



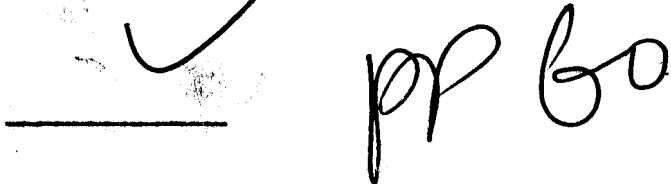
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TITLE PAGE

OMABE MASKING TRADITION IN IBAGWA-AKA: A RESOURCE FOR
VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN



A THESIS
PRESENTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF FINE AND APPLIED ARTS
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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS (MFA)

Sup: Mr C.V. Amaefunah

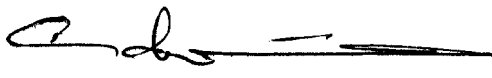
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

Nwoko S., a postgraduate student in the Department of Fine and Applied Arts and with the registration number PG/MFA/83/2192, has satisfactorily completed the requirements for course and research work for the degree of M.F.A. in Visual Communication Design (GRAPHICS). The work embodied in this thesis/dissertation/project report is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other diploma or degree for this or any other university.



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This work has indeed come a long way. But it could not have been possible without the active co-operation of people, too numerous to mention here. To all these, I wish to express my profound gratitude.

Few names must, however, be ^{mentioned.} First is my supervisor, Mr C.V. Amaefunah, who not only inspired, motivated and guided me aright throughout the course of this study, but also, in some cases, accompanied me in my field work in the most remote parts of my area of study. Equally important are all those whose tremendous assistance made my data collection possible. Of these respondents the following must be mentioned: Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, Effort Ugwuoke, Cosmas Ugwu, Igwebueze Ugwuoke, Basil Omeje, Emmanuel Omeje, Ernest Okoli, Aleke G., Eze G., and Obayi F.

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September, 1989

v.

DEDICATION

To my late parents whose
footsteps echo still in mine.

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PREFACE

Once in every four years, the people of Ibagwa celebrate the Omabe festival. To them the feast does not only call for great merry-making with eating, drinking, exchange of visits and expression of goodwill, but also affords them the opportunity to commune with their ancestors and the yet unborn. Thus the festival is an important period in Ibagwa-Aka during which the visitation of the ancestors with the attendant fortune or retribution harmonize the people's co-existence.

The Omabe masquerade which is the ritualistic imagery of the festival is seen by the people as the sun incarnate (enyanwu). Enyanwu as the vital life force sustaining every conceivable living thing, is to the people, the ideal of everything good. Almost every aspect of the festival simulates the relationship of the Omabe and the sun. It is not surprising therefore that the central motif in the artistic content of Omabe is enyanwu (the sun).

The researcher investigates the various art forms in the Omabe masking tradition out of which a comprehensive chart of motifs are sieved. These motifs are shown to be suitable elements for the creation of visual communication works with a distinctive cultural bias.

THESIS ABSTRACT

A quadrennial festival marked by cultural rites, conviviality and masquerading, the Omabe Masking Tradition in Ibagwa-Aka has survived as a living culture whose indigenous traditional features are only fairly adulterated by contemporary developments.

In this study, the researcher probes the aesthetic contents of the Omabe cult, its evolving iconography, and the potential of the festival as a source for present-day visual communication designs.

Omabe Masking Tradition in Ibagwa-Aka:
A Resource for Visual Communication
Design

INTRODUCTION

Festivals have not only always epitomized the diversity of a people's cultural heritage - their art, music, drama and belief-system, but also underscore its continuity as a living tradition. The critical issue, then, is not so much of the validity of this assertion as to the particular festival whose traditional basis is still intact inspite of the influences of modernity. One of such a festival is, perhaps, the Omabe masking tradition in Ibagwa-Aka. According to Obiechina (1978:377), "The cyclical festivals with their attendant rituals and communal drama which have long been undermined by an aggressive, proselytising christianity in most of Igbo-land have survived here and remaine a vibrant phenomenon of the environment. The integrated humanism of traditional Igbo land has been best preserved here than anywhere else."

Given the range of typology of masks on display during the Omabe season in the entire Igbo-Omabe communities in Nsukka, Ibagwa-Aka would seem to rank highest, and consequently, its artistic potential is perhaps greater. This aesthetic sensibility is even more perceived when viewed against the

topography of the area which provides, as it were, the greatest impulse for creativity. According to Obiechina (1978:376), "its breath - taking scenic beauty, its round, green hills that roll away from the observer's view till they embrace the distant skyline, revealing in this embrace exquisitely formed breasts of the earth-mother goddess, its enchanted sunsets splashed over with known and unknown colours, from the ^{deep,} rusty yellow that forms a halo round the hills to the multiple-tinged red and orange mix that hangs down like a magic tapestry between the hills. Surmounting the riot of colours is the majestic sun itself, a huge, round, like a ball of fire. Divinity and mystery are compounded here to create a thing of grandeur and primeval fear."¹

Two reasons seem likely to justify the feast of Omabe which the masking tradition projects. The first is religious, arising from the people's need to harness the resources of the supernatural forces to their advantage. Of the religious, perhaps, the motion of protection, procreation and expiation must have resulted in ritual which in its rudimentary phase, involved simple masking with palm fronds. The second reason

is therapeutic, which affords the people the opportunity to release the tension from the previous years' activities as well as interact with their relatives and friends from within and outside Ibagwa-Aka. This apart from strengthening relationship, does afford an opportunity for the people to draw inspiration for the future. In articulating the basis for masking tradition, Franco Monti ^(1969: 16) opines that "the need to feel oneself to be participant in the driving forces of the universe, to work with these forces and to exploit them in order to sublimate one's own instinctive faculties is at the root of the use and consequently of the culture of mask."²

What has so far been written on Omabe either by way of research or article have tended to present various dimensions on its essoteric, exoteric and adaptative transformations. Some of these writers to whom Omabe is seen as "a male god honoured with fantastic festivals and rituals (Aleke, 1980:12), "a festival built on the belief that the spirits of the dead often come back to watch the earth" (Ogbu, 1981:28; Enekwe, 1987;⁵⁶ Onyeneke, 1987)¹⁷, "poetry in motion" (Obiechina, 1978:384), a "leopard

incarnate" (Aniakor, 1980:299) have sought to investigate its dramatic potential as well as its political role as an agent of social control. But Omabe Masking Tradition as an artistic expression of the Ibagwa seems not to have been touched on from its aesthetic resources for contemporary design application. Also the Ibagwa-Aka dialectics on the Omabe motif seems to hinge upon the sun deity (Anyanwu) from where most of the visual referents seen on the masquerades are drawn.

It therefore follows that the establishment of the Omabe motif, also known as the Omabe spirit, in its proper iconographical context would provide the indigenous basis for the development of African artistic lexicon.

Again as the demands of contemporary life becloud the attention to traditional culture, Omabe festival might eventually be eclipsed into obscurity. Ukpabi Asika (1971:8) seems to decry this tendency when he laments:

When I contemplate the global artistic and cultural scenes of this country, I feel an undertone of sadness - sadness and regret that the glory of the past stands the danger of total loss of complete and unrecorded oblivion. Because what is lost is not recorded, the gap threatens to become unfillable.

A panacea would seem to be provided by Daniel Biebuyck (1975:48-51) who states "We must, therefore, go back to the primary source, examine all available ethnographical and artistic data, cease uncritically rehearsing secondary and derived sources ..."

It is against the foregoing background that the topic was conceived. It focuses on the art in Omabe masking tradition within the context of Ibagwa-Aka in the Igbo-Eze Local Government Area of Anambra State. The purpose is to take a critical study of the various forms of Omabe and attempt to bring to light the art that is involved therein and the possibility of adapting them for visual communication design creativities. The objective further seeks to achieve the following:

- a) To determine the distinctive essence of the Omabe motif;
- b) To chart the motifs Omabe as a design data bank.
- c) To document the Omabe festival for posterity.

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naturally, it has its peculiar problems. Among these are the absence of written records stemming from the usual factors inhibiting research efforts in West Africa. Most respondents expected to furnish reliable information in view of their age advantage appeared to be largely illiterate. It was therefore difficult for such people to supply the relevant research information. Again, due to the nature³ of Omabe which strictly prohibits the divulging of its secrets to non-initiates, the true information regarding its realities and inner business, was not easy. Also the periodic cycle of the festival would require several years of sojourn in the area for any field worker to draw any conclusive inference. However, as the researcher's intentions were made known to the people, the ethical constraints were removed and the subsequent co-operation became rewarding. Thus the reliance on primary sources from interviews with informed elders, titled men, Omabe priests, Omabe initiates, diviners, community leaders, and mask designers in the area and its environs, was very helpful. The researcher's personal experience of fifteen

years association with the people of the area has enabled him to witness several Omabe festivals in most parts of Igbo-Eze Local Government Area, including the Nsukka Urban and its immediate environs. Other useful information collected during the field-work include photographs, drawings and illustrations of the masked types, shrines and their relative signs and symbols, titular objects, utensils. Tape-recordings of Omabe music and interviews with the Omabe initiates as well as available literature were also part of the materials used for this work.

DEFINITION OF TERMS, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The following operational terms like Omabe Masking Tradition, Omabe masked spirit, Omabe communities, Visual Communication Design, Signs and Symbols, are defined within the context of this study. Omabe masking tradition, is the totality of the visual paraphernalia employed during the Omabe festival. These include the ^{Omabe} masquerades, musical instruments, shrines, signs and symbols involved in the ritual processes, furniture and titular objects. These visual paraphernalia

constitute the Omabe art. "Omabe masked spirit" is a masquerade believed to represent the ancestral spirit. Masked spirits or masquerades derive their names from their relative functions. "Igbo Omabe", ^{or} 'Omabe communities' refers to those areas in Nsukka and its environment that observe the same masking tradition as different from the "Igbo-Odo" ("Odo communities").

