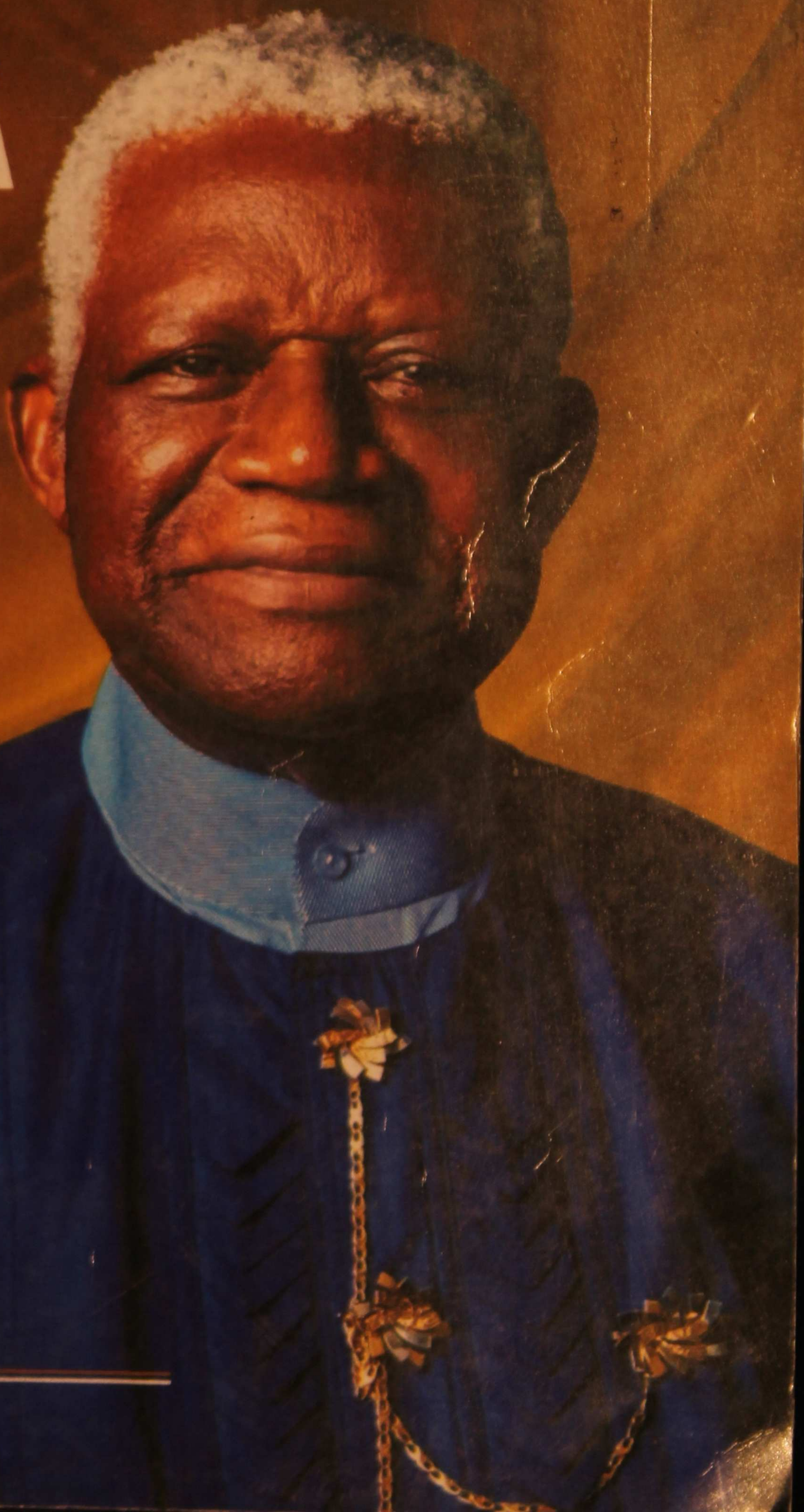
"NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY UNBOUND"

Essays Presented to

GENERAL IKE O. S. NWACHUKWU

At

80



Edited by
Akinjide Osuntokun

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At 80

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September 7, 2020

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AKINJIDE OSUNTOKUN

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PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

General Ike Omar Sanda Nwachukwu served as foreign minister of Nigeria twice, in 1988 to 1990 and 1991 to1993. This is remarkable because no one has had that opportunity to serve in that capacity twice which is an evidence that he served well at the first time that sending him back a second time was an appreciation of the success of his first run in the office. General Nwachukwu gave Nigeria a great profile internationally by his personality, drive and ability to cultivate the friendship of even adversaries of Nigeria. The evidence of this was the number of candidates of Nigeria he campaigned for to get elected into executive positions in International organizations ranging from Chief Emeka Anyaoku's election as Secretary General of the Commonwealth to Justice Bola Ajibola on the world court and others like General Joseph Nanven Garba as president of the United Nations General Assembly during its 44th session in 1989 -1990. Nigeria's voice was heard and listened to carefully in International fora whether as a member of the Commonwealth committee on Southern Africa or as a key member of both the African Union and the United Nations. In spite of the global dislike for military regimes,Nigeria during Nwachukwu's years was ably represented at the highest levels of international relations leading to President Ibrahim Babangida making successful state visits to major countries like Great Britain, France and Germany and to the United Nations where he spoke on behalf of Africa.

Decolonization has always been the obsessive pursuit of Nigeria. It is no coincidence that the period of Nwachukwu's years as foreign minister saw the final push by Nigeria to fully realize this national goal. Not only was Namibian freedom guaranteed, the ultimate goal of removing the stain of apartheid from South African politics and seeing South Africa emerge as a non-racial majoritarian democracy was facilitated by the indefatigable commitment to advancing Nigeria's foreign policy by Nwachukwu. Almost at the same time things were moving positively for Nigeria in Southern Africa, there was the problem of destabilization of West African states of Liberia and Sierra Leone which occupied the time of the Foreign and Defence ministers

of Nigeria. Constant visits to Sierra Leone and Liberia as well as Burkina Fasso were undertaken by Nwachukwu and his team to facilitate peaceful engagement of the major groups in the conflict as well as to engage multilateral partners in suing for peace in the two countries.

