

The Effects and Challenges of Ephemeral Artworks on Sculptural Monuments in Kano Roundabouts

Adedokun, Samson Adedigba and Eseyin, Maye Joel

Department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria

Abstract

It is observed that several monuments in the city of Kano depict cultural heritage, sculptural pieces of Hausa-Fulani tradition. Four of them were considered for this study, Silver Jubilee, Kwarya Fai' Fai, Commune of Elders and Sabo Bakin Zuwo and two out of them has been removed only one is being sustained which is Silver Jubilee. These are monuments auspicious to self-reliant and exposes people to various entrepreneurship skills that reduce unemployment among the youths particularly women. Several of these monuments represent traditional foods and drinks, symbols of unity and authority. But it is unfortunate that these monuments have to give ways for infrastructural development through the expansion of roads and construction of overhead bridges since the population of road users increase daily in the cosmopolitan cities of Kano. The removal of concrete monuments give room for display of ephemeral artworks in some junctions. These had turned to challenges that strongly undercut local manufacturing tradition. The present display artworks are banners of political campaign of last election and stewardship of the Governor Abdullaih Ganduje which are becoming hidden place for tout. The size of several of them block

Keyword:

*Glocalization,
Ephemeral Art,
Architecture/Monumental and
Sculpture*

the faces of road users as a result of wearing out of the banners. The paper observes that the place of billboards and banners for advertising is not roundabout, rather than expressway. In a nutshell, those removed monuments should be replaced with modern forms or send them to a particular garden or keep them in museum for coming generation to learn from it. The paper discusses the forms and contents of these four monuments and observes that change of names of some roundabout had occurred as a result of infrastructural development. The paper concludes that adequate attention should be given to monuments that speaks about the art and culture of a society and the beauty it accorded to the appearance of city like Kano. These should not be truncated for any infrastructure, rather elevates it standard if properly planned.

Introduction

The issue of documentation and preservation of Monumental architectural and sculptural abstraction in the roundabout of Kano Metropolis has become worrisome. The recent decoration of the roundabout with banners of stewardship that government embarks on is attracting abode for tout and terrorist. Despite of long-standing insecurity challenges government is spending on within the metropolis, the ministry that monitors roundabout supposed to take cognizance attention it deserves. In a nutshell, covering roundabouts with big billboard is just a recycling of insurgency. In the thrust towards achieving a desired position of prominence and relevance in the dynamism that defines modern art within the state and beyond, it is pertinent that the professionals in the field of arts should find a lasting solution to the misused of artworks. The issue has become the trends looking at from the past to the present government. Also, the sculptural monuments in Kano metropolis is gradually going towards overlooking and appreciating ephemeral arts that are ubiquitously in the city. The functionality of the outdoor architecture or sculptural monuments is deteriorating. While the ephemeral arts, because of its uses for political propaganda of the different political parties in Kano politics are gaining more

attention of the government. Take for instance, during the time of Mallam Sekarau dispensation it was inscription of sign writing and commissioning of his led government on building and rehabilitation of Mosques as the strategies of political propaganda also, by extension Engr. Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, it was the writing of his name on the roof of every block of classroom built by his led government. Now, we are in the era of the Dr. Abdullahi Ganduje using banners, sign writing, clothes, graphics art to covers the initial approved sculptural monuments. It is very important to know that our past heroes used their indigenous leadership to gained independence for us. The present leaders should follow suite in order to make Nigeria better for the forth coming generation. According to Ademola Babalola:

Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Balewa, Anthony Enahoro and a few others keen on indigenous leadership, called for Nigeria's independence, a dream that was realised a year later, on October 1, 1960. By his role in the independence struggle and his solid achievements as premier after the attainment of independence, Awo etched his name in gold. What is more, the man generally acknowledged as a sage made his former abode in Ikenne a tourist's delight. What now remains is for the relevant authorities both at the local and federal levels to act decisively and exploit this potential tourism goldmine. Remembering that Ikenne is to Awo what Onitsha is to Zik, the above account should be sufficient additional motivation for our present quest for the people in the hem of leadership.¹

Since returned of the democracy into Nigeria in 1999, ephemeral art has covered the vision and pride of some states such as Kano state which has its source pride from ancient cultural and traditional design from the major sculptural monuments in the roundabouts. The said roundabouts have its uniqueness of architectural/sculptural monuments with definite meaning that enhance 'glocalization'.

