

## Evolution of Ceramics Association in Nigeria

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**Abstract.** Ceramic plays an important role in the sustainable industrialization of Nigeria in the light of its strategic application in numerous industrial sectors. Evolution of ceramics association in Nigeria reappraised the development of different ceramic Professional association in Nigeria. Evolution theory was adapted for the study. The paper gives details of Professional bodies' achievements, journals' growth and development of ceramic in Nigeria. It also highlights the important of technical ceramics to everyday life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and proffers some thought for the way forward for a brighter future for ceramists and ceramics in general.

**Keywords:** Ceramics Evolution, Development, entrepreneurship and professionalism

### 1. Introduction

Ceramic is a living and growing form that seems to know no bounds. Knowledge of it is important because its development is the driving force of economic growth, and transformation of rural communities. Harris (1975:95) opines that ceramic is a metallic oxide boride, carbide, nitrate or a mixture of compound materials; while Van (1980) sees ceramic as architectural materials, polycrystalline materials formed from the firing of natural clays and mineral admixtures at high temperatures. Those materials are produced by the sintering of oxides of various metals and other high melting point inorganic substances.

In engineering, ceramics are considered to include a wide variety of substances such as glass, brick, stone,

abrasives, porcelain, enamels, dielectric insulators nonmetallic magnetic materials, high temperature refractories. Generally, the term ceramic applies to an inorganic non-metallic solid made up of either metal or non-metal compounds that have been shaped and then hardened by heating to high temperatures.

As for Sub-Saharan Africa discovery in 2007, Swiss archeologists discovered pieces of the oldest pottery in Africa in Central Mali, dating back to at least 9,500 B.C. The findings from the Borno area are the oldest known examples in Nigeria, assigned to about 6000 B.C. Allsworth-Jones. (1992). Other earlier Nigeria archaeological evidence as recorded by kalilu (2006) are:

*Dutse Kongba, a rock shelter near Jos indicates that pots other ceramic wares were produced as early as 4000 B.C. York, (1978). Also, excavations by Shaw and Daniel (1984) associated ceramic wares, dated to about 3000 B.C., with a late Stone Age site at Iwo Eleru in the present Ondo state. Other late Stone Age sites associated with ceramic manufacture are rock shelter at Rop in Plateau State, Kagoro in Kaduna State, Ukpa in Abia State, Aba-Pele in Osun State and Ife-Ijumu in Kogi State Fatunsin, (1992). The Nok culture has been assigned to 500 B.C. Fagg. (1990) while ancient Ife in Southwestern Nigeria has been assigned to around 1100 A.D. Shaw, (1978). The foregoing show that pottery and ceramic production was undoubtedly very wide in Nigeria as early as the Late Stone Age.*

Pottery has helped in knowing about the civilization of Nigerian Culture, such as the Nok Culture, Igbo Ukwu and Benin. Barley (1994) is of the opinion that

“pottery is intimately connected with social and cultural milieu that creates it”. While Igwilo (1983) referred to pottery as “the mirror of civilization, Ceramic plays an important role in the sustainable industrialization of any nation in the light of its strategic applications in numerous industry sectors that include but not limited to aviation, automobile, building and construction, defense and security, electrical and electronics, engineering, industrial manufacturing, medicine, power and energy and many more. Currently Nigeria is spending approximately US\$900 million yearly on ceramic importation, out of which ceramic tiles imports per year is over US\$500 million and is projected to reach US\$2.1 billion by the year 2025 (Oaikhinan 2019). Despite the economic downturn, Nigeria remains a nation with great growth potentials for ceramic tiles and other products.

## 2. Evolution of Contemporary Pottery in Nigeria.

According to Agberia (1998:66), the earliest efforts at revolutionizing pottery production in Nigeria is recorded by Duckworth. This attempt was by a British potter, Mr. D. Roberts in 1904. His efforts met with no substantial success. At Ibadan he attempted to train some male folks in new pottery art fusing clay and glazes. This experiment did not succeed as a result of two main reasons. First, the tradition of pottery making was singularly in the hands of women who essentially produced pots on part-time basis. Secondly, the trainee potters could not cope with technical complexities in pottery production.

