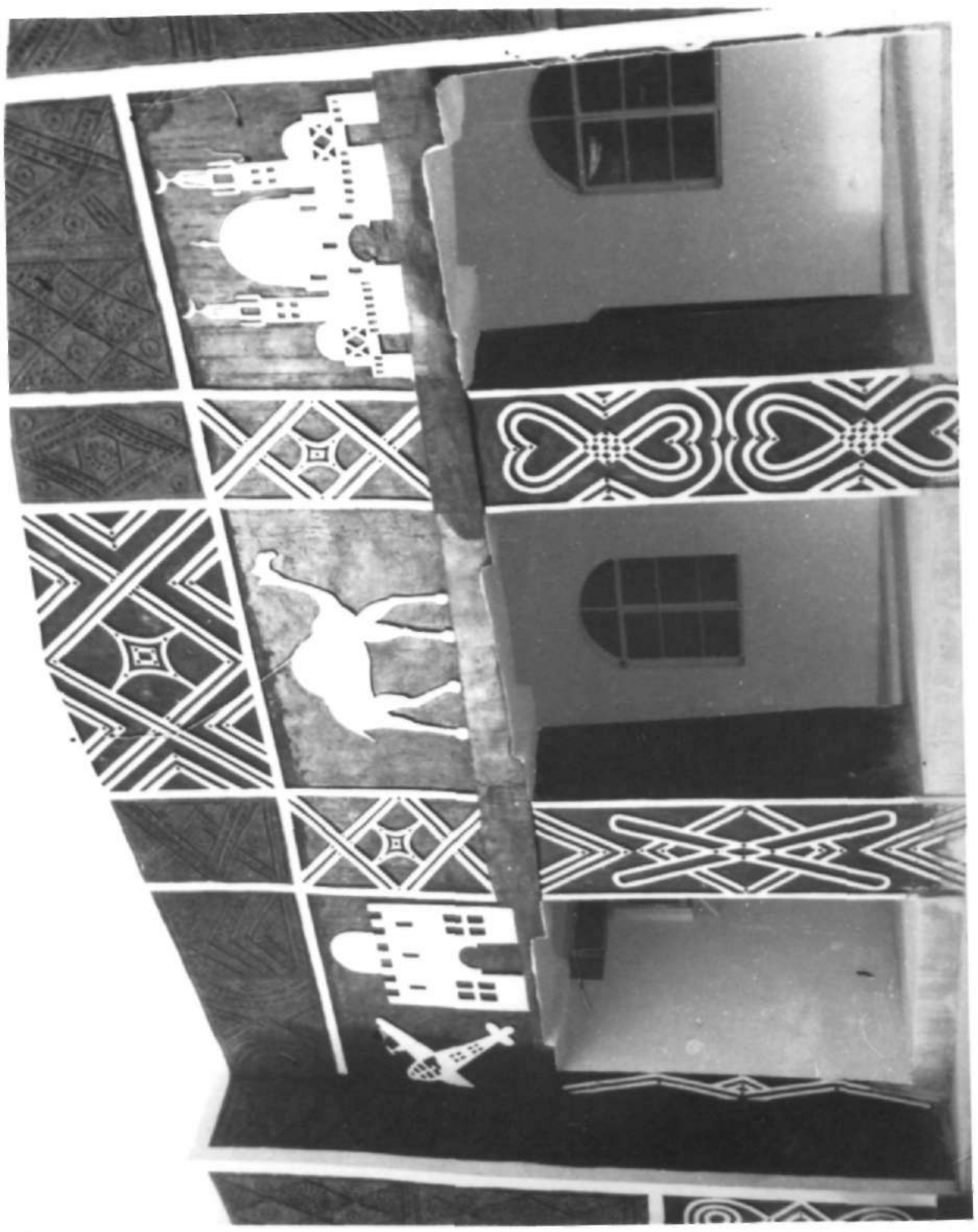
Social Functions

Presently, the mosque and camel motifs do not only function as architectural design but also fulfill certain educational functions. The designs promote beauty as well as documenting historical events.

Hausa traditional decorative motifs are found in modern architectural buildings especially public buildings, such as hotels. The hotel industry is a modern Nigerian economic venture in which traditional arts have played prominent roles. These decorative motifs fulfill educational functions because emphasis is placed on the historical significance of the motifs of 'camel and mosque'. Briefly, there is the reference to the history of the caravan routes across the Sahara Desert lying in the northern part of Nigeria and very close to the Hausa States.

Figure 19

The Mosque and Camel Motif at Bagauda Lake Hotel



THE MULTIFARIOUS MOTIFS

The multifarious motifs differ from previously mentioned wall decorations because they consist of many unrelated shapes and forms. The multifarious motifs include numerous shapes and forms representative of animals such as camels, birds, snakes, lions and butterflies, shapes of houses such as the mosque, shapes of traditional aircraft, and objects such as pots, writing palettes, and numerous arabic symbols and letters. The multifarious motifs elaborately utilized geometric shapes--triangles, rectangles, curves, and the symbolic shapes of motor vehicles and bicycles. Different symbols, design, patterns, and emblems with arabic characteristics prevail. Predominantly noticeable in the relationship among the surface contours is the feeling of expressive structural elements of interrelatedness which function cohesively. There is the impression of a harmonious fusion of ideas in the form of shapes and motifs. The technique and medium of work include flat color paintings on low sculptural reliefs of cement plastering (see Figures 20, 21 and 22).

The representational shapes of birds, animals--camels, horses, lions, leaves, plants, flowers, drums, flags, arabic letters or abstract shapes are entirely interwoven into a synthesis of decorative elements. Hausa arabic writings are superimposed as headlines which symbolize important events. Most images appear flatly patterned, expressive, and decorative.

Black and white colors are used in most cases for creating sharp tonal contrast, but generally interrelated, agreeable, and complementary. In some places, however, multicolored hues, a myriad of cool reds, blues, browns, and other colors are used. This indiscriminate use of colors does not necessarily result in a conflict of colors because the simplicity of form and their naive structural attributes all combine into a union of relatedness on the entire wall surface.

Commenting on Hausa wall decoration in his exhibition of Islamic art forms, D. H. Heathcote (1976, p. 75) observes that:

> The elaborate ornamentation of exterior walls, incorporating representational motifs such as those of lorries, bicycles, guns, animals, and people, drew some of its initial inspiration from the more geometrical types of decoration that had already been made for interiors, the best example of which is the nineteenth-century Zaria City Mosque, undoubtedly the finest mud building in Hausaland. Outstanding later examples of interior decoration which include portions of the Emir of Kano's palace and a number of related buildings are also in Kano. One of these was once used as the Kano Treasury, and the walls of two of its rooms, which were private apartments, were covered in the 1930s with polychrome relief ornaments in an elaborate style transitional between the early restrained work and the later exhuberant work.

Social Category

Like the other decorative motifs previously mentioned, the multifarious motifs are principally associated with aesthetics.

The multifarious decorative motif is not particularly associated with any political idea but the design approach is found on the outer walls of cinema and public houses. Their significance lies

in their aesthetics found on the decorations of other artifacts such as leatherwork calabash designs, garments, and dresses, serving aesthetic functions.

Social Functions

The multifarious motifs serve several social functions. The decorations beautify the walls of houses on which they were found as well as protect the outer surfaces of the walls, and also perform other religious functions. Many cinema houses provide evening relaxation for people; in fact the numerous cinema houses in Hausaland are profit oriented; hence, the owners have lavishly decorated the surfaces of their walls to make them attractive to visitors.

Decorative motifs not only serve aesthetic functions but they are protective in that decorations contain words of prayers to Allah for good health and peace whenever the letters are clearly written. Although no religious ritual is associated with Hausa decoration, superimposed arabic or Hausa writings are intended to fulfill the religious function of protecting the people from evil such as unseen spirits believed to be restlessly roaming at night.

