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A Concise Analysis of Innovation, Culture, History/Archaeology Education for National Integration

By

REV. F. C. EMENI

*Department of History
College of Education, Agbor
Delta State, Nigeria*

Delta State, Nigeria

And

JOHN EDEKI NUKUEYE

*Department of History
College of Education, Agbor
Delta State, Nigeria*

Abstract

Regular timely innovation in all aspects of the Nigerian education system is necessary in order to facilitate her growth, development and national integration. This is crucially important and desirable when viewed from the background of the country's plural ethnic groups, diverse cultures, religions with her stereo-types, sentiments or misconceptions, and political rivalry grievously portending national disunity and conflicts; and the need to correct and harmonize them for national integration. The various academic disciplines in all the schools and tertiary institutions in the country, whether the physical sciences or the social sciences, or the Arts and humanities, all have a stake in this onerous task of national integration through innovative education. It is in the light of the aforementioned facts that the writers are herein attempting a concise analysis of innovation, culture, History/Archaeology education for national integration. It is their firm conviction that the appropriate innovation in culture, History/Archaeology Education can contribute meaningfully to the country's national integration. The focus of this paper is, therefore, on how the right positive creative changes (innovation) in the study and the teaching of Culture,

History/Archaeology Education can contribute effectively to national integration.

Key words: innovation, national integration, culture, history, archaeology, education, misconceptions, stereo-types, sentiments.

Nigeria is a country thriving in ethnic, political and religious crises as a result of gross misunderstanding, misconceptions and erroneous stereo-types and sentiments held by her various ethnic nationalities against one another. For instance, Ifemesia (in Ikime, 2016) has argued that the various ethnic nationalities instead of “the requisite helpful knowledge” used “blatant misconception and alienating stereotypes” in referring to one another in their relations. By these, the Hausa/Fulani is Gambari (a fool) in the South; the Yoruba is tricky and untrustworthy; the Igbo is all grabbing and fiercely ethnic (including Yamiri in the North); the Bini wicked and dangerous; the Urhobo Sobo Wayo; the Ijo irrational and highly temperamental, the list is endless.

According to Ifemesia, “These stereotypes not only prevent us from knowing the real peoples, they make cordial intergroup relations difficult to promote and so retard national (integration and) development.”

Thus unfortunately, these erroneous misconceptions and stereotypes or sentiments have been negatively exploited by politicians over the years for their selfish interest, and thereby fanning the embers of disunity and conflict in the country. Sadly too, the country’s education system has been slow in responding to the above challenges, and therefore creating enough loop hole for her steady disintegration.

It is against this background, that it becomes imperative to overhaul the country’s education system by introducing some innovation into it to address the myriads of problems facing her in order to ensure national integration rather than disintegration. Thus this research paper is about using innovation in culture, History/Archaeology education in addressing the noble goal of national integration.

However, for the proper understanding of this discourse, the authors attempted a brief exposition of the conceptual meanings of innovation, culture, History, Archaeology and national integration herein.

Conceptual Framework Highlight:

(i) **Innovation:** The term innovation can be simply defined as the positive creative changes that can bring about advancements in knowledge, technology, education, instructional adjustments and adaptive ideological orientation in a society.

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According to the en-online English Dictionary (2015), innovation is explained as (i) The act of innovating; the introduction of something new, in customs, rites etc. (ii) A change by innovating; a change in customs; something new, and contrary to established customs, manners, or rites.

Innovation has also been defined by Elizabeth (2013) as the introduction of changes and new ideas; the use of new ideas or methods. From the foregoing definitions, it is quite clear that innovation refers to the introduction of changes, or new ideas, or new methods in doing things, or in carrying out an act in a system or in an institution, an organization, a state or a nation; contrary to the old established old ways of doing things. The key operational words in innovation therefore are changes, new ideas, and new methods. Thus the concept of innovation in culture – History/Archaeology Education implies the introduction of changes, new ideas or new methods in the study and teaching of these core subjects in all the country's academic institutions for national integration.

(ii) **Culture:** This can be comprehensively defined as the primary artificial means created by man in order to adapt to his environment for survival. In Fagan's view, culture is an entirely theoretical concept employed by anthropologists to describe the distinctive adaptive system adopted by human beings. According to him, culture is the primary mechanism by which human beings adapt to their environment (Fagan 2018).