While all this was going on, Nigeria began to think of a post decolonization of African policy in which politics received less emphasis, while how to use foreign policy to serve the cause of economic development of Nigeria took centre place in Nigeria's foreign policy considerations. This gave place to Nwachukwu's policy of "economic diplomacy" which remains the battle cry for Nigeria's foreign policy even until now several years after Nwachukwu left the ministry of Foreign Affairs. Economic diplomacy simply defined means putting the weight of Nigeria diplomatic support behind bilateral economic relations and having a post conflict policy of getting some dividends from our usually no strings attached policy. This is not to be confused with throwing our weight around but should be seen in joint partnership for the countries whose independence we have facilitated in a win - win situation.

The essays presented to General Nwachukwu in this tome covers many areas of Nigeria's foreign policy in which Nwachukwu as foreign minister had to navigate. Some of the contributors worked with Nwachukwu as members of his "cabinet". Others served in adjacent department of government such as the Nigerian Intelligence Agency (NIA) while others are curious academics in Nigerian universities. There is a contribution by an academic / journalist to round up the book which I hope will be a good read.

It has not been easy putting these essays together in a time of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus when interstate travel was prohibited and authors have not been able to meet as would have been expected and the editor has had to do what professional publisher should have done. Because of the pressure of time we have had to make do with what is possible under the circumstances and I do hope what we have

the euphoria and the sense of achievement that the Minister felt! And, as it turned out, the Minister's hard work paid off handsomely. When President Babangida delivered his speech from the famous podium of the General Assembly at about 11am in the morning, it turned out, both in content and delivery, to be one of his finest public speeches, one which earned him an appropriate standing ovation.

The rehash of these details are important, if only to serve as a reminder that stories of efficient and effective public service delivery that belong to our past did not just happen by chance. They were the result of the handwork and commitment of men and women who worked assiduously to make them happen. Considering how much is 'broken' today in our national life, it is debatable whether adequate work goes into preparing our heads of government for outside and foreign engagements. But Ike Nwachukwu belonged to an era where things worked efficiently because people like him believed in standards that held us up as the true African giant. Without question, this incident would ultimately be remembered as one of Nwachukwu's glowing moments as an eminently decorated soldier and a diplomat of great distinction.

Remarkably, age and the passage of time have not repressed these attributes of commitment, charm, and even service in Ike Nwachukwu. If anything at all, age seems to have deepened them. For, even at 80, he has remained his old debonair self – warm, refined, cultured, urbane and forever, so accommodating. The fact that he remains in great demand for speaking engagements at his age bears testimony to an exemplary life that deserves to be celebrated today, and always. That life of outstanding public service assumes an even greater significance and meaning when it is remembered that his wife and consort for several decades, Gwendolyn Nwachukwu (nee Ejiwunmi), played a monumental role in that journey.

Happy Birthday, Brother Ike! Long may you reign!!

Chapter 7

Cultural Diplomacy and the foreign policies of Britain, France and Germany in Nigeria, 1943 to 2015

By
Temilade Olawoyin

Introduction

Cultural diplomacy, "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding",[1] essentially encompasses all activities undertaken by a nation to explain itself to an ever changing world. Indeed, the activities of European cultural institutes in Nigeria were sufficiently characterised by profound history of nation-branding by means of trust building and cultural programmes that were perfectly adapted to their targets. This chapter examines the links between the British council, Alliance Francaise and the Goethe institute, and the conduct of foreign relations between the countries they represent and Nigeria between 1943 and 2015. It also discusses the working collaboration between the cultural institutes and the agents of traditional diplomacy representing their respective countries in Nigeria, and argues that disparities exist in the works of cultural attaches and cultural diplomacy institutes.

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[1] Milton C. Cummings, *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government:A Survey* (Washington DC: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003), 1, www.culturalpolicy.org; See also Cynthia P. Schneider, "Culture Communicates: US Diplomacy That Works" in Jan Melissen Ed. *The New Public Diplomacy Soft Power in International Relations,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 147.

Between Cultural Diplomacy and Foreign Policy

Historically, culture has been an important factor that enriches the foreign relations of global states. Undoubtedly, culture has assumed a prominent place and importance for nations who are desirous of projecting positive self-image overseas. It is an invaluable tool which provides "support for a nation's foreign policy priorities, improve mutual understanding and people-to-people ties, build trust for subsequent interactions and advance matters of national interest."[2] Cultural diplomacy comes in handy where "traditional diplomacy and military power are of limited use."[3] For example, it is able to "persuade through culture, values and ideas"[4] while reaching target groups abroad. In spite of the argument among scholars over several cultural related terms such as foreign cultural policy and cultural diplomacy among others, positive cultural portrayal has for long been regarded as a major foreign policy conveyance for states globally. Among the high-ranking politicians and scholars that have recognized this impeccable significance include Willy Brandt, a former German chancellor who regarded foreign cultural policy as the "third pillar" of foreign policy - next only to economic policy and peace initiatives.[5]For Simon Mark, cultural diplomacy forms major component of a nation's diplomatic practice. He describes it as "the deployment of a state's

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[2] Canada Senate, "Cultural Diplomacy at the front stage of Canada's Foreign Policy" The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Senate, June 2019. Available at: https://sencanada.ca/en/committees/aefa. Accessed 2 July 2015.

[3] Walter Laqueur, 'Save Public Diplomacy', *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1994, vol. 73, no. 5, 20.

[4]See S. Joseph Nye, *The Paradox of American Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 8–9; See also S. Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

[5]Kerstin Martens, "Culture and Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of Britain, France and Germany", *University of Bremen Collaborative Research Centre*: http://www.staatlichkeit.uni-bremen.de. Accessed 31 December 2018, 2.

culture in support of its foreign policy goals or diplomacy."[6] Others see cultural diplomacy as capable of furthering a state's political and economic interests in other countries. Mary Niles Maack described it "as that aspect of diplomacy that involves a government's efforts to transmit its national culture to foreign publics with the goal of bringing about an understanding for national ideals and institutions as part of a larger attempt to build support for political and economic goals."[7] Commenting further on the use of cultural diplomacy as a strategic instrument in Africa during the Cold War, she wrote:

> In each case, their cultural programmes in Africa grew out of their respective colonial policies and represented both the continuation and evolution of beliefs and attitudes toward culture and foreign relations that were a deep-seated part of their national heritage.[8]

These views, divergent as they may appear, emphasized the centrality of contemporary cultural diplomacy to the implementation of a state's foreign policy and the attainment of its goals thereof. Indeed, the recognition of the role that cultural diplomacy plays within a nation's foreign policy has accelerated the creation of dedicated cultural institutes by many states that were not initially disposed to it. In this regard, China, one of the late comers to the business of positive self-portrayal abroad, has now set up and is expanding the Confucius Institute with blistering speed. First opened in Seoul South Korea in 2004, Confucius Institutes, concentrated in university campuses have multiplied considerably with more than 330 centres across diverse countries and regions of the world. In fact, it now boasts of more than twice as many as the German Goethe Institute around the world.

