

# MANAGING THE NIGERIAN CULTURAL IMAGINARY: THE INCIPIENT CRISIS OF GLOBALIZATION

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## ABSTRACT

Against increased global cultural flows, the paper problematizes a true and positive definition for a Nigerian National Culture within our post-colonial configuration due to the reactive management tradition in the culture industry. The non-existence of strategised dominant themes in our national culture threatens the make up of the nation-state as well as precipitates change in the basic primordial or ethnic cultures, which (should) make up the Nigerian national cultural mosaic. Given the nature of cultural globalization and its destabilizing effect on national managements, the paper suggests a proactive management tradition that emphasizes empowerment of the local and primordial cultures of the 400 ethnic nationalities as constitutive elements and stakeholders in a dominant national culture project.

**KEYWORDS:** Postcolonial Culture. Management. Globalization. Cultural Engineering. Media Communication

## INTRODUCTION

The typical post-colonial Nigerian elite is stranded at the crossroads between the steeple and the shrine, the allure of the imperial centres and the ideals and ethos of his kin-group specific culture. He conceives his national cultural values and goals in the foreign concept and tongue of his training; while as manager he propagates and promotes these values as a comprador-cultural elite and a role model. This is the tragedy and challenge of the Nigerian national cultural imaginary. Do we really have a Nigerian national culture, which the cultural administrator manages within the current flows of globalization?

Tragically, we again begin or end with borrowed concepts and definitions. If we saw through the clusters of more than 164 definitions of culture as anthropologists A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluchohn and others have tried to conceive, the constant is that culture is an "abstraction from behaviour" (qtd *Britannica* 874) and a human phenomenon. Three samplers will suffice for our discussion: From the now classic definition of culture as put forward by Edward B. Taylor the father of cultural anthropology, in his *Primitive Culture*, culture -

... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Nanda 67).

Serena Nanda's own definition emphasizes culture as the "learned and shared kinds of behaviour that make up the major instruments of human adaptation" (372) (my emphases).

From the idea of shared human characteristics and learned adaptation behaviour, culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been seen more as the creation of "project identities" (Castells 12) and exercises of "symbolic control" (Baran 16). Stanley Baran's functional concept of culture represents it as -

... the world made more meaningful; it is socially constructed and maintained through communication. It limits as well as liberates; it differentiates as well as unite us. It defines our realities and thereby shapes the way we think, feel and act (16)(my emphases).

Baran's concept of culture, like that of Manuel Castells, goes

beyond other definitions, (including our own Nigerian Cultural Policy definition) in the sense that it emphasizes the centrality of language and communication in the act of cultural engineering (cf. Isola, Ngugi, Ekeh 4). The Nigerian cultural policy document also perceives the role of culture in the shaping of social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization (5). Thus emphasizing the enlarged scope of culture as inclusive of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, ceremonies, and so on. One wonders therefore where the typically Nigerian elites' idea of culture as mere fetish dancing and anachronistic costuming comes from; probably an inheritance from early imperial European ethnocentric idea of culture as "refinement of history and civilization in society" (Ekeh 2), which emphasized the difference between what they termed "high" and "low culture". A culturally literate perspective of culture is therefore non-evaluative.

Further simplified, Akinwunmi Isola classifies culture as tangible or intangible heritage. The tangible has physical form and manifestation, attracts attention and can be appreciated and conserved. The intangible is "out of sight and therefore is vulnerable to being out of mind" (2). The latter is subject to determination or improvement depending on how it is 'managed'. The importance of this intangible aspect of our cultural heritage is that it is that which contains the "mythos and the logos" of our ancient collective wisdom which inform and shape our tangible cultural heritage. It is also the guardian spirit of a people's being because herein lies the ideal and behavioural norms with which culture controls human behaviour, perception of time, space and reality (for instance, the recent Muslim resistance to western polio vaccines in Northern Nigeria).

**The Problem of a Nigerian National Culture**  
Lest we veer off tangent with problematic concepts, we can now ask ourselves the ultimate question. Do we have a Nigerian national culture? Can we think of managing a Nigerian cultural abstraction or imaginary? How has this construct been managed over the years? Can this tradition of management survive the challenge of cultural globalization?