To Raph in Karl (2017), culture is the way of life of members of society, which includes their ideas, habits, beliefs, arts and crafts that are capable of being learned, shared and transmitted from one generation to another. In a similar opinion, Aziken (2010) has argued that culture is "the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenges of living in their environment." He further stated that culture assigns order and meaning to the socio-political, economic, aesthetic, religious beliefs, value system of the people, and this differentiates them from other groups of people and species.

Culture is no doubt, a complex system, a set of interacting variables such as tools, burial customs, traditions, ways of getting food, religious beliefs, social organizations, arts and crafts and so on which function to keep a society in a state of equilibrium with its environment. Once one element in the system changes, other reacting adjustments will occur in many other elements, so that the system remains in a state as closely approximately the original system as possible. This is why culture is said to be dynamic; it is always changing in small and big ways that can be studied in time perspective by archaeologists, historians and other interest groups. Thus the culture of the Nigerian peoples includes their arts, crafts, music, drama, dances, festival,

traditional dwellings, dresses and other ideas documented as monuments and relics of the society which can be taught, studied and used, with the right innovation in education, for national integration. The primary aim of the writers in this research study is to help the country in achieving just that.

(iii) **History:** The term history can be defined simply as the important events which took place in the past in human society. Afigbo in Nukueye (2013) defined history in two basic senses. In one sense, history is an academic discipline which studies the important past events which took place in human society. In the other sense, history refers to all the important events which took place to shape human society in one way or the other in the past.

It is instructive to note that the term history may be, in its strict sense, applied only to the study of, and the important events which shaped human society in one significant way or the other in the past. This is why the study of history is of tremendous importance to all human society. This is because history will help man in the proper understanding of the past, and avail him the opportunity of correcting the grave mistakes made, and consequently greatly assist him in planning for a better society now and for the future.

The above point is aptly captured by Daniels in Nukueye (2017) in his concise definition of history. According to him,

History is the memory of human group experience. If it is forgotten or ignored, we cease in that measure to be human. Without history, we have no knowledge of who we are or how we came to be, like victims of collective amnesia groping in the dark for our identity. It is the events recorded in history that have generated all the emotions, the values, the ideals that make life meaningful, that have given men something to live for, struggle over, die for. Historical events have created all the basic human groupings – countries, religions, classes and all the loyalties that attach to these.

History education is no doubt, a veritable tool that will contribute greatly to national integration in Nigeria. The study of the past will always remind the people of the country of “What has happened in the past, how these happenings continue to influence present practice and what options are available for future planning,” (Ikime 2016).

(iv) **Archaeology:** This is the scientific study of the human past. It is the means whereby the knowledge of human history is extended beyond the limits of written records. In many parts of Nigeria, written history goes back only a few centuries or years. Such meager records encompass only a small fraction of the human story. Archaeology thus gives to the nation the entire spectrum of human experience,

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spanning over a million and thousands of years. This enormous time depth offers the potential to study long term cultural processes, and the opportunity to learn the lessons of countless cultures and civilizations. Recovering this body of knowledge through Archaeology is therefore very important to the nation's survival and history.

According to Fagan (2018), Archaeology is the study of the lives and cultures of ancient peoples. The archaeologist studies and interprets the material evidence of past human activities. Fagan argues that the archaeologist is a special type of anthropologist who has three basic objectives: the study of culture history, reconstruction of past life ways, and explanation of cultural history. The term "Archaeology" is derived from a combination of Greek words – "Archaia" – "ancient things", and "logos" – "theory" or "science". In a very simple definition therefore, Archaeology is referred to as the science which concerns itself with the study of ancient things (Wikipedia 2015). Archaeological investigations which are a veritable source of knowledge of pre-historic, ancient cultures and civilizations, though in their infancy, will certainly be of vital importance to the Nigerian peoples in their quest for national integration.

(v) **National Integration:** The subject matter of national integration comprehensively connotes the process of using all valuable attributes of patriotism and nationalism to bring about peoples of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds together to live in harmony, peace and unity in a nation. According to Phina (2018), National integration concerns the coming together of various ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural groups. It is sometimes referred to by different people as the "National Question, or Engineering" in the society for social and National Development.

