
An Overview of Kwame Nkrumah's Cultural Policies on Ghana's Visual Culture

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Abstract

This paper attempts to inquire about Kwame Nkrumah's cultural policies and philosophies on the visual culture of present day Ghana. The study hinged on the Art Historical research procedures within the qualitative research paradigm and gathered data through interviews, field notes, observation and discussions. The study examined Kwame Nkrumah's cultural policies and philosophies based on his policy actions and pronouncements and their influence on the visual culture as well as their relevance to the policies. The study revealed that, Nkrumah did not make a distinction between politics, culture and economics. He had a dialectic approach to all his policies because he acknowledged the interconnected nature of the social life of the Ghanaian. Based on this, he propagated that Ghanaians should recognise their cultural heritage and take pride in projecting it; that Ghanaians needed to create their nation state based on their culture heritage and that Ghanaians should recognise their cultural heritage as assets for national development.

Keywords: *visual culture, Kwame Nkrumah's cultural policies, pronouncements.*

Introduction

The polemic over whether Kwame Nkrumah's government had a cultural policy or not has been on among historians and in academia for some time now and this has generated a discourse in the cultural world. While some researcher have tried to categorize Nkrumah's cultural policies into Statutory and Non Statutory cultural polies, some anthropologists have argued that there exist no printed documents that can be labelled as Kwame Nkrumah's cultural policy document. Present day Ghana is a conglomerate of ethnic states right from the 10th Century AD. From the mid-1800s to 1957, it became a British colonial territory. Known as the Gold Coast until 6th March 1957, Ghana became the first black African state south of the Sahara to gain political independence. The new black African state, drawing on the traditions and cultures of its ethnic groups, took its name from the medieval empire of Ghana

which occupied an area around the upper Niger River, several hundred miles to the northwest of present day Ghana. It has a total land area of 238,500 sq. Km, a coastline of 539 Km (Encarta, 2009) and more than 50 different ethnic groups.

Ghana had a lot of cultural intangibles in the form of historical benefits, traditional insignias, iconic figures and untold stories which together inspired Kwame Nkrumah in the crafting of his cultural policies which, till date, have impacted positively on the visual culture of Ghana. At a second past midnight on 6th March 1957, Ghana in West Africa was born. Kwame Nkrumah became the Prime Minister and this gave him the authority to make very important policies towards the development of his African Personality concept which has impacted on the visual culture of Ghana since 1957. Nkrumah (1957a) declared:

At long last, the battle has ended! And thus Ghana, your beloved country is free forever. ... Today, from now on, there is a new African in the world! ... That new African is ready to fight his own battles and show that after all, the black man is capable of managing his own affairs. We are going to demonstrate to the world, to the other nations, that we are prepared to lay our own foundation. ... We are going to create our own African personality and identity. It's the only way that we can show the world that we are ready for our own battles.

The researchers are of the view that Kwame Nkrumah's independence speech was very clear on the cultural policy direction of his government. For the purposes of this study, the underlining statement from his speech is his call for a new African in the world. It was clear Nkrumah saw the need to immediately recognize the "Ghanaian national" cultural heritage and took pride in projecting it. He also immediately advocated the need to lay a new foundation of nationhood based on the "Ghanaian national" culture and that meant the Ghanaian ethnic art forms, motifs, symbols, etc. which were labelled as primitive by the colonizers should server as assets for national development. This gives meaning to why the Nkrumah government established and opened the Ghana National Museum and the National Archives before the eve of independence. Their roles were to collect, preserve and protect the cultural heritage of the new nation Ghana. Botwe-Asamoah (2005) claims that, the proposition overthrow colonialism and declare it evil was recognised upon Nkrumah's entrance in the political scene. He continues to state that, "not only did Nkrumah use African art forms, oratory, aesthetics, motifs and symbols, during and after the campaign for national independence, but he also initiated policies and created cultural movements and institutions in Ghana". (p120)