These are some of the posers that should engage the mind of any cultural elite on this threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Interrogating the existence and validity of a Nigerian national culture cuts the image of a battle that is lost even

before it is begun. After all we commonly hear such expressions, platitudes and sentiments like African culture, traditional African hospitality (even among matchet-wielding cannibal tribes) and rich cultural heritage. We are aware of such cultural establishments in Nigeria like the National Council for Arts and Culture, national monuments, museums, cultural centres and national theatre, stadia, radio and television stations, national film corporation; as well as bureaucratic and political establishments like the law courts, national flags, anthems, national currency, common weights and measures, right hand driving and absurdities like WAZOBIA. There are also such other 'real cultural' manifestations like popular, youth, drug and cult sub-cultures, ostentation, pervasive grab culture, corruption, idolatry and materialism, public profession of state religions, a plutocratic democracy, and pervasive hip-hop and rap music and Nigerian Pidgin English. All of these perhaps typify the Nigerian national culture. But how much of the guardian spiritual ethos, ideal and behavioural norms do we derive from these tangible and intangible manifestations of our so-called national culture which should condition our daily living as positive players on the Nigerian culture stage?

Tracing our cultural landscape from the African perspective, Peter P. Ekeh argues that Africa has a cultural diversity apart from the pan-cultural or shared traits and common experience of colonialism (Arab and European), slave trade (trans-Atlantic and Sahara) and a belief system that admits of a common supreme Deity, as well as a unique kinship structure. These cultural realities were as much devastated by European imperial anthropologists (who saw African culture as timeless and stagnant) as they were by the colonial experience.

That colonial experience and slave trade also defined the African kinship structure (and marriage practices) - "kin group is to the African individual what the western state is to the European individual" (Ekeh 6). This development came about as a result of the dislocation of slave trade. The kin group (which had always been there in the tribal family system) now assumed greater responsibility. It offered more protection and benefits to the kinsman than the state, which was and remains an imperialist imposition with little regard for the autonomous ethnic nationalities that pre-existed. The polygamous marriage practice was also an assurance of kin group survival in the face of the wastage of slave trade; and later an assurance of farm labour.

The super-structure of the colonial state could however not wipe out ethnic loyalties and citizenship. All over Africa (and indeed Nigeria), new developments pragmatic accommodations and cultural institutions emerged. These included new linguistic patterns along *creolization* (pidgin English, Kiswahili), new music forms and style (high life) and new institutions (like warrant chieftaincy), even though these could not replace indigenous African cultures. The new imperial culture therefore existed side by side with "kin group specific" cultural traits.

Ekeh distinguishes the African experience from places (like India and our Muslim North) where colonialism had been domesticated and built into the traditional (Hindu/Muslim) value system. These two value systems still stand apart in Nigeria. Therefore there obtains in Nigeria, as in most of Africa, cohabitation of what Ekeh calls the 'primordial culture' (being the traditional kin group culture) with the emergent 'civic culture' brought about by colonial contact. Thus -

we have in Africa, kin group - specific primordial cultures, each with its own linguistic forms of expression and single

nationwide 'civic' culture, usually with a European language enthroned by colonial rule as its vehicle of conveyance (7).

He concludes that colonialism and the colonial religions (with their superficial influences) have also fragmented the integrative mechanism of African culture. The Nigerian cultural elite is a creation of this cultural dilemma, which has led to many other cultural complications and inter-negotiations in the management of the Nigerian superstructure. We shall come back to this shortly.

The kernel of the above analysis is that even when the typical African (Nigerian) has been generally imbued with an African personality that embodies qualities like live-and-let-live, altruism, wholesome human relations, universality of man, communality, a spiritual attitude to life and continuity (Sofola 143), the controlling ideal and behavioural norms that inform this personality well up from the composite (Nigerian or African) primordial cultures of ethnic kin group nationalities.

