

A BRIEF HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ART-EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: THE YEARS 1923 - 1963: SOME CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

The study attempted a brief history of the growth and development of contemporary art education in Nigeria with a view to determining the problems or challenges on the ground and suggest workable solutions. Since no study of any aspect of the history of contemporary Nigeria will be complete without some knowledge of the traditional Nigeria, the paper made a brief reflection on traditional system of Art Education in Nigeria. The period covered by the study is 1923 - 1963 and is divided into five sections as outlined in the introduction.

Introduction

I am inclined to begin this write-up with a thesis, which is not mine. It is that postulated by Fafunwa (1974:ii) who states "history is to a people what memory is to the individual. "A people with no knowledge of their past", he goes on to say "will suffer from collective amnesia, grouping blindly into the future without guide posts from precedence to share their course" adding that "only a thorough awareness of their heritage allows them to make their public decisions as they make their private ones". It then follows that for possible reforms in education, "reflections on the previous events and policies will assist considerably in planning any future course of action" (Ibid 1974:xii).

Thus in order to understand the history of contemporary Art Education in Nigeria some knowledge of traditional system of art education - however brief-that was prevalent in Nigeria before the arrival of Islam, Christianity, colonialism and modern technology will be useful. This will no doubt help considerably in understanding the present and projecting a better future for the advancement of the subject and Nigerian educational system.

As the title of the write up goes, the study attempts a brief history of contemporary art education in Nigeria with a view to determining the problems (challenges) on the ground and suggest workable solutions.

The focus of analysis for the study will therefore be as follows:-

- a. A brief reflection on traditional system of art education in Nigerian before the earlier years of international intercourse.
- b. The birth of contemporary art education in Nigeria, 1922-1930.
- c. Consolidation, growth and spread of contemporary art education in Nigeria 1931 - 1963.
- d. Art Education in Higher Institutions in Nigeria.
- e. Some challenges (problems) and suggested solutions.

A Brief Reflection on the Traditional System of Art Education in Nigeria Before the Earliest Years of International Intercourse:

The phrase "traditional Art Education" is used here to designate "the art education that existed as part of the cultural complex of the various tribes of Nigeria at or before the period of prolonged and continuous contact with Europe" Wingert (1962:vi).

Nigeria before the earliest years of international intercourse had a traditional form of art education, which was highly informal but very effective in the development, and continuity of its art and culture. This was the apprenticeship system, "which was not only intended to train or produce a creative, skillful person but also to prepare a mind wholly and dutifully for all aspects of moralistic living" (Oloidi, 1985:1). In other words this form of training conformed to the total education of the apprentice vis-a-vis skill or talent, moral knowledge and service.

Generally, art education within the apprenticeship system was very functional. It is reflected in modern philosophical area of realism and empiricism. The aim being to enable the child acquire

knowledge; skill and moral for full living in the society and for is/her active **participation in its** maintenance and continuity. Fafunwa (1974:16) perceives that “irrespective of the level of **education and** training given during the pre-colonial days in Africa (Nigeria); it was functional because **the curriculum** was relevant to the needs of the society”. The traditional art education curriculum may therefore **be said to** be society-centred.

Under the apprenticeship system the education of the artist was carried out on the basis of the artist's interest and talents. This method had been described as trial and error method. The workshop was usually organised in the compound of a skilled craftsman or in another place directed or selected for the purpose. The teacher was usually a descendant of a long line of expert craftsmen/women. The period covered under the apprenticeship system varied from place to place but was enough to allow the trainee get a rigorous training in order to reach a high level of craftsmanship. No direct teaching was carried out, rather the learner imbibed the method principally by practice and imitation being guided by the customs traditions, and conceptions of his/her community. The whole village or community therefore was his/her school. Before he/she started practicing the particular craft, he/she had to master the materials by handling them. Because he/she made use of the crafts himself/herself he/she had already become familiar with the visual and aesthetic qualities of the finished products. These added to his/her experience. This method of training artists seemed common among all African communities. In Nigeria it has been and is still vaguely in existence.