"Visual Communication Design", also known as graphic design, here means two dimensional art of communication. It refers to art as it relates to two dimensional art as can be derived from Omabe masking tradition. Storr (1976:184) defines sign as an essentially descriptive pattern element which refers directly to some other entity, a "symbol", on the other hand, will be taken as anything that serves as a vehicle for the expression of psychological states, ideas, beliefs, values, among others. As tangible formulation of abstract notions, symbols are expressive rather than descriptive in relation to their referents. Signs denote objects, symbols connote concepts. In this study greater attention is focused on masquerades as they are seen to constitute the greatest artistic index

representing a cross section of the entire art forms in the Omabe cluster affecting the social and religious lives of the people. In this context also, the followings are regarded as synonyms of Omabe: Omabe festival and Omabe masking tradition; Omabe spirit, Omabe mask^{ed} type, or simply Omabe; motif, signs, pattern, elemental value, symbols, and graphic or visual elements.

Approach and Methodology

A descriptive and analytic approach is used to examine the aesthetic and functional contents of ^{the} theme of this work. The layout comprises a preface, the abstract, an introduction and six chapters. Explanatory notes are placed at the end of each chapter while the bibliography comes at the end of the chapters. Photographs, illustrations and the charted motifs are placed at the relevant pages.

In the introduction researcher seeks to establish the rationale and significance of the study. Data collection, problem statement, objectives and literature review are integrated within the text.

In chapter one, the area under study is examined in relation to its people, natural resources and wild life. The socio-political life as well as their world views are also discussed.

Chapter two surveys the Omabe masking tradition in Ibagwa-Aka.

In chapter three the various forms of the art employed in the Omabe festivals are discussed with particular reference to the masked types. Here also the researcher advances the evidence on the basis of his field work to state the relationship of enyanwu (the sun) and Omabe.

In chapter four, the discernible motifs are charted.

Chapter five discusses the adaptation and application of these Omabe motifs. The emphasis here is on posters.

Chapter six is the conclusion. Here the research findings are summarized, and recommendations, made.

The Bibliography follows the conclusion.

NOTES

1. Obiechina, E.N. "Literature; Traditional and Modern" in The Nsukka Environment edited by G.E.K. Ofomata, 1978, p.377.
2. Franco Monti, African Masks, London, Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd., 1969, p.16.
3. Omabe is a cult. Even, information relating to age and occupation and status, is often resented as probing. The researcher is seen as a government agent collecting information in order to better assess the respondent.

CHAPTER ONE

THE AREA AND ITS PEOPLE

Ibagwa-Aka is bounded on the north by Enugu-Ezike and Itchi, on the south by Obukpa in Nsukka Urban town, on the east by Ihakpu Awka and on the west by Ibagwa-Ani. It has an area of about thirty-two square kilometres and a population density of about twenty-five thousand persons.¹ Politically, Ibagwa-Aka is in the Igbo-Eze Local Government Area of Anambra State, and approximately eight kilometres from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Culturally, it^{is} among the Omabe communities which include Enugu-Ezike, Ovoko, Obukpa, Iheaka, Aro Unu, Ibagwa-Ani, Edem, Eha-Alumona, Opi, Opuje, Obollo, Oba, Imirike, Amala, Umundu, Leja, Nsukka urban, Nguru and Ogbodu-Aba. The four communities that make up Ibagwa-Aka include: Echara, comprising the following villages: Amaeze, Idi, Echezema, Umuelua, and Umuagulu; Amaebo, made up of Amaji, Edemani, Umudieta, Amagu-Achalla; Ezema, comprising Amebo Ndedu, Ndadu Umuguruiyi, Ndioke, Ikolo, Owerre; Isiagu, composed of Ugo and Akpugo.² In recent times, Ibagwa-Aka has become a cosmopolitan town consisting of people from

different parts of Nigeria. The largest number of these non-aborigins are those from other parts of Anambra and Imo States commonly referred to as "Ndi Ugbo" by the indigenes. There are also the minor communities of Hausa, Yoruba, Igala (Akpoto) and Fulani.

ORIGIN

Three different views are held by the people about their origin. The first is founded upon a myth which regards Ozizikoko, believed to be ^a famous hunter and warrior, as their legendary progenitor. He is said to have come from Idah to Ibagwa where he beget the following sons: Ibagwa-Aka, Ibagwa-Ani and Aro Uno. It is possible that the people's aggressive and temperamental traits could be traced to this ancestral kinship.³ The second version traces the origin to the Nri of Awka creation myth. It further argues that Ibagwa-Aka, as a conglomeration of different ethnic groups could hardly have come from Idah since, for instance, the Amebo community is known to have come from Abi in Uzo Uwani; the Umuagulus from Awka, while the Idis also regard Uzo Uwani as their spiritual centre where they hitherto make a periodic pilgrimage.⁴ The third view asserts that

Ibagwa-Aka emanated from Ibagwa soil.⁵ "Pressed for the origin of Ibagwa-Aka, an Ikolo elder, Eke Nwacze, replied that it would appear Ibagwa was created to be where it is now", Afigbo (1978:26).

COSMOLOGY

The people of Ibagwa-Aka have implicit belief in a Supreme being, Ezechitoke and the lesser gods through whose agencies their day-to-day activities are regulated and superintended. In other words, they believe that every sphere of human endeavour such as procreation, agriculture, hunting, wine tapping, and such virtues as probity, power and justice is superintended by a particular spirit. For example, "Nfiajioku", which animates the feast of Agbeze, is the god incharge of agriculture. "Enyanwu", on the other hand, is the sun spirit incharge of power, moral probity and justice.⁶ There is also the belief in re-incarnation and the ancestral world. Because of their belief that their ancestors influence their lives from the world beyond, they establish communication links with the dead through divinations, rituals and worship. These eventually take the form of festivals in which a masking

display plays an important role.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND WILDLIFE

Ibagwa-Aka has two prominent hills, the Adada and Abile. The river originating after the Adada hill is named after the hill, in much the same way as the Spring⁷ water from Abile hill derives its name. Covering the entire hills are such grasses as Izu which are ideal for making thatch roofs. The contrasting distribution of vegetation from grassland to rain forest is said to have harboured such predators as the civet cat (edi), leopard and lion. Other animals include Zebra, python, eagle, among others. These animals are now extinct due to deforestation. Also the savannah or open-nature of the area tends to bring the terrestrial and celestial bodies into closer visual contact. This would seem to influence the artists' creative impulses as would be elaborated in due course.

POLITICAL LIFE

As was noted earlier, cultural dynamics has brought in the Christian and Muslem dimensions in the area. Again, the Echezema people in the Echara quarter who claim Igala

ancestry insist upon their prerogative as the overseers of all chieftaincy affairs in the land while quite a sizeable section regards the Amebos as the duly accredited heirs and king-makers in Ibagwa. There is thus a dichotomous loyalty in the political life of Ibagwa which appears to be responsible for the ever-continuing rifts and squabbles that have been threatening the stability in the area.

NOTES

1. Bulletin of the Economic and Development Planning; Statistics Division, Ministry of Information and Statistics, Enugu, Anambra State, 1985, p.23.
2. Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, 'The Political Structure of Ibagwa-Aka (Oral interview, Ibagwa, 1987).
3. Effort Ugwuoke, "Myth of Origin" (Oral interview, Ibagwa, 1985).
4. Hon. Emmanuel Omeje, "Origin of Ibagwa-Aka, Ibagwa," 1985 (interview)
5. Ugwu Anthony, "Origin of Ibagwa-Aka," Ibagwa, 1985. (oral interview)
6. Ugwoke, E. "Ibagwa Cosmology" (oral interview, Ibagwa, 1985).
7. "Iyi-Abile" (lit. Abile river/water/spring). In the past these water resources were the main source of water supply on which the Nsukka people depended. It was even claimed that the water supply at the construction site for the University of Nigeria, Nsukka was largely obtained from these water resources.

CHAPTER TWOOMABE MASKING TRADITION

As generally perceived by the Ibagwa-Aka people, Omabe festival which comes up once in every four years, is a great occasion marked by cultural rites, sumptuous feasting and masking. The latter assumes a spectacular prominence as a visual expression of the people's sense of communion with their ancestors as well as the perpetuation of that historical chain of continuity reflective of their ideals, norms, values, aesthetics, character-traits and accomplishments all of which are associated with their ancestors. For example, such qualities as probity, bravery, brutality, as well as concepts like justice, beauty, elegance, youthfulness, adoration, retribution, wealth, competition, among others, are fully dramatized by their respective masquerades. Omabe masking tradition is also an ideal period when major family and inter-personal rifts are reconciled.¹

ORIGIN: The origin of Omabe in Ibagwa-Aka is said to be as old as the area itself, and, similarly, there is no consensus on how it originated. The only available information is shrouded in myths and legends. One of these

legendary accounts narrates how Omabe was brought into Ibagwa-Aka through the efforts of a certain woman returning home from a market near Awka, and who, upon reaching Okwero in Imirika Ibagwa, at late sunset, perceived the super natural mission to launch the Omabe spirit. Deriving from "O ma be", meaning "here is spirit",² it is interpreted as a "blessing" which would ensure peace, order, harmony and merry-making in Ibagwa.³ Thus the 'Ushene' Shrine in Imirike Ibagwa would seem to be the genesis of Omabe from where, according to the people, it spread to the other parts of Nsukka. Another, rather plausible view asserts that Omabe, emanated from the Ibagwa soil as the saying "Omabe bu na Nkponkpo" (lit. Omabe abides in the Nkponkpo hill) seems to imply.⁴ Later, the essential/^{of}content (Omabe grew to the putative belief that Omabe, a sun spirit, symbolizes the ancestral spirits who re-incarnate at relative intervals as masked types.⁵

PHASES: The festival is marked by the following stages:

1. PREPARATION: The preparatory phase has three major components of the Omabe festival.
 - a) The Ikpo Ogu (lit. buying hoe) The significance of the hoes which the women purchase for their husbands in advance

of one year, reminds the community of the need to make adequate preparation for the Omabe festival. They thus have ample time to produce enough food to the feast since the festival takes up to one year for the processes to go through, from the return of the masked spirits to their departure.