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[6]S. Mark "A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy"/S. Mark – Clingendael Institute Discussion Paper, 2009' 1.

[7]Mary Niles Maack, "Books and Libraries as Instruments of Cultural Diplomacy in Francophone Africa during the Cold War." *Libraries & Culture, Vol. 36, No. 1 (winter, 2001)*, 58.

[8]Ibid., 82.

There are several factors that point to the fact that cultural institutes, though largely independent (as in the cases of Britain, France and Germany), nevertheless operate in consonance with their respective governments and their agents of traditional diplomacy. Thus, the notion that "Arts and culture are foreign policy assets"[9] alludes to the sheer strengths embedded in creative expression and its usage in furthering a nation's drive for favourable foreign perceptions (usually a product of foreign policy objective). They are viewed as subtle instruments of foreign policy for their respective countries.

Over the past decades, sufficient collaborations between cultural institutes and their sending states have established the fact that such institutes promote foreign policies and further the wider interests of their countries.[10] In Britain for instance, the British Council's objectives are formulated in consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Indeed, the institute's activities and performance are defended in the Parliament by the Secretary of State.[11] This is in addition to a substantive funding called 'Grant-in-Aid,' it receives annually from the government. In 2011-12 and 2014-15, for example, the Council received £180.5 million, and £154 million in grant from FCO.[12] Such is the level of governmental involvement in the Council's duty of promoting cultural relations and understanding between Britain and other countries despite its much touted non-governmental status. To further establish its invaluable contributions to British foreign policy and global image, The Foreign Affairs Committee reported in its appraisal of FCO performance 2011-2 that "by any criteria, the British Council is a major instrument of UK public

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[9] Canada Senate, "Cultural Diplomacy at the front stage....13.

[10] Interview with Professor Ayodeji Olukoju, University of Lagos Akoka, Lagos October 12, 2013.

[11] British Council Triennial Review: Public Consultation, Discussion Paper, September 2013, 6. Available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office. 2 May 2018.

[12] Ibid., 12.

diplomacy and 'soft power".[13] It further recommended that the Council should not only act as "predominantly an English language school rather than a promoter of the UK's reputation, culture and influence."[14]

On their part, the French which "conducts the major portion of its cultural activities bilaterally, consistent with general patterns of French foreign policy"[15] leverages on different instrumentalities to further its worldwide cultural presence. Indeed, the central role of cultural relations to French foreign policy is reflected on the huge budget allocations it devoted to cultural expansion which formed a major component of post war French foreign policy.[16] In this connection, the Alliance Française which is the oldest cultural institute in the world, though a private organization, has been an official partner of the French Foreign Ministry in international cultural activities since 1981. Courtesy of a 1995 amendment, Alliance Française assumed an essential part of French cultural representation across the world with direct link to the French Foreign Ministry while it is also affiliated to the Ministry for Education. More importantly, Alliance Française's more than century-long experience in the promotion of the French language and education, which occupy significant place in French international relations, makes it an integral actor in the conveyance of French foreign policy. As French Cultural Counsellor Bertrand Fort puts it. "Hundreds of thousands of students study French at French

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[13]Ibid.; See also Foreign Affairs Committee Report 2012-3, available at http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmfaff/690/690.pdf accessed 12 June 2018.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Cited in R. William Pendergast, "UNESCO and French Cultural Relations 1945-1970," *International Organization, Vol. 30, No. 3* (Summer, 1976), 453-483.

[16] R. William Pendergast, "UNESCO and French Cultural Relations.....453.

schools all over the world. A big part of the Foreign Affairs Ministry's budget is used to support this global network."[17]

To underscore the centrality of cultural institute such as Alliance Française and other that represent French foreign cultural interest abroad to the French government and its foreign policy, Kerstin Martens posits that:

> France is an example of a state in which foreign cultural policy is under governmental control. The government oversees cultural diplomacy abroad through either a ministry or an official agency, emphasizing the advancement and maintenance of French culture, particularly the French language. French foreign cultural policy is thus made by the state, both at the conceptual level and at the level of implementation. Accordingly, French foreign cultural policy is primarily conducted through centralist institutions, despite the existence of various private initiatives and organizations. The Direction Général des relations culturelles, scientifiques et techniques (DGRCST) and the cultural departments of the French foreign ministry conceptualize and organize virtually all French cultural activities abroad. Due to hierarchical structures in the French system, French cultural institutions are directly dependent on the cultural departments of embassies in their respective countries, which are in turn dependent on the French foreign ministry.[18]

The Goethe Institute is by far the largest and most renowned of the several organizations and bilateral institutions active in furthering the foreign cultural policy of Germany across the world.[19] After its

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[17] Naoyuki Haraoka, "Through a convention regulating AF's activities and defining the conditions of its annual funding," *Japan Spotlight*, March / April 2014, 4.

[18] Kerstin Martens, "Culture and Foreign Policy– A Comparative Study.... 6.

