

THE POWER OF THE MUSEUM: CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the history of museum which originally, is associated with human ingenuity to create, share and research on better ways of improving on the human condition. However, the trend changed, given the myopic perceptions of some people overtime. Whereas some see it as an institution that custodies dangerous awkward objects that brings misfortunes and backwardness to a society. This works argues against such negative misconceptions and rather posits that, the museum is powerful and manifests its power through the human, the spiritual, museum collections (cultural heritages) and through its services to the society. The paper further argues that the museum is a cultural institution which custodies the cultural heritage of a people for enjoyment and doubles as the foundation of knowledge that can be harnessed for development purposes. The method used in this research is purely library.

Keywords: Museum, Development, Cultural Knowledge

1.0 Introduction

An attempt to link the power of the museum to the foundation of knowledge begins with what culture entails. Culture for E. B. Taylor is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and many other capabilities and habits acquired by members of society” (Soules, <http://www.media-studies.ca>).

Essentially, art, or artifact which for Salzmann (1969) is any object manufactured or used by man (106) is a product of child of culture. At this juncture, one can not doubt the fact that the power of the museum is rooted in culture. Culture and art complement as foundation of cultural knowledge. Hence, the more new ideas and thoughts are created the richer becomes society, because free competition of minds gives rise to unity of operations, this is the dialectics of culture (Kokhanova, www.eocss.net). It is unconnected with the position of Olivier Serrat (2012), who argues that, “Broadly speaking,

approaches to knowledge management have followed cognitive and community models” (www.adb.org). The nexus between the strength influence of the museum as a source of knowledge is rooted in the way of life of a people.

Hans Siggaad Jensen (2020) argues on the above salient nature of culture, that in a stone age society one had knowledge-otherwise one could hardly survive, and possibly also deliberations as to what knowledge was, what knowledge was acceptable and suchlike, but of that we know nothing for we can only conclude certain things on the basis that they survived, that they used implements (Online).

This is why all former cultures had knowledge as he argues further and probably also methods for collecting and disseminating it. Here, myths and mythologies, large-scale narratives and symbolic depictions certainly served the purpose of collecting and disseminating knowledge.

Again, knowledge in light of above, is not necessarily systematic or formal, but may be expressed in images or narratives. In view of this line of thought, some decisive traits of the new concept of knowledge include the fact that the focus is now on knowledge as something that must empower action and provide power. Knowledge is no longer theoretical in the sense that it serves solely reflection – particularly reflection on that which necessarily is as it is and therefore, renders action (practice) impossible. The focus as Jensen has noted, is also on knowledge as connected to the empirical, to observation and experimentation. Moreover, it is knowledge as particular inner cognitive state that makes possible, particular types of actions, above all, effective actions.

This validates Antonis Chaliakopoulos (2020) position that the history of museums is a long one, and begins with the existence of Homo sapiens and is linked with art. He opines that art is a way of linking people with other people. He explains further that, the desire to create and share what is created is closely affiliated with the desire to collect. The creator, the collector, the viewer, and the artwork for him, are all parts of one equation, and the museum is the blackboard on which it is written (Online).

What is shared is the ideas and knowledge displayed in works of art. The question now is, does works of art really leads to knowledge? In response some philosophers have maintained that artworks are valuable solely as a source of pleasure or pleasing emotions. These philosophers include formalists, who believe that audience members value the experience of artistic form as a source of intellectual pleasure or aesthetic emotion. Other philosophers have maintained that works of art have content, and that audience members can acquire knowledge by experiencing (viewing, hearing, or reading)

these works according to James O. Young (2003, online).

Young (2003), substantiates the above thus, that artworks awakens reminiscence in human mental states. Implying that artworks do not only have intrinsic value (they are not good in themselves) but also have extrinsic value (i.e. they are good because they have good effects). Furthermore, when a mental state is valuable for its own sake, it is pleasurable. A mental state with extrinsic value gives rise to mental states with intrinsic value.

Arguing further, states with extrinsic value can do so by giving a person a capacity to act in such a way that he attains intrinsically valuable mental states. This gives rise to pieces of knowledge which in turn are the most obvious examples of things that confer the capacity to achieve intrinsically valuable mental states. A person with knowledge is in a position to predict and control nature with a view to maximizing human well-being.