Between 1930 and 1938 another futile attempt was made by K. C. Murray in the Eastern region of Nigeria at Umuahia. Although he recorded failures in the aspects of craft pottery, his efforts however yielded results in the general art curriculum development which he established for the teacher’s colleges, as recorded by Evelyn Brown (1966:56), Agberia (1988 and 1996), Idowu (2006:135) and Danladi (2002). In 1949 the Nigerian Government advertised for a Potter, as a Colonial Civil Servant, Cardew came to Nigeria in 1950 and wrote a survey proposal on Pottery Prospects in Nigeria for the development of commerce and industries.

In August 1951 Mr. Michael Cardew (British potter) established a pottery training centre in Suleja recorded by Telkins (1971:3), Ahuwan (2003:19) and Ozioma (2004:43). In April; 1952 Abuja Pottery Training Centre was officially opened with 6 (six) trainees. Cardew was invited by the then Northern

Regional government to set up a training school where local potters from the rural villages all over the Northern Nigeria could be trained in modern methods of making pottery using locally available raw materials. Prominent among the trainees recruited at the centre was a woman Hadjiya Ladi Kwali who brought both fame and glory to the centre and the entire Nigerian nation.

Between 1958 and 1972 Cardew organized an exhibition for Ladi Kwali in Great Britain, Germany and America where she gave her lecture on art too. Her contribution to ceramics earned her distinguished national and international awards. The achievements of Ladi Kwali at the pottery training centre are important not only from the angle of pottery as an art but also from how traditions have been adapted for modern use. The marriage of the indigenous and modern techniques inherent in her pottery art helps as a model for experiments aimed at managing the two traditions of art in aesthetics with modern technology in contemporary Nigerian pottery.

Following this initiative and the success recorded pottery workshops and ceramics centers were established by ex-trainees from these early centers between 1960 and 1984. Different centers were established such as the Jacaranda and Maraba pottery in Kaduna, Ekiti, Okigwe, Oji River, Badagry and Pidev in Warri, between 1970 and 1990 different institution started ceramics departments, e.g. ABU, Ife, Nsukka, Auchi Polytechnic and Colleges of Education. More and more students were turned out. Just when pottery workshops were developing, Nigeria witnessed a tremendous increase in the establishment of new techniques of mass-production. These were reported by Mcrow (1955:84 - 87) established at Korodu for the manufacture of tea pots, jug, cups, saucers, plates etc. other ceramics industries are Riceware, Ilupeju-Lagos, modern ceramics at Umuahia, in late 70’s we have ceramics manufacturers ltd. In Kano and Royal ceramics Abuja specialized for the production of sanitary wares. Between 1978 and 1985 other ceramics industries established were Quality ceramics ltd. Uyo, Plateau ceramics ltd. Jos, Shagamu, Ipetumodu, Ede and Sokoto. Bricks and refectory companies also sprang up such as Ezenachi, Enugu, Maiduguri, Bauchi, Kaduna, Ibadan, etc.

By 1984 when Ladi Kwali died, modern pottery practice had become firmly rooted among ex-trainees of the pottery centre. Among those recruited is one madam Asibi Ido who worked with Ladi Kwali for 26 years and as a senior pottery instructor at the Dakin-Gwari, a special room for the production of all the randa and tulu pots. Other grandaunts of the

centre in the era of Ladi Kwali are now in towns and communities still holding forte. In Minna, Mr. Danlami Aliu works with the ceramics centre. In Zaria, Dr. Abbashiya Ahuwan (now retired) and Mohammed Tankko Asjada, teaching and working at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Mr. Kofy Athey (now retired) and Saidu Na'Allah are in Jos, Augustina Kauta in A. T. C. Akwaga, Michael O'Brien (also retired) A.O. Ike in Okigwe, Sam Pugala in Uganda and others. In all these, there is no doubt that the popularity which the training centre gained through Ladi Kwali had helped to establish pottery workshops and factories.