Figure 20

Multifarious Motifs Found in a Zaria Cinema House

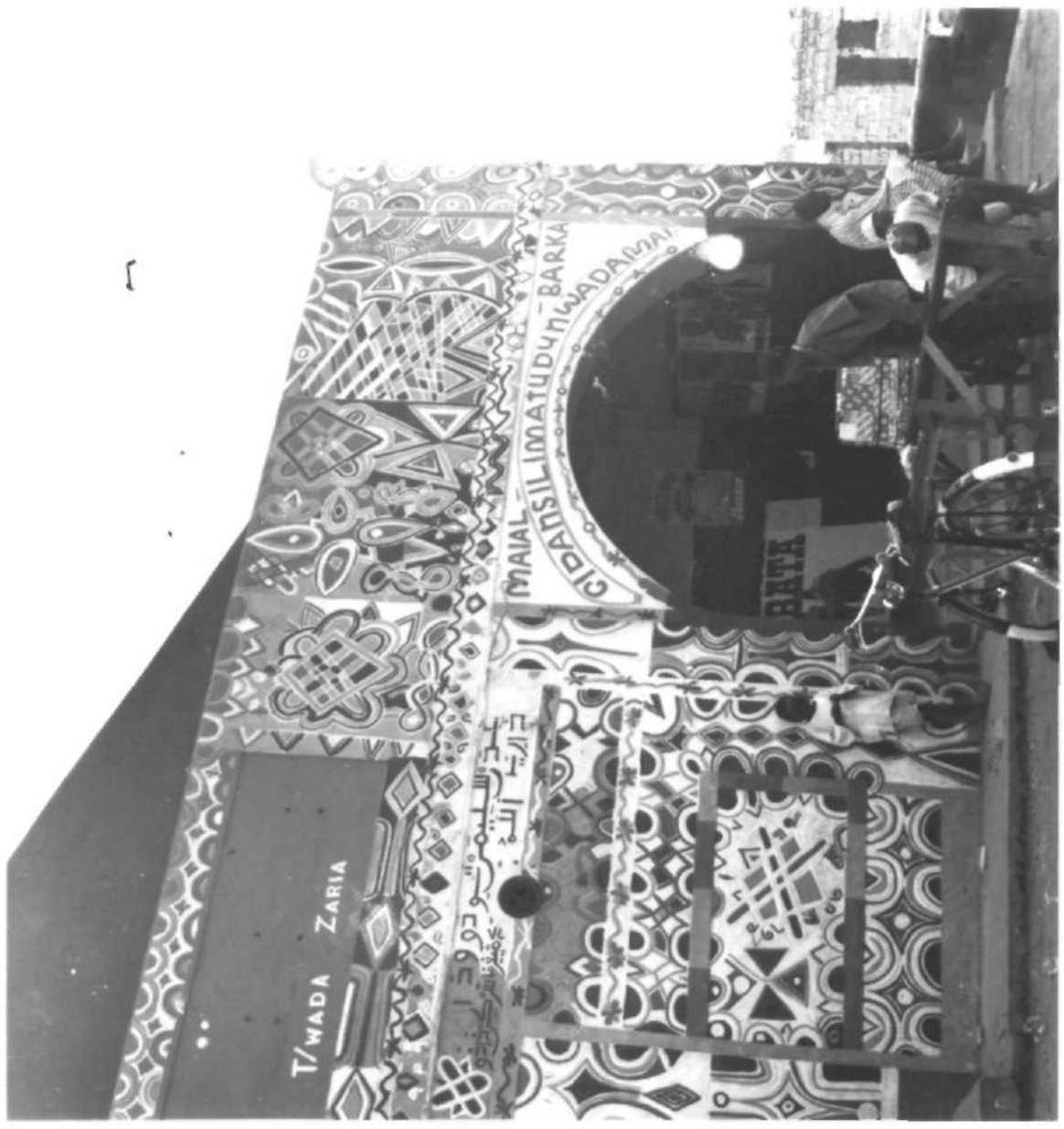


Figure 21

Multifarious Units Found in a Zaria Cinema House



Figure 22

Multifarious Units Found in a Zaria Cinema House



LEAF AND SEMICIRCULAR MOTIFS

Description

Some good examples of the leaf and semicircular motif decoration, usually made from concrete, can be found on the walls of houses in Zaria City. The predominant features of the decoration include leaf shapes, semicircles with dots, lineal, horizontal, and vertical lines and triangular shapes. Predominantly visible is a combination of leaf motifs arranged in star-like shapes each enclosed in a rectangle. The semicircular motifs are serially arranged with dots centrally placed in the center of each shape. The prevailing characteristic arrangement of the overall picture portrays patterns and motifs horizontally composed and segmented with parallel lineal motifs and triangular shapes. The decorations are in natural grey cement color or painted white (see Figure 23).

Some accounts of how traditional Hausa houses were built are reflected by Lieuzinger (1971) who emphasizes that

"The roofs of the houses are cone shaped." (This seems to have described the principles of the buildings, with a base support in circular buildings.) According to Lieuzinger, in her description of the neo-Sudanese buildings:

> The wall is frequently made of lattice work plastered with clay or in the Hausa states of Nigeria of lumps of clay molded to form a smooth surface. In many Nilotic and Central Sudanese dwellings the wall are lined with patterned mats. With its relatively extensive mural surfaces the gable-roofed dwelling affords ample opportunity for artistic decoration... (P. 64).

Social Category

The leaf motif decorative pattern is commonly found in many local houses of common people such as low-income farmers, because of the inexpensive nature of the design. The architectural plan of these houses is simple, in that rectangular style predominates; although there exist a large variety of circular shaped buildings. These decorations function principally in the categories of aesthetics and politics.

Social functions: The low income people used the leaf motif wall decorations principally to protect the outer walls of their houses from the rain. Because wall decorations protect the wall surface, each year the activity is carried out just shortly before the rain season--between the months of June and August in order to protect the walls from being eroded. The low income people could not afford elaborate ornamentations such as the scrolls. Consequently, the kind of decoration motifs found on their walls are usually inexpensive and thus portray the relative prestige and political power of the owner. Thus Kirk-Green remarks that "It is predominantly the merchant class, especially the more recent successes, who have taken up the custom of external mural decorations on their houses, covering the doorway or the whole face if they can afford it, with sinuous arabesques, geometric designs, and pictorial images" (Kirk-Green, 1966, p. 9).

Figure 23

Lead and Semicircular Motif



THE CIRCULAR AND INTERLOCKING EMBLEM MOTIF

Description

Prominently visible on the Kano City Gate is a modernized traditional wall decoration which is composed of sculptured circular and interlocking emblem motifs covering the entire surface of the gate wall. The gate is a modern architectural construction of concrete material on which traditional wall decorative patterns have been elaborately affixed. The appearance is impressive, decorative, and beautiful (see Figure 24).

The circular motifs are sharply delineated. Triangular and rectangular motifs appear within interlocking circular emblems. These contemporary motifs are more sharply formed than the rougher and more simply represented forms of the old traditional wall decoration. It is interesting to note that several examples of this type of newly adopted traditional decorative pattern have been commissioned and incorporated in public buildings within the last decade. This city gate decoration is an example. The Zaria post-office and the Bagauda (International) Lake Hotel, located at Bagauda, are other examples.

The sides of the gate are composed of raised surfaces, incised and ornamented with sculptured low relief in which interior angles are prominent because rectangular shapes are enclosed within rectangles.

The overall appearance portrays a textile-like texture in which motifs are carefully arranged to form repeated decorative patterns. The massive decoration covers the entire surface of the giant gate

which leads into the old city of Kano.

Social Category

Decorative motifs on gates function mostly in the categories of aesthetics and education.

Social Functions

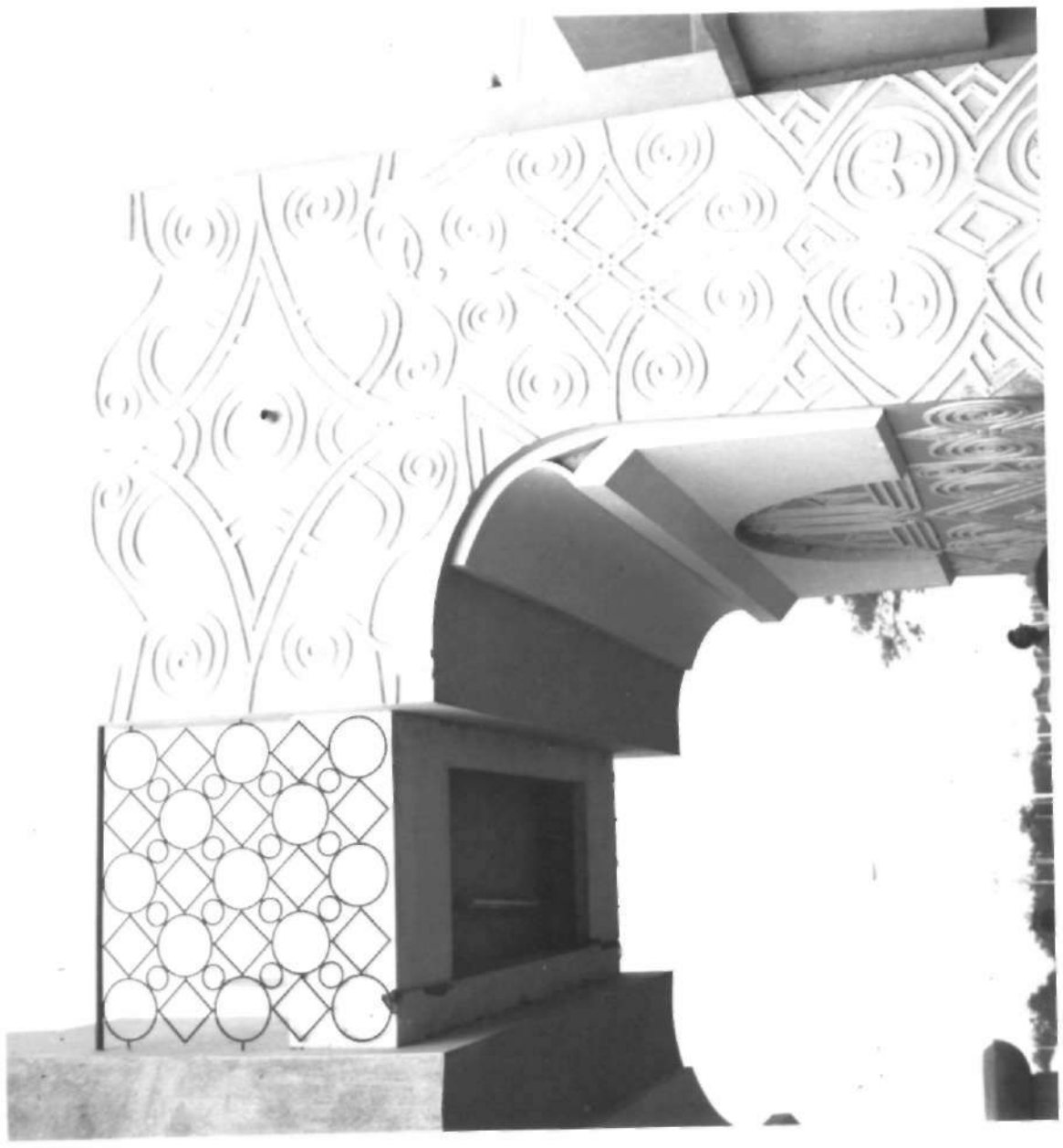
Functionally, Hausa gates are documentary, protective, and aesthetically symbolic. The gates are documentary in the sense that they reveal historical knowledge of that society. Decorated gates are historical markers just like the American historical marker commonly found on wood sign boards on many Wisconsin highways.