The curriculum content of the traditional art school was made up of carving mostly in wood; modeling as in pottery; mud sculpture painting as body and wall decorations; calabash design and decorations; weaving (all types) metal work as in brass or bronze; works in terracotta, bead work etc.

But as Oloidi (1985:1) observed the missionary and colonial influences later descended on Nigeria and these had a deflationary effect on her traditional heritage. Inevitably, the people's philosophy of culture was immediately and forcefully reordered to look to the West. Subsequently, the concept of traditional art education gave way to a new and modern (contemporary) form of art education.

It must be remembered that the traditional art unlike the modern art was not art for art's sake. It was very functional and interwoven into the daily fabric of the life of the people. The new contemporary art was thus in sharp contrast with the traditional art and in all probability marked the beginning of the divorce between art and life in Nigeria.

Modern Art Education in Nigeria

The Early Period 1923-1930

Two names - Onabolu Aina and K. C. Murray - played very important roles in establishing art education in Nigeria and the history of the subject at its early inception in the schools centres round their individual and collective efforts - (1923 - 1930).

Contemporary (modern) art education started in Nigeria in 1923. Unlike other subjects in the secondary school curricula introduced by the missionaries and colonial government, modern art education began in Nigeria through the individual effort of Chief Aina Onabolu. Crowder (1976:56), Wangboje (1968:88), Daily Times (February 22, 1948:8) perceived that Aina Onabolu single handedly laid the foundation of modern (western) art education in Nigerian secondary schools. For this singular achievement, he deserves the name “Father of modern Nigerian Art” as he is generally called. Since then modern art education has grown, developed and became an inseparable part of Nigerian Education.

Onabolu had his formal art training in London and Paris and obtained a diploma certificate. He returned to Nigeria at a time when Phelps-Stokes Report on Education in Africa had a strong impact on the British colonial educational policy in the continent. The report had among other things recommended the teaching of painting, drawing and native handicrafts in the schools. Probably, it was this state in Nigeria schools. “He started by conducting part-time classes in leading secondary schools in Lagos teaching sciences of perspective drawing and human proportions, water-colour painting and graphic design” (Wangboje, 1968:9). These formed the curriculum from which Onabolu drew the contents of his art programme for the schools. He divided the programme into two namely lower form: middle and upper form, in lower (forms one and two) the programme content was as follows:

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- (a) Basic principles of drawing and pattern.
- (b) Basic design and colouring.
- (c) Still life drawing.
- (d) Colour theory and practice.
- (e) Principles and approach to perspective drawing.
- (f) Pictorial drawing.

In the middle and upper classes (forms III, IV, V) the programme content was as follows:

- (a) Still life drawing and painting.
- (b) Anatomical studies and life drawing (drawing from nature).
- (c) Colour, lights and shade.
- (d) Science of perspective.
- (e) Imaginative composition.
- (f) Graphic and commercial design.

Source: Onabolu's teaching file in his house in Lagos (courtesy of Mabel Onabolu, 1995).

Onabolu was a highly devoted and hardworking teacher. He encouraged his students to work hard adding that "our reward will come with the fleeting moments" (Aina Onabolu, 1925:10). He taught his students the rudiments of drawing. He remarked that a good drawing is a result of "training the mind to lead the eye to see and training the hands to obey the mind" (Onabolu, 1925:10). To achieve this end, he subjected his students to rigorous and analytical of drawing.

Onabolu had a strong love for perspective drawing and he developed an unusual interest in its (perspectives) study. To Onabolu an artist who could not understand and master perspective is sight - defective. In fact because of his love for perspective and the emphasis he placed in teaching it, his students nicknamed him "Mr. Perspective". However, Onabolu's art programme and the method (directed method) he employed in teaching it were very successful as could be judged by the Oxford and Cambridge examinations results in art in which his students excelled in the subject.