Humans also enjoy knowledge for what it is, so possessing knowledge has both intrinsic and extrinsic value. Similarly, artworks is said to provide cognitive states, in functions to provide knowledge. Here, both functions could be performed simultaneously, in which case art provides both pleasure and knowledge or have hedonic value, cognitive value or both.

From the point of an African epistemological attitude, which derives from her conception of reality, knowledge is holistic and or ontological. Bert Hamminga (2005) posits that in African knowledge attitude, knowledge is one form of togetherness. Here, togetherness is an African ultimate criterion of action, and the pursuit of knowledge being just one of them.

DEFINITION OF MUSEUM

A Museum is a building in which objects of artistic, cultural, historical or scientific interest are kept and shown to the public (Hornby 1972). ICOM statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria on 24th August, 2007, defines “a Museum as a non-profit,

permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment” (icom.museum).

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

According to Alexandre Marc (1992), the UNESCO World Heritage Convention explains that cultural heritage can be separated into the intangible and non-material aspects such as languages, customs and religions and the tangible aspects such as sites building and artifacts (255). Claude Daniel Ardouin (1992), define intangible heritage to include folklore, ethics, rituals, gestures and dance. They are expressed by language, sounds, gestures and attitudes. These aspects are inseparable from the materials culture, which without it, cannot be completely understood and may be distorted (232).

For June Taboroff (1992), cultural heritage refers to sites, structures, archaeological historical, religious, cultural or aesthetic values (Serageldin 320). For J.H.K Nketia (1992), historic sites, buildings related artifacts and cultural events are regarded by people of every nation as their cultural heritage (365) Phillip L. Ravenhill (1992) sees cultural heritage as non-movable artifacts and the socially constructed knowledge found in craft and technological processes (278). To protect these heritages, Ravenhill recommends collection, preservation and interpretation, not the generic, fascinating objects of a folkloric past but the specific objects, historically constituted, that bear witness to the systems of knowledge, both past and present, that must be preserved if history is to yield it lessons (279). Historic cites according to Ismail Serageldin (1992) are not only marvellous witnesses of our past, rather they are also parts of living organisms rapidly growing cities of enormous dimensions (337). Taboroff corroborates that the historic built environment is key to understanding African culture (323). It is in this sense that history has pragmatic value in Africa. This means that history has practical

relevance, usefulness in solving the problems of human existence as well as beneficial consequences. Here, it is history and not just academic history, knowing about the past, researching, which is related to the way we organize our lives (365). Taboroff explains that archaeological remains constitute for many African countries the only objective source materials for the study of their pre-colonial history (321). In Africa, June Taboroff points that museums have taken the lead in instituting programmes for conservation and raising awareness of the urgent need to protect and conserve the continent’s heritage (324). However, Claude Daniel Ardouin has noted that, through their collections, the museums have different potential perspectives that have been used inadequately or incorrectly. This is because researches the major part of archaeological are carried out outside museums, where it produces increasing amount of knowledge about different aspects of the history of society, yet, this knowledge is only accessible to a small number of specialist. Moreover, it is not incorporated into school, text-books, sometimes only partially. It remains completely inaccessible to the public at large because the objects turned up by these excavation are only very rarely exhibited in museums or anywhere else (232).

Languages, customs and religions forms the intangible and non-material aspects of cultural heritage as contained in the UNESCO world heritage convention. These aspects of cultural heritage affect humanity as values. Clarence Versteeg (1977), defines value as anything that is important to someone. It could be an idea, a belief, a custom or a thing (6). Values give meaning to life. They establish priorities, they also set moral boundaries and define rules of behaviour (Awake, 2003). Language for instance adds value to humans because it is the basis of man’s uniqueness and the essence of his culture (1178). Khaled Hosseini likens culture to a house in which language is the key to the front door and to all the rooms inside (online). Dorathy Motaze (1994) is optimistic, that through the languages found among a people, cultural and international cooperation for development is inevitable. And that for people or group traditionally embedded in their culture

and native ways of speaking, such change, would only be allowed as an ultimate necessity for development. Moreover an objective and intelligent task for the owners of a language is not just to feel strongly or be chauvinistic, but to as well relate feelings and sentiments with practical aspects of their development, through arts, education and technology (Abasiokong and Modo 173). Language also has an in-built cognitive function and the assertion that language is power meaning that through its effects our human world is known and subdued (Ijiomah 71).