In the past, gates fulfilled protective functions serving as barriers against invaders of warring neighboring tribes. A good example is the British forces' invasion of Kano City before the final amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigeria of 1914 (English, 1959).

Symbolically the gate decorations fulfill aesthetic functions in that they beautify the walls of Hausa city gates such as those found in Zaria City and Kano City.

Figure 24

The Circular And Interlocking Emblem Motif



CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS - SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED TRADITIONAL NIGERIAN ART FORMS

The descriptions of sixteen traditional Nigerian art forms which were presented in Chapter Four were subjected to an analysis to determine: (1) the social categories in which the art forms functioned, and (2) the primary and secondary social functions of the art forms. Each of the social functions that were derived from the analysis are then discussed in detail. The traditional masks and related forms were so distinct in style and function that they are treated in separate groups in the analysis.

Social Categories in Which Art Forms Functioned

The art forms and the social categories in which primary and secondary functions were performed are listed in Table 1. First, with respect to the ten traditional art forms, it was found that nine of them performed primary functions in the Religious category. Of the ten forms four performed primary functions in the Politics category and four in the Law category. Next, three forms performed primary functions in the entertainment category, and one each in the Education and Medicine categories. Thus, the majority of art forms, nine out of ten possible, functioned in the Religious social category. Next, most frequent were politics and law with four each, next, entertainment three.

Among the secondary functions six of the ten art forms performed functions in the Education category; next most frequent was 2 in Politics and 1 each in Law and Medicine, and one in decoration.

Of the six forms of Hausa wall decorations five performed primary functions in the category titled Decoration, with one each in Politics and Religion. A total of three of the Hausa decorations performed secondary functions in Education, two in Politics, and one in Decoration. Thus, the predominance of the Hausa wall decorations performed primary functions under the Decoration category, and half of them, three, performed secondary functions in the Education category.

Primary and Secondary Social Functions

Each of the social functions performed by the art objects is reported in Table 2 by social category and primary or secondary function. These primary and secondary functions derived for each art object are listed individually on a separate index card. Cards were then grouped according to similarity of functions, both primary and secondary. Using this method, six social functions of traditional Nigerian arts emerged. They 1) promote the perpetuation of communal association, 2) serve as a form of technology, 3) reform people's attitudes, 4) preserve conceptual knowledge, 5) entertain people, and 6) maintain social reality.

Following the relationship of primary and secondary functions is a description of the meaning of each of the six social functions.

TABLE 1

SOCIAL CATEGORIES IN WHICH TRADITIONAL ART FUNCTIONS

Art Objects	Primary Functions	Secondary Functions
Kurudu Mask	Religion, Politics, Law	Education
Olibobo Mask	Law Enforcement	Politics
Ede Mask	Entertainment, Religion, Politics	Medicine
Gugu Mask	Religion, Law Enforcement,	Education
Ofere Mask	Entertainment	Education, Decoration
Oba's Crown	Politics, Law, Religion	Education
Agbala Drums	Entertainment, Religion, Politics	
Shrine Decorations	Religion	Education
Olokun Shrine Figures	Religion	Education
Ugba-Ifa	Religion, Medicine, Education	Politics, Law
	Hausa Wall Decorations	
Scroll Motif	Decoration*	Politics
Interlocking Emblem	Politics	Decoration
Camel Motif	Decoration	Education
Multifarious Motifs	Religion, Decoration*	Education
Leaf and Semi-circular Motifs	Decoration*	Politics
Circular and Interlocking Emblem Motifs	Decoration*	Education

*Social Category which was added as a result of final analysis.

TABLE 2

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOCIAL FUNCTIONS PERFORMED
TRADITIONAL NIGERIAN ART OBJECTS

P = Primary function
S = Secondary function

Art Object	Social Category		Social Functions
Kurudu Mask	Religion	P	Perpetuates ancestral worship as link between the living and the dead
	Politics	P	Promotes solidarity; immortailizes power and perpetuates mystical values and political relations through sanctions
	Law	P	Mandates newly promulgated laws
	Education	S	Educates the public of newly initiated young adults because it concludes initiation ceremonies
Olibobo Mask	Religion	P	Aids ancestral worship
	Politics	P	Serves as agents of kingship system--as sources of manpower and army
	Law	P	Enforces rules and regulations, enforces sanctions which support and consolidate the social system

(Table 2 continued)

Art Object	Social Category		Social Functions
Ede Mask	Religion	P	Guides the departed spirit of the dead into the spirit world
	Entertainment	P	Entertains humorously; diverts the attention of relatives of the dead, reminds them about their rights to forget about their sorrow and encourages them to have faith in God
	Medicine	S	Casts spells such as exorcism and cures diseases
Ofere Mask	Education	S	Develops children's initiatives Promotes leadership training
	Entertainment	P	Promotes children's sense of humor; gives them fun through acrobatic displays. Children's masking is essentially humorous because they imitate adult ways
Gugu Mask in Bida	Religion	P	It is communicative and thus promotes ancestral worship
	Politics	P	It perpetuates power and authority. It is associated with Bida Royal Family, the political leader of Nupe tribal groups
	Law	P	It perpetuates justice and fair play
	Education	S	It is documentary. It is associated with legends of origin of the royal family of

(Table 2 continued)

Art Objects	Social Category	Social Functions
		Bida. It is educative--it consists of legends which consist of statements of wisdom.
Ugba-Ifa	Religion	P Ifa is worshipped as a god. It exemplifies certainty, order, and reconciliation
	Politics	P The Ifa priest serves advisory role to the kingship system, the political power.
	Medicine	P Ifa provides clues and solutions to serious problems-political, social, etc.
	Education	S Ifa educates--it is a body of knowledge lost through the ages
Agbala Sacred Drum	Religion	P Aids ancestral religious worship
	Politics	S The festival in which it is used promotes the king's mystical authority and powers
	Entertainment	P The music provides emotional satisfying effects on the audience P The music provides a social environment--a suitable atmosphere for interaction.