The manifestation of this phenomenon and dilemma has been well illustrated in Akomaye Oko's *Tragic Paradox*; and Ekeh's irresistibly quotable concept of Nigeria's core cultural dilemmas.

With the multiplicity of primordial cultures co-existing alongside a single nation-wide civic culture, the individual enjoys the freedom to participate in only one or in both of Nigeria's primordial cultures and its civic culture. He (Nigerian) thereby exploits the opportunity open to him by avoiding difficult cultural demands from one domain and switching to easier and more beneficial ones in another domain. It also enables the individual to gain from both cultural domains at the same time (15).

These dilemmas manifest in the ridiculous Nigerian obsession for multiple honorific titles, monogamy and attitude to material graft, or expropriation of resources from the Nigerian Commonwealth for personal or ethnic enrichment. This exemplifies the relationship between *ideal* and behavioural norms and their inter-negotiation. In the Nigerian cultural milieu, such inter-negotiation is always at the expense of the so-called Nigerian national super-structure whose existence and real relevance lies in her continued provision of the "national cake" as it is truly and *Freudianesquely* called. Nothing can be more true as the nation's dependence on the "free" petroleum sector for revenue increased from 1970's 23.3 per cent through an all time high of 1992's 86.1 per cent to 2000's 65.1 per cent (CBN).

This gap in our Nigerian cultural makeup is being exploited because the Nigerian national 'civic' culture has neither a dominant controlling theme nor a credible ethos, which should characterize and guard its existence. Rather, various national activities (religious, economic, political, etc.) have different contradictory themes, which contradict family, ethnic or primordial themes and ethos or vice versa. For instance, there are contradictory attitudes in Nigeria towards the universal concepts of honesty, progress, democratic governance, success, or corruption in the two domains of our national culture.

The conclusion drawn from the foregoing is that the Nigerian national culture is an imaginary hyper-structure which has no positive home grown value system other than those motivated by selfish political ideas of statehood, which may also be promoted through systematic management. The only redeeming cultural value system of our nation-state emanates from the (cultural values of) individual primordial cultures of different ethnic nations that have been 'annexed' into a

Nigerian nation-state. A national culture therefore exists only as a collection of ethnic cultures, a multi-cultural pastiche which serves as "third culture..., culture of links ..., the force that can counterbalance the fragmentation of our (nation)" (Peter Brook qtd Betiang 25). Otherwise, a national culture project in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is more of an abstraction, promoted by politicians to push their political agenda because globalization has reawakened ethnic cultural sensitivities and fundamentalism all of which need to be channelled into a trunational culture project.

#### Management of Cultural Change So Far

So how has this abstraction been managed over the years? Considering Nigeria's cultural diversity, R. A. Amadi has provided a philosophy for the management of our 'national culture' which must devise a selection process in keeping with the nations traditions and requirements along a management culture which aims at achieving "unity in diversity, postulates decentralization within centralization, (and) respects identity within uniformity" (qtd Betiang 26). To what extent has the National Council for Arts and Culture done this beyond annual arts festivals?

It is important to remind us that the main threats to any (Nigerian national) culture come from many fronts. These traditionally can come about through innovation, which can result, from deliberate experimentation or by accident, by invention, which is a "combination of existing cultural elements into something altogether new" (Nanda 50), or through cultural diffusion - a borrowing of cultural elements. Cultural anthropologists are divided on the prime mover of change, whether change evolves from values, ideology or material conditions of life; from the economy or technology. Proponents of technological-economic determinism see world cultures and human development as driven by technology and money (Baran 22). But today technology, driven by communication technology, seems to lead these major determinants even though Serena Nanda argues, "cultural change is a result of a cumulative feedback relationship between ecological stimuli, ideology, technology and social relationships" (84). The mass communication media (television, radio, video, Internet) are at the centre of cultural change today thanks to cultural globalization. The Canadian approach to USA's media imperialism using Canadian Broadcasting System exemplifies the two sides of cultural change.