b) THE IHUJI (lit. roasting yam): This phase declares the Omabe year. The sense of expectation takes time to build. The Umuma, thus, take the yams with them to 'Ugwu Nkp~~on~~kp~~o~~' where they camp for one month. At this stage, these Omabe initiates, undergo a rigorous training (practice) for the Omabe transformation which requires the most suitable maskers and music players.

c) The OGBUEKWE (lit. Beating the wooden gong): Here, the particular day the Omabe spirits would make their entry into the village is announced by the custodians of the ritual calendar. Communal work for all the necessary preparation is set in motion and a great sense of expectancy electrifies the atmosphere. Costumes and masks are built. Omabe houses (Uno Omabe) are erected, if old ones have fallen into disrepair. The roads, public squares (Otobo) and compounds are cleared

of debris and all untidiness. 'The gods must find the people ready when they arrive.'⁶

2. ODAMA (The arrival or decent of the Omabe masked types); Associated with this phase is the symbolic green palm fronds which the Umuma (the young Omabe initiates) brandish about to signify the living spirits of their ancestors. As the Omabe spirits file down from the mythical hill (ugwu nkponkpc), they proceed to the cult houses where they undergo the first communion with the elders. They later proceed to the major landmarks of the environment. Communion centres on communal feeding in the village square during which the people renew their sense of belongingness by sharing the meal together. The Omabe retire to the cult house and they again commune with the elders. *With* Ito Aji⁷ as the next sub-phase, the masked types are accorded a warm reception by the community. The significance of this 'welcome' ritual underlines the status of Omabe as the real owner of the land for the period of its one year sojourn with the people.

As the Omabe spirits begin their rounds of visits to every household, people bring their problems before the

spirits and pledge some sacrifice they would make if in the interval Omabe will intercede to get rid of their troubles. Odama, as the climax of the festival, would be examined in detail in due course.

3. The DEPARTURE phase is marked by three steps of action:
 - a) IGBO MA AYA (lit: Appeasing Omabe). Sacrifices are made in order to mitigate the wrath of the gods.
 - b) EGWU OTOBO (lit: Omabe music at the village square): This is strictly for the Omabe initiates and usually the dancing is done without the masquerades.
 - c) ULA MA (lit: (The) departure of the Omabe spirits): The latter which marks the grand finale of the occasion,, involves the period of propitiation and the Omabe's trip to the mythical hill in order to process the numerous petitions and supplications from the people. This is a crucial aspect of the festival as the result might be reward or punishment depending on the dominance of the people's virtue or vice. Literally, the maskers, usually the "Umu ma", (the Young Omabe initiates) undertake the journey for the "judgement" of the people,

as it is called. The symbolic act here is the carrying of chicks with, sometimes, perforated earthen pots which they drop as soon as they (Umu ma) reach the spot. The ritualistic spell (chant) believed to ensure complete ablution and protection is an accompanying supplement of the above symbolism.

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OMABE MASKING TRADITION

As noted previously, the Uda ma, which is the climax of the Omabe festival, is characterized by sumptuous feasting, music, poetic incantations and dexterous display of masquerades. At night, a set of masquerades⁸ believed to be invisible spirits go about decrying evil doers and their impending punishments. They mention specific cases of incest, murder, stealing, witchcraft, dishonesty and indolence. In most cases, names of the culprits are mentioned.

In the later part of the day, the celebrants and their guests troop out in their great number covering both sides of the road in eager expectation of the Omabe masquerades. Group supporters, brandishing green palm fronds, dane-guns and matchets, parade the road while boastfully proclaiming

the spectacular pageantry and splendour which their anticipated masquerades have. They support this with praise songs and epics relating to their origin, heroic deeds, problems and prospects. The scene is kept clear for the Omabe parades by the activities of the "Otunju" masquerade in preventing the anxious crowd from shoving into the arena. Gunshots from the Omabe excorts soon herald the arrival of the masquerades. On beholding the company of these masked spirits - an unusual magnificent spectacle of moving forms and colours, the roaring ovation of the crowd becomes so intense that the gun shots and music seem almost drowned. There is no better expression to describe the beauty of the scene except as 'poetry in motion'.⁹ Spectators use all sorts of praise names to compliment them, such as "enyi ma mu ofu n'amgbe a hua" (lit: "an elephant that gives birth once in a year"), "Ofu n'obodo" (lit: "One in town"), "Egodi n'akpati" (lit: "money is stored up in the box"), "Nwamuru ije" (one with a proud gait). For the head masks like "Isima", praise names like "eze bi n'obodo" (Chief of the land); "Uroko", "Edi" symbolize "saviour", "ancestor" and strength¹⁰. The Omabe masked types in the parade include Egbe-Ocheala,

Agbeji, Igele Nweye, Ajulaka Oshagenyi, Mgbediko, Ijiri, Adada, Obodike, Uhuaho, Ojoba, Ekwe-Idi, Edi Ogbene, Uroko, Onweonweya and Otunju. Whereas the Igele, Agbeji and Ekwe entertain by capitalizing on their charm, elegance, youthfulness and remarkable gestures, the Oshagenyi, Nweye, Onweonweya, Otunju and Edi Ogbene masquerades entertain by their skillful use of proverbs, idioms, conundrums, simile and metaphor.

The spirit of competition is implicit in the performance of the masquerades at the village square as the various masked types¹¹ seek to outclass each other by their respective displays. Ability to emerge as the winner depends on the quality of the costume which indicates the degree of care taken to produce an aesthetically suitable outfit,¹² and the dexterity of skill displayed to arouse the aesthetic sensibility of the audience. The village whose Omabe spirit emerges the winner proudly accompanies its Omabe home amidst great excitement, while the loser is ridiculed by the audience.

"Soon night overtakes the Omabe spirits and audience. Echoes of applause afloat through the air as the audience

acclaims the village whose Omabe spirit has out-displayed the others."¹³

In what follows, the researcher will examine the specific areas of the masking tradition which demonstrate great possibility for visual communication design elements.

NOTES

1. His Royal Highness, Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, the Igwe I of Ibagwa-Aka. 'Origin and rationale of the Omabe festival', Oral interview, Ibagwa Aka, 1988).
2. Aleke, Personal interview, Nsukka, 1987.
3. Abugu, 1985, Ugwuoke, E, 1986, in an oral interview with them at Enugu-Ezike and Ibagwa-Aka respectively, seem to agree that a special masquerade, "Oyi Omabe" (lit. Omabe's Lover) and the "Iyi Oyi" ceremony during the Omabe festival, is a special tribute to this legendary woman).
4. Ugwuoke Eze Ugwuanyi, the Attama of all the 'Ede Masquerades in Ibagwa-Aka, "Origin of Omabe". Oral interview, Ibagwa-Aka, 1987.
5. Op.cit.
6. Obiechina (1978:384).
7. Lit. Removal of belt.
8. The "Onyekurunye" masquerades perform only at night, and because the law of the land prohibits any one from seeing them, especially women, children and the uninitiated, they are said to be invisible spirits.

9. Obiechina (1978:389).
10. Aloke (1980:21).
11. Usually the masquerades in this arena display are the Igele, Agbeji, Ekwe.
12. The Igele which is usually owned by the community requires a lot of money to produce its costume. Thus a properly prepared Igele would indicate that the village owning it is not only well off, but regards the festival importantly.
13. Aniakor (1980:13).

CHAPTER THREE

TYPOLGY OF OMABE ART

The Omabe Art discussed in this study are the masked types, metal works, musical instruments, architecture (shrines), signs and symbols.

THE MASKED TYPES

The different kinds of masquerades that are used during the Omabe festival in Ibagwa-Aka have been referred to in this study as the masked types. Included in this category are the masquerades already highlighted in the previous chapter, namely, the Ugele, Edi Ogbene, Agbeji, Egbe Ocheala, Otunju, Mgbedike, Ajulaka, Oshagenyi, Ijiri, Adada, Obodike, Ojoba, Ekwe-Idi, Uroke, Ugwuoke Edi, Onweonweya, Onyekurunye and Uhuaho. For the purpose of this study some of the masquerades would be examined.

THE UGELE:

The principal Omabe masquerade is the Ugele.¹ According to the people's belief, the Ugele expresses the concept of mystifying beauty, divine radiance, ideal probity and immense wealth. Structurally, the head is covered with a hand woven fabric on which large feathers are stuck. These are mainly

from Eagle and "Agho" (red feathers from a rare, strong bird of the eagle family). Lines, which are actually threads sewn around the eye slits, radially extend to a point at the back of the head where the convergence of the seeming rays appear to be knotted together. Covering the entire "body" are silver coated buttons skillfully glued unto the fabric which is sewn to give the masker a tight fitting from the chest to the knees. Together, these buttons reflect the sun's radiance. Other body prop^s include:

- a) Aji (lit: belt) which is a narrow strip with either striated or chequered patterns. Sometimes this is made of leather or animal skin with furs. Aji is used around the waist to prevent the costume from sagging.
- b) Ozo Ebulu (lit rain's manes) is usually worn around the elbows. It also signifies purity and probity.
- c) Mma Omabe (Omabe's matchet/knife) is mainly a wooden fabrication skillfully painted to simulate an actual knife. Strips of cloth of yellow, red and white colours are wound round the handle of the matchet leaving the rest of the strips to flow down as frills. This hand

prop is the Omabe's insignia. Occasionally, strings of tiny brass bells are tied around the knee joints. Over the long pair of stockings reaching the knees are tied anklets made of dry leaves. The content of the Ugele masquerade derives from the meaning attributed to its elemental forms. For example, the sun-burst motifs of the eye slits which are said to represent the rays of the sun are believed to depict power. Similarly, the eagle feathers on the head depict dignity, strength and beauty in the people's view. The buttons, in addition to reflecting the luminacy of the sun, are said to symbolize wealth. The Ozo Ebule has earlier been shown to signify purity, and this perhaps explains why only men of proven moral probity are admitted to the cult of Omabe as maskers. It is easy now to understand why the Ibagwa-Aka Igbo identify the Ugele motifs with the sun, which to them is the ideal of everything good. On the other hand, the people's penchant for the Ugele's comely qualities derives from their belief that some of their ancestors were really handsome men whose exceptionnaly pleasing appearances attracted the most beautiful ladies within and beyond Ibagwa-Aka.²

AGBEJI is another masked type in the Omabe hierarchy. Like the Ugele, Agbeji is associated with prestige, peace, elegance and wealth. At a glance, the headgear could be mistaken for a large dome of foliage - a "moving" orchard, measuring about six feet in diameter. Actually, it is composed of a cluster of large, colourful feathers fitted into a basket-like hat. The body-dress (body mask) could be seen as a composite arrangement of geometric patterns which, on the face, shows horizontal strips of applique cloth and vertical lines in between two spherical bands. The vertical strip and spherical band stand for the nose and eyes respectively. Within the horizontal bands which run through the entire body, are shapes which informants³ identify as ~~sun motifs~~. Some of these motifs bear vertical and horizontal lines which are designed to cross each other within the circle. These intricately ordered patterns are greatly enhanced with warm and attractive colours. Informants readily relate these cosmic motifs to Agbeji whose essential character of friendliness and playfulness is fully supported by the graphic interpretation of the motifs as well as the expressive quality of warm hues.