(Table 2 continued)

Art Objects	Social Category		Social Functions
Oba's Crown	Religion	P	It perpetuates the divine religious rights of the king
	Politics	P	It symbolizes authority and power. It symbolizes the aspirations of a civilization at the highest level of authority
	Law	P	It is mandatory. It symbolizes the highest law of the land in which it is owned
	Education	S	Historically, it is symbolically documentary. It is educative, because it is associated with legends of origin and immigration
	Decoration	S	A Crown promotes visual beauty--It symbolizes the glitter of aesthetic experience
Olokun Mud Figures in Benin	Religion	P	Olokun is worshipped as a goddess, the shrine thus perpetuates communal association
	Education	S	It educates because it perpetuates ethical codes of conduct of accepted norms and thus educates. The legends associated with Olokun promote and inculcate into children a sense of awareness and moral responsibility

(Table 2 continued)

Art Objects	Social Category	Social Functions
Shrine Decorations	Religion	P A shrine is a place where sacrifices are offered. It thus promotes interaction, communal worship
		P Colors played significant roles by creating higher emotions into sacrificial ceremonies
	Education	S Shrine decorations are documentary--they symbolize significant roles that the ancestors had played in the community during their lifetime
The Scroll Motif	Politics	P Wall decorations suggest and visually symbolize wealth, authority, and power. Elaborately ornamented wall surfaces may suggest the relative amount of wealth possessed by the house owner
	Decoration	S Ornamented wall surfaces promote environmental beauty. Decorative motifs are visually satisfying, pleasant, and lightly refreshing
Interlocking Emblem	Politics	P Symbolize the official emblem by government of former *Northern Nigeria* on public buildings and papers. It is also used on the ceremonial gowns of Emirs and important Hausa chiefs.
	Decoration	S The emblem is a symbol of beauty which served as architectural ornamentation

(Table 2 continued)

Art Objects	Social Category		Social Functions
			on buildings and on textile materials
	Education	S	Symbolically, decorations are educative. The designs document historical events
	Decoration	P	Promote environmental beauty
Multifarious Motifs	Religion	S	Decorative motifs also fulfill religious roles. The decorations contain words or prayers. Hausa decorative motifs used caligraphic forms as modes of communicating prayers. Superimposed arabic letters if present in a decorative surface suggest words of prayers.
	Decoration	P	Multifarious motifs principally are intended to beautify the walls of the houses on which they were found
The Leaf and Semicircular Motifs	Politics	S	Suggests as indicators of the house owners' rank or social status. Lavish designs portray wealth, or the wealthy, simple designs indicate poverty.
	Decoration	P	Symbolizes the people's taste for aesthetic value and love for beauty
Circular and Interlocking Emblem Motif	Education	S	The decorations reveal documentary objects with historic and symbolic meanings
	Decoration	S	They convey a sense of beauty and creative thinking

TABLE THREE

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Art Objects	Social Category		Social Function (P = Primary functions; S = Secondary functions)
Group A: Promoted the perpetuation of communal association			
Kurudu Masks	Religion	P	perpetuate ancestral worship as link between the living and the dead.
Olibobo Masks	Religion	P	Aid ancestral worship.
Ede Masks	Religion	P	Guide the departed spirit of the dead into the spirit world.
Gugu Masks	Religion	P	It is communicative and thus promotes ancestral worship.
Olokun Shrine Figures	Religion	P	Olokun is worshipped as a goddess. The shrine thus perpetuates communal association.
Shrine Decorations	Religion	P	A shrine is a place where sacrifices are offered. It thus promotes interaction and communal association.
Ugba-Ifa	Religion	P	Ifa is worshipped as a god. It exemplifies certainty, order, and reconciliation.
Group B1: Traditional arts served traditional people as technology			
The art objects were used as tools as techniques for effecting desired objectives. The tools mentioned in this current discussion are the art objects, and the techniques are why and how the art objects were used.			
Kurudu Masks	Law	P	Mandate newly promulgated laws.
Olibobo Masks	Religion, Politics Law	P	Enforce rules and regulations; enforce sanctions which support and consolidate the social system.

(Table 3 continued)

Ede Masks	Religion	P	Guide the departed spirit of the dead into the spirit world.
	Medicine	S	Cast spells such as exorcism.
Ofere Masks	Education	S	Develop children's initiative.
Gugu Masks	Religion	P	Are communicative and thus promote ancestral worship.
Ugba-Ifa	Religion	P	Ifa is worshipped as a god.
	Medicine	P	Ifa provides clues and solutions to serious problems--Ifa is diagnostic, prescriptive, and also cures illnesses.
Agbala Drums	Religion	P	Aid ancestral religious worship
Oba's Crown	Politics	P	It symbolizes authority and power. It symbolizes the aspirations of a civilization at the highest level of authority
	Decorations	S	A crown promotes visual beauty.
Olokun Shrine Figures	Religion	P	Olokun is worshipped as a goddest.
Shrine Decorations	Religion	P	Colors played significant roles by creating higher emotions into sacrificial ceremonies
Hausa Wall Decorations-Scroll Motif	Politics	P	Wall decorations suggest and visually symbolize wealth, authority, and power. Elaborately ornamented wall surfaces may suggest the relative amount of wealth possessed by the house owner.
	Decorations	S	Ornamented wall surfaces promote environmental beauty. Decorative motifs are visually satisfying and pleasant.

(Table 3 continued)

Interlocking Emblem	Decoration	S	The emblem is a symbol of beauty which serves as architectural ornamentation on buildings and on textile materials.
The Mosque and Camel Motifs	Decoration	P	Promote environmental beauty.
Multifarious Motif	Religion	S	Decorative motifs also fulfill religious roles. The decorations contain words of prayers. Hausa decorative motifs used caligraphic forms as modes of communicating such prayers.
	Decoration	P	Multifarious motifs principally are intended to beautify the walls of houses on which they were found.
Leaf and Semicircular Motifs	Politics	S	Suggest as indicators of the house owner's rank or social status. Lavish designs portray wealth or the wealthy; simple designs indicate poverty.
	Decoration	P	Symbolize the people's taste for aesthetic value and love for beauty.
Circular and Interlocking Motifs	Education	S	The decorations reveal documentary objects with historic and symbolic meanings.
	Decoration	P	They convey a sense of beauty and creative thinking.
Group C: Traditional arts were used to attract people's attention and to reform people's attitudes			
Shrine Decorations	Religion	P	Colors played significant roles by creating higher emotions into sacrificial ceremonies.

(Table 3 continued)

Group C Continued			
Ede Masks	Entertainment	P	Entertain humorously and divert the attention of relatives of the dead, remind them about their rights to forget about their sorrow and encourage them to have faith in God.
Olokun Shrine Figures	Religion	P	Because of the belief in predestination an unborn child's future can be predicted by the Olokun worshipper, devotee, and priest; such predictions may include a revelation of those things the child is likely to encounter when it is born--wealth, good luck, and life span. (Thus these art objects were used to attract the viewer's attention and to reform their attitudes--especially about the problem for which the viewers sought meaningful explanations from the priests.)
Group D: *Traditional Arts Promote Conceptual Knowledge*			
(The meanings of traditional arts are based on a structure of beliefs and plans founded on a set of shared beliefs, concepts, values, and principles accepted to a group. Specific art forms represent specific ideas. Art objects represent unique samples of structured knowledge (e.g.) legends and stories of origin, etc.)			
Kurudu Masks	Education	S	Educate the public of newly initiated young adults because they conclude initiation ceremonies.
Ofere Masks	Education	S	Develop children's initiatives, promote leadership training.

(Table 3 continued)

Group D Continued			
Gugu Masks	Education	S	Are documentary. Are associated with legends of origin of the royal family of Bida. Are educative because they consist of legends which consist of statements of wisdom.
Oba's Crown	Education	S	Historically, it is symbolically documentary. It is educative because it is associated with legends of origin and immigration.
Ugba-Ifa	Education	S	Ifa educates - it is a body of knowledge lost through the ages.
Olokun Shrine Figures	Education	S	Educate because they perpetuate ethical codes of conduct of accepted norms. The legends associated with Olokun promote and inculcate into children a sense of awareness and moral responsibility.
Shrine Decoration	Education	S	Shrine decorations are documentary. They symbolize significant roles that the ancestors had played in the community during their lifetime.
Hausa Wall Decorations			
Interlocking Emblems	Education	S	Symbolically, decorations are educative. The designs document historical events.
Circular and Interlocking Emblem Motifs	Education	S	The decorations reveal documentary objects with historic and symbolic meanings.

(Table 3 continued)

Group E: Traditional Arts Entertained People in Traditional Society			
Ede Masks	Entertainment	P	Entertain humorously and diverts the attention of relatives of the dead, remind them about their rights to forget about their sorrow and encourage them to have faith in God.
Ofere	Entertainment	P	Promotes children's sense of humor; gives them fun through acrobatic displays. Children's masking is essentially humorous because they initiate adults' ways.
Agbala Drums	Entertainment	P	The music provides emotional satisfying effects to the audience.
Group F: Traditional Arts Maintain Social Reality, Express Myth, and Enhance Human Aspirations			
(Traditional arts were used as symbols of successful accomplishments to differentiate important dignitaries, and to promote a feeling of confidence, self-worth, successful living, social identity, social importance or influence, and a sense of maturity.			
Kurudu Masks	Politics	P	Promote solidarity--immortalize power and perpetuate mystical values and political relations through sanctions.
Gugu Mask	Politics	P	It perpetuates power and authority.
Ofere	Education	S	Develops children's initiatives, promotes leadership training.
Agbala	Politics	S	The festival in which it is used promotes the king's mystical authority and powers.
Oba's Crown	Religion	P	It perpetuates the divine religious rights of the king.