Traditionally, Ghanaian ethnic cultures, over the many years of their civilizations, had used the arts and crafts to ensure their continuous existence. Through many informal systems, those arts skills and technologies have been handed down from generation to generation to this day (AD 2017) and the trend is likely to continue. Nkrumah pursued an agenda to identify and link the African past, present and future, all in a search of a National Identity. His cultural policies inspired visual artists to create positive socialist conceptions of the African society, stressing on the efficiency and validity of its ethnic statecraft, its purposeful energy and many more. Based on Nkrumah's African Personality concept, a visual culture was developed by artists like Kofi Antubam for the political authority of the new nation Ghana. Abbey (2008, p. 36) postulates, during the last ten years of his life, from 1954, Kofi Antubam had become an inspiring nationalist and a leading advocate of Kwame Nkrumah's concept of the African Personality and was playing prominent roles in all public functions.

After Kwame Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, Ghana's political leadership and intellectuals have generally seemed more inclined to foreign cultural concepts and ideals;

probably because it seems more prestigious to them. The seeming inclination to foreign cultural concepts and ideals, however, has created a nation with a questionable visual culture; a culture that is very much dependent on Western ideas to the detriment of Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist or home grown ideas.

As a result of Ghana's continuous over-reliance on alien cultural concepts, the Ghanaian visual culture that was carefully crafted and painstakingly pursued after independence seems to be gradually disappearing and that further threatens the originality and creativity of the Ghanaian cultural identity. If this present situation is left unchecked, future national cultural art forms that will form part of Ghana's visual culture may lose all traces of the Ghanaian identity and ownership. This led to the main objective of the study which was to inquire about Kwame Nkrumah's cultural policies on Ghana's visual culture and explore how this cultural policy was implemented.

The framework to this study was situated within the qualitative research paradigm. This method emphasizes on words and the data collected are in the form of narrations and it is concerned with qualities and non-numerical characteristics of the data. The data collection techniques associated with this method includes observation and structured interviews. These were the factors that informed the researcher's use of this particular method. Data collection instruments used therefore included interviews, field notes, observation and discussions and the data collected was qualitative data. The focus of the study was on Nkrumah's cultural policy directives and actions from 1951 to 1966. The sampling strategies used to arrive at the samples were both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Triangulation and multiple data sources were used to ensure the validity of this study. For ethical reasons, interviewees' consent was sought and the agreed terms of confidentiality were respected.

Data for this study was collected through both structured and unstructured interviews with historians, art historians, traditional rulers, artists and Ghanaians living both in and outside the country. In gathering the data for this study, the researchers used the paper and pen methods: personal field notes and live methods, observation, interview, and discussion were employed. Participant observation enabled the researchers to observe some of the artefacts made as part of the implementation of the cultural policies in order to gain a clearer picture of the research context. This is because the research study discussed the influence of Nkrumah's cultural policies on Ghana's visual culture.

Results

Cultural Policies

According to Miller & Yudice (2002), Cultural policy is a framework for making rules and decisions that are informed by social relationships and values, cultural policies, public and private, implicit and explicit –all the time. On the other hand, Atlas (1985) is of the opinion that cultural policy is connected to all the major issues of our societies: economic stratification, race relations, international relations, technology, education and community development (p. 7). Just as culture is all-embracing, cultural policy also incorporates a broad range of measures taken to develop the cultural life of a people. Many policies with thoughtful cultural impact are made by decision-makers who have given cultural considerations a thought. Most of these cultural policies are born out of the determination to preserve and promote culture for pride and ownership, as well as for future heritage just as in the attempts Kwame Nkrumah made after Ghana's independence.