Religion, whether African or Western is a spiritual pilgrimage characterized by the quest for and recognition of some supra-human power (God), the acknowledgment of man's limitations and self-insufficiency, and the adoption as well as formulation of doctrinal code and practical-moral in life, in explanation and answer to the fundamental issues and problems of human existence (Iwe, 48). Religion in a nutshell, is perpetually involved in guiding human being as they try to actualize themselves in the various societies. According to IbnRushd as quoted by Felso, religion is a divine blessing that opens new horizons for people in many subjects by giving some information that answers metaphysical, psychological, ethical and eschatological questions and problems, in the easiest and shortest way (<https://www.123philosophy.com>)

Customs means an accepted way of behaving or doing things in a society or a community. Although the origin of custom is obscure according to Negi Mohita. Its role in the society is not in doubt. This is because they play several important roles as such they are means of controlling social behaviour.

Customs is the repository of social heritage. It preserves our culture and transmits it to the succeeding generations. It brings people together and develops social relationships among them. Custom helps in the process of learning, help in adjustment with many social problems. They provide stability and feeling of security in human society. They mould personality,

attitudes and ideas (www.yourarticlelibrary.com).

POWER OF THE MUSEUM

The power of the museum can be examined from different dimensions. This include the human, the spiritual, the objects (tangible and intangible) cultural heritages, and through its services to the society.

The human dimension of power exhibited by the museum can be expressed in the idealist dictum that, it is only minds and ideas that exist. For Hegel (1995), "Like the stoic, God, history leads the wiseman and drags the fool" (Uduigwomen & Ozumba 121). The bible records and acknowledged that God gave man some level of power, when He, (God) referring to man said "ye are gods". This portion perhaps informed the saying by Protagoras of abdera, "that man is the measure of all things, of the things that are, and the things that are not, that they are not" (Asouzu 70). the first power house of the museum. Historically ranging from Aristotle's Lyceum, the Mouseion of Alexandria, cabinets of curiosities, the Louvre, to the era of modern state national museum, men were the ones involved in collection, study and research etc. it has been noted, that in every culture there existed a crop of ingeniously endowed people whose intellectual curiosity and ability to probe and supply answers were higher than the average members of their time. It is from such people that the of philosophical and scientific advancement (Asouzu 2). Philosophy was therefore, the child of curiosity, wonder and adventure according to Ozumba (50).

POWER OF THE MUSEUM THROUGH COLLECTION

Today, museums display diversity inform, content and function, but we can roughly explain what makes a museum, to include, collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting humanity's cultural heritage. Museums are at the same time united by a common goal that is service to society and its development. This mind- propels the museum who use their collections as well as stories about people and their environment, (gloconnet.com).

Museum collections are made up of groups of objects within each museum. These objects include any element that pertains to the realm of material and cultural nature that is worth preserving either inside or outside of its natural habitat or in www.ddfscoialearning.com). At this junction one can categorically and undoubtedly assert that the power of the museum lies in its collection (as ammunition of the museum). To accomplish, actualise and express the power of its collections, Philip L. Ravenhill opines that, “Museum collections must move from custodial care of objects to the power of the object to communicate, evoke, and encapsulate history (269). It is a privileged arena for dialogue and communication. This is because according to Nel McGregor as quoted by Ravenhill (1992), it allows things to speak, to bear witness to past experiences and future possibilities, to cause the viewer to reflect on how things might otherwise be. He adds that the museum objects has power and inherently multifocal. They contain within themselves multiple messages, and can speak, simultaneously of history, of technology, of aesthetics, of philosophy and of value whether material or existential.

Things stand in contrast to perceived realities and make one critically received wisdom.

Things are of critical importance, when rightly selected, evaluated and interpreted because at such point, they can become a prime means of public education and interrogation.