Cultural change therefore can come from "planned and managed change" or through natural flows of cultural power dialectics between so-called dominant and recessive cultures. Let us take a cursory look at the management of 'cultural imperialism' in our Nigerian situation over the years before we introduce the inexorable complication of cultural globalization

One of the first semblance of a planned 'management' of cultural imperialism in Nigeria dates back to the 1860s, when the Indigenist Movement reacted against the Victorian culture of the Academy (founded in 1866). This movement, championed by men like A. K. Ajisafe and C. B. Olumuyiwa drew their inspiration from the cultural rationalism of the Independent African Church Movement (Aladura). Drawing from Adedeji and Echeruo, Jeyifo identifies strategies used by these cultural nationalists and groups (like the Ibadan Choral Society and Lagos Glee Singers) to include: (a) Encouragement of dramatic composition and writing in Yoruba language and literacy; (b) Rejection of European names which hitherto had become popular status symbols; (c) Rejection of European dress forms in schools and work places; (d) Nurturing of interest in Yoruba history, folklore, mythology and traditional religion (47); (e) Also, the de-sacralization of literary

drama through injection of folklore and contemporary events. These efforts were however more of private commitment by some cultural elite, religious and artistic organizations and movements than government policy executed by cultural managers in public establishments and organizations.

Language has always been a formidable medium for foreign cultural diffusion. Arguing along the same line with Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Akinwumi Isola, Umaru Ahmed sees language as a determinant of culture and relationships, mobilizer and medium of cultural transmission, a 'basic word stock' and a central catalyst for enculturation (32-59; Isola 20 - 21).

Ahmed argues that the colonial masters and bureaucrats themselves, during the colonial period, consciously encouraged and promoted Nigerian languages like the three main languages of Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo. In addition missionaries, who produced Bibles and other religious literatures in many other Nigerian languages, also promoted indigenous language literacy. These promotion and publications were however, designed for imperialist evangelistic, political/administrative purposes within the languages' zones of influence. But during the post-independence period, Nigerian languages have increasingly been accorded a diminishing role in the education sector in favour of European languages; a tendency that is characteristic of British post-colonies (36).

Concluding that "language policy in Nigeria since independence (has) been a failure" (37), Ahmed traces this to three basic factors:

- (a) The role and apathetic attitude of the elite who by their educational orientation prefer European languages;
- (b) The role and attitude of government's lack of commitment and sense of direction of conflicting government agencies charged with language research and development;
- (b) The political structure of Nigeria has also constituted another bottleneck due to its political configuration, structural imbalances and minority alienation (41 - 54).

It is however noteworthy that there is a great output in creative writing in English language probably due to the market value of the language; and what Ahmed refers to as the 'predominance of trans-national publishers'. (Ngugi laments this 'Europhonism' and sees the universities in terms of Ali Mazuri's definition as 'academic multinationals' whose intellectuals and writers continually tap from the 'magic fountain' of African culture without putting back anything (1 - 11). Even in the mass media, the English language has been given a primary position over indigenous languages, which take second position. This again, due to its 'neutral value' (Ahmed 39) and market value in a globalizing world except in the zonal stations of Radio Nigeria in Enugu, Ibadan and Kaduna; and some state stations of NTA. It is also regrettable that the variant of English spoken on our airwaves today can neither provide a positive model for our children nor contribute to the development of our linguistic culture. This is because it is a miserable imitation of American pop-heroes, hip-hop and rap sub-culture

Herbert Schiller, an American radical commentator perceives the media as "the foremost example of operating enterprises that are used in the penetrative process" of cultural imperialism (qtd. Hutchinson 202). This situation has been largely enhanced by commercialisation and deregulation of broadcasting (Axtmann 35) which media globalization has intensified. Hutchinson puts it bluntly that –

... no country which is serious about promoting its own culture as a means of self-expression, and of encouraging national feeling and awareness, can afford to ignore the media (199).

When the Nigerian Radio and Television got their first new indigenous managers, (Teju Oyeleye: WNBC; Christopher Kolade; NBC, Dodo Mustafa: BCNN) the career general managers, unlike earlier political appointees set about –

struggling to serve the goals stated for their creation, Nigerianize their organizations, as well as lead their countrymen to creativity and cultural rediscovery (Maduka 111).