As can be gathered from the above, Onabolu's philosophy of art teaching emphasized professionalism at the expense of functionalism. His reason being "to produce students that could rival the Europeans if given the chance". For this very fact and as already shown he fashioned a curriculum that was a blind copy of what obtained in London Art Schools.

Since of the schools where Onabolu taught at this early period included C. M. S. Grammar School, Wesleyan Boys High School, and St. Gregory's College all in Lagos. Some of Onabolu's pioneering students from these schools who later became art teachers or artists, were Albert Odunsi - a painter, Geoffrey Okolo - a painter and Dr. Michael Okpara a medical doctor and the former Prime Minister of the former Eastern Nigeria. Okpara did not continue with art afterwards. Other individuals who were not Onabolu's students but who were

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greatly influenced by him (Onabolu) were Lasekan and Okeyebolu. They were notable teachers whose pioneering efforts also contributed to the growth of art in Nigeria at this period.

Consolidation, Growth and Spread of Contemporary Art Education in Nigeria, 1931 - 1963.

The period under discussion was one in which Onabolu fought relentlessly to place art education firmly in the schools and to ensure its continued growth and spread in schools outside Lagos. In the realization of this objective he encountered enormous problems; at times to the point of frustration or despair but he persisted. One may conveniently divide the problems into two namely outer and inner. The outer refers to the non-provision of infrastructure facilities for teaching art, while the inner refers to curriculum matters, provision of more qualified teachers for the schools, principals and parents attitude to art etc. With particular reference to the attitude of the principals to art teaching in the schools an incident that occurred in King's College, Lagos in November, 1944 needs to be highlighted. This year the principal of the school Mr. A. A. Cliff wrote a letter to Onabolu informing him of his (principal's) intention to discontinue art in the school. The letter dated 29th November, 1944 read thus:

I propose to discontinue the teaching of drawing in the Time-Table next term, pending t- on the general question of the teaching of art in the College, which is at present under considerate. I shall therefore not require your services as a part-time teacher after December 21st, 1944.

Yours sincerely,
(Sign)

Cliff A. A.
(Principal, King's College)

Sources: Family file (Courtesy of Mrs. Mabel Onabolu)

Unknowingly to Mr. Cliff, students interest in the subject had greatly improved and they (the students) did not hesitate in demonstrating against the decision. On January 4, 1954 the school was forced not only to reintroduce art in the school curricula but also to reinstate Onabolu. This type of treatment against Onabolu was not peculiar to King's College alone. It was common among all the other schools. Nevertheless Onabolu was not frustrated. He continued his pioneering effort with great vigour.

To solve the problem of acute shortage of (qualified) art teachers for the schools Onabolu did two things. Firstly, he conducted weekend and vacation free private art lessons for would be art teachers and artists. In addition he operated correspondence art courses for the interested public. A sizeable number of the general public benefited from this programme. This however, marked the genesis of illiterate and semi-illiterate street artists in Nigeria. Because there was acute shortage of qualified art teachers, most schools that contemplated including art in their programme got their manpower needs from the 'street artists'. In time the employment of such artists as art teachers for the schools became the order of the day, especially among non-Christian and Government schools.

Although the general public had developed unhealthy and poor attitude towards art, these group of art teachers added more to this problem. There was a story of a street artist employed by one of the schools near Onitsha. Tjie artist teacher did not know the spelling of 'Art' he was to teach. In his first appearance before his students (class one) he went to the black board (BB) and wrote 'At' and underlined it. When interrogated by his students, he remarked 'you no know At'. One student rose up and asked Sir, "Do you mean Art?" Bu the teacher insisted, "No no atoll na At" repeated the word on the backboard (BB). The whole class burst into laughter since his name was Anene the students nicknamed him "Anene AT for Art". These grade of art teachers constituted more than half of the disrespect for art and the art activities helped the gradual depreciation and disrespect for art and the art teacher by students. Soon the general public began to see the subject as something outside their normal sphere of thought, a subject for the idle, the uneducated and the unintelligent child. This state of affairs lasted for long and had some serious implications for the growth and development of art education in Nigeria. However, this statement is made without prejudice to Onabolu's efforts in this direction. The underlying intention is to focus on the fact that he unknowingly added to the problem of art education than he intended to solve with his weekend and correspondence art lessons.