National integration has become an issue of great concern to the Nigerian state because of the mounting national problems causing disunity, insecurity, protests and agitations as a result of various ills purportedly perceived or experienced by the diverse ethnic nationalities in the country. From the time of independence in 1960 till now, the country has been on turbulent terrain tilted towards anarchy and disintegration as a result of polarized political, religious and ethnic differences amongst its constituents.

For mistrance, the control of the Nigerian "political space" has been a keenly contested issue among politicians of the different nation's geo-political divides; the predominantly Christian South has been suspicious of the predominantly Muslim North on the issue of secular and non-secular Nigerian state; majority of the Igbo people are ever anxious and bent on the actualization of the Republic of Biafra; and the Niger Delta people are ever conscious of their marginalization by the Federal Government, and the environmental and social degradation brought upon the region by oil exploration and exploitation.

All the above problems are at the bottom of the Nigeria's socio-economic and political debacles, which call for urgent consideration and attention by all and sundry, hence the appropriate choice of the topic of this paper- Innovation, culture and History/Archaeology Education for National Integration, presenting a special avenue to address this national malady.

Innovation, culture and History/Archaeology Education for National Integration Innovation in Education. Innovation in Education

The point has already been made that innovation is synonymous with changes, new ideas, new methods and ways that can be creatively introduced into the country's education system, in this case, especially Culture, History/Archaeology education, for positive results for national integration. This simply connotes that these changes, new ideas, and new methods, once introduced into the study and teaching of culture, history/archaeology education in the country can facilitate the achievement of national integration.

That this has become necessary is quite understandable; because the study and teaching of the subject – matters of this paper have continued to be handled in the country's academic institutions in such a way dictated by the then colonial masters and their writings, which were meant to safeguard their divide- and-rule tactics. Thus Nigerian pre-colonial history has been written and taught as the history of mutually antagonistic groups of people who were always at war with one another.

The above point was well articulated by Mordi in Nukueye (2019) when he asserted that,

Pre-colonial Nigerian history continues to be taught and indeed written as the history of mutually antagonistic groups perpetually at war with one another. Such topics as the Yoruba internecine wars, the Fulani Jihad of the nineteenth century, the Igala wars on their Igbo neighbors, and the incessant Benin expansionist wars on communities east and west of the Benin kingdom, to name a few, form the dominant themes of the pre-colonial history of Nigeria. Such a history is often written as the background of the establishment of British colonial rule in Nigeria. It is usually shown that British intervention into Nigeria area smothered the flames of war,..... The negative impact of such an interpretation of Nigeria's pre-colonial past on national integration is monumental. The people continue to view their present post-colonial relationship as an artificial contrivance, which is bound to break down and unworthy of any sacrifice geared towards its sustenance.

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So, innovation in Culture, History/Archaeology education is all about the right interpretation of the existing materials or data on pre-colonial and any other aspects of Nigerian past, which have always tended to relegate the indigenous and the pre-colonial basis of Nigerian unity to the background. This calls for a robust emphasis of the fundamentally deep-rooted pre-colonial and other designs of the past of Nigerian unity, which must be given greater attention and consideration by historians as one of the powerful media of achieving national integration in contemporary times and beyond. These areas include music, dances languages, legends of origins, diplomatic, political and commercial relations, artworks and monuments. They are all addressed here under innovation in Culture, History and Archaeology Education.

Culture Education

Nigerian cultures contain very important elements such as music, songs, dances, folklores, arts, fashions and designs which are common to the people and can be shared mutually for national integration and development. The various music, songs, dances and festivals of the Nigerian peoples are typical evidences of their glorious past and heritage which engendered mutual peace, unity and harmony amongst the peoples. These have been exercised in colourful displays, melodious tunes and stylistic performances today, which can be harnessed for national integration. For instance, the Itsekiri and Ijo colourful regatta on river; the Effik –Ibibio beautiful carnivals; the Igbo Atilogun dances; the Argungun festivals of the Hausa/ Fulani; Udje and egbada of the Urhobo people; the Awigiri dance of the southern Ijo; and the fujji and afro- juju music of the Yoruba, all have a serious common message and role to play in bringing the country's highly diverse peoples together for national integration.