To achieve these aims indigenous programmes were designed, the Broadcasting Organizations of Nigeria [BON] was founded to facilitate networking and programme syndication, zoning policy was introduced to make for more cultural promotion and participation. In addition by 1979, the programme quota of 80 per cent of the 60/40-indigenous/foreign programmes ratio was achieved. Other measures like the prohibition of foreign rhymes and folklore in children programming (in 1978), as well as the initiation of various television programme festivals (NIFETEP 1985); and, TV Drama (1978) were initiated through the sheer ingenuity of the broadcasting managers. National orientation was also awakened by the launch of the War Against Indiscipline (WAI). The latter according to Maduka injected and promoted "nationness, patriotism, ... national identity, new work ethic (and) frugality" (134).

Commercialisation and market-driven media changed local programme time, abolished zonal administrative structure, brought about rationalization and consequently increased independent production. With broadcast deregulation and the entry of private broadcasting, the motives for any broadcast licensee have become more commercial, political and personal.

Maduka notes that even though the broadcasting laws in Nigeria are modelled after state-controlled public service model, the laws are silent on what the organizations should do about Nigerian cultures, values and entertainment, rather "they took considerable space to elaborate on news, politics, and controversial matters" (121). Television (like the Radio) has been run "as a freewheeling medium, without any clear-cut objectives" (Ukoha 9). This situation should have been saved by the presence and provisions for cultural development and promotion in the national *Cultural Policy for Nigeria* and recently the *Nigeria Broadcasting Code*. The former was written at the prompting of UNESCO, just in the same manner that broadcasting deregulation in 1992 was Ibrahim Babangida's 'obedient' response to veiled threats from Breton Woods' IBRD and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Television and Radio (NTA & FRCN) are continually being used by policy-makers and politicians more as political weapons and propaganda organs than for purposes of cultural engineering and weapons to contain cultural imperialism (Ahamba 43). The actions that have so far been implemented to address cultural imperialism have been geared towards so-called national integration, and state politics but without adequate government or backup provisions for the implementation of these policies. Information and broadcasting parastatals like NTA, FRCN, NAN, NBC and the various ministries in charge of the administration of culture at both federal and state levels are still tied up to political leaderships at these levels. This has bridled their performance over the years (Betiang). The Federal Ministry of Culture was only created in 1979 and 1985 as an after-thought by the Shagari and Babangida administrations respectively even though this has not changed government's lukewarm attitude to management of culture (Emeji 33). There is also a predominance of foreign music and programming on our airwaves, with a resultant impoverishment of our indigenous recording companies and artistes.

Arjun Appadurai identifies five dimensions of global cultural flows, which of course any meaningful cultural management strategy or policy must take into consideration. These are (a) *Ethnoscapes* (the landscape of people who make up the changing world); (b) *Technoscapes* (the global movement of 'hitech', penetrating international borders); (c) *Financescapes* (global currency speculation and capital transfer); (d) *Mediascapes* (the distribution of media, manpower and technology which produce and disseminate complex coded information); and (e) *Ideoscapes* (ideologies of states and counter ideologies of movements which determine political cultures) (cited in Shohat and Stam 168).

Added to these scapes are the so-called 'arrowheads of progress' viz: liberalization policies, technological change, transportation and communication; without which a country cannot but remain at the fringes of globalization. Nigeria has been largely 'allergic' to some of these dynamics of globalization especially in the areas of transportation and technology. Incidentally some of these scapes or arrowheads now move around independently through the Information Superhighway beyond the control of national governments.

Any meaningful cultural management strategy must therefore necessarily take into consideration the different dynamics through which these 'scapes' operate. Most countries in both first and third worlds that are seriously addressing cultural imperialism have, among other strategies, created a meeting point between economic liberalism, necessitated by regional interdependences, and interventionism aimed at protecting their national culture.