Secondly, by far the most important and successful achievement of Onabolu in solving the problem of acute shortage of qualified art teachers for the schools was his (Onabolu's) success in "persuading the then Director of Education to allow qualified art teachers from the United Kingdom to take teaching positions in secondary schools and teacher training institutions of Nigeria" (Wangboje, 1968:88). One of the expatriate teachers who came to Nigeria as a result of this was Kenneth C. Murray. His arrival in Nigeria in 1927 marked a significant turning point in the history of Nigerian art curriculum. If Onabolu's achievement was spectacular, that of Murray was progressive. His work was essentially of a pioneer nature and he was highly interested in the teaching of traditional arts and crafts in the schools. He found this task very formidable because the colonial education administrators did not see the value of preserving the traditional arts through the schools. Through a series of articles in the Nigerian magazines he presented Nigerian arts and craft as fundamental tools in education; but his words fell on deaf ears. However Murray achieved some measure of success. In the first place his effort led to some mission schools not only to teach art in their institutions but also to include traditional arts crafts in their art programme. Thus in the 1930's Slessor Memorial Home, Arochukwu, taught cloth design based on the "Aro Uri" body and wall painting. Christ the King College, Onitsha taught blacksmithing and brass work. In Owo, wood and thorn carving was taught in the government school, and in St. Andrew's College, Oyo, calabash carving. Besides, at the Government College, Umuahia, Murray initiated the training of a handful of Nigerian artists to serve as art educators or administrators. It is worthy to note that these students were later to influence the course of art education in secondary schools in Nigeria. Among the

few of these students mention will be made of the following: C. C. Ibeto, Okolo, A. P Umuna, Nnachi, D. K. L. Ugoji, Prof. Ben Enwonwu and Uthman Ibrahim.

These students on graduation in 1936, became art teachers in various schools in Nigeria. Their pioneering efforts yielded many dividends. In the first place the number of schools that teach art increased considerably. Secondly, art education was no more confined to secondary schools in Lagos and environs. It spread to other parts of Nigeria. Finally parents and students' interest in the subject gradually started to manifest.

However, towards the second quarter of this period, two opposing philosophy schools of thought in respect of art curriculum were noticeable - the one represented by art teachers trained in Murray's art school and other by Onabolu's students who later became art teachers. Murray operated a curriculum that was very functional - a synthesis of the traditional and the modern. His philosophy therefore emphasized culturalization over standards - the objective being to produce teachers with balanced knowledge of art and who would function effectively in the society.

On the other hand, Onabolu as stated earlier emphasized professionalism or technical efficiency at the expense of functionalism. The objective being to "disentangle and dehydrate the colonial low conception of an African" by producing students that could rival the Europeans. Thus, the curriculum he fashioned were blind copies of the London Academy Art school.

Unlike Onabolu whose approach to art was somewhat apologetic or nebulous, Murray's conception was healthy and progressive, but the task was not an easy one for several reasons.:

- (a) There was a gradual decay of traditional belief and values due to Nigeria's continued contact with the western World. Ulli Beier (1960:7) throwing more light on this observed that traditional culture nearly everywhere has lost confidence in itself, in view of the tremendous progress made by Western materialism in Nigeria.
- (b) The art curriculum was unified due to the requirements of the Cambridge University School Leaving Certificate examination for all secondary schools in Nigeria. Art was one of the examination subjects and the art curriculum for the examination was a blind copy of what obtained in Cambridge. Secondary institutions were to draw their art programme from this curriculum.
- (c) The government officials did not support Murray's art programme and exhibited a lot of indifference to his efforts. In any case, with the belief that knowledge of traditional arts and craft of Nigeria was basic and that a study of them could form the basis of a true contemporary Nigerian art education, Murray carried his crusade to several parts of the country. As already stated, he succeeded best in the Eastern Nigeria, where he trained a number of Nigerian artists and art teachers at Government College, Umuahia.