Glocalization

According to Chanda, Art is the product of creative human activity in which materials are shaped or selected to convey an idea, emotion, or visually interesting form. The word art can refer to visual arts including painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, decorative art, craft and other visual works that combine materials or forms Glocalization is the ability to annex the local materials with the foreign to make art unique.² It was adopted by the crop of

students who were admitted first in the Zaria art department who rejected the philosophy behind the kind of art training they were given some people called them “Zaria rebel” and others called them “the revolutionists” depending the side you look at them, this will be a discourse in another time.³ In view of that they adopted a philosophy called “Natural Synthesis” which has guided art productions in Nigeria till date.

Ephemeral art

The word ephemeral from Merriam Webster dictionary is something that lasts for a very short time. The autumnal blaze of colors is always to be treasured all the more, so because it is so temporary. The artwork that are not lifelong, fix and re-fixing continually, not durable, detectible and perishable. It is observing that where the ephemeral art and the figure in the round were displayed together, there will be communication error. Babatunde clearly stated that sculpture in the round really means “a figure that could be viewed from all round side. Most of the sculptures in the round are erected standing, it may be an abstract figure or naturalistic one”⁴

Monument and Sculpture /Architecture

A monument is a natural structure or site of historic significance set aside by an individual, a community or the government for public enjoyment and enlightenment. Artistic monuments are creative objects produced for the remembrance or commemoration of particular personages, events or emphasizing ideals of a group of people or corporate body or nation.⁵ Though artistic monuments perform the aesthetic function of beautifying public spaces, their usefulness transcends that of mere objects of aesthetic beautification. Monumental sculptures are repository of the historical, political and the socio-cultural experiences of the society where they are being erected. Commenting on the use of monumental structures for sustaining political ideologies, creating national identity and a sense of belonging in modern African states. Monumental sculptures are generally enormous or massive three-dimensional images that make various social and aesthetic statements. The term monumental is also used in the field of architecture as regards its perception, function and size. It describes architectural designs that are large or imposing.⁶ Many of monuments that teach women entrepreneurship are not considered most important and by implication, women population in every society are more than

men. A.C. Egele observes that most concept of entrepreneurship is strongly gender biased, in a way that makes our women entrepreneurship less visible, and that in spite of women starting and running more than a quarter of all enterprises, men want to be lord over everything.⁷

The Entrepreneurial Insight and Socio Analysis in the Monumental Sculptures in Kano Metropolis

Art objects that are massive and larger than human size is called monument. Many of them teach road users how to become self-reliant as they see them every day. With the removal of this monuments, it's killing source of inspiration and strength for cultural development amongst youths. Effiong and Aisha opine that Nigeria institutions should encourage training that beyond given students wage employment.⁸ Supporting the view, Osiboye in his dialectic comparison of preference of art works as predictor of gender in art value, considered Christiane's artworks as what educate nurses and medical practitioner by creating artworks from wood to produce what related to part of the human body but with different title.⁹ Art as a professional career has made many people to become art collectors and many have that eagerness for preservation and maintenance. Chukwuemeka Bosah in his preface for a celebration of Modern Nigerian Art encourage artists not to keep their mouth shut in educating the uninformed society on mostly art inspiration that pre-occupied with self-preservation of artworks.¹⁰ This makes this paper a burden that needs to expose how we are encouraging foreign art at the detriment of our indigenous art. Like many other major cities in Nigeria, Kano metropolis is adorned with numerous visually captivating monumental sculptures of different forms and contents, strategically sited in public places around the city. All these monuments perform historical, socio-cultural, religious, enlightenment and aesthetic functions. Because of its inalienable roles on the lives of the people, Kano State government, through its relevant agencies, erect and ensure proper maintenance of the monuments. Government, from time to time, compels corporate bodies such as banks in the metropolis to aid in the maintenance of the monuments. Occasionally, they renovate monuments that are depleting due to age, harsh weather condition or other human factors. Nigerians are artistically uninformed people; they post their posters, banners, handbills on the precious sculptures, thereby defacing them. Thus, the defacing has reached the level of whereby the government herself embrace it without minding its repercussion.