EGBE OCHEALA (lit. the kite that guards the land) is an Omabe head mask. Its elaborate headgear combines well with the intricately coloured costume arranged in horizontal bands. The headgear is composed of carved human and animal features which are skillfully rendered to dramatize contemporary experience.

Organic arcs with highly decorative details support the sides of the headgear. The details include numerous arcs and circles in white, blue, red and yellow hues. Overflowing from the head backwards and sideways are apron-like fabrics having a pageantry of geometrics in which the dynamisms of semi-circles, obliques, triangles and horizontals are structurally and colourfully rendered for a full visual effect. Such motifs as sun, sometimes in its sun-burst forms are adapted to form the principal design patterns on the body of this masked type. Egbe Ocheala, like the Otunju or the Nsukka Oriokpa masquerades, is the chief overseer of the land during and after the Omabe season.

EDI OGBENE (The civet cat) This Omabe masked type is named after Edi (the civet cat) probably due to the latter's unrivalled ferocity among all the canivores in Ibagwa-Aka.⁴ Edi Ogbene

is the most dreaded of all the masquerades in the area and the people have great penchant for it. To them, Edi Ogbene personifies their ancestors known for their bravery, masculinity and militancy. The masquerade is able to play these roles by its gesture, action and poses. While at rest, the diagonal pose of the torso forms an angle with its knee on the ground, while the other leg is stretched to balance the body kept diagonally. According to Amaefunah (1986:55) "Angular shapes have the propensity to confer an attitude of energy and force on the masquerade and portray the seriousness of the occasion".

Structurally, the body is of Edi skin, but brown hand woven sack is used to produce the inferior types. Strings of cowrie shells are sewn round the body forming three to four bands so that the masked spirit looks like a graduated tubular. On the waist is fastened a rope which the Ugwuoke Edi (Edi's attendant), holds in order to control some of his violent movements.

MGBEDIKE (lit time for the brave) is one of the powerful Omabe masquerades. It is one in which youthful exuberance is fully dramatised. This masked type is able to accomplish

seemingly incredible feats like jumping over small huts, climbing to the roof of a big house or very tall palm trees, by means of its thaumaturgic influence deriving from very powerful antidotic and harmful charms it is believed to carry along.

Structurally, its massive headgear, grotesque face and huge, coarse body, magnify an awe-inspiring spectacle. On the head are carved zoomorphic and anthropomorphic forms ranging from horse rider, lion, female nude, man and python, to aeroplane. To further intensify its structural austerity, the facial features ^{have include} has exaggerated eyes, prominent ears, jagged teeth and surrealistic moustache with beards. Down the body, shells of "Ogbono" seeds (no botanical name) in different combination of colours are skillfully sewn unto the hand-woven costume, giving it a rather rough texture. As stated earlier, Mgbedike is intended to inspire strength and gallantry to the Ibagwa -Aka youths.

Ekwe masked type is another excessively beautiful Omabe masquerade. Structurally, the ^{dome} dome-shaped headgear is characterised by broad, red curvilinear arcs bound by white spiral bands of applique cloth. Down the face, is a cluster

of colourful buntings drooping down to veil the bust. Two semi-oval black slits with an orange outline, represent the eyes. Further down the body are lines showing rhythmic shapes reminiscent of the 'Ugwu-Nkponkpo'⁵ hills and valleys, and apparent jagged teeth lining the seeming valleys which, in some areas, tend to form a star. At the base of apron-like costume, there is an asymmetrical arrangement of a velveteen embroidery which seems to create a visual weight.

In some Ekwe Idi (fig.), the body dress is a network or lace consisting, to a large extent, of scroll-work and counter curves. The principal characteristics of this masked type which includes an insistence on the primacy of curve-linear and floral shapes, further stresses the dominance of such tension-creating properties as colour, texture and movement. Thus the vivid, and often harsh colours like red, orange, blue, green lighten the emotional effect rather than describe the forms, while the intricacies of the ornamental cords help to achieve the balancing of the various elements making up the overall design structure.

Ekwe Idi is, perhaps, the most significant masquerade in this study largely because of its motif resources and unique

sensitivity to design inspiration which, has led to the derivation and development of an original novelty type-face as would be seen later in this study.

METAL WORKS

The different objects used during the Omabe season are mainly the products of the blacksmiths from Umuagulu in Ibagwa-Aka, who, as was noted earlier in the study, claim descend from Awka. The following products, Odu Atu (buffalo's tale), Okwuri, Egbechi, need to be mentioned.

Odu Atu which can easily be mistaken for a metallic staff is indeed an Oho or Ofo stick on which bands of copper wire are skillfully wound from the base where it tappers to the top. Some more intricate spirals are worked into the cylindrical form. At the tapered end, the buffalo's tail is affixed. Actually, animal strands, probably (from) of horse or cow, with only a few strands of buffalo's tail are used, due to the rarity of the latter. It is believed that the presence of even a strand of Odu atu can nullify any form of witchcraft that might be contacted through eating, drinking or even hand shake. The holder of Odu atu is addressed as "Asogwa Oha" or simply, "OIUC".

Okpuri is an all-metal staff with two rectangular forms at the two ends on which linear concentric patterns are worked with copper wire. Titled men are seen to carry Okpuri during the Omabe and other important festivals in Ibagwa-Aka.

Egbechi is another ceremonial staff that is quite popular during the Omabe festival in Ibagwa. It is a long metallic staff with bronze and copper decorations. The design on the Egbechi staff can be seen as a mosaic display of cowrie shells measuring up to ten centimetres along the staff. Egbechi is also a status symbol.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

A significant aspect of the Omabe masking tradition is the Omabe music. Among this, Omabe music, is the Okanga. The (figs) show the variety of instruments used in producing the music. These include the Igede drum, twin gong, Osha (basket rattle) and the Okanga drum.

The Okanga drum is sealed at both ends of the wooden cylinder with animal skin, which is sewn onto the wooden drum with strands of animal hides. This creates a rope-like pattern. More strings are used to connect the free overlapping edges of the skin at both ends of the drum. Wooden pegs are driven under these to reinforce the strands, in order to

ensure that the broad circular skin is taut. An extra animal skin is provided to act as shoulder belt.

ARCHITECTURE

The Omabe music is usually played in the ULO Omabe (lit: Omabe's house), a small hut with a tatched conical roof on which two or three plume-like filaments are affixed. These, according to the people, signify that the Omabe house had been duly consecrated.⁶ Omabe house is constructed on a high relief, and is usually located at the outskirts of the village. The other type of architecture is the gabled roof type. Located at the village square, these houses, in addition to serving as Omabe music centres, also serve as masking rooms for the Omabe masked spirits as well as store rooms for the Omabe outfit. Decorative patterns adorn the walls of these houses.

SHRINE

Onu Omabe (as the shrines are called, are basically earthen ware mounds surrounded by pillars of perforated clay pots stuck over each other with stick in the centre. Some shrines are located along the village square usually adjoining the Omabe house. Others are sited away from public view.

The perforated earthen pots can also be arranged horizontally into several rows.

STONES AND SYMBOLS

Though signs also constitute the elements of visual communication, the symbolic rituals earlier discussed indicate the existence of indigenous design in the culture of the people. For example, Green palm-fronds during the Omabe season signify the living spirit of the ancestors; A Hoe signifies preparation for the Omabe season; A piece of yam over a live fire indicates the Omabe period; Gong 'beating' signifies the arrival of the Omabe into the town; The Uda ma (descent of the Omabe masked types) may represent the notion of healthy competition, since Uda ma is, itself, a competition ceremony when each clan tries to feature the best masquerades; An earthen pot at the Omabe shrine is said to signify sins 'washed' away during the ablutionary process of the Omabe; A young chick in an open space also means ablution.

Notwithstanding the distinction in the seemingly synonymous terms, a sign, in so far as it is a visual image relating to concrete object in the environment, may also be used as a symbol.

TEXTILE

The fabric considered here is for masking purposes. Generally, the 'Ekpoto' cloths are the common dress for the body-masks in the entire Nsukka Igbo. The name 'Ekpoto' is, as it were, a misnomer, for the fabric is woven at Edemani and not at Idah! However, this woven fabric, as well as the dyes for decoration, can be bought at the Nkwo Ibagwa market. The artistic contents of the Omabe fabrics have been discussed in the various body masks like the Igele, Agbeji, Egbe ochala, Mgbedike, among others.

The foregoing survey will constitute the x-ray from which the visual communication possibilities will take. A pertinent question comes to mind as to whether the discernible motifs charted are indigenous to the Omabe masking tradition of the Ibagwa-Aka Igbo.

Because of the wide range of motifs found on the Omabe masked types, the probability might be that some of these designs are alien. This seems plausible with the concentric patterns on the Agbeji and Ugele masked types which seem to simulate the Uli design; or the profuse ornamentation on

the Ekwe Idi masquerade which points to the Igbo-Ukwu Art tradition. Although the reason may not be far from the facts of history relating to the heterogeneous nature of the people and other external influences,⁷ informed sources⁸ maintain that such motifs have their meanings relative to the Ibagwa cosmology.