Other Contributors Within the Period

Besides Onabolu and Murray another individual who contributed to the history and development of art education in Nigeria at this period (1923-30) was Mrs. H. L. O. Williams. She accompanied her husband who founded the Methodist College, Uzoakoli to Nigeria in the early 1920s. Like Murray she was interested in the functional aspect of art and thus taught illustration, cloth design based on Igbo traditional body and wall decoration, design etc to both students and the general public. According to Mbahi (1996: 15) the Uzoakoli experiment was influenced by the Murray school of thought.

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Among the products of the school, only Udo Ema is perhaps of note. His contribution to the development of art-education in Nigeria was in the form of text for art teaching in the schools - *African Art Teachers Hand-Book* (1951); *The Teaching of Clay Work* (1952); *The Art and Crafts Teacher* 1962).

Mrs. Williams left Nigeria in 1939 and since art was then considered of no economic value to the students her work was discontinued and it died a natural death.

The Catholic Mission

The early impact of Christianity on traditional art was purely harmful and destructive.

By the 1940's however, the churches were less openly hostile, but a majority of them continued to frown on traditional arts objects.

In any case, the only exception to this rule was the Catholic Church. The late Pope Pius XVIII decreed in the early 1940's that traditional cultures were not to be suppressed by the missionaries unless they could prove that "they (traditional cultures) are inseparably linked by error or immorality or absurd superstition. (Beier, 1960:55). Encouraged by this directive, the Catholic Church in Nigeria began to stimulate a new Christian art which was devoid of foreign influences but was developed from traditional art forms only. What was basically good in traditional art once regarded as pagan art was retained and built upon. This task required understanding of human feeling that went into the making of traditional art. In this way the skills that were already known to every villager were welded into the expressions for a new age.

Yoruba woodcarving offered a fertile ground for this experiment. In 1947 Rev. Father Kevin Carroll an artist and a Catholic priest was transferred to Nigeria from Ghana to begin a workshop and training programme based on the above philosophy. He settled down in a Yoruba town known as Oye- Ekiti. He then started a talent hunt and engaged such settled carvers like Johnson Esan, Bamidele and Lamidi Fakeye etc. he also engaged women weavers, bead workers, leather workers and calabash carvers. The training programme followed the Yoruba apprenticeship method. The working tools for wood carvers were the usual axes, sharp adze, a well homed knife and some chisels while the narrow looms and upright broad looms were used for weaving by both men and women.

The artists who were either pagans or Muslims were told Christian stories in Yoruba language and were encouraged or allowed freedom to illustrate them as they had done with happenings in their Yoruba life. In this way the workshop produced statues of the saints, Stations of the Cross, door panels, pillars, ornamental clothes etc for the church, government houses and other bodies. Early in 1949, Bishop T. Hughes directed the workshop to make available examples of their works to be sent to Rome for the 1950 Holy year exhibition of modern art. Commenting on this point further, Carroll (1966:3-4) explained that the British Council organised exhibitions of the works in Lagos and Ibadan in late 1949. They were then sent to Rome as examples of Nigerian Christian art.

Ekiti art centre was influenced by Murray's philosophy of art education in Nigeria and has survived through the years. To Father Carroll must go the credit of bringing about a synthesis of the Yoruba traditional art forms and modern art, which serves the needs of life today in Nigeria.

The Katsina Teachers' College

Most significant developments in art education in Nigeria took place in the south. However there were some developments in the North worth mentioning. The first institution to come to mind in this respect was the Katsina Teachers College. It was established in 1929 and was the first of its kind to be opened in the far North and to have art in its curriculum. The college was "intended to produce high quality teachers for the provincial schools in the North" (Ogunsola, 1975:20). Its programme content included Hausa, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Drawing, Scale work, Hygiene, Elementary Botany, Gardening and Arabic.