[19] Ibid., 12.

establishment in 1951, the first task of the institute was to provide further training for foreign German teachers in Germany. It went further to adapt to local needs of host countries through partnership in addition to promoting knowledge of the German culture and language and the presentation of a comprehensive picture of Germany through information about its socio-cultural, political and economic life into the cultural life of the host country. Through the relationship between it and the Foreign Office, which is governed by general agreement, the institute spearheads the intensification of Germany's foreign cultural policy which serves as a specific instrument of its foreign policy. This can be better understood within the context of the post-Second World War Germany that needed to regain international acceptance and friendship. Thus, the establishment of the Goethe Institute to replace Deutsche Akademie, it's forerunner after the Second World War represents effort in this direction. Apart from self-generated income and contributions from sponsors and patrons, partners and friends, the government also provides funding which broaden the scope of the work of the Goethe-Institute. Therefore, from the very beginning of German's involvement in cultural diplomacy, it has always represented a specific instrument for the promotion her national interests and foreign policy goals so much so that Hagher noted that the "German foreign policy is cultural diplomacy oriented."[20]

As the examples of Britain, France and Germany have shown, cultural diplomacy is often situated within the broader foreign policy objectives of sending states. Thus, it cannot be said to be taking place outside the purview of the foreign policy of sending states. Over the course of six decades, Cultural Diplomacy has evolved into a long-term mechanism that involves a range of policies, initiatives, and activities for the purpose of advancing national interests. Consequently, the activities of the British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe-Institute in Nigeria within the period under review found expression within the framework

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[20] Iyorwuese Hagher, "The Importance of Cultural Diplomacy in the Foreign Policy of Nigeria," Paper presented By Nigeria High Commissioner to Canada at the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin 16 July 2011, 2.

of the intensification of the foreign policies of their respective countries. Cultural diplomacy merely served as a channel of manifestation, with immense sensitivity and subtleness for the advancement of their articulated foreign policy goals in the country. It has become the favoured approach for bilateral and multi-cultural engagement in today's world where conventional diplomacy has become challenged as its environment becomes increasingly complex.[21]

Juxtaposing Cultural Attaché and Cultural Diplomacy

Arguments have emerged about the appropriateness of establishing dedicated cultural diplomacy institutes despite the existence of cultural attachés sections in most embassies. How then does the works of a cultural attaché differ from that of the British Council for example? If their duties are similar why then do they operate side-by-side? Would that not amount to unnecessary duplication? These and several others have agitated the minds of observers. Traditionally, cultural attaché is charged with the responsibility of explaining his/her nation's culture to would-be visitors, tourists and exchange students. They attend meetings and seminars on education, culture, research, science and technology in their accredited territory. John L. Brown aptly described a cultural attaché "as a diplomat with the special responsibility of promoting the culture of his or her homeland. Historically, the post has often been filled by writers and artists, giving them a steady income, and allowing them to develop their own creative work, while promoting their own country's cultural attractions abroad."[22] In practice, *cultural attachés* usually possess technical skills in cultural matters with which they represent their country's cultural interests overseas through the platform of an embassy.

Though the job of a cultural attaché is cultural based, it is still an integral part of the conventional responsibilities that embassies as gate-keepers, discharge. Once "a problem is outside the realm of "the

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[21] Ibid., 1.

[22] John L. Brown, "What does a Cultural Attaché DO?" - *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 6 (June 1964), 56.

political, economic, military, administrative or information,"[23] it is directed to the cultural attaché. The Cultural Affairs Officer (as cultural attaché is known in U.S.) must conventionally be universally informed, eternally watchful and very articulate in the discharge of their duties.[24] In addition, they must be strategic cultural mastermind who will to promote cultural relations between their own country and the one to which they are accredited.

There appear to be a very thin line between the job of cultural attaché and cultural diplomacy institute. This is largely because they often collaborate or rely on each other for optimum cultural representation in their receiving states. For instance, "due to hierarchical structures in the French system, French cultural institutions are directly dependent on the cultural departments of embassies in their respective countries, which are in turn dependent on the French foreign ministry."[25] In fact, where any of the two is unable to function properly, it depends on the other as a medium to carry out its activities. In this regard, the British Council had had to use cultural attachés in the British embassies in foreign countries on few occasions. The most popular example happened in post-Suez Canal Egypt which holds a particular significance in the history of the British Council because its first overseas representation opened in Cairo in 1938.[26] Things turned for the worst for the Council in Egypt after the 1956 Suez Canal crisis when everything linked to Britain was viewed with maximum suspicion. Donaldson's description of the situation in Egypt reflects one in which the:

> Egyptians authorities were extremely suspicious, not merely of the British generally, but of the former British Council Institutes, which were regarded as sources of

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[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Kerstin Martens, "Culture and Foreign Policy– A Comparative Study.....12.
[26] Frances Donaldson, *British Council: The First Fifty Years* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1984), 343.

> propaganda and anti-Government feeling. The Government would not deal with the Council except through the diplomatic mission, and the Council's Representative had to be attached to the Embassy as Cultural Attaché.[27]

While there exists great similarities in purpose and the nature of tasks they undertake, however, dedicated a cultural institute is more likely to better promote the interest of a state in another given the mutuality that characterize it. The British Council for example enjoys more accelerated presence, trust and acceptance in Nigeria than the British High Commission and its cultural attaché. The reason for this is not farfetched. Cultural diplomacy is a subtle process of winning hearts and minds of others as opposed to conventional diplomacy with "emphasis on military might, political leverage and economic power."[28] Unlike conventional diplomacy within which cultural attaché is domiciled, cultural diplomacy encourages broad base dialogue, value sharing and relationship building.[29] Professor Hagher puts it beautifully when he noted that:

> Cultural diplomacy has become an urgent necessity as a diplomatic tool in today's multicultural world. The Global Diplomatic Operating Environment (GDOE) has become a challenge because human lives, activities and interactions, have become even more complex, diverse and characterized by ambiguity, rapidity and even danger. The traditional role of diplomats as gate-keepers, focused in geo-politics of problem and problem solving, is giving up space for diplomacy of boundary spanners which is based on value, - sharing.[30]

In addition to the above, cultural institutes have the benefit of reaching a much wider audience outside of the diplomatic corps. Thus, they

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Iyorwuese Hagher, "The Importance of Cultural Diplomacy....1.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 2.

posse wider coverage and scope needed to reach diverse members of their host countries unlike the cultural attaché that is domiciled within the diplomatic corps and have little influence outside it. The ability to be more accessible to the wider public in the receiving states make the representation of their state's interest more broadly open to the general public.[31] The cultural scope and influence of a cultural attaché is therefore limited for several reasons. Due to the obvious fact that access to embassies is usually restricted, even if the attaché have cultural materials, books and publications that promote the image of his/her country, the number of people it will be able to reach is incomparable to that which cultural institutes can reach. The activities of the British Council in Nigeria from 1943 represent a major example of accessibility promote direct contact with foreign audience. The Council maintained libraries across it major centres in Nigeria. Similarly, when it established branches in the old Western Nigeria; Sapele, Oyo, Ife, Owo, Warri, Ilesha, Oshogbo, Ijebu-Ode, Benin City, Abeokuta and Ilorin, reading rooms were also created.[32] This pattern was also followed by Goethe Institute and to lesser extent Alliance Française.