The Nigerian cultures have the potentials of ushering in a common social order and thereby bridging the wide gap of unity in the country. They contain vital socializing and moralizing factors such as hospitality, benevolence, obedience, respect for elders, order and truth; love for good (and) properly defined sources of wealth, etc. It is important that Nigerians should study their common cultural heritage, and historians should continue to teach about such common important cultural features and other significant aspects of the people's past that bind them together, which will encourage them to live together as one indivisible entity (Adamu, 2018).

History Education:

Here some important historical factors such as legends of origins, linguistics, political and trading relations which formed the strong basis of the Nigerian peoples' unity and peaceful co-existence in the past will be looked at, for national integration.

Legends of Origins:

Many Nigerian peoples have various well articulated stories about their origins which have established their interconnecting relationships dating back to a very remote past. Various evidences abound to suggest that the peoples of modern day Nigeria started to engage with one another in their current geographical setting right from the formative years of their various polities, a period covering so many years before the emergence of colonialism.

For example, one of the legends of Origins of the Igbo claims that the Igala and some Igbo groups originated from the same parent stock in the Anambra Valley. Igala or Idah people also claimed to have migrated from this area to found their present location in the Niger-Benue confluence area. Some existing traditions among some Igbo groups also trace their origin to the Igala area. Isichei (2013) has asserted that, "A whole chain of Niger Igbo towns claim Igala origins or have *q̄ 5* ; which trace their descent from Igala." These towns include Oko, Odekepe, Illah and Ossomarri.

In a similar vein, Mordi in Nukueye (2019) argued that some of the Igala settlements would have begun as trading and fishing post, especially along the lower Niger basin. He further maintains that they were probably absorbed by older Igbo settlements at Illah, Okpanam, Asaba, Okwe, Ossomarri and Oko through the triple agency of trade, marriage and migration.

From available evidence, it is possible to suggest that the Niger-Benue, confluence area occupies a centre place in the origin of many Kwa speaking groups in Nigeria, including the Igbo, Yoruba, the Edo, the Cross River people, the Urhobo, etc.

Commenting on the origin of the Yoruba people from the Niger- Benue confluence area, Akinjogbin and Armstrong in Nukueye (2019) have claimed that this lays to rest the well known myth of Oduduwa, which holds Ile-Ife as the cradle of Yoruba civilization. They argued that the myth merely seeks to describe the overthrow of power in an already settled polity by a conquering band of immigrants, or by members of the same stock.

It is instructive to note that the territories of the Yoruba speaking people and those of the Igbo were very close geographical proximity. According to Mordi (2005) "The River Niger, which seems to differentiate the two groups, should be viewed as a factor of unity, for mountains divide but rivers unite. It may well be that sometime in the remote past, these town groups were one people."

Linguistic evidence also supports this claim of a shared common origin. According to Armstrong (1964) as quoted by Mordi in Nukueye (2019), "*The most definite statement that can be made about the Igala is that they had a common origin with the Yoruba and that the separation took place long ago to allow for fairly, considerable linguistic differences.*"

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Similarly, linguistic evidence has clearly shown that the Niger-Benue confluence area was the original home of many ethnic groups in Nigeria, whose languages belong to the Kwa group of languages. These people include the Igbo, Yoruba, Edo, Ijaw, Idoma, Nupe, Ebira, Gwarri, Igala, Urhobo, Itsekiri, etc. It is said that the language of these people began to assume their separate distinct forms about 6,000 years ago. It is logical to suggest that a similar development would have taken place in Hausa land, Borno and other parts of Nigeria, which stands to reason that many Nigerian people derive their origins from the same geographical area. This is a sure source for national integration, because it shows clearly that Nigeria is not an artificial creation of the British imperialists.

Political Relations:

Mordi in Nukueye (2019) has stated, clearly that,

It is in the realm of political and diplomatic relations that the pre-colonial origins of Nigerian unity, though contentious, become clearer. Various oral traditions of the peoples of Nigeria are replete with evidence, which suggest that various pre-colonial rulers, ruling houses and polities maintained diplomatic or political relations. Such relations went further to promote understanding among these groups.

For instance, there existed some form of cordial political relationship between Ile-Ife and Benin ruling houses, which warranted the Benin people requesting a prince from Ile-Ife to rule over them. According to Egharevba in Nukueye (2019), the Oni of Ife sent his son, prince Oranmiyan, to rule over Benin, but he found the mission impossible to accomplish, due to the “Vexation of the land”; which demanded only a true blooded prince of Benin to rule over the land. However, Oranmiyan fathered a son in Benin through a Benin woman, and this son, Eweka I, began the political administration of the second Benin Empire.