The researchers agree with Ayibadeinyefa (2011), when he argues that people often say we don't have cultural policies, when in fact we have many – we just don't know that they are cultural policies. He further states that Cultural policies are part of our everyday lives. All the decisions we take concerning our daily activities amount to some form of policy-making which should bring about improvement. Again, Atlas (1985) writes that a

family's decision to educate their child in the language, traditions and history of a particular ethnic group and a Community Development Corporation's decision to focus on cultural tourism or historic preservation are all cultural policies. This simply means that, at a point in the development of every human civilization, men have made choices about the culture to build in order to ensure their survival. These may include fashioning out ways to represent their values and how to express their desires and fears. An example is found in Nkrumah's Independence address in which he told the world of Ghana's determination to build a new foundation, her own African Personality and Identity from that day forward.

Towse (1999) is of the view that, Cultural policy remains a process that provides for the preservation of the arts and culture of a people which is foundational of their history and of utmost relevance for growth and development. The ideas which have informed cultural policy over the centuries come from many sources from traditional practices in diverse societies, from philosophers and theoreticians, from accounts of history and utopian speculations (Girard, 1983). On the other hand, Ayibadeinyefa (2011) suggests that the concept of a special socio-cultural responsibility for democratic governments is a relatively new invention. The idea of cultural policy as such came into currency after World War II. However, Girard (1983) proposes that court houses, churches, legislatures and patrons have, for many centuries, made decisions about whether, why and how to support work in the arts and cultural facilities; about the language and religion of a society; and about such issues as proper dress and behaviour.

These are some of the cultural elements that can be considered for the formulation of a cultural policy. Again, Singh (2010) argues that a cultural policy remains important for the preservation of culture not just for Africa, but for the world at large (p. 21). However Miller and Yudice (2002) note that, a cultural policy refers to the institutional supports that channel, both aesthetic creativity and collective ways of life, which is serving as a bridge between the two. Cultural policy is embodied in organised regulatory guides to actions that are adopted by a social group to achieve their goals of an all-encompassing development. Based on these statements, one can safely suggest that every country needs a cultural policy. Furthermore, the rules and decisions made for the purpose of preserving the cultural history of a people is not only of very high importance but should be considered as a document for further and sustainable development in every society. Nkrumah, realising the levels of brainwashing colonialism had caused to the mind-set of the Ghanaian about his own ethnic culture, sought to reverse the damage through the educational system. Atlas (1985) states that, the idea of cultural democracy has emerged as the major innovation in cultural policy as cultural ministers throughout the world have become interested in the idea because of their alarm over social trends that are being felt globally. This refers to the proliferation of electronic mass media, urbanization, "modernization", along with the individual alienation and deracination which accompanied them. Taken together, these phenomena have come to be known internationally as the "Americanization" of culture.

It is common knowledge that every society must build upon its past; on its history, traditional values and norms that shape the present and positively influences the future. In view of this, Ghana, and Africa as a whole, stands to gain a great deal by being involved in this global discussion, for the light it can shed on how to keep the multiplicity of the African cultural traditions alive. The researcher agrees with Ayibadeinyefa (2011, p. 15) when he contends that, "Today, most policy-makers haven't made the paradigm shift that would bring culture fully to their consciousness when government agencies in the industrialized world define cultural policies."

On the other hand, Girard (1983) notes that the challenges to democratic cultural development are global and they manifest in different ways from place to place, depending

upon local social and political conditions. But according to Ayibadeinyefa (2011), the crucial question for developing societies has been how to preserve and develop indigenous traditions, which root them strongly in the past and provide their deepest sources of energy and inspiration without being inundated by ideas from the industrialized world. Just like in the case of Ghana and that of many other nations in Africa, Girard (1983, p. 14) observes that,

Most developing societies have been struggling to overcome a long history of cultural colonization and the fact that their theatres, libraries and airwaves are dominated by the cultures which colonized then centuries ago, they want to find the best ways to shape modernization when it comes.