(Table 3 continued)

Group F Continued			
	Politics	P	It symbolizes authority and power. It symbolizes the aspirations of a civilization at the highest level of authority.
	Decoration	S	A crown promotes visual beauty.
Olokun	Religion	P	Olokun is worshipped as a goddess.
	Education	S	Olokun educates because it perpetuates ethical codes of conduct of accepted norms. The legends associated with Olokun promote and inculcate into children a sense of awareness and moral responsibility.
Ugba-Ifa		P	Ifa is diagnostic, prescriptive, and also cures illnesses. (The use of body and mask coloring in initiation ceremonies suggests the concept of newly acquired power.)
Hausa Wall Decorations		P	Project dignity, influence, and social identity.

DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL FUNCTION

Traditional Arts Promoted the Perpetuation of Communal Association

One of the roles of masks in ancestral worship was to serve as a symbol of the bonds extending kinship. Art forms were used in activities that generated interrelationships among people, such as love and caring, responsibility to others, mutual respect, and especially respect for elders. Through such bonds the traditional arts promoted the social cohesion and integration of social groups, the old and young, men and women.

Six traditional art objects promoted the perpetuation of communal activities in which people associated with one another. Kurudu, Olibobo, and Ede masks, Olokun shrine figures, shrine decorations, and Ugba-Ifa helped to perpetuate ancestral worship as a mode of traditional religion. Through ancestral worship, traditional art promoted social interaction and communal association in which people assembled together in shrines to worship God and offer prayers recognizing similarities among people.

Masks were worn by male adults who appeared in public places annually as sacred beings from heaven to suggest a belief in the existence of life after death. Art objects used in ancestral worship symbolized the concepts of God, power, and the unseen concepts which served as socially cohesive forces (D. Fraser, 1974; Parringer, 1969, 88-89; Bascom, 1944, p. 37; Morton Williams, 1964).

Traditional Arts Served as Technology

Art as technology here implies the use of art objects as tools and techniques for effecting desired objectives. The tools are the art objects and the techniques are how the art objects were used by the traditional people in effecting their desired intentions. These arts served as technology in several social categories.

Traditional art objects such as Kurudu masks, Olokun shrine figures, Oba's Crown, and Ugba-Ifa served three political functions: 1) Such objects immortalized power by perpetuating mythical values which promoted political relations in traditional societies. The art objects were symbolically used by the Oba and his chiefs exclusively who ruled by mystical sanctions, a belief in legendary stories, myths, dogmas, and ritual ceremonies. The ceremonies emphasized the solidarity of the people, fertility, health, prosperity, peace, and justice. As a result, people operated and cooperated in a system of interconnected moral norms; 2) Symbolically, art was used to project the dignity of the Oba. Abundant ethnographic data reveal that Benin art essentially was an adjunct to the kingship system, since most figures symbolize the authority and power of the Oba of Benin (Tibor Bodrogi, 1968; Michel Leiris T. Delange, 1967; W. and F. Forman & Philip Dark, 1972; Frank Willet, 1971; Ulli Beier, 1956; Coleman, 1958).

Masks were used as tools of law enforcement in several ways, including providing sanctions, and punishment, as well as protection.

In ancestral worship, Gugu masks were used to symbolize the spirits of the ancestors who come to earth to rectify wrong doings and thus protect living relatives. In particular, Olibobo masks in Isho were worn by men whose primary role was to enforce rules and regulations. In this way, Olibobo masks were used as law enforcement agents. Masqueraders were intended to enforce societal law and mete out punishment to culprits either by seizure of property--goats, cocks, or farmland--or in certain cases banishment from the town. The mask concealed the identity of the wearer and enabled him to assert his authority in an impersonal manner. The masquerader was the law, and the conduct of the masquerader was instruction that was consecrated and firmly binding. It was a crime to unmask a masquerader in public. Thus, the Olibobo mask was not only a symbol but an active instrument of power, the law, and social coercion.

The sanctions and displays by Olibobo masks and others supported and helped consolidate the social system, helping to make the men responsible and devoted to it. Ede masquerade dances also provided gestural and symbolic forms of social coercion. The control was indirect, but effective, because people were aware of the proper punishment for offenses as provided in the law of retribution. Indeed, sanctions brought pressure to bear on people apart from their loyalties and convictions.

Symbolically, an Oba's Crown conferred power, because the wearer proclaimed judgments on offenders that were carried out. Also,

the worship of Olokum perpetuated the law of retribution, which provides a reward or punishment for all past or evil offenses, known or unknown.

Ifa promoted social order and peace through sanctions suggested by the divination system (D. Fraser, 1975; Geoffrey Parringer, 1969). Hence, Ifa made adequate provision of reward and punishment through the law of retribution, for all sorts of disruptive, erotic, or defiant behavior in traditional social settings.

Hausa Wall Decorations as Technology

Decorative motifs in Hausa architecture had at least four functions. First, pragmatically, the sculptural wall surfaces were intended to protect the outer well surfaces from rain. Second, aesthetically, the scroll motif, the interlocking emblem, the camel motif, the multifarious motifs, the leaf and semicircular motifs, and the circular and interlocking emblem motifs all were designed to promote environmental beauty; the decorative motifs were visually satisfying and pleasant as architectural ornamentation. Third, the economics of the artistic decorative techniques promoted industrial enterprise. It provided a meaningful occupation which promoted positive incentives for aesthetic tastes. Technologically, the Hausas have always been highly industrious people, and their technological achievements are reflected in traditional wall decorations as well as in the decorations of their pottery, textiles, leartherwork, and embroidery. Artisans formed closed groups such as trade unions and guilds.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, traditional Hausa wall decorations were signs of social and political importance. The scroll, interlocking, and interior angle emblem, the leaf of the semicircular motifs, and the circular and interlocking emblem motif are all symbols of social status, prestige, and identification. Not only are elaborately ornamented wall surfaces visually expressive, they suggest the degree of wealth possessed by the owner of the house. Indeed, the wall decorations themselves visually symbolized wealth, authority, and power. The interlocking and interior angle emblem motifs represent a commonly identifiable emblem found on many public buildings, as well as ceremonial robes of emirs and chiefs, such as 'Babanriga'.

Traditional Arts Were Used to Reform the People's Attitudes

Several thematic interpretations can be derived from the physical and visual appearances of traditional art motifs which have been used to attract people's attention and to reform their attitude in traditional Nigerian society.

Symbolically, shrine decorative motifs in Isho possessed magical implications through their interpretative meanings. For example, the eye symbols represented the protective watchfulness of supernatural forces, the presence of sacred gods, as guardians and protectors of the people from evil spirits. Colors such as red and white played significant roles, creating higher emotions during sacrificial ceremonies. Red, for instance, represented danger,

horror, and sacrifice during rituals. White denoted the presence and the unending domain of Olodumare (God of the Yoruba religion). If worn by shrine priests, white dress symbolized purity, innocence, and a state of transformation. White materials were present during ceremonies, such as marriages, initiation, and religious rituals as parts of sacred masks, and as markings with magical implications on the face, chest, and stomach. In these contexts white suggested the new acquisition of power. A combination of white and red symbolized mixed feelings.

The role of the preceding art symbols and colors in traditional medicine should not be underestimated in view of their significant social functions of attracting people's attention. Ifa, Ede, and Olokun art objects performed certain social functions by diverting the viewers' attention and consequently reforming their attitudes--especially about the problem for which they sought meaningful explanation from the priests. Ifa divinations performed the functions of reforming attitudes because they provided temporary feelings of security for sick people in traditional Yoruba society. In this way Ifa's diversion practices manifest themselves in the exemplary activities of the Babalawo (Ifa priest), an important traditional doctor who possessed the ability to heal sick people. The Babalawo was a general physician, a consultant, and gynecologist capable of helping pregnant women during childbirth. But Ifa is the personal savior of the diviner (Babalawo) and the protector of his relatives

and devotees and all those who may seek protection through the Ifa divination system.

However, the role of art as a means of diverting attention was symbolic in traditional society because the Babalawos associated and incorporated colorful media along with their medicinal practices. The role of color here was to effect a magical implication through their colors with which people were closely familiar. Similarly, Ede masking performed diversion functions because Ede masqueraders were used for burial rites and for guiding the departed spirit of the dead into the spirit world. The activities involved were dramatic presentations like plays and included gestural dances, acrobatic displays in which masqueraders shrilled like birds, howled like monkeys, and so on.

