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TYPOLOGY AND FUNCTIONS OF NGIZIM POTTERY TRADITION IN YOBE STATE

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the typology and functions of Ngizim pottery tradition in Yobe State, Nigeria. Ngizim people are one of the tribes occupying the southern part of Yobe State. They also extend their land to form part of the eastern side of Jigawa State. In the olden days, the Ngizim society made pottery to function well for domestic, social and religious purposes. About twenty different typical pots are grouped to function in four programs of Ngizim society. The pots are identified by their design and size of the pots. It provides the information essential to the understanding of more detailed information about Ngizim pottery culture. It lays emphasis on the physical appearance, uses and significance of Ngizim pottery. The types of the Ngizim pottery functions are however identified as well as their social significance.

Keywords: Typology, Functions, Ngizim People, Pottery Tradition, Values.

INTRODUCTION

Ngizim land area is situated on the western side of Potiskum along Maiduguri road from Jos. Ngizim is a Language of the west branch of the great Chadic family of Afro-Asiatic language. The Ngizim people have the same language similar to that of Bade people with some phonological differences to each other, mi (Bade and Ngizim Phonology, 2011). Ngizim is divided into several clans of which are Dagthawa, Muginum, Magzabai, Dago and Dagthagem. Members of these clans constitute social structure which are found in all the villages but each of them appear widely spread throughout Ngizim land but are all found in Potiskum township.

The Ngizim occupation includes weaving, pottery, hunting and farming before the coming of Islam (though reduced thereafter), traditional religion was centered on a number of gods owned by clans and rituals associated with these gods and their ancestors like Malum, Dishu, Apsan, Daro, Alan and Bazim which were worshiped according to clans alleged to them. There were villages and towns which are still Ngizim settlements in Jigawa state today.

NGIZIM POTTERY TYPOLOGY

Hornby (2015) defined typology as a system of dividing things into different types. In this case, Fiki-George (2016) stated that typology can be seen according to the general type in archaeology or social science. He stated further that typology is the classification of material culture into types based on similarities in form, construction, styles, content or use.

Pottery has provided ancient writers and the prophets during Biblical and Quranic periods in describing God's creative relationships to human beings. It has shed lights on not only

cultures and industries but on the migrations of the people, trade, commerce as well as domestic lives, (George and Mitchell 2003). It has become the key to establishing chronological frameworks for other cultural data among the societies of the world. Agberia (1996) also clarified that pottery is believed to be one of the oldest surviving crafts right from the earliest to the present day. This means that pottery has been very impotant in day to day and periodical activities in the society. Among Ngizim people, pottery is connected with four different institutions of usage which are domestic life, marriage, medical as well as ritual functions in the olden days.

Pottery occupation has been the work of the women even up to this day in the entire Ngizim countryside. The women owned the world of pottery in the land. They produce pot and use pot for their daily functions as women. Except on few situations, men do not have much connection with using pots. The pottery production is done by women with the help of their children as apprentices learning the work.

POTTERY FUNCTIONS

These pots are attributed to uses through their sizes, shapes and decorations made on them usually on the shoulder or neck. The decorations are laid in Horizontal order round the pot.

Domestic pots: The pots are also differentiated according to their functions which give them names. Osariyekemwen (2016) explain that communities have values, norms and believes, which forms their mode of operations and existence. This reflects the Ngizim culture, where beliefs and values regarding medical healings, sacrifices as well as social functions are attributed to pots.

Cooking Pot: Vaknak is the largest Ngizim cooking Pot with the average size of 120cmx130cm in height and belly. It is occasionally used for cooking food for large numbers of people during festival or ceremony and also used for preparing local beer called 'burukutu'. It is used for other purposes as mentioned later. Other pots for cooking food are called 'Dawisha' with sizes ranging from 45cmx35cm to 50cmx35cm. It is one of the Dawibuna (cooking pots). Dawidlugwan is a soup cooking pot smaller than Dawisha. The smallest soup cooking pot is Dakura which girls usually use for practicing cooking with her mother. Kwayakbuma is a pot lid with the size ranges according to the mother pot.