The researchers support the view point of Ayibadeinyefa (2011) when he suggests that it is most likely that every society, whether developing or developed, faces the challenges of preserving their cultural practices and make use of them to enhance growth in the face of alien cultural trends. The researchers would also like to agree with the point that if these societies gain knowledge about new and foreign cultures, it is up to them to decide what they want to be influenced by, how new traditions would affect them, what would be kept and what would be let go while bearing in mind that every culture is unique in its own way. In view of this, cultural policy can therefore be designed for the purpose of correcting or reorienting the mind-set of a nation in order to get a majority of the population to think in one direction for the development of a nation as it was done in the Nkrumah era.

Overview of Ghana's Visual Culture

Visual Culture is that part of our daily life that communicates visually with the things in our changing environment. A lot has changed in terms of the visual culture of Ghanaians since the days of independence. Most of the changes are largely positive and are based on the fact that aided by technology, Ghanaians have found better and faster ways of doing things in a more cost efficient way. From graphic designing to printing, advertising to packaging, fine arts to photography, one can record different levels of technological and developmental changes which have largely impacted positively on the Ghanaian's daily life. Records show that Ghana's cultural policy in the years after independence was the philosophy of an *African personality*. According to UNESCO (1975), African personality was at once a philosophy of revival which sought to rehabilitate African cultural values, and a creative philosophy which sought to bring an African perspective into contemporary African politics and modes of life. Hagan (1991a, p. 7) however indicates that,

when in 1958 the Bill establishing the Art Council of Ghana came up for debate, there was no reference in the debate to the need to develop Ghana's Cultural programs with the aim of entering into cultural exchanges with other African states and achieving African unity; and there was no reference to the concept of African personality as a guiding principle for Ghana's cultural development.

Hagan further argues that the general impression left by the debate was that Ghana's cultural policy had to have a Ghanaian focus and to develop Ghana's wealth of ethnic culture as the means of projecting Ghanaian "national culture" which was accepted all round as an existing fact. Nkrumah took a keen interest in the promotion of the arts right from the start. The Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, in collaboration with the Independence Day Committee using the African aesthetics as the criteria, organized Miss Ghana contests to mark Ghana's Independence Day celebrations. Botwe-Asamoah reports that Mawere Opoku indicated in their interview that, Nkrumah approved all the activities (Mawere as cited in Botwe-Asamoah, 2005).

Records made available to the researchers suggest however that Nkrumah did not only project the Ghanaian culture but, also that of Africans. In a letter dated October 8, 1965 which Nkrumah addressed to Mrs. Du Bois, the then Director of Television – Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Nkrumah stated that he wanted a beginning to be made at once, with television programmes telecasted in Akan; ahead of the O.A.U. Conference of Heads of State. Nkrumah listed that programs must be Ghanaian, African or Socialist as the three requirements for Ghanaian television and that implied foreign films used on the national television should in one way or another reflect these ideals (RG17/1/371, Letter courtesy of Ghana Public Records and Archives Department). Earlier on in 1948, while opening the Ghana National College at Cape Coast, Nkrumah argued, “the times are changing and we must change with them. In doing so, we must combine the best in Western culture with the best in African culture” (Agyeman 1991, p. 154). Again, Hagan (1991a, p. 7) is of the view that,

“from the beginning, then, with his mass education programme in place, Nkrumah did not have any other policy on culture, nor was there any awareness that his educational programme should aim at creating consciousness of the African heritage.”

After independence in 1957, Nkrumah fashioned Ghana’s presidency around some established Akan chieftaincy symbols, contrary to views that he had some serious issues with chieftaincy as an institution and some traditional rulers. Nkrumah himself stated,

I am not in the Gold Coast to abolish chieftaincy. All that the people expect our natural rulers to do is to respect the wishes of their people. Let me make it plain to all that even when the CPP has been able to achieve self-government for Ghana, there will still be chieftaincy in the Gold Coast (Nkrumah 1961, p. 24).