Traditional Arts Preserved Conceptual Knowledge

The meaning of traditional art is based on a set of shared beliefs, concepts, values, and principles acceptable to a group. Masks and art objects in this respect became sanctions of law enforcement, therapy, or medicine divination, and magic in traditional societies. Specific Nigerian art forms and motifs represent specific ideas, so that masks, for example, represent spiritual power, an Oba's crown represents political power, and especially Ifa art objects evoke knowledge. Thus, the art objects as embodiments of knowledge served to preserve such knowledge from one generation to the next.

Ifa divination and legends and stories associated with ritual art objects represent unique samples of structured knowledge in Yoruba traditional society. Ifa divination is a body of knowledge maintained through the ages in such areas as medicine, psychology, philosophy, and history. Finally, the Oba's Crown and Gugu Masks play an educational role because they taught the origin of dynasties and the migration of people in traditional social settings. The legends and myths associated with the masks consist of statements of wisdom consisting of stories which portray social evils like polygamy. Polygamy is pictured as causing jealousy, avarice, and unhealthy rivalries. Traditional legends promoted a broad ethical code with warnings for children about the requirements to face life realistically and with courage. The realities of life were communicated informally to children through stories and legends associated with masks.

Art perpetuates cultural knowledge by associating symbols and projecting inner feelings, and by perpetuating legends and mythological stories, folklores, and tales. Stories amuse adults and instruct children, stimulate their emotions and imaginations, and lead them to evaluate acts, thereby promoting their concept of social behavior.

Art perpetuates knowledge through its relationship to myths. Segy provides us with some insight as to how myths functioned in such a fashion among societies:

> The sacred myths aimed to preserve the wisdom of precedents based on ancestral laws. They became cultural canons limiting life and determining what was unalterable, excluding the unpredictable,

> giving security and prosperity to the collective life of the community by stressing obedience to the law, the code, and the practical guidelines for behavior and closer fraternal relationships between members of smaller groups. (Segy, 1976, p. 8)

Traditional Arts Entertained People

Traditional arts in the form of masks, tales, folklores, legends and stories, dramas and acrobatic displays associated with art objects entertained people in traditional Nigerian society. People used art forms in manners in which they were relaxed, refreshed, and emotionally satisfied.

Three traditional art objects, Agbala, Ede, and Ofere, performed social functions through entertainment. Agbala drums promoted social interaction through entertainment. The drums aided the gathering together of a large number of people during the king's annual festivals. Drums provided attractive music which was refreshing, stimulating, amusing, pleasurable, and emotionally satisfying. The music provided the proper social environment for interaction and relaxation.

The Ede masquerade was a humorous talking masquerade in which hair-raising stories and tongue twisters were told, libelous songs were sung, the future was forecast, and dances performed. Even religious ceremonies were entertaining. They were often dramatic representations, plays which went on for several days. They were designed to amuse and entertain in order to simultaneously offset and stimulate the mounting psychological tension which occurred before a sacrificial

offering was made.

Traditional Arts Maintain Social Reality

Traditional arts were used to fill life with meaning. Not only was art used for fortune telling, divination, averting bad luck and acquiring good luck, it was used for indoctrinating children. Through systematic indoctrination such as the role of art in initiating children, the focus of traditional art was teaching and developing children to become increasingly sensitive and aware of values and knowledge about their natural and social environments. Four traditional art objects, Kurudu and Ofere masks, Olokun shrine figures, and Oba's crown performed several educational functions toward the end of indoctrination.

Kurudu masks functioned in initiation rites. Their place in initiation was mandatory; Kurudu masqueraders always appeared to conclude initiation rituals. Initiation deals with the perpetuation of principles and practices of social behavior. The process confers new social status and brings about major psychological changes. Upon completion of initiation rites, the initiated age grades assume their societal roles as responsible adults. The use of masks and body coloring in initiation suggests the concept of newly acquired power. Masks function as the abode of ancestral spirits who teach man codes of behavior.

Ofere masks inculcate leadership roles into children. The

activities promoted children's creativity and their sense of responsibility and maturity in handling their own affairs.

Olokun initiation ceremonies and the legends associated with them promote and inculcate a sense of awareness, responsibility, and maturity in children. The root of averting bad luck and acquiring good fortune was central to the religious worship of Olokun. Olokun worship thus perpetuated the dualistic concepts of predestination and how to avert dangers by supernatural means. These concepts were acquired through systematic indoctrination through religious activities and the devotees were encouraged to be law abiding, friendly, helpful, hardworking, and purposeful in all their daily activities. Through their roles in initiation rites, certain traditional art objects, then, functioned to maintain common social realities.

Philosophically, then, traditional Nigerian masks and other art forms as well as Hausa traditional wall decorations should be perceived not only as aesthetic objects constiting of shapes, but should be regarded as performing several social functions important to traditional society, but with important meanings for contemporary Nigerian education.

In the chapter that follows, the contemporary educational implications of the social functions of Nigerian traditional arts will be discussed.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY TRADITIONAL NIGERIAN ARTS FOR CONTEMPORARY ART EDUCATION

We have found that a selected group of traditional Nigerian art forms functioned in several social categories, including education. Six major social functions were found to cut across the several art forms. Whereas, the traditional art forms functioned in several ways among their own cultural group or sub-society how can these functions performed by arts of another era, and for smaller social units than are prevalent today, have implications for contemporary Nigerian art education? If they do, what might these implications and practices suggest for today's art education?

Having surveyed various theories of art education, the view presented by Donald W. Oliver in Education and Community (1976) seems to best recognize the nature of educational problems faced by Nigeria today, including the broader social issues. The social functions of art that have been derived from traditional Nigerian art will be examined against the context for education as developed by Oliver.

Oliver states that the central problem of education is:

> ...one of creating balance between the primal and modern aspects of human community, systems of thought, and personality. This means creating balanced participation among primal social forms (family and community) and the modern social form of the corporate organization; creating a balance between an ultimate

> sense of religio-philosophical meaning and the skeptical sense of choices we associate with "scientific thinking"; and creating a balance between efforts to maximize the potential development of each individual and recognizing the necessity and value of diversity among humans, even in such sensitive areas as intelligence, motivation, and social responsibility. (p. ix.)

Contemporary Nigeria is at a point between the modern aspects of the human community and smaller traditional social units. There is a need for a new adaptation to modify existing patterns of behavior and thought to meet the new conditions of emerging national Nigerian social values. The emergence of contemporary developments must be seen against the heterogeneous nature of the country. Approximately three hundred linguistic groups exist in Nigeria, and ..."the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, and the growing cleavage between the social grouping, all of which combine to confuse the nation and disrupt the concerted march to orderly progress in recent time." (Nigerian Constitutional Debate, 1976-78). There exists, then, a need to establish harmony between divergent Nigerian cultures and between the traditional and emerging contemporary ways based on technology and communication.

Traditional arts, such as the selected examples examined in this study, performed functions which maintained and preserved the integrity of societies. Using Oliver's model of social functions necessary to maintain qualitative life in contemporary society, we will examine how the infusion of traditional Nigerian art education might serve similar socially cohesive functions today.

The social functions of the traditional arts under consideration fit into a philosophy of education that education is a principal agent of promoting and perpetrating social values and beliefs. As a principal agent of society, education should consider using art as a vehicle for establishing goals such as: 1) national unity, 2) reducing societal conflict, and 3) improving the "qualities of life" as defined in Oliver's functional theory.

A top Nigerian educational priority focuses on uniting all the three hundred linguistic groups not only through legally enforceable rules such as adopted in the 1978 Constitution, but through a sound educational approach. Because Nigeria is a multicultural, heterogeneous nation, any proposal for educational change must recognize the cultural diversities of the people.

The functional theory of Professor Donald W. Oliver provides an approach that offers an educational model particularly valuable to the Nigerian situation. An educational approach for Nigeria should give art education a significant role in the educational system. It appears that the social functions of traditional Nigerian art, adapted for today's education might meet several of the functions that Oliver sees as necessary to a quality life.

Oliver's theory includes the following six categories of social functions: 1) Attachment; love bonding; 2) Adaptation; work; coping; 3) Renewal; play; sleep; relaxation; fantasy, dreaming; 4) Planning, deciding, conflict resolutions; 5) Celebration or

acting out of universal events in the human condition; story telling, drama; sports; dance; and 6) Creation of myth and meaning; placing man in relation to past and future human and cosmic events. (Oliver, 1976, p. 111)

Three major questions are suggested by Oliver's functional theory of education. First, what are the functions of education? Second, what effective roles can art play in educating children? Third, under what kind of framework can one bring traditional art into the contemporary setting of Nigerian education?

In response to the first question, education should promote Oliver's six functional categories, providing the social basis of education's role in human society.

Attachment

Education should promote the concept of attachment. "Attachment," in Oliver's terms, means interpersonal relatedness, as opposed to "short-term" bonds or common jobs bonds, or minimized kinship relationships.