Before delving into the possibilities for visual design, it may be very necessary to discuss the issue of the Omabe motif. From the conventional logic of "form, content and function", (Faulkner, 1966), it would seem most appropriate to give an appraisal of the Omabe motif. Thus William Dennis (1966) defines this rationale when he states, "If an aesthetic experience takes place, further explanations as regards meanings and functions may increase the observers' interest."

THE OMABE MOTIF

From oral interviews held with the people of Ibagwa, Obukpa, Nguru, Umundu and Enugu Ezike, it seems that their cosmological belief about Omabe motif upholds the sun as the Omabe spirit.

The linear striations which are seen on the face of the Omabe masquerade are according to the people, the symbolic rays of the sun whose concept as the sun-god is popular in the Ibagwa cosmology.¹⁰ The fact that these linear motifs radiate from the eye slits appears to make it suggestive. Another informant¹¹ further supports the above idea as follows:

Omabe is, in all respects, a masking tradition with a lot of religious connotations. It is the sun spirit, a spirit associated with the movement and power of the sun. It never "touches" (falls) the ground just like the sun. It moves the people and moves with the people in an atmosphere of oneness.¹²

Furthermore, it is said that every Omabe initiate has a shrine dedicated to "Enyanwu" (lit. the sun). Onu Enyanwu, is located centrally in the compound opposite the main entrance to the house. On the shrine are found some of the paraphernalia on the Omabe (Ugele) headdress such as the Ugo and Agho¹³ feathers. Before setting out, Omabe bows to

the Onu Enyanwu to direct and control its activities in the day's event. Also when it returns, it moves straight to the same shrine, bows and pledges a fowl. This, to the Ibagwa people, signify the intrinsic relationship between ~~the~~ the sun and Omabe. Again, the sun, Omabe never retraces its course. "It rises, moves on, and disappears into the hills with the setting sun."¹⁴

With regards to the silver-coated buttons which adorn the dress of the Ugele, and the pseudo tail which are assumed to relate to the leopard motifs, informed Ibagwa elders¹⁴ explain that the battons are contemporary aesthetic devices to express the luminacy of sun's radiance. The seeming tail is simply Aji (lit. belt) which is worn round the waist to prevent the costume from sagging.

It is worth reiterating to show what relationship exists between the silver coated buttons and the sun in the Ibagwa context. First, the roundness of the silver coated buttons represents the apparent shape of the sun. As the sun incarnate, the silver coated buttons, by reflecting the radiance of sun, help to bring the aura of the sun god to the people.

Another view advances the Omabe dance-steps and innovative movements when it performs as further evidence of Omabe's relationship with the sun. Combining heavy foot thrusts with springy movements, Omabe's phenomenal leap into the air and down to its previous position is said to reflect a significant moment of transformation in which its excitement reaches a frenzy. This movement is interpreted as Omabe's response to its cosmic counterpart, the sun. When Omabe jumps or leaps skywards, it is because it is seeking to identify itself ~~is~~ with the sun deity (enyanwu). If the people did not shout, Omabe would disappear into the air to coexist with the sun. ¹⁷ Any wonder the people shout in nostalgic favour, "Oh dear ancestor, are you leaving us behind to join your sun-spirit? Pray come back and remain with us."¹⁸ But as soon as the masquerade returns to its previous position, the people rejoice with wild ovation and gun-shots.¹⁶

It might be rational to reconcile the foregoing views with the concept of Omabe whose primary role of entertainment and re-union is evidence by its close association with the people.

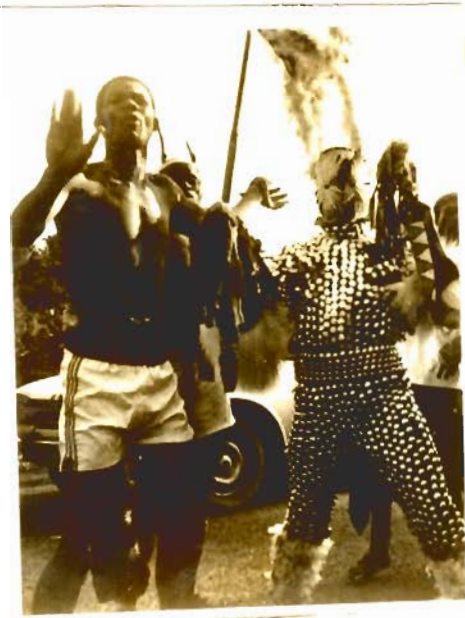
On the basis of this field work as well as the analytical survey of the typology of Omabe art in the previous chapter, the researcher now seeks to sieve the ^{visual} elements in them as can be seen in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. The Ugele is the representative Omabe masquerade. It is variously known as "Echarichama" or "Aharicha" in most communities of Nsukka; and "Igele" or "Agele" in Enugu Ezike.
2. Chief Anthony Asogwa. "Communing with the Ancestors" (Personal interview, Ibagwa-Aka, 1987).
3. Igwebueze Ugwuoke, a retired teacher, oral interview, The Obukpa, 1987.
5. In the distant past when wild animals like civet cat, hyena etc, abound in Ibagwa, none was so much dreaded as the Edi. These animals are now extinct.
4. The hill in Ibagwa-Aka which is believed to be the Omabe's abode from where it descends during the festival, and to where it retires after the Omabe season.
6. Atama Omabe, oral interview, Ibagwa, 1987.
7. According to Afigbo (1978:27) Ibagwa, like her Nsukka counterpart, came under the following external influences in the course of her socio-cultural evolution: Nri (Awka), Igala and Aro.
8. Chief J.A. Ugwu, the accredited fuler of Ibagwa-Aka, Chief Anthony Asogwa, the traditional ruler of Ibagwa

- community and Hon. Emmanuel Omeje, to mention a few, are among the top ranking community leaders who are believed to be versed in the customs and traditional norms of the Ibagwa-Aka community. Again, Ibagwa, like the others Nsukka Igbo, had come under the foreign influences of the Awka, Igala and Aro respectively.
9. Obayi L.O., community leader and school teacher, S.T.C. Nsukka, maintains that Omabe as generally perceived in Nguru, Nsukka, his village, is in every respect, an affiliate of the sun (enyanwu").
 10. Chief Ede Ugwuoke Omeje, at 110, is believed to be one of the oldest men in the entire Ibagwa community. He holds the "Ede" title which reflects age, wisdom and authority in custom and tradition of the area. "The Omabe Transformations". (Oral interview, Ibagwa-Aka, 1987).
 11. Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, the Igwe I of Ibagwa-Aka together with Eze ~~E~~ (Umundu; Ugwuoke S, Obukpa, and Abugu ~~E~~. Enugu Ezike, seem to agree that Omabe relates to the sun.) "The significance and meaning of the Omabe motif". Oral interview. Ibagwa-Aka, 1987)
 12. Hon. Omeje E. "The Analysis of the Omabe motifs" (Oral interview, Ibagwa, 1987).
 13. Effort Ugwuoke, "The Omabe Spirit" (Oral interview, Ibagwa, 1987).
 14. Ugo (lit. Eagle). Agho is a large, rare bird of the eagle family found in the Igbo-Eze and some parts of Igala. Usually red in appearance, this bird is now almost extinct.
 15. Ugele is the representative Omabe masquerade. It is variously known as "Echaricha" or "Echaricha ma" in most communities of Nsukka, and Igele or Agele in Enugu-Ezike.

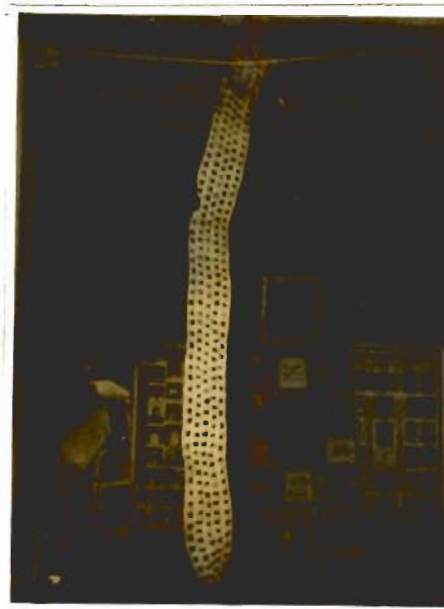
16. Ugwuoke E, Ibagwa Aka 1987); Obayi L.O. Nguru Nsukka, 1989. These clearly maintain that Omabe's characteristic movements as well as the festival simulate the sun. First, the festival begins at sunset at the exact time the masquerades appear. Second, the Ulama, i.e. the departure of the masked spirits which marks the grand finale of the festival takes place at dusk.
17. The silver-coated buttons are highly expensive. Thus the cost of providing enough to adorn the Ugele masked types can only be defrayed by affluent communities within the area. It is thus a wealth symbol.
18. Elder Ugwuoke Onyishi Nguru, Nsukka and Effort Ugwuoke, Ibagwa (Personal interview, 1989).
18. This follows immediately the masquerade leaps high into the air.
19. The people would seem to say, "Yea, he's back home once more". Since adequate measure is taken in the pre-Omabe ("Udama") period to ensure that would be maskers perfect in the arena display, the ideal Omabe performance would be one of good dance steps, phenomenological body movements and acrobatic display in relation to the Omabe music. Only the ~~antutored~~ masked type would seem to dance out of tune.