They are like art; as such, they make one think of other possibilities of existence. These humble things can call into question the world that is, and also hold out the possibility of a world that can be (281). Mary Anne Frese Witt et al (1993), corroborate the above thus, “For the African artist, the objects of everyday life may express beauty, harmony, and philosophical concepts as much as or more than something to hang on a wall” (Witt B. & Witt D. T. 199).

A single thing can change the world, when properly presented and interpreted, because it can be a provocation, a puzzle. It can confound in a way that makes reflection yield new answers to the solution of critical questions.

Moreover, in presenting things, the Museum presents systems of knowledge and also makes possible new ways of knowing. Knowledge they say is power, and it has the capacity to call into being, new things, new creations and respond to new challenges. The past therefore becomes a foil for the known present and the unknown future.

Furthermore, she adds, that the most humble object may manifest a complex relationship between people and society and their experiences and understanding of the world. This is because understanding the world and interpreting one’s experiences in it are the basis for art everywhere (200).

Moreover, both African art and Music have had a profound impact on their modern counterparts, we are not likely to view these arts, as did the European colonialist, as awkward, tribal or primitive (199). Another dimension of African art is the spiritual. In some cultures, Alexandre Marc (1992) argues that what makes the value of a mask is the force that inhabits the mask more than the quality of the design or its age. Once a mask has lost its force, it becomes a normal object which can be sold or given away, even if it is extremely old and rare (260). Similarly, Witt Brown, et al explained in support of above that, the necessity to appease various spirits has been a motivating force for one type of African art. Objects, usually small statues, are created to invite a particular spirit, either natural or ancestor, to inhabit it. Hence great care is taken to make the object beautiful enough to entice the spirit to rest in it (200).

THE ROLE OF HISTORY

Now why does museum object communicate, evoke and encapsulate history and what role does history play?

The role of history in relation to the museum object can be situated on a certain foundation of knowledge which has become linked to the notion of regularities – laws of nature. According to Hans Siggaard Jensen (2000), it is precisely familiarity with these that makes possible effective actions, in that predictions and monitoring are possible. Here, the causal

viewpoint is adopted, in which particular causes have particular effects. And through such knowledge, the free agent can thus influence the cause of things, alter them or achieve certain states. When this form of knowledge is used, the theoretical and practical thus become interlinked (online).

History you would recall is the study of the past in order to understand the meaning and dynamics of the relationship between cause and effect in the overall development of human societies. The claim of history is not so much its capacity to capture immense details or to record ancestral knowledge rather it is and interpret to handle a rich variety of sources in order to draw out their general relevance or to reveal their general significance for human understanding of why and how change occurs (online).

According to Bill Nasson, the usefulness of history, therefore, is not only that it constantly offers new ways of viewing and understanding the grip of the past, rather it further helps to shape the future by always emphasizing that it can be one of possibilities and alternatives (online).

Another sense of history is that, it is something continuous, as human or self-development. Here, Nasson quotes Raymond Williams who agrees that, the clearest way of projecting this newer post-eighteenth century sense of history is to say that past events are viewed not as specified process (online). It is for them, new understanding of history as self-development, meaning that it sheds its exclusive association with knowledge of the past, and becomes directly connected not only to the present, but also to the future.

A contemporary idea of history as further noted by Nasson is rooted in an idealist sense, as reflected by the philosopher Hegel, in which history is seen as a process of world-historical movement over time. Here, through a strong association with, the French revolution, with Marxism and variants of socialist thought, history has been construed as a range of mass historical forces. History also shares with literature art, history of art, and other laboratories of the spirit and the mind, a probing

preoccupation with exploring the many hopes, wonders, fears and darker contractions of the human condition (online).

The above idea of history can be likened to the positive spirit. Here, S.E stumpf (1966) defines positivism as a general attitude of the mind, a spirit of inquiry, an approach to the facts of human existence (Asouzu 19). To further buttress the indispensability of history in one's life, Kwame Gyekye as quoted by Kartin Flikschuh (2018), explains that one's past holds the key to one's future. Hence the Akan symbol of Sankofa according to him advises a person not to shy away from searching her past for the seeds of her future. He argues that more generally, the belief is widespread that the success of a post-colonial African revival depends on the reaffirmation, under modern conditions of colonially denigrated traditional values and beliefs (online). Alexandra Marc, while contemplating on what the value of cultural heritage conservation could be, and how it improves people's well-being argues, that well-being is seen not only as physical but also psychological and spiritual (258). It follows therefore as further explained, that it is said that pride and self-respect are essential ingredients for successful development, because they motivate people to maintain social standard in front of other groups (259).