Water Pot: The main pot for storing drinking water is Tulisaam with 90cmx75cm belly size. Kwayakviya is an open bowl like like any other pot with no decoration but with attached stand at the base, It contains water at the bath room for bathing. The other one is Sawa (26cmx28cm) belly size and can also be used for producing local minerals (kunu) as well. There are pots for providing storing water for bathing new born babies especially twins. The other water pot are for providing drinking water for domestic fowls and animals. Among the water pots is Bule for carrying drinking water to the farm.

Ritual Pot: Fatunsin (1992) pointed out that ethnic groups have peculiar ceremonies associated with them and as such they employ pottery in carrying out these various ceremonies. The Ngizim people have really employed pottery for rituals and sacrifices in their belief to their gods. They have ritual pot called 'kwayakzagarim' in which the sacrificial materials are arranged and offered to the gods alongside with words of appeal to the gods. Rituals, sacrifices or ceremony depends on occasions periodically as demanded by the priest

or diviner. The Zuga (chief priest) directs the sacrificial ceremony. The pot can also be used to perform funeral sacrifices to their ancestors.

'Vakinsaam' is a medicine pot usually hung on a wood stand (that can reach the waist) by the side of the gate into the compound house. It is meant to ward away evil spirit around the compound house. The name 'patasukum ' was derived from the action of an Ngizim man's (an ancestor) horse always tied inside the compound house and released for grazing each morning. As it comes out of the compound house, it will struggle to rob its belly side against the medicinal pot (vakinsaam) standing by the gate side of the compound house. The man and his compound house was nick named as 'Patasukum ' meaning a house where a horse struggles with medicine pot. Kwayaksinasine is another pot similar to lovayakzagarim shape and function. It is used for frying or baking sinacine (fried cake) during Zatagarim ritual ceremony and Dabawa New Year festival. It has both religious and domestic uses.

Medicine pot: Bawayo is a pot of (20cmx15cm} belly size usually made for day to day domestic uses and specially made with the base open for dressing the top of the roof. It contains medicine that keeps away dangerous spirit from the house. This can be seen from a distance from the house. The same pot can be used to prepare concussion made of plant roots and leaves for healing the sick in the family.

Storage Pot: Pottery are ritual and utilitarian objects of values across tribes and societies. Diakparomre (2010) classified that container pottery traditions produce storage and serving utensils which may further be grouped. Nzigim people have pots made for storing and safe keeping precious goods. Vaknak (120cmx130cm) belly size is the largest pot of Nzigim. It is mostly used for safe keeping of precious and food items against rats or insects. 'Dawigadava' which means central pot is another big pot second to Vaknak in size. It is meant for storing food items and is owned by aged or rich women.

Marriage Pots: one of the important properties a marrying girl should take along from her father's house to her husband's house is 'Arambana' and most of the pots needed for immediate household use are expected to come through marriage. Arambana pot is a symbol for marriage. It is used to decorate her room. As a newly married girl, she is expected to pocess every pot needed for her immediate use in her husband house. Vakin pot is another important pot that the married girl must carry along to start cooking.

Pot for Decoration: It is clearly seen that pots are produced for various reasons which include aesthetic display, ceremonial, economic or religious functions. In this case, Ngizim women are much more found of displaying variety of pots as part of their wealth. They developed the idea of assemblage pot standing order. Every category of pot is assembled on each other according to their range from the largest pot, Vaknak, Davigadava, Guruf, Sawulyo are arranged on top of each other up to the smallest ones for house decoration as a permanent pottery exhibition in a particular room in the house.

Sawulyo is a commonly pot found among the old and middle aged women to possess dignity and respect among women. Any pot standing independently must have a stand called gudunkur (pot stand) or buried at least one-quarter to the ground, to enable it stand well. Gudunkrur is made of bold perfect circle of coil clay. The size depends upon the type and

function of the pot. The giant pots were usually buried almost half body into the ground before arranging other pots on top or when standing independently for economic use. Some pots may be found in the parlor or at the entrance sideways. Colorful dyes were used for decorations on the pots apart from incisions on them before setting the pots for exhibition or economic functioning.