ARIONS DANCE FROM THE LODGE



III as Displayed by the Applique Designer



III (Belt) the Pseudo Tail Seen Around the
Waist of the Male



OZC 25112



Mrs. Omaha with Feathers



Atlatl





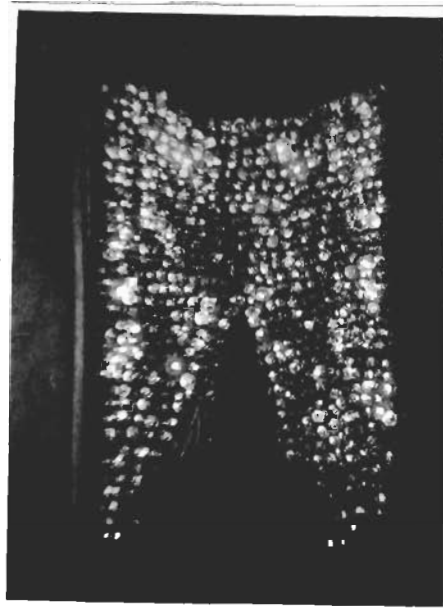
Yobe, Leo



Yobe, Oshema

VARIETIES OF EKWE





Textile (Ugele's Body Dress)



Odu Atu

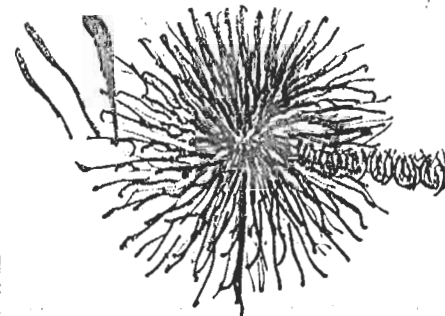
CHAPTER FOURVISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN POSSIBILITIES(a) Discernible Motifs

The motifs charted below are classified according to their names, sources and iconography. Names are derived partly from those for which the motifs are commonly known in the area, and partly from the craft names given by local craftsmen.

55. Agbeji

Agbeji headdress with
large clusters of
different types of
feathers

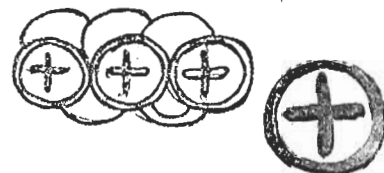
Beauty and
nobility



56. Uguwu

Reverence from the
body mask of Agbeji

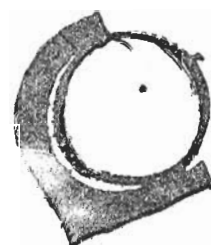
Reverence for
the ancestors



57. Mmezu-Nkwa

Fulfilment of pledge
Artist's formulation
from Agbeji concept

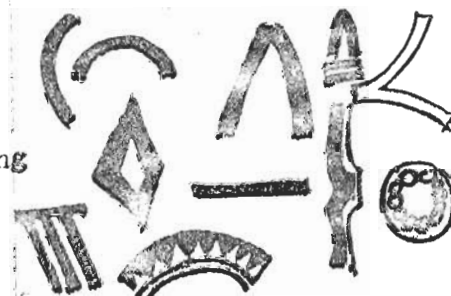
fulfilment



58. Aji

Forms of the Omabe
belt

Loins/preparing
for action



59. Uguru

harmattan from the
Kpakpawuru masked type

forerunner of
Omabe

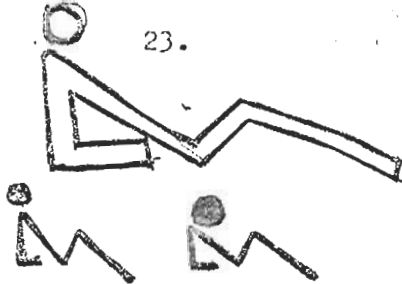
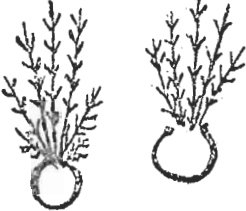


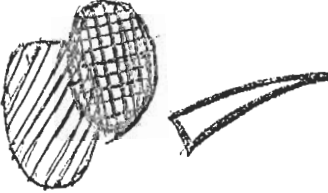



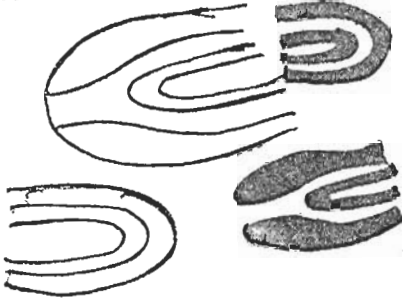

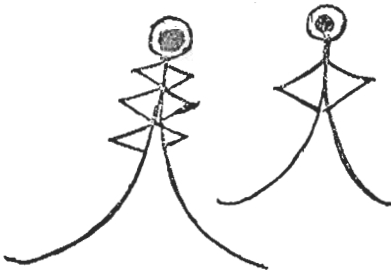
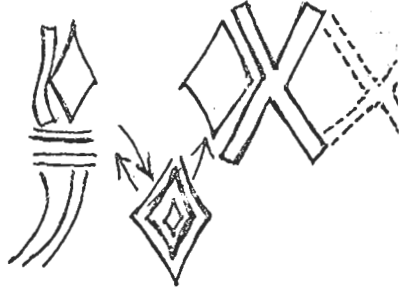
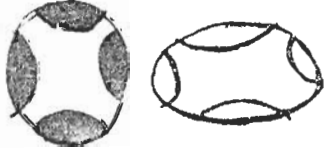
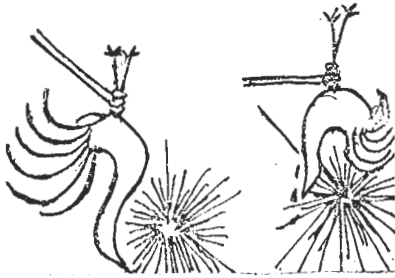
60. Uguru

-do-



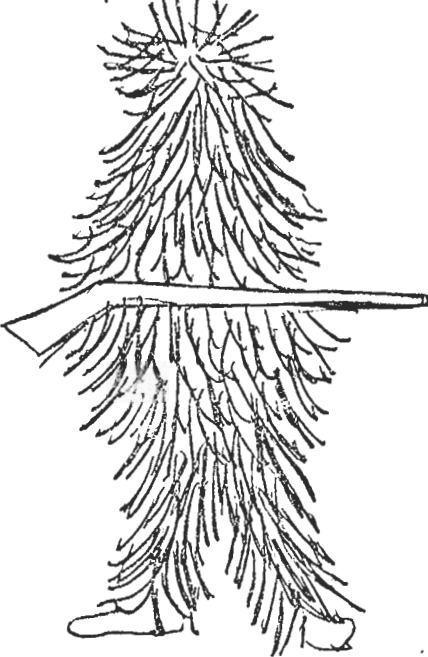
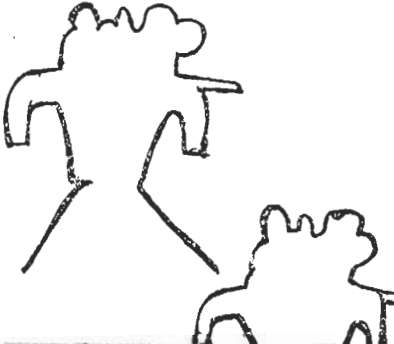
forerunner of
Omabe



NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	Motif
61. Edi Ogbene	Edi masked type from the characteristic poses while at rest. Ibagwa Aka	Potential danger	<p>23.</p> 
62. Isima	Headmask of Ugele. Masked spirit	Truth & justice	
63. Igbandu	Mutual pact from Ajulaka masked type Ibagwa Aka	Oath of secrecy relating to the cult of Omabe	
64. Igu	Palm frond	Peace	
65. Ikpa Oga	Pride; artist's formulation	Infidelity decried during the Omabe period.	
66. Ladore	Farewell; artist's concept	abstract notion of the departure of Omabe into the wilderness	

NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	MOTIF
26. Uzo	The way from the Ajulaka mask	Social control deriving from the notion of Ajulaka the social critic	
27. Ajulaka	the significant mouth (lips) of the Ajulaka masquerade	social critic	
28. Umuma	Young Omabe initiates from the Agbeji mask	Initiates of the Omabe cult	
29. Ozoebule	Ram's names from Echarichama	Probity	
30. Ekpuru Mbe	Tortoise from Mgbedike	Strength and wit	
31. Igo mmuo na-onu Enyame	Sacrifice at the Omabe's shrine	Communing with the gods	

NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	MOTIF
33. Otunju	The Police of Omabe	Out of bounds	
34. Oji	Metallic rattle	ritual staff	
35. Oshagenyi	The Police of Omabe	Order	
36. Beholding the people	abstract sign from the Yoruba	Clasped hands	

NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	MOTIF
37. Ebuba Ezenwudele	Feathers from Vulture	Warrior	19. 
38. Ezenwu- dele (par- tial view)	The heroic prince of the vulture	In Ibagwa mythology like the Enugu-Ezike, this masked type represents patriotism and victory in time of war.	
39. Ezenwu- dele (full view)	From the Eze- nwudele masked type whose body is an assemblage of vulture feathers	Warrior: Victory in time of war	
40. Isima	Head mask from Mgbedike (Time for the brave)	Power	

NAME

SOURCE

ICONOGRAPHY

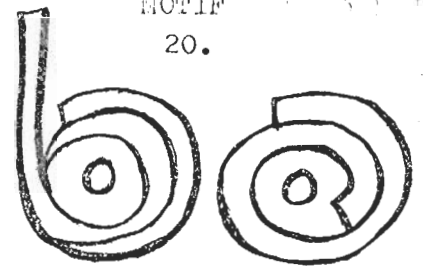
NOTIF

20.