Even though there exists in literature the presence of national policies for cultural development, there has been a lack of political will among leadership and commitment to actualise the policies due to the unfortunate "comprador-elite factor" in Nigeria, where managers and policy makers are themselves products of an imperialist system as well as what Isola refers to as the national tendency to appoint the wrong people into wrong positions by political party driven national leadership. But one constant is that this sorry situation cannot be reversed without a meaningful policy and strategy that should be implemented by committed and exemplary cultural managers, not by those who "put on the mindless toga of old colonial masters as predators on the people" (Isola 12)

The above scenario gives a picture of the management of Nigerian culture and cultural imperialism over the years. It is obvious that it has been more reactive than proactive, with a development planning that separates cultural planning from the overall economic planning (Emeji 28), and a National Council for Arts and Culture that has not gone beyond organizing annual jamborees without follow-up action that maintains a regular vertical relationship with state and local councils and the artistes that are yearly exploited.

Granted that it is problematic to strike a balance between cultural development and cultural imperialism in today's globalizing world. In fact, Nancy Morris considers the idea of an unadulterated and pure culture a myth because there has always been a prevalence of cultural flows, even outside imported media (or cultural products), which are today the greatest purveyors of foreign cultural imperialism. She further insists, "to say that a culture is adulterated by exposure to outside elements requires us to identify its start-points after which change equals adulteration" (284). This position however, according to her does not mean local and national media (culture) industries should not be defended. Many an Asian and Latin American nation (including even European Union) has adopted conscious national protectionist policies for their cultural industries in the face of cultural globalization. A conscious management and engineering of a 'national culture' is therefore not out of place in an unplanned third world environment.

#### Cultural Globalization and the National Cultural Agenda

The concept of (cultural) globalization stretches back to the evolution of globalism. Globalism is the tendency to internationalise and 'build networks of interdependence across multi-continental distances' through the flow and influence of capital and goods, information and ideas, people and armed forces, as well as toxic environmental and biological

On a cultural level, globalization has involved mass movement of ideas, services, information, images and people (who also carry ideas and information) across international borders. Most of these movements usually transform the creative and material aspects of the way of life of a people. These contacts and social transformation lead to a renegotiation of attitudes towards culture, politics, community, nationality and even personal identity. The Internet and Satellite television have globalized and intensified this flow of ideas and have also given autonomy and speed to this flux. For many third world nations and scholars, globalization is another form of colonialism because it is a renegotiation of power (Khor, Scholte, Amin). Globalization by its very nature impacts on both local and national cultures often outside the control of national cultural administrators in an unprotected and unplanned system.

Doreen Massey laments the dislocation of the nation state and its institutions of management -

the nation-state has lost sovereignty upwards to supranational institutions (for example the UN, the EC, the World Bank and the IMF) and for different reasons downwards to regional ones (qtd Curran 46).

But in spite of the uncertain role of the nation state, the local still remains part of the international (made up of local, national, regional and international).

It has also been observed that "globalization forces do not have identical impact across the world", since they have a "power geometry" that is "inherently uneven" (Curran 46).

This is as much a promise of hope as a challenge for national planning. It is a call for cultural managers to "think globally and act locally" to contain the forces and flows of cultural globalization but through collaborative action with national and regional governments. The nation-state cannot therefore be jettisoned from the cultural scheme of things. This is because, as touted by its proponents, globalization has united global forces for protection of natural resources and the environment, promoted health and alleviated poverty; increased democratization and commitment to human rights. But despite all these seeming gains, the global trade in cultural products (television, film, video, radio, fashion, music and news) has, within the last decade increased in scale, intensity, speed and volume (even though still a one way traffic reminiscent of the pre-New World Information and Communication Order). Because of this flux of cultural products,

People everywhere are exposed to the values of other cultures as never before. Nothing, not even the fact that we all speak different languages, can stop the flow of ideas and cultures. The English language is becoming so dominant that it provides a

substances as well as international norms and standards (Keohane & Nye 24). Globalization also operates through multiple networks and connections, and it is driven through media communication technology which has become more intensified, pervasive and expansive due to the commercial convergence of print, telecommunications and broadcasting and promoted by global media conglomerates

Globalization is a transmutation of globalism due to late 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in information technology and corporate expansionism, which have shrunk distances on a large scale, and amplified the poverty and digital divides between rich and poor countries. Globalization is therefore a "process by which globalism becomes increasingly (felt)" at a magnitude that has become more complex, speedy, intensive and penetrative (Keohane & Nye 78).

linguistic infrastructure as powerful as any technological system for transmitting ideas and cultures (Held & McGrew 18).