By July 1929 when the Education Department of the Northern and Southern provinces were amalgamated into a central administration, the college transformed into a full secondary school and was then transferred to Kaduna.

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The Bauchi Teacher's College

The college also contributed to the growth and development of art education in Nigeria. It was first established as elementary training centre in 1936. In its programme the curriculum content consisted of drawing, elementary wood craft, nature study, practice in vernacular expression, and the writing and acting of original plays based on historical subjects.

“The college later became an Art and Crafts Centre” (Mbah, 1995:17) and J. P. Greenlow was the founder.

Mbah (1995:17) also explained that “by 1957 the scope of art teaching at the Bauchi Teachers College had increased to include lettering, free hand drawing, pattern and design, paper cutting and folding and some modeling”.

Other contributors worthy of mention included Michael Cardew, a famous English potter; who in 1950 established the “Abuja Pottery-Training Centre” which has continued to train potters up to date.

In the like manner Ulli Beier founded the Mbari Mbayo Club in Oshogbo town in 1961. It aimed at creating an environment that could enable individuals express themselves freely in the art of painting, dancing, literature and music. Mbari spread to many areas and had centres at Enugu (1963) and other places outside Nigeria such as Kenya and Uganda (1966:64).

Art Education in Higher Institutions in Nigeria

One of the foremost developments of art education in Nigeria was the genesis of the subject in higher institutions of Nigeria. The following three institutions are to be considered.

Yaba Art School

The Yaba College of Technology as it is called was the first higher institutions in Nigeria to offer course in art. It was established in 1934 and by 1952, the college introduced art classes designed to provide in-service training for graphic artists in different government departments (Fasuyi, 1973:25).

The programme of art education in the college was made up of full-time evening courses, which included,

- a. Two-year general course designed to provide the students with rudimentary drawing, painting, design sculpture, crafts and the history of art.
- b. Two year commercial art courses designed to produce intermediate level artists for advertising, information services etc and covering drawing, illustration lettering, poster design, package design, typography and reproduction methods.
- c. Three-year fashion design course that included designing, cutting, fashion illustration, drawing and historical studies (UNESCO 72). Painting had in the last few years been introduced as well as Departments of Ceramics and Sculpture. Mbah (1996:21)

Yaba College of Technology later became a Federal Government institution. Its graduates hold an equivalent of an intermediate certificate in art. This enabled them to find employment in industry and advertising agencies or further their studies in Zaria or Nsukka art school.

The institution has contributed immensely to the growth and development of art education in Nigeria.

The Zaria Art School

In 1946-47 an *Inter-University Council* delegation visited Nigeria from the United Kingdom at the instance of the British Government and recommended that *Colleges of Higher Institutions* additional to a university be established in Nigeria. In view of this, the colonial Government appointed a two-man commission to look into the establishment of such institutions and make recommendations. The commission produced a document known as *Report on Technical College Organisation for Nigeria* The second of April 1949.

Following their recommendation, the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology was established in Ibadan, Zaria and Enugu. As a result, Fine Art Department was established at Zaria to train artists and teachers of art.

The art course in Zaria was however patterned along the line of the British system that was awarding a Diploma in Fine Art (Bachelors degree equivalent). The 'Diploma' was however replaced with degree certificate in 1962 when the college became *Ahmadu Bello University*. It also appeared that the change was a kind of self defence against competition from University of Nigeria Nsukka which in its inception started awarding degree certificate in art.

Two kinds of courses were available in Zaria during the period under discussion.

- a. Four-year B. A. in Fine Art for professional artists and specialization in one area after two years of basic training. Courses offered for specialization included painting, sculpture, commercial design and textile design.
- b. A one-year programme for intending art teachers was planned for students who had successfully completed the four year course of study in fine art. The course was however offered in the Department of Education and it awarded art teachers certificate to successful candidates.