The researchers also support the view point that, Kwame Nkrumah understood the strength and significance of the chiefs as the personification of the cultural values of the land and that was why he surrounded the Presidency with symbols of traditional authority. Nkrumah’s depiction of the State opening of the nation’s Parliament on 4 July 1960 is by far one record that indicates his strongest appreciation of the cultural element that he used in projecting this cultural personality. Nkrumah records that:

My arrival at Parliament House was heralded by the beating of traditional drums and the cheers of watching Ghanaians.... I was then escorted to the House in a procession led by the State Sword Bearer and including the Mace Bearer and eight linguists drawn from many parts of the country. State horns – Imenson - were sounded by the Juaben State Ntamera. I then took my seat on the Presidential Throne, carved in the form of a stool and adorned with golden traditional stool symbols (Nkrumah 1961, p. 238, 239).

According to Hagan (1991a, p. 14),

One matter which issued out of Nkrumah’s nationalist propaganda and life-style was whether independence should lead Ghanaians to throw away European attire and wear the traditional cloth to church, school, factory – wherever. Clothing has a great symbolic value in African cultures. Any accession to new status, power or privilege tends to be marked in change of costumes.

As a result of the cultural rebirth that was engineered by Nkrumah's cultural policies, there seemed to be a rethinking of how to take pride in what was then known to be a Ghanaian identity and most people, especially the youth, projected it with pride.

African Personality and Identity

The over dependency on Imperial institutions and European consumers both inside and outside the Gold Coast during the colonial era, created both opportunities and limitations that influenced the creation of art; as the colonist labelled the "ethnic" art of the ethnic people as "primitive". According to Hagan (2012), the characterization of African cultures as primitive and African mentality as irrational led to three logically-connected abominations:

- The denial of the human identity of the African.
- The destruction of African communities and their heritage.
- The eradication of the individual's identity and dignity, resulting in the giving of European names to "civilize" and "Christianize" Africans.

He further explains that in Nkrumah's view, the human image, communal values and personal dignity of the African could not be reinstated, if the African did not reclaim and reaffirm the dignity, integrity and sophistication of African cultural expressions and heritage. Cultural nationalism, therefore, had to be the springboard for the struggle for freedom from colonial domination. On the other hand Négritude, a literary and ideological philosophy, initiated by francophone African intellectuals, poets, and politicians including Léopold Sédar Senghor in France during the 1930s disapproved of French colonialism and claimed that the best strategy to oppose it was to encourage a common racial identity for black Africans worldwide. On like Nkrumah's African Personality that pushed for the idea that the human image, communal values and personal dignity of the African had to be reinstated and used as the bases for national development. The problem with assimilation was that one was assimilated into a culture that considered African culture to be barbaric and unworthy of being seen as "civilized". Therefore the assimilation into this culture would have been seen as an implicit acceptance of this view.

Nkrumah, after his studies abroad, returned to the Gold Coast with the dream of helping to end the injustices against the African race. He had experienced the sophistication of his people and was willing and ready to assert the dignity of their culture and therefore a total independence from the colonialist and his way of life was his aim. Nkrumah (1964, pp. 62, 63) writes,

Our highly sophisticated culture was said to be simple and paralyzed by inertia, and we had to be encumbered with tutelage. And this tutelage, it was thought, could only be implemented if we were first subjugated politically.

He argues earlier on that,

Such disparaging accounts had been given of African society and culture as to appear to justify slavery, and slavery, posed against these accounts, seemed a positive deliverance of our ancestors. When the slave trade and slavery became illegal, the experts on Africa yielded to the new wind of change, and now began to present African culture and society as being so rudimentary and primitive that colonialism was a duty of Christianity and civilization (Nkrumah, 1964, p. 62).