But like Doreen Massey has argued above, Keohane and Nye believe that the "filters provided by domestic politics and political situations play a major role in determining what effects globalization really has and how well various countries adapt to it" (83).

This indeed is the job for cultural management at the national and local levels. This is the level at which the cultural elite should come into play. As J. A. Sofola has rightly noticed, the progress of any nation depends on the quality of its elites who possess the requisite skills and knowledge to interpret through "elite mediation" the "society's values and inheritance to the masses" (160). Otherwise, the elite lives, unemancipated in a foreign culture he cannot imbibe, "a world of make-belief where he has no roots and no respect" (161).

The way forward to cultural modernization, planning and managing of our cultural imaginary at the national level and our primordial cultures is therefore "not just the replacement of the traditional and obsolete with the imported and up-to-date", but initiating a "double goal of seeking to remain (ourselves) and at the same time adapt to the requirements" of the time (Geertz qtd Nanda 355). Modernization must be achieved on the terms of the different primordial and national (civic) cultures and not on terms



dictated from any imperial centres which hold the reins that control the technological and economic high horse.

Hyginus Ekwuazi (cited Ibagere 296) has come to a conclusion that American imperialism through broadcasting is a deliberate cultural policy. Even though Ibagere himself believes that indigenisation strategies cannot work, there are paradigms from other third world Asian and transitional economies like India, South Korea and Mexico that are working. But he concedes that television has immense power to effect change given the right policy and executive direction that will develop positive "attitudes that would foster the country's march to modernization" (315). The answer to strategised media imperialism cannot be found outside a strategised response from the colonized culture, if possible, through the very instruments of imperialism, the medium of television and Internet, through policy and what Isola describes as "television station administrators who are convinced about the development capacity of African culture" (21).

Akinwumi Isola identifies the Nigerian elite – leaders, school educated elite, politicians and traditional rulers – as the worst offenders against African culture because they often cannot make a distinction between culture and religion. Akinwumi Isola (27), who also places the blame on state policy and management; calls on states, parties to take full advantage of various opportunities offered by UNESCO to safeguard cultural heritage; especially the intangible aspects of Nigerian culture (like indigenous languages) which contain the guardian ethos of our society.

At an international level, UNESCO General Conference has at various times produced documents and guidelines designed to guide and safeguard cultural heritage and development. These documents provide the vision, guidelines and methodology including how to access technical and financial assistance that may be needed for their implementation. After the production of the *Cultural Policy for Nigeria* and the declaration of the UNESCO Decade for Culture by the Nigerian government, not much exists in literature as official deliberate efforts towards this direction. Nigerian Foreign Offices should also see it as part of their sacred duty to promote not just political and economic matters but essentially cultural matters through activities of trained, effective cultural attaches (Sofola 167).

The fact that there exists some disparity in the manner the effects of globalization are felt among urban dwellers, the youth, professionals, the business community, and the rural dwellers – (Scholte 18) shows that cultural globalization is an evolving phenomenon, which can be cultured or engineered.

Despite its potential to homogenize, globalization may not all the same, spell complete doom for national cultures. This is because as some studies (Dirlik 22-45; Featherstone 46-77; Castells 27, Tomlinson 270) have shown, the threat of homogenisation and globalism has led to greater national, cultural awareness and protectionism in many societies of the world thus leading to the development of new 'resistance' identities. This trend also has the tacit support of UNESCO when it declared in its 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity, "the cultural wealth of the world is its diversity in dialogue".

Therefore the culturally fatalistic option expressed by some cultural critics in favour of cultural integration with the global may not be in the best interest of minorities and 'developing' cultures.