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

The institution was opened at the eve of Nigerian independence. It offered a four-year course in Fine Arts. It started with a well-defined programme that was designed to award bachelor's degree in art. Unlike the *Zaria Art School* which was British oriented in curriculum, Nsukka's programme was bound and patterned along the line of *America Land-Grant colleges* and specifically followed the plan of Michigan State University According to Nsukka University calendar (1964-65:75), "The objective is to provide a basic and comprehensive training in all the visual arts and professional training in one major area of specialization, with a general background in liberal arts" The first two years were "devoted to the basic programme followed by two years of specialization in one area chosen from painting, sculpture, visual design, and art history" (Wongboje, 1968:95).

Large bulks of high-level manpower in the field were products of the two schools in the 50's, 60's and early 70's Hence their respective contributions to the development and growth of art education in Nigeria are deemed inestimable.

By the end of 1963 and when Onabolu passed on, art education was no more a Herculean task for those schools willing to include the subject in their school programme. "With a nucleus of six schools teaching art on part-time basis in 1923, the schools rose to about 61 teaching art on part-time and fulltime in 1963. In the same wise, the number of art teachers in the field (secondary schools) rose from one in 1923 to about 55 (about 20 qualified and 35 unqualified) in 1963. However, despite this fact and all efforts, to the contrary the foreignness of the art curriculum remained the same over the years until quite recently".

• Source: West African Examination Council Yaba Lagos).

Some Challenges Facing Art Education in Nigeria in the 21st century

So far what challenges can be gathered from the brief explication of the history and development of art education in Nigeria as outlined in the preceding pages of this write up?

- (1) First, it can be said without hesitation that the Onabolu, Murray, Carroll, Beier, etc schools of thought have exerted a lot of influence on Nigerian art education today. The diverse ideas, beliefs and practices one witnesses in the Nigerian art scene today can to a certain degree be attributed to Onabolu, Murray etc diametrically opposed philosophies. So definitely one of the main challenges which Nigeria art education inherited from the founding fathers of the subject is the issue of definition as well as the objectives and meaning of art education in Nigeria.
- (2) The problem of acute shortage of art teachers for Nigerian schools, which originated since the days of Onabolu/Murray may have been somewhat relatively solved. However, there exists today a large number of inadequate and untrained art teachers in the field to make the education and training of students meaningful. It thus follows that one of the serious challenges, which face the Art Departments of Nigerian Universities is the training of the "right kind" - (see last page for explanation)- of art teachers for positions in our institutions of learning, more especially

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- secondary schools. How do we provide complementary professional art teacher training and experience to these groups of teachers? it is, however, necessary to emphasize that the possession of a degree in art does not necessarily make one the 'right-kind' of art teacher. Although, it can be argued that some teachers are bom, a majority of them are not but can be made through proper and appropriate training. Moreover, how should the art teaching profession be organized to discourage or prevent untrained art graduates and opportunists" - (see last page or explanation) - from joining the teaching field?
- (3) Uche Okeke (1977:3-4) explains that out of several ideological schools of thought one witnesses in Nigerian art scene, two have stood the test of time; one believes in evolving art with uniquely Nigerian identity or character through the fusion of the old (cultural heritage and the new (contemporary culture., and the other believes in good art or art with high standard of production". This is exactly Onabolu, Murray, and Carroll etc visions of art education in Nigeria respectively. While some Nigerian artists, art educators and art educationists believe that the two schools of thought have merit and are valid; there is need for emphasis. Which of the two schools should art teaching in Nigeria emphasize?
- (4) A further challenge is the role art education-especially painting and sculpture should play in Nigeria's technological development in the 21st century. This will no doubt demand a changing view of the art activity and a different perspective on the art school in relation to the aspiration and needs of Nigeria.