After Ghana's independence however, the cultural policy that Nkrumah pursued lead to a cultural rebirth that enable visual artists especially to recreate ethnic art forms for the national identity of Ghana. Woets (2011) states, "both government institutions and artists created a cultural pride by falling back on nationalist and Pan-African discourses that showed

traces of a colonial legacy” (p. 117). Gakpo (2014) reports that in an interview with Brigadier-General Nunoo Mensah, Former National Security Adviser for Ghana, he urged Ghanaians to vote out Members of Parliament responsible for importing Parliament's Chinese chairs. He claimed,

It is sickening to hear that we have to go to China to make seats to sit on in Parliament. He cannot fathom why 50 years after Dr. Kwame Nkrumah built the Parliament House using Ghanaian manpower; seats have been imported from China to refurbish it. He adds that... Parliamentarians take our money to import furniture which you can make in Ghana, that really saddens me,... when you look at the House of Commons in Britain, the seats are benches which have been there for decades if not centuries, ... “Society must show their abhorrence against their Parliamentarians because what they have done is unforgiveable.... If the Parliamentarian doesn't serve the people's needs, you vote them out.”

First and foremost, it is important for Ghana, as a nation, to know how to invoke that feeling or notion of “*Ghanaianness*” while still avoiding some of the troublesome areas of national identity. Parliamentarians must know that the Ghanaian Parliament is the center of the nation's cultural authority and by their action, an identity is lost forever. In a broadcast to the nation on 13th April 1958 in Accra, Kwame Nkrumah indicated, for far too long in our history, Africa has spoken through the voices of others. Now, what I have called an African Personality in international affairs will have a chance of making its proper impact and will let the world know it through the voice of Africa's own sons. In effect, Nkrumah was encouraging his countrymen to tell their own story to the world rather than to follow European standards and themes. In Fine Art, Ghanaian artists, inspired by these nationalistic pronouncements of Nkrumah, made a shift from their usual Eurocentric themes. This is supported by Woets (2011) when he observes, the themes exposed at the National Museum's collection were chiefs, girls (not boys) undergoing puberty rites, durbars, horn blowers, “traditional” priestesses, cultural festivals, Northern dancers in smock, drummers, *Ananse* stories, idyllic village scenes with men playing *oware*, women pounding, gossiping or carrying pots to the river, and finally, vast beaches with fishermen in canoes. Also part of the collection was a number of landscapes with abundant green (and a waterfall here and there), away from the growing industrialization taking place.

Woets (2011) continues to write that not a single work from that period reflected life in the rapidly growing cities or towns, such as the popular Kingsway Department Stores, colonial buildings, railways, commerce areas, offices, and cars; nor did the Museum's collection say anything about the new harbours or gargantuan hydro-electric project in Akosombo that was built between 1961 and 1965. This account is an indication of the themes that inspired the works of art produced around the time of the cultural reawakening in Ghana. Again, Woets (2011, p. 114), when writing on the National Museum, indicates

The majority of the older works were acquired during exhibitions in the 1950s and 1960s. This was a time when the National Museum did have a budget at its disposal and the mission to give cultural form to the “recovery” of an African cultural essence, which Nkrumah had conceptualised. The period surrounding Independence, when hopes for a bright African future were high, influenced the manner in which artists came to frame and mobilize modern Ghanaian art. To grasp the underlying ideas and assumptions behind “traditional” African themes and styles in canvas paintings and sculptures.

He concludes that the striking similarity between the paintings, batiks and paper works - notwithstanding the use of different art styles - was evident in the recurring thematic focus on “traditional” Ghanaian culture. The researcher also shares the view that the actions of the Ghanaian artists at the time was not an inward looking process, as artists proudly represented Ghanaian culture in both local and international circles. Artists like Kofi Antubam actively evoked a “Cultural Renaissance” in the establishment of the new national identity. The fundamental evolutionist idea was that “traditional” art forms served as the nucleus for a contemporary and intellectually “advanced” Ghanaian art. This cultural renaissance was consistent with Nkrumah’s political project of Africanizing all Western forms of state organization.