Pottery Exhibition

At that time in question, an exhibition of each sample of pot as mentioned above usually takes place inside one of the rooms in the house. It is usually a permanent exhibition each category of pot arranged in sequential order with the smallest on top and the biggest at the base. A bed of clay with at least 30cm height and 2 meters breath and 3meters length is usually prepared upon where the pots are arranged. The biggest pots at the base are buried almost half length into the ground on the clay bed. Such exhibition is usually found with the rich people among Ngizim people.

Nowadays, these traditional potteries are going into extinction and are now becoming part of arts and archaeological artifacts of museums in Nigeria and around the world. Such is the case of Ngizim traditional pots that forms part the artifacts of the museum of the palace of the Emir of Patasukum (Potiskum) today. Ngizim population constitutes the majority among the indigenous tribes in Potiskum. The palace of Mai patasukum is located at the north western side of Potiskum along Gashua road while the palace of the Emir of Fika is located at the south eastern side of the city. The area constitutes the Mangawa people of Fika.

Summary of Ngizim Pots and their Functions
Sawa is for storing Kunu against quick fermention.
Kwalo is used as pipe for smoking tobacco.
Kwayakviya is a bathing pot placed at the bath room.
Dawaigadava is used for cooking Burkutu the local beer.
Kwayakgazadinis used for storing water for animals.

Vakin is a pot used for cooking, Support, Medicinal Pot at the entrance gate and for decoration.

Kwayak Buna is a cooking pot cover.
Gudunkur is meant for supporting pots arranged in chain.
Sawulyo is a cooking pot for big occasions.
TuliSaam is used for storing drinking water.
Vaknakis owned by women of virtue and wealth for sturing food items, clothes as well as decorations.
Dawibuna is used for cooking.
Kwayaksinasinis used for baking food items during zatagarim and dabayo new year festivals as well as ritual ceremonies are commonly used on daily bases.

Dakurais used for cooking food for small family. It is used by young girls for practicing cooking with their mother.

Cewiadarakai is an expensive pot owned by wealthy or old women (gwandrak) mostly for decoration and display of wealth. It creates respect for the owner in the society.

Bula	taking cool water to the farm
Kwayak Zaragarim	Religion pot for ritual water or food offering to the gods.
Cewiadarakai	Children medicine pot for bathing new baby each and usually put by entrance side of the room which signifies the presence of a new baby.
Bawayo	Child care medicinal pot on top of the roof to ward off evil spirit.
Arambana	This is room decoration pot by rich, beautiful (or superior women).
Vakin	meant for room decoration, fixed at entrance sideways, bathing and storage of food.
Dawishar	for cooking solid food (shar), Room Decoration it is one type of Davibuna.
Dawidlugwan	for cooking soup and room decoration
Kwaloke Sataba	for smoking tobacco, and other spiritual medicines.
Daragai	Another type of pot for feeding domestic fowls.

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

This paper is significant in order to keep the records of Ngizim pottery types and various functions for future upkeep; it also reveals the extent at which pottery production is important in African societies in the time past as an occupation. It has really shown clearly that Ngizim society in the far north of Nigeria did practice the use of pot for rituals and sacrifices to the gods of their land as it happens in the southern parts of Nigeria. Ngizim tribe constitutes the majority among the indigenous tribes occupying Nangere areas in the north eastern part along Gashua road in Potiskum. Though pots serve much domestic, aesthetic, religious and every social other purpose in African society for quite a long time. It is seen in Ngizim Culture that pottery exhibition were been practiced in Africa for a long time, though lots of these pottery

types and functions do not exist any longer but samples can now be found in archaeological exhibitions in Museums.

At that time in question, samples of aforementioned pots above were been arranged upon each other according to sizes with the smallest on top and the biggest at the base. More importantly, modern day social relations, technology and economic changes taking place in the society has discouraged further practices of old traditions associated with pottery in the society. Religious discouragement from Islam and Christianity is a major point to note.
However, the future art teachers and professional artist/potters can make good studies of these records to revisit our old pottery traditions for social and economic development.

CONCLUSION

People have much more involved in pottery production for economic gain only and neglecting the social functions gradually. It is however very important to revisit the idea of practicing the social functions of traditional pottery in Nigeria. This is an aspect by which our culture can be much more emulated and practiced to sustain pottery culture in Nigerian societies.

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