Ekwe

41. Okilikili

Concentric circle
(from Ekwe)



42. Nka Ekwe

Decorations from the
body mask of Ekwe

Ekwe



43. Okilikili

Concentric circle
(from Ekwe)

Ekwe



44. Mpalaka-
Omabe

Omabe's lieutenant

Checks and
balances in the
land



45. Oburuzo

The Omabe's escort
from Ekwe

Forerunner



46. Itesi Aji

removal of Omabe's
belt

Ugele's metamor-
phosis



NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	21. MOTIF
48. Edi Ogbene	Edi Ogbene tubular struc- ture	Brute force and bravery - Also testifying the place of the masquerade as the embodiment of the most deadly charms in the land	
49. Ajulaka	Ajulaka head mask	Social critic	
50. Ajulaka	-do-	-do-	
51. -do-	-do-	-do-	
52. -do-	-do-	-do-	
53. Nfijioku	God of Agric.	Bounty	

14. Igba

drum from
Mgbedike
music inventory

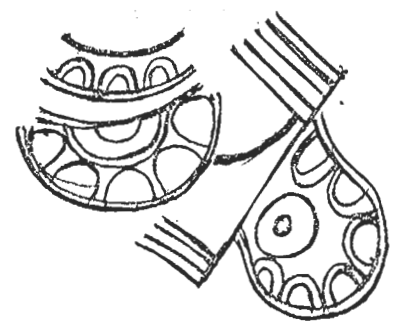
Omabe Music



15. Nka

Art (Decoration)
from Mgbedike
paraphernalia

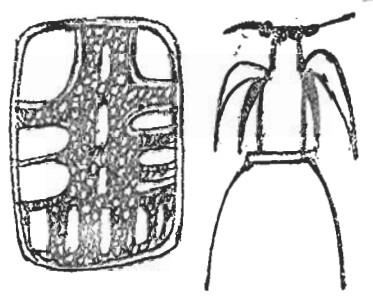
Aesthetics
(Beauty)



16. Mgbedike
with its
Isima

Body and headdress
of the Mgbedike
masked-type

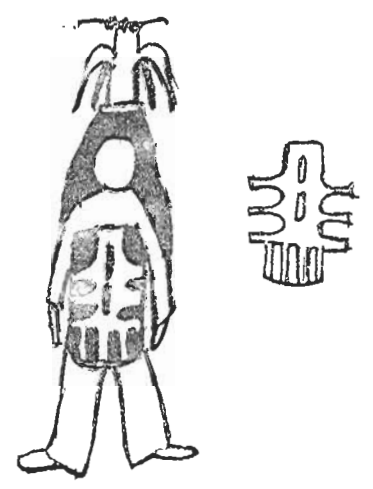
Aesthetic and
ritualistic
respectively



17. Mgbedike

Full representat-
ional rendering of
the Mgbedike
masquerade

Bravery



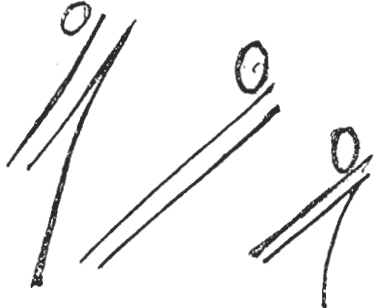
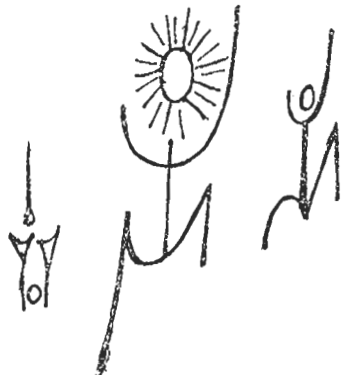
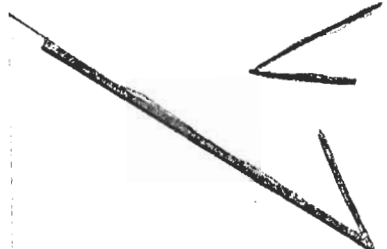
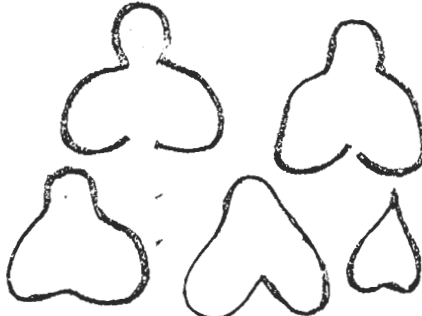

18. Mgbedike



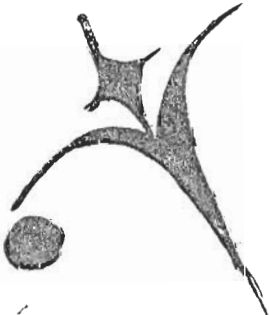
Progressive
formulation of the
Mgbedike motif
from its various
poses

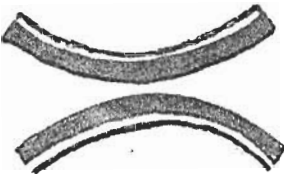


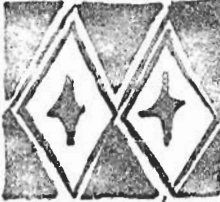
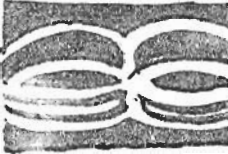
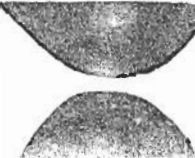
Time for the
brave

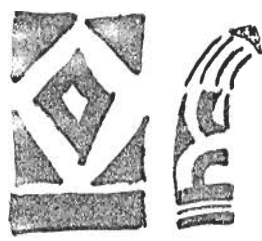


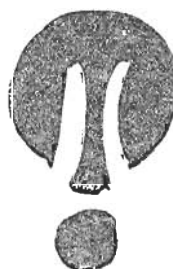




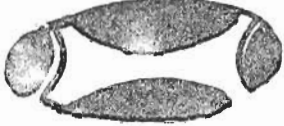



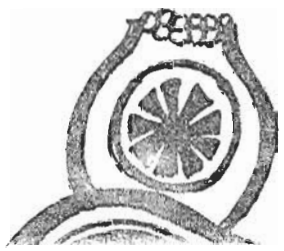
NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	16. MOTIF
19. Ugwuoke Omabe	Omabe's escort from Ekwe	Social Control	
20. Enya Ma	Ekwe's eyes from Ekwe	concentric/ eccentric imageries depicting ever- surveillance of their ancestors	
21. Ugwu Omabe	Omabe's hills	Sacred abode of Omabe	
22. Ugwu Omabe	Omabe's hills	Omabe's eternal abode in association with the celestial forces	
23. Omabe	Omabe masked spirit from the headgear	the principal Omabe masked type	
24. Akala/ Ekpelekpe	Strips from the Agbeji	Peacefulness	
25.	

NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	MOTIF
9. non-figurative abstract signs	from the Igele's gesture as the hands are stretched obliquely with an equally diagonal torso.	Slow motion	<p>14.</p> 
10. Upward thrust	artists formulation of the Ugele's response to the solar pull - his kit and kin	Excitement	
11. flexed elbow	abstract formulation from Omabe's gesture	Greetings	
12. Relating to the people	artists concept from Omabe's gestures/poses	Greetings	
13. Kwamuruije	One with a beautiful gait from Echarchama	gait	

Name	Source	Iconography	Motif
Osharichu	Agbeji	The beautiful	
Okagbeji	-do-	<p>Concerned with the comely qualities of the male athletic, god.</p>	
			

Name	Source	iconography	Motif
Egbeocheala	Egbeocheala	Surveilleur of heaven and earth	
Ma-Agbeji	Agbeji	Vigilance	
Ogene (Gong)	Omabe musical instrument	Musical object	
Ejima	Agbeji masquerade	Friendliness	
Enya Agbeji	Agbeji masked spirit	The Omnipresence of the Omabe spirit	
Enuna-ani (sky and earth)	found on the body - mask of Agbeji source is unknown	Motion of the relationship between the living and the dead.	

Name	Source	Iconography	Motif
Nka	Agbeji/ Egbeocheala	Beauty	
Egwa Ugele	Combination of motifs from the Agele masked type.	merry-making	
Odu	Egi Ogbene	Detective charm	
Akupe	Akupe (hand fan)	Contempt for vanity	
Iyoyi	Agbeji masked type	Admonition: Female infidelity	

Name	Source	Iconography	Motif
Unknown	Agbeji	Unknown	
Mbe	-do-	Unknown	
Okililali na isi oji	-do-	Composition based on the three motifs from the Agbeji body mask: No definite meaning.	
Afala Uli	-do-	Unknown	
Nfi&jioku	-do-	Beautiful harvest	
Ani mother earth	-do-	Abundance	

P

NAME

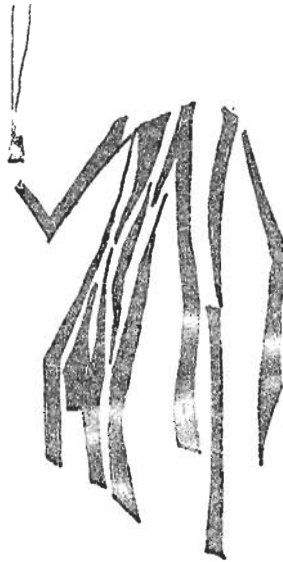
SOURCE

ICONOGRAPHY

MOTIF

Onyekurunye
night

Onyekurunye
masked type
night masquerade



Obe

Egbe Ocheala

Unknown



Iyi Abile
(Abile lake)

Abile Lake

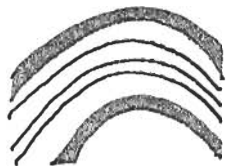
Extension of Omabe Abode



Ugwuabili

Egbeocheala

Associated with the lovely
scenery of Ibagwa hills



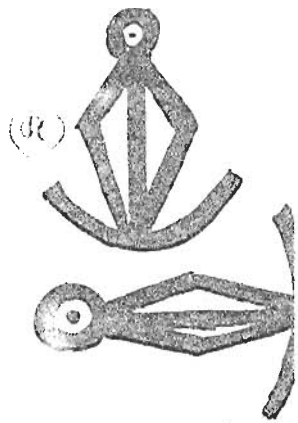
Name Source Iconography

1000000

Eyegami

Omas's eye slit
(a) reversed vertically

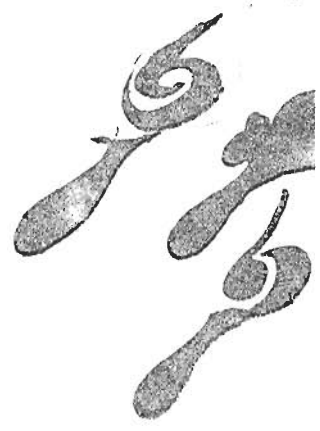
Justice (Omas's
"see" through one eye)



Odu ari

Odu ari
hand prop.