In 1990 Dr. Abbashiya Ahuwan and other lecturers in A.B.U. Zaria tried to form ceramics academic association which was a failure. Along the line, between 1985 and 1987, a British Woman Joy Voisey and Ben Drew first visited Nigeria in Borno state to work in Bama, a technical Teachers Training Programme where they built oil Kiln for firing. In 1987 – 1990 Joy returned to U.K. where she arranged a commonwealth grant for Ayuba Gadzama. During

this period Joy worked as an advisory teacher in the U.K. In U.K. Joy met Tony Ogogo, a Nigerian who owns and runs the Heritage ceramics workshops in London. Tony, Ben and Joy became interested in the prospects of a resource centre in Nigeria for the development of ceramics. Between 1990 and 1992 Joy returned to Nigeria to assess, as far as possible, the major set-backs facing potters at that time. And where they felt their main problems lay. Margaret Mama of jacaranda Pottery, Kaduna, was introduced to the ideas at that time and she was able to help set up links with the British High Commission in Nigeria, University ceramics departments and many individuals. In 1993 the second commonwealth foundation grant was negotiated for Mr. Umar Sulaiman (ceramics lecturer in Industrial Design, A.B.U. Zaria) to study semi-industrial ceramics in U.K. from April – July 1993. Ben and Joy traveled to Nigeria with general questionnaire on the possibility of establishing a Resource Centre for ceramics in Nigeria. Joy founded the ceramics Voice in Nigeria as a forum for dealing with contemporary ceramics issues in Nigeria.

### 3. Craft Potters Association of Nigeria (CPAN)

In 1996, with the help of British council, Joy Voisey, Tony Ogogo, Ben Draw and Margeret Mama, organized an exhibition of contemporary Nigeria ceramics hosted by the British Council at Kaduna in February 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 1996.

Reg. No	Name	State	Address	Status
96/CP/001	Abubakar Lawal	Abuja	Arts Council, P.M.B. 199	Corporate
96/CP/002	Capital Ceramics	Abuja	P.O.BOX 656 Suleja	Corporate
96/CP/003	Okoeguale O. A	Edo	Federal Poly Auchi	Ind. Potter
96/CP/004	Alasan Shaibu	Edo	Federal Poly Auchi	Ind. Potter
96/CP/005	Ibude Ikechukwu	Edo	Federal Poly Auchi	Ind. Potter
96/CP/006	Ohimai John	Edo	Federal Poly Auchi	Ind. Potter
96/CP/007	Uzzi Festus O.	Edo,	33. 1 <sup>st</sup> Republic Lane U/Sakpoba Rd. B/C	Ind. Potter
96/CP/008	Margeret E. Mama	Kaduna	Jacaranda Pottery, Kaduna	Corporate
96/CP/009	Umaru Aliyu	Kaduna	Mararaba Pottery Box 3213 Kaduna	Corporate
96/CP/010	Cuthbert Ilika	Kaduna	305 Dantina palace 25 Yakwo street.	Ind. Potter
96/CP/011	Ester Dokyoung	Kaduna	National Museum	Ind. Potter
96/CP/012	Suzia Shok	Kaduna	National Museum	Ind. Potter
96/CP/013	Dahiru Makama	Kanu	Sch. Of Technology PMB. 3348 Kano	Ind. Potter
96/CP/014	Fatima Bello	Kanu	Sch. Of Technology PMB. 3348 Kano	Ind. Potter
96/CP/015	Jide Ayodele	Kashina	Fed. College of Technology PMB. 2041	Ind. Potter
96/CP/016	Rosemary Ojugbana	Lagos	1 Adeshina close, Iwaya Onika Yaba	Ind. Potter
96/CP/017	Akintunde Oke	Lagos	1 Adeshina close, Iwaya Onika Yaba	Ind. Potter
96/CP/018	Levi Obem Yakubu	Benue	Dajo Pottery P.O.Box 2242, Makurdi	Corporate
96/CP/019	Sam Egbadho O.	Niger	Ceramic Centre P.M.B 92 Minna	Ind. Potter
96/CP/020	Okpan Oyeoku	Enugu	University of Nigeria Nsukka	Ind. Potter
96/CP/021	Ali Vincent	Enugu	University of Nigeria Nsukka	Ind. Potter
96/CP/022	Jeremaial Tuhenba	Rivers	Fed. College of .Educ. PMB 1038 Obudu	Ind. Potter
96/CP/023	David Olukotu	Kogi	Fed. College of .Educ. PMB 26 Okene	Ind. Potter