Odotei (2008) also argues that the modern state of Ghana was named by the Europeans as the Gold Coast because of the abundance of gold found in the country. This was changed at independence to Ghana after the Ancient Empire which flourished between 4th and 13th centuries AD. Odotei (2008) claims the Empire’s actual name was Wagadugu and that the name Ghana was the title of the king. From the above discussions, it is noted that, before the arrival of the Europeans, the inhabitants of modern day Ghana had already established working ethnic cultures that were based on the solutions they had found to the challenges of their environments. It was during the colonial rule that the ethnic groups were brought under one administrative authority but it was not until after independence that Nkrumah’s cultural policy tried to adept and adapt these ethnic cultures into one common national culture.

The Concept of African Personality and Identity has a particular importance in this moment because of the many challenges facing Ghana as a nation and also in these times of cultural clashes and crisis. This is because many Ghanaians are struggling with how to invoke this concept of African Personality and Identity in the face of a total lack of confidence in the direction of Ghana’s visual culture due to the over-dependence on unworkable alien concepts.

Nkrumah’s Visual Culture

When Nkrumah became the president of the Republic of Ghana, he surrounded himself with symbols of Ghanaian traditional authority. He used the *kente* cloth for most of his formal ceremonies and *fugu* was his battle dress reserved for mostly party duties. Hagan (1991) records that traditional drummers and horn-blowers became a part of formal state ceremonies and occasionally, [Nkrumah] had a state umbrella over him. Kwame Nkrumah “lived” his cultural policy as he tried to lead the way by setting an example for his followers (Ghanaians). For instance, he kept his African hair sometimes without combing; often making it appear matted and soon the youth saw ‘aboy’ (a habit of parting the hair) as a colonial culture and left it. He roused his followers to rapturous endorsements with his white handkerchief and the swish or horse-tail he occasionally carried. His constant companion became a walking stick he carried along. Again, Nkrumah provided for his party, colours of great symbolism to the Ghanaian just like the *Asafo* groups did for the ethnic Ghanaian cultures. The red, white and green with the red cockerel became symbols of martyrdom for his die-hard followers. Nkrumah was perhaps aware of the notion that people make leaders after their own image. It therefore became fashionable in the way he communicated with his people using traditional cultural art elements already known to Ghanaians.

Findings and Discussions

The study has clearly shown that Kwame Nkrumah had an unwritten cultural policy. The cultural policy he pursued had positively impacted on Ghana’s visual culture in that, it fully recognised the need for Africans to recognise the values of their culture and to be confident in projecting it and also the need to recognise the cultural heritage as assets for the

bases of national development. This conscious awakening inspired lots of creativity and experimentation of traditional cultural concepts by visual artists.

A policy in this context could therefore be defined as a collection of principles and ideas that serve as guide for action among a group of people. By extension a cultural policy implied collection of principles and ideas written or unwritten, that serve as a guide for identifying, developing and preserving the sum total of the way of life of a people. These suggest that it is ideal for a cultural policy to be written because it is one clear way to ensure its communication to all stakeholders especially if it is a cultural policy of a nation. This study revealed that Nkrumah made some key appointments with some specific directives as to his expectations of their office. Nketia also made mention of some pamphlets that were made on some of these specific policy directives (J. H. K. Nketsia, personal communication, 3rd March, 2015).

A lot was done by Nkrumah's government to ensure the restoration of the dignity of the Ghanaian visual culture in the years after independence. He attempted to reverse the imageries that the colonialist left in the minds and the thinking of the Ghanaian in order to ensure that he will not see himself as being at par with the imperialist. In the process, he insisted on the "*Africanisation*" of every concept that had traces of colonial ideas and projected with pride the positive cultural practises that had survived the colonial era. He supported and encouraged anything that he perceived as an authentic African cultural identity.