It is necessary to examine these sculptures stylistically and conceptually. For example, the Silver Jubilee is one of the most imposing and strategically located monuments within Kano city (Fig. 1) is a commemorative monumental sculpture commissioned by the Kano State Government and erected in 1988 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the reign of the immediate past emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero. It is located at the Silver Jubilee Roundabout along State Road in Nassarawa Local Government Area of Kano metropolis. The work, an abstract work in form of three swords attached to one another is symbolic of the emir's power. It is fabricated from plated metal coated with white paint. What is interesting in this monument are its horizontality and spatial dignity that echo through its highly simplified but dynamic design. The artistic representation of the work in the form of three swords standing on their handle is of socio-cultural significance in the history of Kano Emirate. The sword represents the symbol of authority of the Emir of Kano.

Beyond the socio-cultural functionality of this monument, it also performs artistic function of beautifying one of Kano's busiest roundabouts, one can see the infrastructural development there now that overhead bridge has given the place a new outlook, although billboard covers one side which the one of the effects of ephemeral art in the roundabout. As the magnificent monument with its beautiful surrounding landscape represents a major landmark within the city. It possessed harmonious balanced with polished finishing. The Kano State government and the state ministry of works is responsible for its renovation and maintenance.



Fig. 1: Artist Unknown, Silver Jubilee, 1988, Fabricated Metal, Jubilee Roundabout, ©Adedokun, 2014.

The Kwarya and Fai' Fai monument (Fig. 2), is located at Nassarawa Roundabout opposite Gidan Murtala in Kofar Nassarawa area of Kano, is a symbolic representation of the traditional Hausa-Fulani calabash (Kwarya) and its cover (Fai'Fai). It is used by Fulani milk on aids to hawk the popular Fura de Nunu delicacy.¹¹ The work is reinforced with some concrete elements that also add strength to its stability. The aesthetic pleasantness of this monumental work is clearly evident in its mathematically hemispherical design. No doubt, the monument can be seen as a grace to ceramics art.

Secondly, the Alo (Slate) at the top of the work symbolizes Islamic Education which is highly valued in the northern part of Nigeria. The work was also erected to serve the purpose beautifying the environment. The Fai'Fai is decorated with an "Alo" (traditional writing slate). This can be linked to the functional importance of calabash in the everyday domestic lives of the average Hausa-Fulani household. It is a commemorative work of art which performs both socio-cultural and aesthetic function. Calabashes, whether designed or not, are cherished in northern Nigeria, because they basically fulfill realistic functions in the day-to-day activities of the Hausa-Fulani women. Usually, they are used for serving food, for milking cattle and as carrier vessels. However, the decorated ones have additional value because they are highly prized objects of artistic value. Calabashes are known to add value to whatever function they are used for. When used as containers for food, calabashes serve as kitchen utensil, tools in the dairy woman's trade; they help to attract customers, thereby performing some economic functions. They are also an extension of the seller's look and therefore an aid to personal attractiveness.¹²

Decorated calabashes are so highly valued by Hausa-Fulani women, especially in the north-west geo-political zone of Nigeria, that they consider them as worthy presents to their daughters during marriage. This valuable domestic utensil helps to start them off in their new social role as married women, and they can be put to many uses such as serving of food, water, milking of cattle, washing and other domestic chores. Basically, all the designs of the Hausa-Fulani decorated calabashes are combinations of various abstract motifs and shapes like circles, squares, triangles and lines sometimes simple, broken or wavy.¹³ The Kano State Ministry of Urban Planning and Development Authority commissioned the monument and are also responsible for maintaining it.



Fig. 2: Artist Unknown, Kwarya and Fai' Fai, Concrete, Nassarawa Roundabout ©Adedokun, 2014.