It is important to note that the practice of peoples sending to other respected, older and more experienced ruling houses in different geographical areas to help them in times of succession disputes, or of sending their princes to such well established and respected rulers to learn various arts and other insignia connected with royalty, was very common in pre-colonial Nigeria.

For example, some traditions of the Ubulu-Uku people claim that the successful mediation of the Benin ruling house in a power tussle at ubulu-uku was the beginning of the Ubulu-Uku monarchy. Yet, other traditions of the people assert that the Benin mediation was simply the legitimating of the overthrow of an established monarchy at Ubulu-Uku, which commenced with the era of ubulu-Uku princes or monarchs visiting

the Benin monarchy to show appreciation and renewal of this cordial relationship until 1914.

Alagoa (2013) has also commented on the practice of various people visiting the Benin Monarchy or sending gifts to the monarchy to validate their installations, or to settle succession disputes, among the western Niger Delta peoples of Ughelli, Ozoro, Iyede and Agbon. He further notes that in recent times, the chiefs (Tor) of the Tiv are said to have been sent “to serve a period of apprenticeship to learn the ceremonials and obtain insignia at the Jukun courts at Wukari and Katsina Ala.”

Similarly, Mordi in Nukueye (2019) has equally noted that,

Igala traditions claim that each new chief of Aboh had spent three months at Idah before Investiture performing rituals, and receiving instructions from the Kings. That the Obi of Aboh was not considered too small to be allowed to mediate in disputes at the court of Idah..... in like manner, Nsukka Chiefs are said to have been treated as official guests of the Atta of Igala and his chief official, the Achadu.

In fact, Igala traditions claim that the first Igala Achudu was an Igbo who came to Idah either as a hunter or a slave (Boston, as quoted by Mordi in Nukueye, 2019).

Trading Relations:

Myriads of available evidence indicate that people of pre-colonial Nigeria interacted so much in the course of their trading and commercial activities and relations that the ethnic-lines of differences separating them became considerably blurred. It has also been argued that some important diplomatic relationships developed in some cases as means of securing the safety of traders and their activities, and of reducing bitter effects of trade rivalry.

The differences in natural endowments occasionally provided the avenue for the patterns of trading relationships among the diverse ethnic nationalities of the pre-colonial Nigeria. Since no one geographical unit was self-sufficient, it became necessary for each to move beyond its immediate vicinity to satisfy those needs which were available in other places. Thus, there were mutual inter-group relations largely based on the economic and trading activities of the peoples cutting through the different geopolitical units of the country.

For example, the people of the coast like the Ijaw and Itsekiri produced and traded fish, crayfish, salt and earthenware for the agricultural produce of the hinterland peoples. The people of the eastern Niger Delta, the Gbaramatu Ijaw of the western Niger Delta and the Bassan of the Central Delta are said to be proficient in salt making, and the Itsekiri supplied the clay pots used for the manufacture of salt (Ikime 2012).

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According to Oguagha in Nukueye (2019), the resulting trade between the Niger Delta people and their hinterland counterparts was carried out mainly in a north-southerly direction through chains of several local markets, which incorporated “the Delta Ijaw to the south, the Igbo to the North, and further North the Igala.”

The Itinerant Awka blacksmiths and the Aro traders complemented each other in their role of plying metal products, especially farm implements in Igbo land, the Delta region and as far north as the Igala area. Throughout the period of this trade the Igbo traders and their neighbors interacted freely and peacefully, and this provided a basis for a greater interaction and intermingling of the Igbo and their neighbors to the north, especially the Hausa, the Nupe, the Igala and the Idoma (Afigbo in Nukueye, 2019).

Archaeology Education:

It is true that archaeological studies are quite recent in Nigeria, but few archaeological discoveries in the country can be learned and taught in such a way as to boost national integration. They can also complement historical studies to address the national building process. Here, some important archaeological discoveries and sites collectively referred to as Ancient or Early centres of Civilization in Nigeria, will be treated to buttress the point being raised. These include Nok, Ife, Benin, and Igbo Ukwu.