According to Oliver, the social function of attachment underscores the principle that all "persons are related to other." The principle of attachment enhances the quality of life by assuring the individual that:

1) The feeling of individual powerlessness can be overcome, and 2) Love is a productive form of relatedness to others and to oneself implying responsibility, caring, respect, and desire to foster the

growth and development of others. Attachment is illustrated as an expression of that kind of intimacy between two human beings which preserves the integrity of each (Oliver, 1976, p. 110).

Adaptation-Work Coping

Oliver's concept of adaptation includes several elements among which there should be "Adequacy for meeting the burden of survival and the basic economic needs of society." It means meeting the basic biological needs of the society, as well as "biosocial functional needs" (e.g., celebration, play).

Also, adaptation means one's flexibility to meet changing conditions or "The extent to which institutions can change as human needs or natural conditions change."

Renewal

The concept of renewal should be promoted. Modes of renewal must be related to the developmental needs of individuals: infants, children, adolescents, adults, and old people all have different renewal modes and needs. The meaning of renewal implies "fantasy participation balance" in that "there should be a balanced renewal variety in relaxation." Further, renewal should be diverse enough to meet the need of different kinds of people (e.g., verbal, play, physical play, artistic activity).

Planning, Deciding and Conflict Resolution

An educational system should incorporate Oliver's concept of planning. Educational "activities are not spontaneous, but are carefully directed and managed" (Oliver, 1978, 118). Oliver remarks that proper "management requires planning and decision-making, and one can search for quality of life criteria which apply to decision-making." He provides two explicit definitions of planning and conflict resolution: a) planning and conflict resolutions means justice, participation, and the acceptance by members of society that decisions are self-binding and not enforced by coercion, and b) educational "Planning and conflict resolution mean efficiency, devotion to duty, and quality of decisions," balanced and just steady and productive.

Celebration

Oliver defines celebration as "shared joys, anxieties, hardships, the fellow-ship"; and as "universal elements in nature which bind man-in-society to the planet." According to Oliver, "Transcendent celebrations recognize not only human life more generally; the biological unity of many forms of life." Oliver maintains that "the diversity of humans in society (old-young, weak-strong, men-women, conceptual-sensuous-kinesthetic, etc.) should find authentic meaning in a common celebration."

Creation of Myth and Meaning

Oliver's concept of myth and meaning deals with man as an historical animal placing him in relation to past and future, human

and cosmic events.

According to Oliver, the creation of myth and meaning implies a) the ability to solve conflicts of beliefs and aspirations within oneself; b) that beliefs and myths should "deal with human meaning at various levels of abstraction and concreteness so all members of a society can share in the meaning"; c) and that "domains of human life (death) which are avoided or omitted from a meaning system should be made comprehensive." And he argues that "It is probably safe to assume that a meaning system which can relate various domains of human action, at least in some loose way, is going to be more adequate than one which deals with humans in society as a set of fragments."

Oliver concludes that

> One can generate quality of life criteria by looking separately at individual functional requirements, and by looking at relationships among various functional requirements and finally by consideration of the requirements as a whole. In the last category, one might say that any society or subsociety with a relatively balanced expression of basic human functions might have a higher quality of life than one which has focused most of its energies on one or two functions...One can also look at the whole set of functional requirements in terms of the extent to which various functions are integrated within common activities. (Pp. 121-122.)

Theoretically, art can be used as the vehicle for infusing Oliver's six categories of the social functions of education. By its very nature, art promotes the concepts of attachment, adaptation, renewal, planning-deciding, and conflict resolution, celebration, and creation of myth and meaning.

A comparison of the functions outlined by Oliver as necessary for qualitative life in a society and the social functions discovered in this study reveal marked similarities. It can be concluded that art education program designed to realize these functions on a broader national scale would be helpful in strengthening Nigerian societies.

While it is not the purpose of this study to develop the details of such an art education program, the basic outline can at least, be suggested for future development.

TABLE 4

A COMPARISON OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF TRADITIONAL ART WITH OLIVER'S SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Oliver's Functions	Social Functions of Art
Attachment; love bonding	Traditional arts promoted the perpetuation of communal association. Masks perpetuated ancestral worship as a link between the living and the dead relatives; served as symbols of the bonds extending kinship.
Adaptation; work; coping	Traditional arts served as technology. Masks mandated newly promulgated laws, enforced rules and regulations, and sanctions, which supported and consolidated the social system; the art objects were used as tools as techniques for effecting desired objectives. The tools mentioned are the art objects and the techniques are why and how the art objects were used.
Renewal; play; sleep; relaxation; fantasy; dreaming	Traditional arts were used to attract people's attention and to reform their attitudes. Masks entertained people, and diverted the attention or relatives of the dead, reminded them about their rights to forget about their sorrow and encouraged them to have faith in God.
Planning, deciding; conflict resolution	Traditional arts preserved conceptual knowledge. The meanings of traditional arts were based on a structure of beliefs and plans founded on a set of shared beliefs, concepts, values, and principles accepted to groups. Specific art forms represented specific ideas. Art objects represent unique samples of structured knowledge, legends, and stories.

Table 4 continued

	Art perpetuates cultural knowledge by associating symbols and projecting inner feelings, and by perpetuating legends and stories. Stories amuse adults and instruct children, stimulate their emotions, and imaginations, and lead them to evaluate acts, thereby promoting their concept of social behavior.
Celebration or acting out of universal events in the human condition; story telling; drama; sports; dance	Traditional arts entertained people in traditional society. Traditional arts, masks, tales, and legends entertained people humorously, promoted children's sense of humor, gave fun through acrobatic displays. The drumming provided emotional satisfying effects to the audience.
Creation of myth and meaning; placing man in relation to past and future human and cosmic events.	Traditional arts maintained social reality. Traditional arts were used as symbols of successful accomplishments to differentiate important dignitaries, and to promote a feeling of confidence, self-worth, successful living, social identity, social importance or influence and a sense of maturity. Masks perpetuated power and authority. Masks promoted solidarity, immortalized power, perpetuated mystical values and political relations through sanctions. Masking developed children's initiatives, promoted leadership training.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIAN ART EDUCATION

It has been suggested that traditional arts have some important roles to fulfill in contemporary Nigerian education and art education.

If cultural education was properly implemented and financially supported, it could greatly help promote a much desired "national unity" in contemporary Nigerian society, and thereby eradicate the pattern of confrontation and conflict exemplified by the Tiv Riots of 1960 and 1965 (P. C. Lloyd, 1970), the Agbekoya Riots near Ibadan in the late sixties, and frequent student demonstrations.

Several critical problems now confront the implementation of the Universal Primary Education Scheme (UPE) of September, 1976. As mentioned earlier, Fasuyi (1972) defined three major problems currently facing art education in the primary and secondary schools of contemporary Nigerian education. First, there is a lack of qualified teachers; second, there is a lack of instructional materials and visual aids; and third, there is a lack of textbooks. In addition, a set of workable and acceptable educational objectives and organizational principles is yet to be devised. The educational system lacks a primary school syllabus that could assist in the promotion of social identity, cohesion, and cultural continuity. The remants of colonial instructional materials and modes of teaching art and other subjects are relatively outdated.

Fasuyi also noted that the teaching of cultural subjects--art, art history, dance, and music are rated a "low priority" by the Nigerian government. As a result of inadequate government funding (both state and federal) of art programs at the university and college levels, no satisfactory results have been achieved. Consequently, higher education has lacked the ability to effect meaningful programs of art education in elementary schools; however, it is hoped that with the development of a comprehensive plan to improve Nigerian art education this situation might be changed.

Based on this study, it is recommended that the traditional arts of Nigeria might play a more important role in realizing some of the functions stated earlier by working in these areas: teacher training, curriculum development, and the development of instructional materials based on Nigerian life and traditions. Recommendations for developing each of these areas follow:

Teacher Training

1. The national goal for the training of teachers and purpose for the establishment of the U.P.E. could be accomplished if teachers are given adequate cultural knowledge about their environment. In order to achieve a national goal of social efficiency, a radical change should occur in the training of Nigerian teachers, especially all elementary teachers as contrasted to existing practices. Cultural education designed to develop an increased awareness of Nigerian traditions including the visual arts must be a part of every teachers training. This could be done by giving a study of Nigerian

art traditions, folklore, dance, and drama associated with the use of art. Emphasis might be placed on the subjects related to the culture of the people in the district where the school is located.

Teachers should be encouraged to study familiar objects around them such as art forms--wood carvings, Hausa wall decorations, and symbolisms of masks can be used on school buildings and public properties to teach children to design and decorate with symbolic emblems to identify, enhance, and thus perpetuate the dignity and personality image of the group.

2. Teachers should study the diverse styles of Nigerian art. Teachers should be introduced to a variety of motifs, patterns, and art styles within the Nigerian context. Teachers should be encouraged to study art forms through appreciating art forms through the objective and subjective interpretations of its forms, meanings, and functions in the society in which it is found.