Given the acceptance and success of the cultural diplomacy model and the fact that traditional institutions are seen to be progressively losing credibility and legitimacy, cultural institutes can be said to now penetrate where the conventional diplomacy approach may not be able to. As a result, the ethical dimension of cultural diplomacy and its dialogical openness makes it utterly acceptable to diverse cultures. Besides, due to the fact that cultural diplomacy and indeed cultural institutes are seen as trusted partner and integrity based organizations, using interactive and collaborative approaches, makes them unique and melt away cultural differences. Thus, dedicated cultural institutions (such as British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe Institut) which had been around for some time inspire the necessary trust in all parts of the world where they do their works.

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[31] Interview with Professor Abayomi Akinyeye, Lecturer University of Lagos, 20 May 2016.

[32] NAI, File No: 4941, The British Council, Oyo Province.

European Cultural Institutes and Foreign Policies in Nigeria

The respective foreign policies of Britain, France and Germany unfolded in Nigeria under the guise of cultural diplomacy. The institutional makeup and characters of various sending European states without doubt, were reflected by the activities of British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe Institute in Nigeria. This was due largely to their links with their governments and foreign ministries in particular. In France, the Foreign Ministry along with Ministry for Education not only regulates all activities of Alliance Française, but also determines its funding.[33] In Britain, the government provides some financial resources (40% of its annual funding) through FCO; however, the Council's activities, to a great extent were determined by private actors. Yet, the Council still represented British foreign policy. Germany has a mixed system. "On the one hand, the state retains overall control of foreign policy, but on the other, it contracts agencies to operate independently within the field of foreign relations."[34] Consequently, the activities of British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe Institute in Nigeria unfolded under an ambience where national interest was of paramount importance and indeed reflected foreign policies.

During the colonial period, colonial officials, both from Britain and Nigeria, who obviously represented national interest and foreign policy of Britain regularly supported and facilitated the activities of the British Council in the country. Indeed, the British government made no secret of its support for an organization that advanced its foreign policy in Nigeria. In a correspondence between the Colonial Office in London and the Colonial Government in Nigeria on 2 October 1945, the former expressly asserted the existence of collaboration between the Council and government and the need for it to protect government interest. The letter noted that:

> The objects for which the Council was formed...are in the Colonial Empire the responsibility of the Secretary of State,

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[33]Kerstin,"Culture and Foreign Policy....12.
[34] Ibid.

> and it is therefore essential that the policy of the Council should conform to Government policy and that their activities should be coordinated with official activities in the same field. The Council must in short operate in Colonial territories as the agents of the Secretary of State....[35]

British government officials who in addition to the Council's staff carried out its activities in the country engaged mostly in lecture tours and career talks across Nigeria. Using its centres and Native Authorities' reading rooms, the visiting officials (it could also be a colonial officer working in Nigeria) gave talks on British Tradition, education, cultural Co-operation, the royal family, the British Council, making career choice and other topics that promote British interest and mission in Nigeria. As already noted ~~in chapter three,~~ J. A. Danford, the Regional Director of the Council in the western province accompanied to Benin City in December 1951 "....Mr. Bryan King, a fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, whom the British Council are sending on a lecture tour to this country to deliver talk on Voluntary Services in the British Tradition."[36] Such talks which were in line with the foreign policy objectives that Britain implemented across the world, particularly in her colonies, generally promoted British achievement in Arts, Music, Science, and general civilization.[37]

Those collaborations between the British Council and the government of the United Kingdom continued after independent in 1960. Nigeria and her elsewhere colonial master, Britain officially established diplomatic relation relations in 1960. Britain opened its High Commission in Nigeria in 1960 with Nigeria reciprocating in the same year. Mr. Antony Henry Head, a conservative politician, diplomat and former Secretary of State for War and Minister of Defense served as the first British High Commissioner to Nigeria between 1960 and

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[35]File No: 4941, The British Council, Oyo Province.
[36]NAI, File No: 4941/ 64, The British Council, Oyo Province.
[37] Interview with Elder T. O. Fagboye, (Retired Principal Inspector Osun State Ministry of Education), 82, Ibadan, 23 May 2017.

1963. Antony Henry Head and others High Commissioners after him as well as their staff advanced the works of the British Council in several critical areas. For them, it was a great opportunity to promote British interest which the Council represented in Nigeria. This was not restricted in Nigeria alone. It must be noted that across her colonies, the United Kingdom supported the promotion of her culture, civilization and advancement in science, arts etc as a means of national self-advertisement. To be fair, from the 1940s, the Council began to extensively expand its presence to new areas such as the Latin America, Near East, China, and North Africa. From the beginning of the 1940s the Council also commenced its cultural representation of Britain in colonial Africa by opening in Nigeria, the Gold Coast (now Ghana), and Sierra Leone in 1943 as well as the Belgian Congo from 1941-44. In all these places, the traditional British diplomatic instruments were constantly deployed to assist the Council in reaching the 'heart and mind' of foreign audience.

Over the next decades, promotion of education and became much greater factor in British government and the Council's engagement with Nigeria. Of course other governmental agencies also became involved. The Inter-University Council, established in 1946 by joint action of the British universities became instrumental in implementing the interest that Great Britain took in supporting the development of universities and university education in colonial and formerly colonial territory. It particularly played very useful part in the implantation of the idea of the university in Africa and Asia; a programme that became a somewhat foreign policy tool for the British government. Through this initiative, the Inter-University Council recruited leading British academics who were genuinely interested in helping contribute to the creation of universities with high intellectual standards[38] either in the colonies or in newly independent former British colonies. The fact that the British Council were on ground in Nigeria for example and in most places where British academics (professors and young academics

[38] Martin Kolinsky, "The Demise of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas: A Chapter in the History of the Idea of the University," *Minerva, Vol.* 21, No. 1 (March 1983), 57.

formed a substantive part of the teaching staffs of the various colleges and universities where they went) were sent meant that the two agencies collaborated extensively.