NOK

In 1936 at a small village called NOK close to Kafanchan in the southern part of Kanduna State, a terra cotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey was discovered by tin miners. Few years later, archaeological excavations brought out more terra cotta in other places such as Wamba, Jema, kastina Ala and Taruga. The area where these terra cotta figurines were discovered is called the NOK culture Area. The civilization known as NOK culture has been interpreted by archaeologists as a transitional culture between the Stone Age and the Iron Age in Nigeria because of the presence of a combination of stone and iron objects. However, Taruga was a fully iron-using centre because no stone tools were found there (Eluwa, Ukagwu, Nwachukwu and Nwaubani, 2013).

NOK culture existed between the 5th and 2nd century B.C. It was developed by a people who had a lot of things in common and who had a well organized economy. NOK culture is significant to Nigerian History because the people established iron technology, made iron tools and weapons. Besides the iron-smelting Furnaces and terra-cotta sculptures of animals and human figurines discovered in the area, the people also smelted tin because tin beads were found in some of the sites as well as pottery. Some archaeologists have suggested that Ife art is an off-shoot of the NOK culture because of the similarity in the terra cotta heads which they produced. Yet others have argued that

many other cultures north and south of the River Niger developed from the NOK culture; though this has not been proved.

Nok art is geometric and rigid in style of execution. And the Jabba people who live in the Nok area today are still currently using the hair styles found on the Nok terra-cotta heads.

The Nok culture is also very significant because it has helped to push back the antiquity of Nigerian History by proving that Nigerians existed, were well established socially and economically, produced and used iron tools and weapons as early as 500BC.

Ife

Ile Ife is seen by all Yoruba people as their cradle of civilization and origin. Available evidence suggests that people already lived in the area between the 8th and 10th centuries.

Ife is significant because of its terra cotta and bronze heads. Other objects like stools and figures were carved on hard stones known as quartz. Animal and human figures were also made from granite and decorated with iron nails. These are still seen in the Opa Oranmiyan in Ife. The Ife artist used the *cire perdu*, the lost wax method in the casting of metal. They also made objects in their natural form. For instance, the bronze and terra-cotta heads were presented in most cases life-size. They made holes along the hair lines and fixed natural hair to them. They also put scarification marks on the faces of the human objects and decorated them beautifully. Some very important characteristic features of Ife technological development were in architecture – potsherd pavements, and manufacture of glass beads.

As already stated, archaeologists and art historians have asserted that Ife art originated from Nok culture because both Nok and Ife artworks had beaded necks, wrists and ankles. They also argue that the Benin artists learnt their art of bronze sculpture from Ife. Available evidence also suggests that Ife people built mud houses with verandas and walls with ditches round them for defensive purposes. These artworks show a high level of technological development and social organization of the people from early time.

Benin

Archaeological investigations of Graham Connah and other sources have helped to show how Benin evolved from early time. Instructively, the polished stone axes of the Late stone Age type discovered on shrines in Benin suggest that thousands of years ago, people lived in the area where Benin is presently found. Available evidence confirms that Benin developed as a result of the coming together of various

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settlements which recognized the Oba of Benin as their king. The settlements were demarcated with banks and ditches, built around the 11th century A.D., where the people also had their farmlands (Eluwa et al, 2013).

Similar to Ife, Benin was equally important for its artworks. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory, and cast objects in bronze and brass. As already noted, some scholars have claimed that bronze casting was brought to Benin by an Ife artist. They carved wooden doors and ivory masks; one of which was used as the FESTAC symbol in 1977. Significantly, Benin craftsmen also produced a special type of bronze sculpture known as bas relief; which looks partly like a sculpture and partly like a picture.

Importantly, archaeological evidence on Benin provides a good example of a well organized kingdom or empire with a stably established system of government and an elaborate economy, plus a high level of artistic and technological advancement.

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Igbo Ukwu

Igbo Ukwu lies about 30 kilometres south-east of Onitsha. From 1939 to 1959, various archaeological excavations were carried out on this centre by Thurstan Shaw. The finds discovered include various bronze objects, Ornaments, bells, chains, anklets, craft heads, an altar, ornate scabbards, copper objects, pointed iron rods, beads, burial chamber, human skeletons, and clay pots decorated with deep channeling and projecting bosses. The Igbo Ukwu excavated sites have been dated to the middle of the 9th Century A.D.