It is therefore surprising the silence of Ghanaians and especially the posture of the legislative arm of government over the recent refurbishment of the chamber of the Ghanaian parliament in which Ghanaian artists were side lined. No attempts were made to ensure that even if the job had to be done by Chinese designers, they were not reminded about the uniqueness of our cultural environment and the Ghanaian cultural identity that reminded visitors who entered the chamber of the Ghanaian parliament that they were in a different cultural environment and visual standards. Consequently, the design ended up depicting an Ambien that fell short of traditional Ghanaian legislative certain.

Kwame Nkrumah had a dialectic approach to all his policies because he acknowledged the interconnected nature of the sociocultural life of the Ghanaian. Nkrumah wanted Ghanaians to be aware of their place in the world. In view of this, making them aware of their sense of cultural identity was the first thing he pursued. He believed strongly that the fundamentals of Ghana's nationhood depended on these. He propagated certain philosophies and ideals which constituted the basics of a practical series of thoughts which could be considered as cultural policy even though these philosophies were not put together in a document. In an interview with Prof. George P. Hagan, he indicated these three philosophies and ideals are that:

- Africans needed to recognise their cultural heritage and to take pride in projecting it.
- Africans needed to create their nation state based on their culture heritage.
- Africans should recognise their cultural heritage as assets for national development.

During the presidency of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana saw movement in culture. Culture was evolving with psychological expressions and philosophies like his African Personality, African Identity, African Genius and the Black Star concept which all simply said, 'it was okay to be African and that we should not allow the imperialist to dictate to us their image of the African past but we should take pride in our cultural heritage (G. P. Hagan, personal communication, 20th March, 2015). In the creation of the three Presidential Seats and the State Sword, one could see the promotion of an indigenous skill of stool carving. This was a practical way of creating the nation state of Ghana based on the culture of the people.

Nkrumah's request for these stools was in line with his African Genius concept which recognised and sought to promote the African state craft and creativity.

The introduction of the Presidential Seats, the talking drums, framed *kente* cloth and wood carving for example, gave a cultural colouring to the National Assemblé. Nkrumah's "Africanisation" policy, like holding the State Sword for the Presidential oath and the use of the Presidential Seat gave a body to the abstract transitional ceremony and made Ghanaians understand and appreciate the process better, while initiating a shift from the established British order. Using Ghanaian cultural art expression, Nkrumah cultural policies was able to touch and link several aspects of the socio-economic and political life of Ghanaians from television programming, book and newspaper publishing, logo creation, interior decoration, advertising (labelling) including the nation's currency notes and coins.

Conclusion

Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah understood the strength and significance of the cultural heritage and value systems as practised by his people as the personification of the highest cultural values of the land. In his appreciation and projection of the various cultural symbolisms, Nkrumah projected the Ghanaian visual cultural identity in line with his concept of African Personality. Nkrumah made key appointments with specific directives as to his expectations of their office. There were also some pamphlets that were made on selected policy directives to guide the implementers.

Kwame Nkrumah did not make a distinction between politics, culture and economics. He had a dialectic approach to all his policies because he acknowledged the interconnected nature of the social life of the Ghanaian. It was a general perception that the cultural policies were African centred and it placed Ghana on the map. It was established that the cultural policies Nkrumah pursued made Ghana unique as a cultural nation; Ghanaians took pride in their cultural heritage and projected it. There were lots of creativity and movements in the traditional culture of the nation.

Generally, before independence, the educated looked down on the Ghanaian traditional culture but, the cultural policies perused by Nkrumah were largely positive as it created a national pride in Ghanaians and helped in defining Ghana as a culture nation. The cultural policies established the fundamentals of Ghana's national development and created cultural institutions and the Art Schools for higher learning. The naming of the University of Ghana in the commemoration report as a cultural institution also allowed for the cultural colouring of activities of Ghanaian academic institutions. This was what led to the introduction of cultural elements like the processional horn blowers, African motifs on academic gowns, traditional or cultural dancers and inclusion of chieftaincy with its cultural colouration to project an aspect of our culture in academic and other social events.

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