Robert Goodland and Maryla Webb as further quoted by Marc, explain the fact that knowledge and understanding of a people's past can help present inhabitants to develop and sustain national identity and to appreciate the value of their culture and heritage. Such knowledge enriches the lives of a nation's citizens and enables them to manage contemporary problems more successfully (259). Similarly, Sheikh Anta Diop is quoted here, to have established a close link between the ancient Egyptian civilization and sub-Saharan African cultures, just to affirm the importance of a glorious past as an element of national pride (259).

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Education simply means the process of facilitating learning. Here, knowledge, skills, values, belief, and habits of a group of people

are transferred to other people through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training or research (online). The museum potential for activity and impact on public life can be realized only by developing a new approach to museum research. Put differently, museum's future is tied to the development of research programme about contemporary and past societies, history, art, archaeology, natural heritage, environment, and museum technical discipline (Ardouin 235).

Ardouin explains in light of above that, museum can use collections (their own or loaned), research findings, and data to inform, educate, entertain, prompt to think, and engage their different publics. Here, the range of activities is practically unlimited, there include, permanent and travelling displays, educational and cultural programmes, audio visual products, publications, meetings, and media-events (236). According to Philip L. Ravenhill, public education depends upon the nature of museum collections and these collections must be redefined and to evolve through serious scholarship (274).

By public scholarship, Neil McGregor as quoted by Ravenhill talks about a scholarship that communicates through objects, a collection-based scholarship (280). In one hand, the pursuit of knowledge is the justification of university education. On the other hand, museum scholarship keeps its focus on the works in the collection and it must justify itself by serving as a basis for better conservation and increased public enjoyment (280). Here, the University pursues knowledge as its own justification while museum scholarship, on the other hand, is circumscribed and must keep as its focus the works in the collection to justify itself by serving as a basis for better conservation and increased public enjoyment (280).

He argues therefore that museum preoccupation with cultural heritage, must not fail to include the topics of archaeology, history, environment, urban culture, or modern culture that individually and collectively bear witness to the systems of knowledge that people have created and are creating in society, that is, knowledge that gives meaning to human existence (281).

This will in turn close the gap between museum and scientific research. Ardouin argues that there is lacuna between museums and scientific research. Perceived and used as warehouses for exotic object rather than as research centres, developing knowledge, museums do not attract professional researchers, especially young ones, who are more tempted, rightly or wrongly, by careers in other research or teaching institutions (235).

Now why the insistence on museum research?

Hans Siggaad Jensen (2000) posits that, in contemporary society too, there is a need for experts and knowledge producers. For there is still an incredible amount of social activity based on the application of knowledge produced within the framework of research institutions (Online).

Research allows you to build on any personal experience you have with the subject. The process of research opens up new opportunities for learning and growth, a clue to most recent information available, as well as awareness of issues like climate change, racial discrimination, gender inequality, and more.

OTHER DIMENSIONS OF MUSEUM POWER

Lexically defined as the influence of a particular thing or group within society, power as inherent and characteristics of the museum, influences the lives of people within or beyond the museum is location, directly or indirectly.

It is in this light that ICOM in its 2022 International Museum Day conceived the museum as incomparable places of discovery, which can teach us about our past and open our minds to new ideas as being two essential steps in building a better future. (icom.museum, online). In this sense, the power of the museum translates into knowledge for service. It corroborates the argument that logically, knowledge is a form of power – power for growth, improvement, innovation and development (Chimakonam 70). The goal of knowledge therefore is service to humanity (79).

In furtherance of the above, ICOM identified three lenses which includes, the power of achieving sustainability, to establish efficient communication and the power of innovating on digitalization and accessibility.