Archaeologists, art historians, and anthropologists have tried to explain the meaning of the objects found at Igbo Ukwu as follows:

- i. First, the finds show the availability of wealth in the area. The bronze vessels must have been used as sacred items for rituals or for ceremonial purposes.
- ii. Secondly, the objects found in the burial chamber suggest the regalia of an important personality, may be a king. This shows why Igbo Ukwu culture has been associated with the Eze Nri institution of Oreri which is close to Igbo Ukwu.
- iii. Thirdly, the Igbo Ukwu finds also help to give insight into the social, political and economic organization of the area. The society which produced these objects could have been a complex one. The people were skillful and experienced crafts men.
- iv. Fourthly, some of the raw materials such as copper and lead, used in producing bronze objects, were probably got through trading activities within and outside the area.

Finally, the Igbo Ukwu finds have thrown more light on Igbo history in particular, and Nigerian in general, by showing that the Igbo, like other ethnic groups in Nigeria, have also contributed greatly to the cultural heritage of the country which should be a pride and an inspiration to all Nigerians.

The Significance of Nok, Ife, Benin and Igbo Ukwu Highlight:

The foregoing analysis on archaeological investigations in Nigeria has a lot of significance for national integration.

- (i) It is clear that Nigerians, like other people in different parts of the world, passed through various stages of cultural development; from food gathering to settled life.
- (ii) The study shows that Nigerians were able to manufacture tools and weapons to enable them control and adapt effectively to the physical environment.
- (iii) The various centres of civilization have shown that very early in their historical evolution, Nigerians were involved in different forms of activities such as farming, craft work and trade. Various objects found at the different sites suggest trade with areas within and outside Nigeria.
- (iv) The similarities of artworks between the various centres suggest that Nigerians in the past had more meaningful economic and social relationships and never interacted only through wars. They also show the interdependence of the various peoples who lived in the Nigerian territory.
- (v) The study has also thrown more light on Nigeria's cultural heritage, and this should help to increase the pride of Nigerians in their country. This should be seen as special ingredient for national integration. The artworks have given Nigeria a unique identity in international quarters, since some of them have become so famous; for instance, the ivory mask from Benin served as the 1977 FESTAC symbol.

Indeed, the achievements of the peoples of Nigeria who lived in this earlier period should act as a strong inspiration to present and future Nigerians to achieve greater cohesion, mutual relations, peace and unity.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it is clear that innovation in culture, History/Archaeology education will help to bring about greater understanding of the core issues raised in the study and teaching of these disciplines, and therefore facilitate national integration. It is quite obvious that the study and teaching of the disciplines in schools will no longer follow an old order, but new ideas and new methods will be introduced into them in order to sufficiently address the national question. This means that teachers and lecturers who teach and lecture pupils and students in schools will

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have to emphasize what unites the diverse peoples of the country in their disciplines rather than factors that will create disunity and insecurity amongst them.

It has also been shown above that Nigerians' cultural heritage, early history, especially legends of origins, and archaeological artifacts contain powerful and useful elements that can give Nigerians pride, inspiration, dignity, determination and love to live in unity, mutual understanding, peace and harmony; thus the possibility of the achievement of national integration.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations will help in drawing the attention of all Nigerians to the important subject-matters of this paper, and therefore make national integration achievable.

- (1) Innovation in Nigeria's education system is overdue, and must be given wider attention.
- (2) Innovation in the study and teaching of culture, History/Archaeology education must be given urgent and greater attention by various stakeholders, government and other relevant bodies in order to produce positive results.
- (3) The teaching and learning of the Nigerian cultures, history and archaeology must be encouraged in schools by the government and the public in order to have greater understanding of the country's great cultural heritage, positive historical and archaeological past for unity and mutual co-existence.
- (4) Nigerians of all walks of life need a great understanding of the country's early history and origins in order to know the diverse peoples of this country better for mutual cooperation and unity.
- (5) Archaeological researches are still in their infancy in Nigeria, the government and other relevant bodies should therefore encourage the discipline of Archaeology to take root in the country, so that more about her important past can be excavated and studied to aid national integration and development.
- (6) National integration is necessary in Nigeria today, all the country's diverse ethnic nationalities should make it a priority to study one another's history in order to do away with the erroneous misconceptions, stereotypes and sentiments which each one holds against the other.

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