Several universities such as University College Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU Zariá), UNN etc benefited from the great intellectual standard brought to bear by the expatriate academics. In the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War, the work of the Inter-University Council became even more necessary in Nigeria, particularly in the Eastern Region where the devastation caused by the war was hindering academic activities at the University of Nigeria Nsukka for example. The British Council as well as the British High Commission became very crucial in promoting the work of the Inter-University Council in the country. Examples include during the visit to Nigeria of the West Africa working group of the Inter-University Council after the civil war to evaluate major needs of universities in the first academic session after the war. Led by Dr F.J. Llewellyn, vice-chancellor of the University of Exeter, the team remained in Nigeria from 24 November to 5 December 1970. During the visit, the British Council and British High Commission provided indispensable services for the visiting team[39] and helped facilitated their engagements.

It is not difficult to discern why the promotion of education and English language teaching across the globe has remained a major economic, political and foreign policy priority of Britain for decades for which the British Council, its cultural institute has continued to receive persistent government support. Educational promotion, particularly the teaching of English language has remained very lucrative for the British Council. Along with this profitability comes the prestige associated with the spread of English globally. In 2012/13 about 26,000 international students from different countries studied at over 1,200 independent fee-paying schools in the UK. Fee income for international pupils at independent schools was estimated to have earned the British Economy £685m in 2012/13, up from £430m in

[39]Ibid., 57.

2007/08.[40] Similarly, international students in further education were estimated to have paid £350m in tuition fees in 2011/12 and £980m in living expenses.[41] Beyond those travelling to British institutions, students studying English in their home country was estimated to be worth over US$50 billion in 2012.[42] The British Council was very central to this and also administers international exams. The Country Director, British Council Nigeria, Lucy Pearson, highlighting the benefits of its educational and exam business said:

> Through our exams business, we provide educational, professional and life-changing opportunities through globally recognized qualifications. These will enable people to work, study, build career prospects and promote personal development.[43]

The granting of scholarships to Nigerian students and professionals is usually as a result of synergy between the government and the British Council. Indeed granting of scholarship to deserving students is one of the major methods through which Britain and the British Council have engaged with Nigerians. From inception in 1943, the Council has administered the scholarship programmes of the British government in the country. In 1949/50, for instance, ten scholarships were awarded by the Council.[44] As noted in chapter three, the council also awarded bursary targeted at professionals with considerable experiences in Printing, Bookbinding, Librarianship, Youth Service, Child Welfare, Clerk, Trade Union, Nurse, Teaching, Craftwork, general technical

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[40] Based on data from the Independent Schools Council Annual Census 2008 and 2013 and following the same methodology as the London Economics report cited in "International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity," 2013.

[41] 'Evaluation of the Value of Tier 4 International Students to FE colleges and the UK Economy' and SIES 2011/12.

[42] Education Sector Factbook 2012, GSV EDU).

[43] Yinka Badejo, "British Council, CFA institute bring exams to Nigeria," *Punch Newspaper* July 6, 2018.

[44] NAI, File No: 4941/ 64, The British Council, Oyo Province.

work and others. Its 1951/52 advert inviting application from qualified individuals read thus:

> The British Council in proposes to award instead of academic scholarships a limited number of Short-Term Bursaries tenable in the UK for period of three to six months. .....it is intended to enable Nigerians work at their own trade, profession or vocation side-by-side with their opposite numbers in Britain and thus gain insight into the British way of life and into up-to-date methods and techniques...bursars will live with private families in England to make a wide circle of friends, who themselves will have opportunity of leaning something of Nigeria and Nigerian way of life...all expenses, including fares and maintenance will be borne by the British Council.[45]

Since 1984, British Council has conducted the Chevening scholarship which is the UK Government's global scholarship programme that offers future leaders the unique opportunity to study in the UK. These scholarships are awarded to outstanding professionals from all over the world to pursue a one-year master's degree in any subject at any UK university.[46] The scheme is aimed at grooming future leaders who will develop their nations. Administered by the British Council in Nigeria, several Nigerian professionals yearly benefit from it. Therefore, the work of the British Council in Nigeria in the areas of cultural cooperation and education was essentially complementary to the foreign policy goals of the British government. Indeed, the British Council along with the BBC was the most instrumental British organizations that engendered the positive perception of Britain in Nigeria during the period.

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[45] NAI, File No: 2320, "Western Nigeria British Bursaries" (Scholarships and Bursaries).

[46] https://www.chevening.org/scholarship/nigeria/ Accessed 8 May 2018.

For Alliance Française and Goethe Institute whose home governments did not have the leverage that colonial relation afforded Britain in Nigeria, diplomatic collaboration with their respective embassies had to wait till after Nigeria independent in 1960 and the subsequent establishment of diplomatic relations with their countries. Nevertheless, French officials intermittently visited the country to promote the work of the Alliance Française. This however did not match the scale of engagement, support and collaboration that existed between British Council and Britain. Yet, Alliance Française and other institutes of French cultural foreign policy were able to implement the cultural equivalent of French foreign policy in the country.

French's love for its language and the passion to have it dominate the world is perhaps unmatched anywhere else. Indeed, the spread of the French language is an integral part of its government's foreign policy. It was based on this understanding that the Alliance Française operated an aggressive quest for new speakers across the world, Nigeria inclusive. While doing so, it enjoyed a complete partnership with the French government, particularly through its embassy in Nigeria. This is not new. Generally, cultural diplomacy programmes, in their entire facet are designed explicitly to support foreign policy and the national interest of the state engaged in it. Thus, the French example is in order. Again, these activities, beyond being clear manifestation of French foreign policy in action, also benefit the interest of the receiving nation, in this case Nigeria.[47] Being a country surrounded by French speaking countries, knowledge of French by Nigeria is of paramount importance to the economic, political and regional integration championed by the country. To underscore its importance, the country established a French Language Village in Badagry to promote the teaching and learning of the language. Thus, Alliance Francaise's engagement with the Nigerian audiences throughout its network of French language centres across the country does not only serve the national interest of France to get its language expanded but