There is a need for teachers to have a broadly-based intellectual discipline. If teachers are equipped with general knowledge of their environment and of other places, they may be able to cope more effectively with their jobs and with the difficult process of dealing with children of a different ethnic group in a socially heterogeneous environment, like Nigeria.

Children can become familiar with art as a vehicle of communication by teaching art appreciation, appreciating the traditional art objects, making elementary school teachers and pupils thoroughly familiar with African/Nigerian arts and culture, history of the arts,

philosophy of the arts, the use of art in religion, discussing the proverbs and folklores associated with the arts, and understanding the nature of the social setting in which the arts were found. Teachers and pupils can be introduced to the history of art through a comparative method where the emphasis will be placed on the thematic approach through the presentation of ideas in traditional African/ Nigerian sculpture as compared with similar representative art from Europe, Asia, America, Mexico, or Latin America. Students can be introduced to comparative aesthetics in order to teach them to see the values of other cultures in similar social contexts when compared with their society.

3. Art teachers should study art in a broad cultural context. It does this by making children more aware of their environment, their laws and customs, and the ethical values of their culture and by contribution to the social, emotional, and intellectual development of the child.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to teach the social functions of art experimentally (to elementary school teachers) as previously specified in this chapter, in order to develop the social and environmental awareness, artistic, creative, and technological potentials--how to improvise and make their teaching more meaningful, more effective, less boring, more structural, more reformative, more adaptive, and more intelligible by incorporating local, readily available art materials together with any available art materials along with any available modern instructional means for adaptive

living so as to improve the qualities of their jobs. An initial basis for the consideration of the two objectives mentioned above is the topic of our next discussion in the implications of this current study for practice.

Curriculum Development

This theory, in proposing a radical change for the curriculum of contemporary Nigerian art education, has made the following suggestions for art curricula activities, a recognition of the importance of art and art education to societies.

1. The making of art

Elementary education should incorporate simple forms of arts and crafts derived from traditional forms such as pottery, weaving, decorative applications, and so on. These activities would become increasingly complex in concept and process throughout the grades 1 to 6.

2. Traditional art forms should be studied throughout elementary education progression from the study of local artifacts to those of other regions and groups.

3. The study of art in elementary education from both productive and appreciative points of view should be studied in conjunction with the related culture of myth, folktales, stories, drama, dance, and song. A variety of story telling can be selected to reflect specific ideas of wisdom.

4. Parental involvement in story telling could be encouraged. Parents could be invited as guest speakers to participate in class activities.

5. Secondary education should follow up on patterns of curriculum developed in elementary education with respect to making and viewing art and studying art in a broader cultural context. Greater specialization would occur; for example, courses might be developed in particular craft areas such as weaving, dyeing, pottery making, wood carving, and print-making.

6. Beyond formal education, particularly in vocational areas, the continued development of traditional crafts might be encouraged especially in trade schools and polytechnics.

7. Beyond secondary education, cultural education should be introduced to advanced students, to appreciate art forms and the related culture so as to make better use of their environment. This process will promote the concept of life-long education and equip the students with skill and knowledge with which to live comfortably in different ethnic groups and villages other than their own tribal or religious groups. Cultural education will promote national unity and lasting peace in Nigerian societies.

8. That art facilitates and maintains man's relationship to the external world is a concept that man must consistently promote in view of the rapidly social changes in the world. Therefore a regular exchange program of cultural activities of art teachers, art students, and group exhibitions of children's art works at

international levels could further promote Nigerian image, mutual understanding, and technological cooperation.

9. Finally, one of the first objectives of this study is to organize a curriculum conference in Nigeria for a consideration of developing a process in which the use of traditional arts is given a prominent role. The curriculum conference can generate a radical change in the awareness of educators about the social functions of art that will contribute to the growth of curriculum development in Nigeria.

The Curriculum Conference will discuss Traditional Arts as National Bonds of Unity. The subject will be discussed as useful to the environment, and that it should be given first priority in curriculum development for elementary schools. The Conference will be arranged to allow individuals to express specific skills and special interest in specific knowledge areas in which the functions of art are felt. This could be done by giving preference to some local subjects related to the culture of the people in the district where the school is located.

The art teacher needs to know the nature of traditional arts: their visual characteristics, the symbolic meanings, the mediums of work techniques, and stylistic variations and social themes. Teachers need to know how the traditional arts were used; they need to know the nature of the traditional social setting in which the arts have been found. Teachers need to know the role of the artist in traditional society, and how art experiences can be accomplished.

Development of Curriculum Materials

Traditional legends, folktales, and mythologies or stories associated with traditional arts can be introduced to children in order to inculcate specific cultural values--morality, honesty, and wisdom. Some specific things that could be done to develop art curriculum materials include 1) Teachers should gather, collect, and analyze local information about the arts including stories and mythologies in order to understand, modify, and reconstruct them to suit the individual's classroom requirements; 2) Not only should teachers be taught how to collect and how to use materials associated with traditional arts during their initial training, but they should also be involved in periodic regional workshops to improve and expand their skills; and 3) There is a need for a comprehensive set of art education text materials that place traditional arts in a prominent role. Such text materials might be developed on the national or regional levels. Workshops could train teachers to use such materials.

Summary

Abundant ethnographic and anthropological data exist in relation to the social functions of art but these materials have never before been analyzed for their educational values. Consequently, this study has attempted to document the social functions of Nigerian traditional art, analyze their meanings, and suggest their implications for contemporary Nigerian education. By so doing, the study has attempted to contribute to the solution of three main problems:

1) facilitate the training of qualified art teachers for Nigeria's elementary schools, 2) promote the development of curriculum materials for art education, and 3) develop a basis for promoting a concept of general education through art for Nigeria so as to help eliminate illiteracy and promote social cohesion.

Data were collected on sixteen selected Nigerian traditional arts under three categories of information: 1) the visual characteristics of the art forms, 2) the social categories in which the art forms function, and 3) the social functions performed by the art objects.

The sixteen art forms functioned in a primary sense: 10 times in religion, 5 in politics, 5 in decoration, 4 in law, 3 in entertainment, and 1 in medicine social categories. The art forms functioned in a secondary sense: 9 times in education, 2 in politics, and 1 each in law and in decoration social categories. Thus the majority of these art forms functioned in several social categories.

It was found that the traditional art objects performed six major social functions: 1) Traditional arts promoted the perpetuation of communal association. Masks perpetuated ancestral worship as a link between the living and dead relatives, thus serving as symbols of the bonds extending kinship; 2) Traditional arts were used as technology. The art objects were used as tools as techniques for effecting desired social objectives. 3) Traditional arts were used to attract people's attention and to reform their attitudes. Masks entertained people, and diverted the attention of relatives of the

dead, easing their sorrow. 4) Traditional arts preserved conceptual knowledge. Specific art objects represented unique samples of structured knowledge as related to legends and stories. 5) Traditional arts entertained people in traditional society. Masking promoted children's sense of humor, produced fun among adults through acrobatic displays, and the drumming provided emotional satisfying effects to the audience. Finally, 6) Traditional arts maintained social reality. Arts were used as symbols of successful accomplishments to differentiate important dignitaries, and to promote a feeling of confidence, self-worth, successful social identity and importance, and a sense of maturity.

Oliver's (1976) concept of education provided the framework against which the social functions of traditional arts were analyzed for their contribution to contemporary Nigerian art education. The study suggests that education should promote the six functional categories suggested by Oliver, i.e., attachment, adaptation, renewal, planning, celebration, and creation of myth and meaning by serving six basic social values: social cohesion, efficiency, sense of relaxation, structure and cultural knowledge, joy, and sense of maturity.

Suggestions for Future Study

A great many possibilities exist for future studies in Nigerian art education. There are needs to probe further the social function of Nigerian art as well as attempt to implement the study of traditional arts into the educational curriculum.

Specifically, it would be useful if future researchers explored the following potential research topics:

1. An anthropological field study of an artist in contemporary Nigeria compared to a traditional artist--and the significance of the study for educational practice.

2. The historical and chronological treatment of art education in Nigeria since Nigeria attained independence from 1960 to date.

3. An evaluative study of art or art education programs in contemporary Nigerian education, particularly in terms of information and activities towards traditional arts.

4. Nigerian teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and understanding of traditional Nigerian arts, art products, and art experiences. The specific category and nature of teachers concerned must be defined.

5. The "aesthetic awareness" of Nigerian children towards their environment.

Studies such as these are necessary in order to contribute positively towards the promotion of artistic literacy and the awareness of the social values of art. Because of varying interests and expectations of individuals, and the effects of culture on institutionalization--alienation, the lack of satisfaction and the ineffectiveness of our present education system, there is a need in Nigeria for a reevaluation of our current knowledge about the nature and meanings of art symbols as social phenomena.

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