Fig. 3a and 3b: Artist Unknown, Commune of Elders, 1999, Metal and concrete ©Adedokun, 2014/ 2019

The untitled monument located at the Lagos Street Roundabout (Fig. 3a) is an abstract metal work designed in wave-like spiral form made of galvanized metal pipes arranged in ascending order. It was erected in 1999. The medium used is metal poles buried in concrete floor foundation. Conceptually the work is suggestive of a commune of elders or community leaders engaged in a very attentive deliberation. It is also symbolic of unity. This monument symbolizes progress engendered by unity, bonding and communal living. The work which is strategically located in one of the most developed and highbrow areas of Kano metropolis supports this interpretation. Apart from its aesthetic functionality of beautifying the Popular Lagos Street Roundabout in Kano metropolis, this artistic masterpiece made of metal poles creatively arranged in ascending order, symbolizes progress and the close-knit arrangement. This work can be traced to origin where Kano was “the ironworkers” of the Abagayawa tribe descendants of the Gaya smith.¹⁴ This monument shown non-representational symbol, Kano chronicle in which the pagan chiefs rule the city at the earliest period of Kano’s growth. It also suggested the steady development of economy, physical worth of the state among other state in Nigeria. depicts bonding and unity. This monument is managed by the Kano State Ministry of Environment as part of its urban beautification project. (Fig. 3b) is the ephemeral artwork, covering the erected monument (Fig. 3a).

One of the few monuments with complex design is the Sabo Bakin Zuwo (Fig.4). This monument is an abstract representation of a lion’s den. It is located at the Dengi, Zoo Road Roundabout and erected in 1996. The monument, by Alhaji Abdulkadir Lawal, is produced with a combination of bricks, concrete and marble finishing and terrazzo floor. This breath-taking monument is located around the popular Zoo road Roundabout. Presently, the place has been reconstructed with overhead and under-bridge without any monument. Apart from serving the purpose of beautifying the environment, this artistic representation of a Lion’s den also serves as a landmark direction to the Kano Zoo. The use of arch was pronounced in the monument which indicates the reflection of Islamic representational. The structure was painted in white and depicts strong texture and heavy concrete pillars. The monument also serves religious purposes as its well landscaped surrounding is being used by faithful Muslim faithful for daily prayer sessions. The monument is maintained by Zenith Bank as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative.



Fig. 4: Artist Abdulkadir Lawal, *Sabo Bakin Zuwo*, 1996, Zoo Road Junction.
©Adedokun, 2014.

Solutions to the Challenges Confronting Monuments in Kano Metropolis

1. Despite all these numerous functions and importance of monuments, one will not believe that nearly all of them have been tampered with in one way or the other due to the placing of billboards and banners for advertising or due to infrastructure of development. Moreover, complete removal of monuments should be replaced with modern forms of the

monuments or send them to a particular garden or keep them in museum for coming generation to learn from them.

2. The problem of change of names of some roundabout as a result of infrastructural development and loss of the monuments in Kano Metropolis is worrisome. This is causing confusion for many road users. For example, 'Gedigedi' roundabout is also known as "Gada Lado", recently, the place is being commissioned as "Ado Bayero bridge". The name 'Gedigedi' attached to the monument in this roundabout has been lost. The authority in charge of art and culture in the state should find lasting solution to the proper identification of monuments to their roundabouts.
3. Cares should be given to the old monuments also in order to preserved our culture and historical identity and values which is root of present development. The used of ephemeral arts are also good in some areas such as highways road for advert and prompt publicity of goods and services. All these artworks have their place of exhibiting and functioning. However, the two types of artworks suppose not to be displayed at the same place if government want to keep the roundabouts environment clean and free from evil doers.
4. The attitude of complete removal of monuments should not be encouraged, the initiator of commissioning is number one stakeholder responsible for cares, preservation and sustenance for removal and replacement. The infrastructural development has to be planned along with monument erected on any roundabout in order to prevent memory damage and loss of history. Modification of monuments should be encouraged as part of infrastructural development.

Conclusion

It is clear that infrastructures are bond to change the outlooks of any developing city. The adequate planning should be given to monuments that speaks about the art and culture of a society and the beauty it accorded to the appearance of city like Kano. These should not be truncated for any infrastructure, rather elevates it standard if properly planned. The old monuments have to give way for the new and modern monuments such as fiber glass in three-dimensional artworks in some major roundabouts in Kano to be able to meet-up with the

current development in the metropolis which would enhance self-reliant amongst the youths.