[47] Interview with Mr. Oyolola Kolade, Staff at Alliance Francaise, Alagomeji, Yaba, Lagos, July 22, 2016.

also expand the French knowledge of Nigerians. In addition, Alliance Francaise Centres across the country also runs training programmes for French Teachers by offering summer teaching courses for teachers wishing to deepen and improve their knowledge of the Language. Among the certificates (diplomas) issued across its centres are DAEFLE (Diplomoe d' Aptitude a l'Enseignement du Francaise Langue Entragere) and the DPAEFP-FLE (Diplome Professional de alliance francaise Paris Ile-de-France en Francaise Langue Entragere) which is obtained five months after an initial training.[50]

Beyond the teaching and promotion of the French language across Nigeria, Alliance Francaise also mastermind the general expression of French civilization and culture through the organisation of cultural exchange programmes that cater for intellectuals and artists. Such exchanges take place between Nigeria and France or other French speaking countries. Through such arrangements, many artists from Nigeria have performed, exhibited locally and abroad courtesy of Alliance Française centres. It also facilitates the visit to Nigeria of foreign artists, especially those from France or French speaking countries. Another of its flagship programmes, is the celebration of the 'French Language and Francophonie Week' which features concerts, dance and music performance. Marked across the world, it provides great opportunity for French speakers around the world to celebrate the French language in all its diversity with more than 1,500 events taking place during the week, across 70 countries.[48] Like in every other activity it undertakes in the country, the French Embassy annually provides financial and logistic support to make it successful.

On its part, the Goethe Institut had no any form of activity in colonial Nigeria. In fact, it was not until 1962, two years after Nigeria's independence that Goethe Institut was established in the country. Nevertheless, informal cultural cooperation between Nigeria and Germany dates back to 1910 when Leo Frobenius, an earthnologist from Berlin dug up ancient relics from Ile-Ife. Frobenius was

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[48] https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/. Accessed 12 April 2018.

impressed by the quality of his discoveries that he likened them to what ancient Greek would offer. He was one of the first uncover and intimate Europeans about the cultural root of Africa. Felix von Luschen, another German explorer also made reference to the quality of Ife culture. In 1919, he described sculptures in bronze which received international acclaim at the time as "masterpiece of African artistic creation." It was on this historical ground that Nigerian-German cultural relation took root.

It was however the establishment of the Geothe Institut in Lagos on 6 August 1962 that brought vibrancy and organization into Nigeria-German cultural cooperation. Acting as a bridge for cultural cooperation based on the principle of cultural dialogue, the institute facilitated the provision of endless cultural interaction between Nigeria and Germany. Through its German language programme, cultural exchange, as well as library and information service, the institute gave Nigerians the platform to learn a new language and show their talents. It gave Nigerian artists the platforms to exhibit their sculptures and paintings, gave authors the stage to read their poems and novels and musicians the stage to showcase the music in Nigeria and Germany. In addition, the institute organized exchange programmes for journalists, and regularly hosted workshops for German and Nigerian artists in collaboration with the German Embassy/Consulate in Nigeria.[49]

Indeed, it must be emphasized that the German Embassy in Nigeria consistently collaborated with the Goethe Institut in the discharge of its German cultural representation assignments. Apart from collaborating with the institute in organizing local events for artists, musicians, authors and academics, it constantly facilitated their visits to Germany. The long list of Nigerians in various fields who benefited from this practice is endless. Examples include: Duro Ladipo, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Uche Okeke, Yusuf Grillo, Bisi Fakeye, Fela Anikulapo Kuti etc. Through these programmes and activities, the

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[49]Niyi Bello and Bridget Onochie, "Stronger ties will balance Nigeria, Germany trade relations, says Stefan Liebing," *Guardian Newspaper*, 31 August 2018.

institute promoted the positive image of Germany in Nigeria. In all its activities and engagements in Nigeria, the support and collaboration it received from the German Embassy were incredibly significant to it success. Nigeria and Germany have also engaged cultural dialogue at the highest level on several occasions. The three day working visit of the former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Helmut Schmidt to Nigeria in June 1978 provided the two countries an opportunity to engage at the highest level. Beyond agreements on economic scientific and cooperation, issues surrounding global security (e.g. the situations in Lebanon, Palestine etc.), the apartheid regime in South Africa and technological development, General Olusegun Obasanjo, the then Nigeria's Head of State and Mr. Helmut Schmidt also discussed and signed agreements on cultural cooperation and collaboration. In a joint communiqué released at the end of the visit states in part that:

> The two leaders noted with satisfaction the current state of friendly relations existing between their two countries and expressed their determination to further expand and strengthen these relations by intensifying and diversifying bilateral cooperation in all fields...expressing their satisfaction at the positive evolution of the relations in the fields of education and culture, the two leaders agreed to stimulate further the development of such ties, with particular reference to the provision of specialist skills and personnel for Nigeria both in the country and in the Federal Republic of Germany.[50]

To further underscore the value which German government had for the Goethe Institute and its activities in the country, a strong delegation of state officials who were on Mr. Schmidt entourage, made up of Mr. Guenther Van WELL, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office; Dr. Juergen Ruhfus, Head of the External Relation Division, Office of the Federal Chancellor; Dr. Heinz Droege, the Ambassador of

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[50] Federal Ministry of Information, Press Release No. 889, Lagos, June 28 1978.

Germany to Nigeria and other representatives of the German cultural sector met with the leadership of the Goethe institut in Nigeria on the by-line of its visit to Nigeria. Several other high level visits have since taken place between the two countries both in Nigeria and Germany with cultural cooperation and collaboration as well as educational development being high on their agendas. Commenting on one of such agreements signed during the state visit to Germany by President Obasanjo in December 1999, Chief Ojo Maduekwe remarked that Nigeria "finds this historic agreement with Germany a good omen for the shortening of distance in the sharing of heritage between Benin and Berlin, Port Harcourt and Frankfurt, Kano and Cologne, Maiduguri and Munich."[51]

For the Federal Republic of Germany, sustaining cordial relations with Nigeria was imperative in many respects. Her massive population, influence on African affairs, resource endowment and potential as a global superpower made the country one that must be courted. It was perhaps this understanding that informed the German government's sustained effort to reinvigorate its relations with Nigeria after being accused of abandoning the country during the Nigeria Civil War. Indeed, Germany was accused of providing human, material and financial resource for Biafra. It was discovered that a number of German mercenaries fought on the side of Biafra with arms delivered to them. Financial resources that reached Biafra from Germany were so massive that by the close of 1968; about 55 million Deutsch-Marks had been received from the German government.[52] To revive the constraint relations, the Germany government took steps to assure Nigeria of her commitment to continue existence of a united Nigeria. During the visit of Mr. Kurt G. A. Ludwigsen, West Germany's Vice Consul in the northern states to the Military Governor Col. Abba Kyari

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[51] "Nigeria, Germany signs cultural pact, *Vanguard Newspaper*, 1 July 2000, 25.