The power of achieving sustainability: Museums are considered as strategic partners in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. As key actors in wide variety of Goals, which include fostering short-circuit and social economy and disseminating scientific information on environmental challenges. (Online). C.D Ardouin (1992) acknowledges the fact that dissemination involves museum's ability to reflect the reality of their societies and to participate in the life of their potential publics.

Dissemination for him is an essential aspect of museum work. Why? Through dissemination museums can have real impact on public life and development, acting as tools for education, the spread of knowledge, as spaces for information and reflection, for cultural contacts and leisure and as conservation centers (236).

To establish efficient communication: he explains that museum must use national languages as means to arouse or maintain national visitor's interest in display and cultural activities, if they cannot understand the presentations. As such museum-community relations are based on the museum's capacity to use the public language. June Taboroff avers further, that arguments of sustainability and job generation are central to well-designed cultural heritage project components. Hence linking the management of cultural heritage to the social and economic needs of people living in communities adjacent to archaeological sites or in historic settlements is probably the surest way of achieving sustainability. The result is that looting and vandalism of sites can be greatly diminished, if protection is shifted from an emphasis on patrolling by guards and penalties for illegal use by local populations to job generation through sites improvement activities or compatible tourism (233).

The power of innovating on digitalization and accessibility: Here, museums have become

innovative playing-grounds where new technologies can be developed and applied to everyday life. Digital innovation can make museums more accessible and engaging, helping audiences understand complex and nuanced concepts. (Online). The 2020 corona-virus pandemic forced the museum world into the digital age. Museum collections are becoming available online. This has led to the rediscovery of the power of social media by museum, in an attempt to maintain a relationship with their audience. Virtual, tours, online exhibitions etc. it has really enhance museum visibility and as well placed museums on the global space. (Online).

Furthermore, the power of the museum extends to community building through education: Through its collections and programmes, museums thread a social fabric that is, essential in community building. By upholding democratic values and providing life-long learning opportunities to all, they contribute to shaping an informed and engaged civil society. Museums have the power to create unity on both a social and political level, but also on a local one. Local museums are able to provide a sense of community and place, by celebrating a collective heritage, offering a great way to get to know the history of a particular area. (Online).

In the face of hatred and ignorance, knowledge and understanding are often the best weapons. This is what the museum has the power to showcase.

Museums and galleries provide insight into the history of human kind. While no museum can claim to provide a complete picture, the lesson we can learn from past events, wonders and tragedies are priceless. This is especially true in times of turmoil. (www.museumnext.com).

CHALLENGES

Culture according to Ukeje (2004) is the totality of people's way of life as deduced from material and non-material aspects of their life such as clothing, values, beliefs, thoughts, feelings and customs (Mbakogu 37).

However, during the colonial era, our traditional culture and values were seriously threatened.

Here Gbotokoma as quoted in Mbakogu (2004) reported that, “the colonialists categorically denied the existence of African Cultural value and worse still taught the Africans themselves to despise them (38). This perhaps accounts for the low public awareness/misconceptions held among some Africans on the value of the museums. Why a museum piece is lexically defined as a “thing or person that is old-fashioned, or old and no longer useful (Hornby 972).

According to Alexandre Marc (1992), “the changing attitude towards traditional cultures diverted many people to new values inspired by modernization and westernization, many in turn loss regard for their cultural heritage which they associated with backwardness and underdevelopment (261). Many Christians, and Muslims tend to consider traditional objects and the religious sites of past cultures as pagan and threatening. Such misconception is most times connected with names of some museums. An example is the museum of Mengo in Burkina Faso locally called “Yaabroogo” or the house of ancestors (267) names like this will definitely cause some would be visitors to reject or forbid the museum environment.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND DEVELOPMENT

The word development has been defined by some authors in the book *a Concise Introduction to Philosophy and Logic* from a perspective which holds that the culture of a given society plays a vital role in initiating, guiding and broadening the character and level of growth and development of the society. In other words, the notion of development is itself culturally founded; implying further that every realistic development exercise must be rooted in the culture of the society (Uduigwomen and Ozumba 68).

Henry Olela (1994) quotes Comperz who believes that knowledge about geographical factors and influences are necessary condition for the comprehension of a people’s philosophy (Wright 78). Briefly explained, Comperz means that most philosophies are culturally or geographically rooted and influenced. We infer

therefore that a genuine development process thus affect what happens in a continuing situation (Iroegbu, 39).