References

- Ademola, Babalola. "Seven Years After, Police Recover Awo's Statue", Thisday Newspaper on Wednesday August 18, 2010.
- J. Chanda "African Art and Architecture" Encarta Dictionary Code of Ethics for Museums (The American Association of Museums). In Ezenagu N, & Olatunji T (2014), "Nigeria Sculptural Tradition as Viable Option for Tourism Promotion: An Assessment of Esie Mysterious Stone Sculptures." *Global Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol. 2, No.5, 57, 2009.
- Kunde, Terkura Matthew. "Prospects of Art Training Programmes In Nigerian Colleges of Education." A paper presented at the 6th National Conference of Vocational and Technical Education; Theme- Job Creation and Economic Empowerment via SME: The Place of Vocational and Technical Education, 2013.
- Babatunde, H.O. *A comprehensive Approach to Creative and Visual Arts: 1st Edition*. Ibadan: Lagos, HOB Designs (Nig.) World Press Ibadan, 1999.
- Lyn, Avins and Betsy, Quick. *Central Nigeria Unmasked: Arts of the Benue River Valley*. Fowler Museum, 2002.
- A. Folarin "Urban Sculptures in Metamorphosis" In B. Campbell (et al.). *Diversity of Creativity in Nigeria*. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. Nigeria, pp. 45-67. 1993.
- Egele, A.C. "The Entrepreneur II", In *Entrepreneurship In and Out*, edited by A.A. Akanbi, pp.10-26. Kano: Tahir. S. Advertising Agency, 2006.
- Effiong, E. Asuquo and Aisha A. Akanbi "Poverty, Unemployment and Education", In *Entrepreneurship In and Out*, edited by A.A. Akanbi, - 26. Kano:Tahir. S. Advertising Agency, 2006.
- Osiboye, O. Oluwaseun "A Dialectic Comparison of Preference of Artworks as Predictor of Gender in Art Value", In *Gender Theories and Polemics Acritical Source Book A Festschrift in Honour of Professor Mrs, Mary Ebun Kolawole*, edited by. Y.O.O Akorede and Asiyanbola, 267-278. Republic of Benin: Sonou Press, Porto-Novo, 2010.
- Chukwuemeka, Bosan George. "A Celebration of Modern Nigerian Art: 101 Nigerian Artists". (Exh.cat. 2010).

Adepegba, C. Kehinde. *Decorative Arts of the Fulani Nomads*. Ibadan p.28. 1996.

Interview with Mr. Idris Musa, Director of Research and Documentation, Kano State Ministry of History and Cultural Bureau, in his office August 18, 2014.

Aisha, Ni'lma Shehu Kano State under the Administration of Audu Bako 1967-1975. An Unpublished M.A. in History Thesis, Department of History Bayero University, Kano, 250 – 258. 1997.

Aisha Ni'lma Shehu Kano State under the Administration of Audu Bako 1967-1975. An Unpublished M.A. in History Thesis, Department of History Bayero University, Kano, 250 – 258, 1997.

Architectural and Related Factors Which Affect Worshippers Attraction to Campus Mosque; a Case Study of the Faculty of Environmental Design *Musallah*, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

H. M. Babangida, & B.B. Musa

*Department of Architecture, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State
Nigeria.*

Keyword:

*Architectural
Design, Musallah,
Attraction, Staff,
Students*

Abstract

The Musallah is a mosque which specifically refers to a place or space dedicated for the observance of the Muslims five daily prayers (Khamsu Salawat) found in various locations such as residential neighborhoods, places of work and institutions. While many factors could be attributed to worshipper's attraction towards a particular Musallah over others in these places, this paper investigates the role of Architectural and other related factors which affect worshipper's attraction towards a particular Musallah by using the Faculty of environmental design Musallah in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria as a case study. The data for the study were collected through a questionnaire survey, interviews with worshippers and documentation of physical characteristics of case study Musallah. Analysis of data was undertaken to calculate the Level of Attraction (LA) among worshippers and Relative Attraction Index (RAI) of measure factors. The results of the analysis indicated that closeness to office/department has the highest level of attraction with LA score of 24.7% followed by availability of water (23.6%). Similarly, the results of RAI the further