96/CP/024	Habila Gukas	Plateau	Fed. College of .Educ. PMB 27 Pankshin	Ind. Potter
96/CP/025	Royal Ceramics	Abuja	P.O.Box 1141, Suleja	Corporate
96/CP/026	Dave Ampah	Kaduna	22 Kings rd Sabor bari Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/027	Sanusi Abdulkadir	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/028	Umar Sullayman	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/029	Eric Okpoko	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/030	James Ewele	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/031	Elizabeth Ewele	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/032	Abbas M. Ahuwan	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/033	Mike Aluwong	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/034	Adele Garkide	Kaduna	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Ind. Potter
96/CP/035	Ozioma Onuzulike	Enugu	University of Nigeria Nsukka	Student
96/CP/036	Patience Ugbekile	Enugu	University of Nigeria Nsukka	Student
96/CP/037	Bala L. Abubakar	Kaduna	Jacaranda Pottery, Kaduna	Student
96/CP/038	Haruna Hussein	Kaduna	Jacaranda Pottery, Kaduna	Student

During the week exhibition, a steering committee of five (5) was elected on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1996 by the exhibiting potters to manage the affairs of ceramics Voice for 12 mouths. In march 12<sup>th</sup> 1997, a new association was formed i.e. Craft Potters Association of Nigeria (CPAN) and the third Commonwealth foundation grant was awarded to David Isa Ampah, a member of CPAN to enable him undertake a training attachment in the UK and a joint exhibition was held in the U.K. i.e. Scotland/ Africa '97 sponsored by British Council. Joy Voicey's contribution to Nigeria ceramics has enabled most potters all over Nigeria to come together to formed a professional body called CPAN and hold an annual convention.

Since the birth of craft potters Association of Nigeria, the Association has set up a resource centre to provide a shop for pottery raw materials. The Association has also provided an avenue for training for all potters, as well as information centre for Arts. CPAN after eleven years made some progress in achieving its goals despite some setbacks, the Association meets annually to show case its products. CPAN also, has been able to own a piece of land in Abuja as well as secretariat inside the National Museum and monument Onikon Lagos.

#### 4. Ceramics Researchers Association of Nigeria (CERAN)

The first move to organized Nigerian ceramists under a professional body was in 1986. Led by Benjo Igwilo as recorded by Ozioma (2004.46) but the ceramics association of Nigeria could not survive the high rate of 'infant mortality' plaguing most laudable corporate initiatives among artists in Nigeria. The second attempt was by Dr. Abbashiya Ahuwan and other lecturers in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria tried to re-organize the Association which was a

failure. Until 2002 when the lecturers in ABU Zaria has to fought hard to organized and bring back ceramics Association of Nigeria with a successful conference and exhibition held in September 2002, at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The outcome of the conference gave birth to the first journal of ceramics called ASHAKWU. VOL. 1 No 1 Published in June 2003. Ceramics Researchers Association of Nigeria aims are to promote the advancement of ceramics and allied sciences, organize seminars, conferences, workshops and exhibition to foster technical interaction and exposure among members, cater for the general welfare of members, and co-operate with organizations with similar objectives. Since 2002 Ceramics Researchers Association of Nigeria (ceRAN) continued to grow from strength to strength with over six (6) volumes of Ashakwa Journal of ceramics. Institutions now rotate the hosting of ceRAN conferences and workshops yearly.