Furthermore, the nature of globalization shows that, while it does not erase any physical, geographic nationalities and their attendant sovereign controls, it still remains a complex of inter-related forces which are cultural and *ipso facto*, political, economic, technological, ecological and psychological. This implies that whatever national strategies are designed to manage these relentless flows have to be holistic and proactive in nature. This is more so because, even though globalization (like postmodernism) may facilitate intercultural communication and dialogue, it can also alienate cultures that cannot jostle for and acquire a space on the 'globalization train'.

The way forward for the containment of the effect of this problematic cultural phenomenon must inevitably be in the form of management. Akinwumi Isola, a cultural visionary, underlines the centrality of the manager in the culture industry when he warns that -

when making appointments into the top management positions for radio, television and the censors boards, government must beware of religious fundamentalists who are the sworn enemies of African culture (22),

especially people who cannot differentiate between culture and religion since it is management that gives direction to laid down policy.

Media managers must become aware of their role in the global transmission of cultural globalization especially through media; whether the problematic and failure of gate keeping and agenda setting arise from policy, regulation or management or factors beyond these realms. Our cultural elite and broadcast managers must re-examine the prevalent forms of broadcasting ownership, economic system or the political system, all of which have been complicated by a deregulated broadcasting industry.

Paradigms from some other countries show the imperative for the media under globalization to provide an even public space for a globalized community (Axtmann 49); the development of a multi-cultural media (Wilson and Dissanayake); the development of an 'indigenous media' and community broadcasting that would strengthen the (developmental potentials of the) people to "think locally" within a global setting (Cvetkovich 18); as well as enacting appropriate gate-keeping policies, widening choices, enriching local competition in cultural production (Chadha and Kavoori 415 – 432) and other indigenisation programmes.

Being an age of knowledge where information management has become the fourth resource, there is an increasing need for labour education and management of labour flows; as well as what Peter Drucker calls the forging of a "broad alliance between managers and intellectuals" to adequately tap into this knowledge based era (qtd. Matterlart 591).

Finally, in an era of globalization where the gate keeping role of managements at the national level (like Censors Board, National Broadcasting Commission, Copyright Commission) are being frustrated by global trans-national flows (satellite, cable and free trade zones), national managements must cede some of their responsibilities to local functionaries and communities. This is because planning for change must begin from the village and peasant societies.

Part of this local strengthening is the protection of independent television, film and video, music and radio producers. The independent cultural producers associations (FITRAN, PMAN, MPPCON, NANTAP, ITPAN) should be allowed some mandatory basic percentage on national broadcast media for their locally produced cultural products. Furthermore, emphasis should be shared between cultural regulation and local audience empowerment through cultural/media literacy. Local media rights activists, schools and departments of theatre arts and mass communication studies should build in cultural (media) literacy courses in their curricula and activities to create responsible cultural-elites, audience-ship and participation in the unfolding contemporary interactive media landscape.

The ultimate *locus* of emphasis and cultural action for cultural elites, participants, managers and politicians must be the local, indigenous primordial cultures of the various ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. This is because it is this level of culture that can and does provide the cultural *ethos* and *mythos*, which can reorient or create a Nigerian national value system and identity, which one can proudly refer to as Nigerian culture. All these activities should operate under a national dominant cultural theme designed to promote Nigeria's cultural diversity within a unified national mosaic. This is one cardinal way Nigeria can jostle for and secure a place to carve a cultural niche on the globalization map.

## CONCLUSION

Without necessarily concluding an agenda for a national development continuum, it needs to be restated that the *laissez faire* attitude to cultural management and the absence of strategised dominant themes in our Nigerian culture have made the idea of a Nigerian national culture a mere political abstraction. This has created problems of management even in other sectors of our national development especially given the pressures of (cultural) globalization.

In summary therefore, there is a need for a proactive management culture that derives its ethos from positive values of the various primordial cultures that make up the Nigerian national (civic) culture mosaic. The same threatening globalizing media and global infrastructure should be used to broaden, strengthen and project local cultural production, participation and consumption as a way of rethinking and acting locally within the global setting.

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