[52] Femi Aribisala, "Nigeria and West Germany," cited in G. O. Olusanya and R. A. Akinjide (eds), *Nigeria's External Relations: The First twenty Five Years;* (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1986), 309.

in Kaduna immediately after the war, the envoy gave assurance that Germany "would continue to give its full support to Nigeria's effort to maintain internal cohesion and its territorial integrity."[53]

Except for few occasions, Nigeria and Germany have naturally had fruitful collaboration in several critical areas of their bilateral relations. Amongst all, cultural collaboration played a greater role. In this respect, the Goethe Institute, Germany's institute for foreign cultural cooperation through its activities in Nigeria helped deepened the relations even as it masterfully implemented important aspects of German foreign policy. It must also be stressed that the support it consistently received from German embassy in Nigeria and indeed the whole of the German foreign framework were instrumental to its successful operation in the country.

Generally, the implementation of critical foreign policy agendas of the sending the European states by their respective cultural institutes became intensified during the Cold War. "Book donations, translation and publishing programmes, and the creation of cultural centre libraries were all means by which foreign governments sought to influence the African elite during the Cold War"[54] all unfolded through the platforms cultural institutes. For example, Britain and France who along with the United States of America were at the forefront of ideological warfare with the USSR employed this strategy the most. This era witnessed an accelerated provision of books, opening of new libraries and other related activities through which the cultural institutes promoted the foreign policies of their respective states. The priority that each nation gave to these activities was a result of underlying ideologies that provided the foundation for its cultural diplomacy.[55]

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[53] "German Consul Pledge Support for Nigeria," *New Nigerian Newspaper*, 8 October 1970, 7.
[54] M. Maack, "Books and Libraries as.....58.
[55] Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has showed that the activities of the British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe Institute did not in any way contradict the foreign policies of their sending states.[56] If anything, their activities and engagements with the Nigerian state and people were motivated generally by and indeed aligned with the foreign policies of Britain, France and Germany. This was in line with the central place that international cultural relation came to occupy as a powerful medium for international dialogue and understanding and important means of influence.

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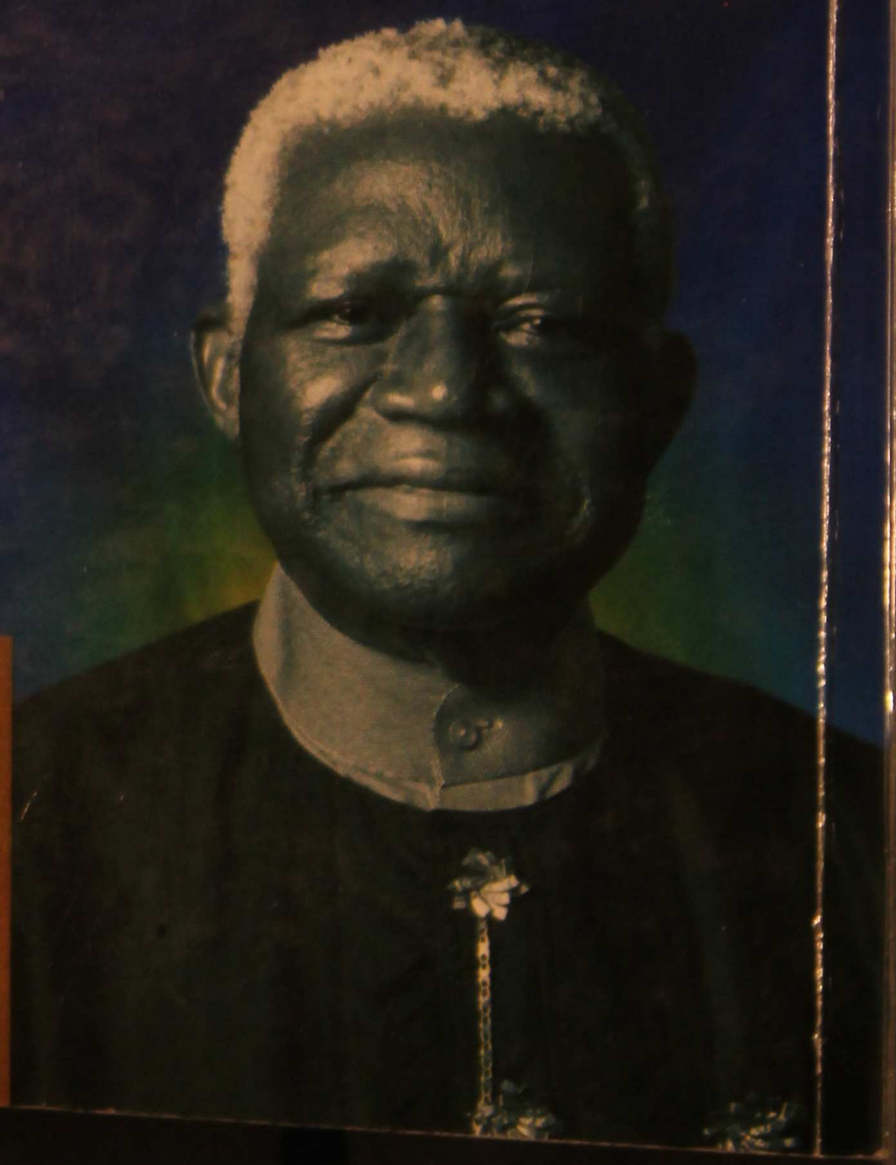
[56] Interview with Mark Donfried, (Director, I.C.D, Berlin), Berlin, September 18, 2011.



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