Suggested Solutions

- (1) First it is my candid opinion that a philosophy of art education in Nigeria should emerge in which:
the structure and contents of the art curriculum are in harmony with the type of society which Nigeria seeks to build. Such a curriculum should put into consideration the nation's perception and determination to expand her opportunities and to explore her abilities to cope with the dynamics of technological and industrial future. In this way the meaning and objective of art education at all levels of Nigerian education will be re-defined in such a way as to remove' or eliminate the present diverse beliefs, ideas and practices prevalent in contemporary Nigerian art education, (Onuchukwu, 1998:15).
- (2) Since the quality of art teachers depends upon their training, the Art Departments of Nigeria Universities should see themselves as being in pursuit of excellence. This suggests that the best form of education should be given the art teacher to equip him for his professional calling. As already stated, it is true that some teachers are bom, but it is equally true that a vast majority of them are not, but can be made through proper and appropriate training. At this point it may be necessary to recommend the establishment of postgraduate diploma or certificate courses in art education to cater for the training of art graduates who are in the field or who may wish to join the profession. In addition, the curriculum for art education at undergraduate level should be thoroughly reviewed with a view to improving on them. Serious consideration should be given to the problem of balancing the practices with the theories. In this regard, it is here suggested that the duration for art education at the said level be five years. The first three years should be spent doing studies in all the studio areas. At the end of the period and after passing prescribed examination students should spend the remaining two years for studies in the theory and practice of art education.
- (3) The teaching of traditional arts and crafts in the schools and or synthesis of the traditional and modern imported arts as advocated by Murray, Carroll, Zaria rebels (see explanation on the last page) Uche Okeke and Wangboje et al should not only be emphasized in Nigerian schools but pursued vigorously and implemented. Such a programme will no doubt help restore dignity to the artistic heritage by giving it an honoured place in education. Moreover, through the programme the educational system would not fail to produce "a new breed of artists teachers who are as

acutely aware of their cultural heritage as they are aware of modern industrial society (1988) in the final analysis the stated new breed of artists teachers will in turn “produced which draw inspiration from our cultural heritage to create new tastes, new habits, products for the good of society” (Wangboje, 1989:8). It is envisaged that through this system of art education will go a long way in helping to solve the nagging problem cultural/artistic identity in Nigerian contemporary society. “To make room for effective implementation two types of art teachers as suggested by Wangboje (1989:8) are here advocated. “These are the traditionally trained and the western trained.” It is worthwhile, however, that orientation courses in modern art education be organized for traditionally trained artists teachers in order to modernize their traditional art skills and methodology” (Onuchukwu, 1998:26).

- (4) Today Nigeria has emerged as a country, which is developing along industrial and technological lines. In this wise motivations for art which would serve the needs of the present and future should of necessity reflect this outlook in Nigeria’s development, so that it could be valid, meaningful and educationally relevant. This means that art education according to Wangboje (1973:7) should not concentrate only on the aesthetics, it must stress the “practicals” as well. With special reference to painting and sculpture such a programme should provide opportunity for studies “in industrial painting and studies in sculpture in relation to metal products design and building industries in Nigeria” (Onuchukwu, 1998:26).

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Appendix

**Right Kind of Teacher* represents an art teacher who is well trained. Such a teacher should be fairly skilled in all the studio areas of fine and applied art including some knowledge of the history of art. He should also have a fairly good knowledge of the principles and practice of education including some subjects outside the field like sociology, anthropology etc. In short, he needs much intellectual, technical and pedagogical preparation, whereas an artist may get along with less.

**Opportunists' Art teachers*. These are art graduates or other graduates who have no interest in the teaching vocation but who join the teaching field either because there is no place else for them to go or because teaching is viewed as a ladder by which they can climb into better positions.

Zaria Rebels " This is a name art historians coined for a group of students members of the "Zaria Art Society" in the then Nigerian College of Arts Science and Technology Zaria now Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. These students in 1957 at the risk of failing their examination rebelled against the foreign academic art they were exposed to and sought to include in their works something of their respective traditional culture and art. Hence the name "Zaria Rebels".