The view here is that fundamentally, development and the conservation of cultural heritage are not mortally exclusive rather, development and the valuation of cultural heritage can be mutually beneficially (Serageldin and Taboroff 321) similarly, Alexis B.A. Adande (2002) states that conservation of the cultural heritage and economic development are concepts which may at first appear contradictory, or even quite incompatible, but that each summarizes succinctly, the urgent problems facing the people of black Africa today and that we should find a way of safeguarding the core of the ancient cultural heritage, without in so doing, sacrificing advancement of the living condition of the whole population.

Now how does this tangible heritage philosophically serve as tools for development? Okpoko (2004) opines, that cultural dimension of development works in forms whereby it teaches every man reverence for the creative genius of men, which unites the nations and generations on a plane above their conflict(7). In other words, like philosophy which proceeds via critical reflection on existing belief system and the necessity to change them, tangible African heritage like monuments, sites, artefacts, and forms etc. are objects which pass for knowledge and invites critical reflections on them. This of course results in new dimensions whereby such inherited objects are used to usher a people into new ways of development possibilities.

Ekechukwu (1990) simplifies that the historic towns and buildings, museums and monuments of various dimension, secret groups and shrines, festivals and other relics of the past are important features to tourism and are sure ways of bringing our various ethnic groups into closer contact to enable them appreciate themselves better and benefit from such cultural contacts and share exchange, thereby generating some revenue and fostering national growth (123).

The numerous artistic traditions of our past are today modified for economic reasons. Each of these traditions reflect types of material

resources available in each locality, thus revealing and confirming the ingenuity of local craftsmen in using abundant local material and simple tools to produce useful articles that are often of high quality. When this happens, development of some sort has been achieved. It is in this sense that African art is said to exist beyond the western horizon in terms of its source, metaphysical assumption, mode of knowing etc. In this wise, Anyanwu as cited by A.F. Uduigwomen (2002), viewed art as integration and vision ("A Philosophical Appraisal" 7). Similarly, Kanu, posit that unlike the west where art is appreciated for its sake,

African art has moral and metaphysical functions, in which case, it always exist within its cultural functionalism ("A philosophical Appraisal" 7). In like manner, Roy Sieber (2003) argues that African art is not rooted in the object itself isolated and rarefied, but in the creative impulse and aesthetic intention that lay behind it, and emerged within it. He adds that African art functions the cultural commitments of the artist (Berns and Donald). In other words,

African art has apart from its aesthetic function, other functions that affect the social, economic or political life of a people. Other possibilities may include nation building. To emphasize the significance of the museum to building a nation, Kwame Gyekye acknowledges that fact that, one's past holds the key to one's future. He further capture the Akan symbol of Sankafa, which advises a person not to shy away from searching her past for the seeds of her future. Now, the history of museum is linked to art. It suffices therefore according to Aykoroma that "the use of arts, culture and language as integrating factors in a pluralistic and multi-ethnic, religious and linguistically diverse nation, cannot be overemphasized" (19).

This is in agreement with Ekechukwu's position, earlier discussed under cultural heritage and development. In like manner, Cecilia M. Ljungman et al (2003), captured such nexus thus, "artistic practices serve to express the identity of group structure, including how they see and interpret their existence. This for him, further allows for the formation of cultural

identity, which is considered to enhance people's sense of dignity and have an empowering effect" (7). Such effects most often include nation-building in diverse forms.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it suffices to point out, that development in Africa cannot be completely successful if developers rely solely on foreign models rather, some aspects of our African traditional heritage (tangible) which are still full of potentials should be used reasonably as complementary indigenous knowledge and skills preserved by the people over time, through traditional preservatory methods, oral tradition and the likes. Herein, lies the place of tangible traditional African heritage as tools for development. I enjoin therefore that youths who are future leaders be educated on the potentials inherent in traditional African heritage, for use in future development concerns.

And that people of all nations should see the need to develop a formula that can politically, economically, socially, educationally and culturally utilize the values and institutions of traditional society by recognizing them and building on them in a manner that reconciles them as partners with the forces of modern science and technology.

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