The establishment and operations of selected cottage ceramic industries which are currently Operational in Nigeria are Maraba pottery at Kaduna, Dajo pottery at Markudi, Buhari pottery and Ushafa pottery both at the Federal Capital Territory, Sweet art Nigeria Ltd situated in Lagos, (Atamora pottery) close to Ikire in Osun state, Pot-purit Pottery centre located in Lagos, Saubana and son's pottery at Ibadan and Heritage ceramics established in Lagos,

#### 5. First African –American Ceramics Exchange Exhibition

Interchange and Exchange exhibition of Nigerian and Texas Artists was introduced to Nigeria by Professor Duo Chan from Dallas Texas. The South Dallas Cultural Center was pleased to present an exhibition of ceramics

works featuring artist from two different cultures, America (Texas) and Africa (Nigeria). Ceramic pottery hold the common thread among these artists.

These group exhibition includes twenty-two artist including eleven from Texas and eleven from Nigeria. The show, “Interchange” exhibition from September 7 to October 26, 2019. An artist reception was held September 7 from 6-8pm. Professor John Agberia, Dr. Uzzi Festus and Professor Du Chau, a Vietnamese Taxan, have curated the exhibition.

In May 2019 the first African –American exhibition titled “Exchange” was held in the Complex Museum at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The second exhibition “Interchange” was held in Dallas, Texas, at the South Dallas Cultural Center September 7 to October 26, 2019. Professor John Agberia and Dr. Uzzi Festus invited the artist from Nigeria and Professor Du Chau invited the artists from Texas. On a recent trip to Nigeria, Du Chau transported ceramic art by eleven Texas artists in his luggage to Nigeria. At the conclusion of the Nigeria exhibition, the eleven- ceramic works by Texas artists were added to the permanent museum collection. On his return trip to Texas, Du Chau carried the Nigeria art to Dallas for the upcoming exhibition at the South Dallas Cultural Center. Eleven Nigerian artworks will be added to the Dallas African American Museum Collection after the exhibition. This is an amazing exchange between artists of different cultures, working across the globe from one another.

The first African –American Interchange Exhibitors are:

*John Agberia, Du Chau, Uzzi Festus, Lisa Ehrich, Anthony Etuokwu, Barbera Frey, Juan Granados, Dan Hammett, Virginia Marsh, Emmanuel Mordi, Victor Nwokeogu, Anthony Okonofua, Elizabeth Onyebi, Edem Peters, Marty Ray, Louise Rosenfield, Tammie Rubin, Charlotte Tam-George, John Umoh, Uwa Usen, Merrie Wright and Marla Ziegler.*

This exhibition provided a platform for the exchange of ideas and dialogue between cultures through artists who practice the universal language of art.

## 6. Oaikhinan Ceramics Foundation

Prof. Oaikhinan *E. P.* is the founder of Oaikhinan ceramics foundation. The Foundation is to empower youths, particularly young girls that make up 51% of employees in ceramic business, to become ceramic entrepreneurs. It also supports faculty members to become advocates in their institution for ceramic

education in Nigeria. The Foundation is setup to give opportunity and deliver youths from criminal tendencies, give them a career that will make them contributing members to national economic growth.

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the long tradition of fine ceramics table ware manufacturing, to bricks, roofing tiles, wall and floor tiles, sanitary ware and clay pipes, the Ceramic Industry in Nigeria plays a major role in our daily environment. Technical ceramics are now used in a whole range of high-tech products including computers, jet engines, lasers, radars, thermal imaging devices and artificial joints, to name but a few. Equally important is the abrasive industry producing grinding tools. Last but not least, the manufacture of any steel, cement or glass is impossible without refractory ceramics. In fact, the importance of ceramics to everyday life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be overstated.

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