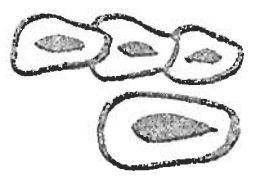
Anti dots
for poison and
witchcraft



Cowrie shell
(no craft name)

Ede Ogben's
body prop.

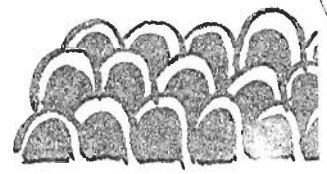
Charm/magic



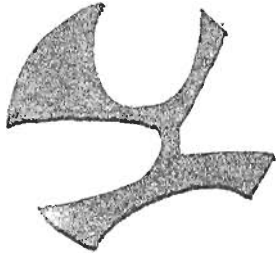
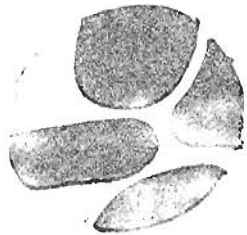

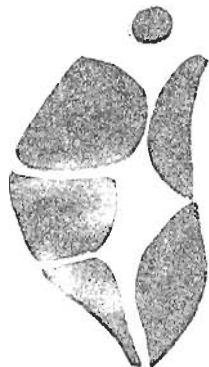
Egu

Igese
and Iagwe
Enwans

forestration,
Scenic beauty



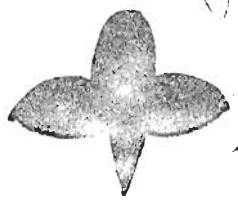
(172)

Name	Source	Iconography	Object
Ibagwa Ake Ishinano	The artists' creation from the four unequal components of Ibagwa	Unity in diversity	
—do—	—do—	—do—	
Unknown	Iwa Izu	Unknown	
Ijekome	Ekuwe	Unity	

(11)

Name	Source	Comments
UNKNOWN	Ekwe	Seems to be for embellishment of the masked type

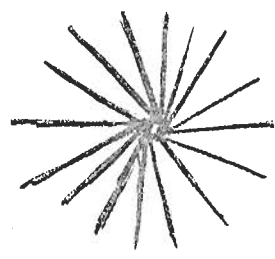
110019



Ugwu	Ibagwa Aka hills	Spirit abode
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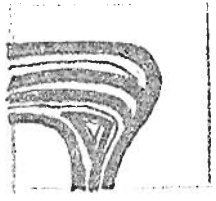
Ndu	Omabe Eyeslit	The sun as the vital life force
-----	---------------	---------------------------------



EKpelekepe	Repeated Motif from Egeshele	No definite meaning save, in the words of the local craftsmen, for sheer beauty.
------------	------------------------------	--



—do—	Egeshele	—do—
------	----------	------



Ikpe

EKWE

JUSTICE



Isioji

—do—

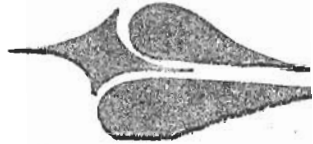
Goodwill



Oburu Uzo

—do—

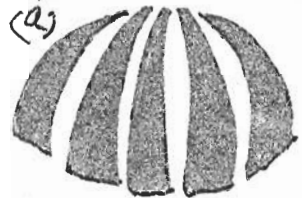
FORERUNNER



(2)

ECHARICHAMA

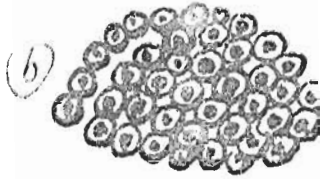
UNKNOWN



(5) NNU

AGELE

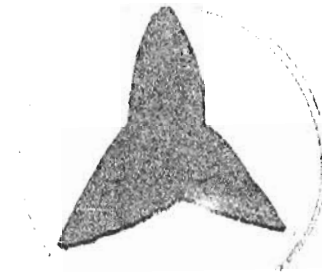
FORTUNE



CHI

EKWE

PAST, PRESENT &
FUTURE



NDIMADU

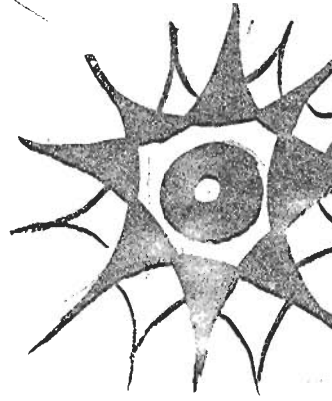
—do—

MASSES



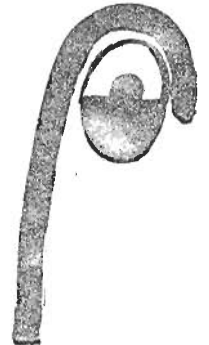
ECHARICHA —do—

ENYANWU
SUN SPIRIT



MA AJULAKA
AJULAKA
MASKED TYPE

NOT KNOWN



ISI OJI
METAL STAFF
FROM OHABE
SHRINE

SACREDNESS



OKWA OJI
WOODEN
KOLA BOWEL

FRIENDLINESS/
WELCOME



AKALA ULI
—do—

—do—



MPI

MGBEDIKE
HORN

NIL

ISI MGBEDIKE

MGBEDIKE
HEAD GEAR

THE YOUTH

IBAGWA

ISI NA NO

—do—

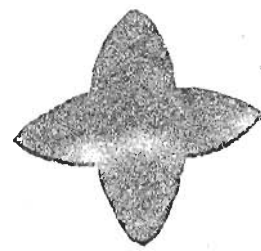
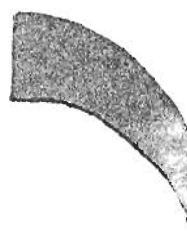
CLASH
SOLIDARITY




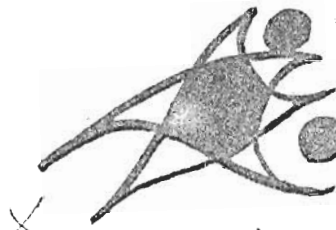
ISI MA

—do—

COURAGE

Handwritten scribble



Name	Source	Iconography	Meaning
ANURI	<p>AGBEJI</p> <p>COMBINATION OF TWO MOTIFS</p>	<p>JUBILATION AND EXCITEMENT</p>	
EZI HMEKO	— do —	<p>RELIEF THROUGH CO-OPERATION</p> <p>MASK DESIGNERS UPHOLD THIS INTERPRETATION FROM THE PERCEPTIVE ROLE OF THE AGBEJI</p>	
NZUKO	— do —	<p>RE-UNION</p> <p>(FROM THE CHARACTERISTIC GESTURE OF THE MASQUERADE)</p>	
ASIRI NIWAHY	— do —	<p>RIVALRY OF CO-WIVES</p>	

OKIKE

EKWE

JUSTICE AND FAIRPLAY



OMENKA

ARTIST AT
WORK

CREATOR



KILIKILI

AQBEJI

STRATIFICATION OF
POWER



EKPELEKPE

1954

COMPETITION FOR PROGRESS
ARENA COMMUNAL DISPLAY



ASOAWA OHA

THE EYE TITLE

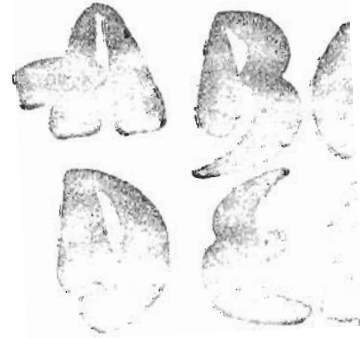
POPULARITY



LETTER
FORMS

EKWE FROM
THE PERCEPTIVE
FORM, SHAPE AND
FUNCTION OF
THE EKWE
MASKED SPIRIT

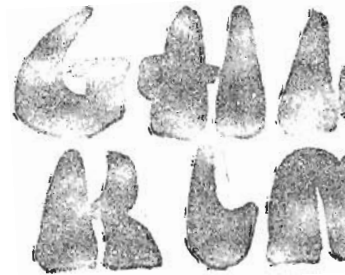
CALLIGRAPHIC
POSSIBILITY OF
OMABE



—do—


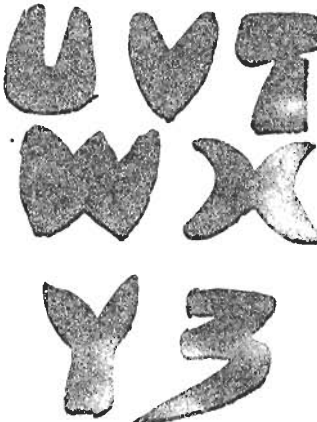
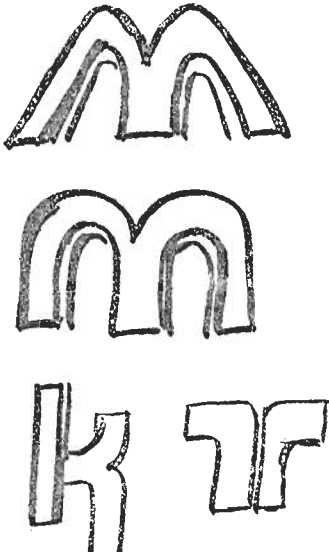
EKWE AND
IBAWA-AKA
HILLS

—do—

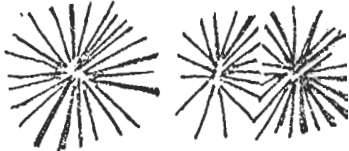

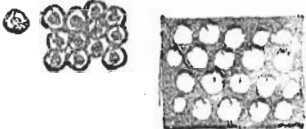





(5)

Name	Iwundu	Iconography	Meaning
EDI	EDI MASKED SPIRIT	ASSOCIATED WITH STRENGTH AND BRAVERY	
OKWE	OSHAGEHYI	FOR AESTHETIC PURPOSES	
EKWE	EKWE MASKED-TYPE	ASSOCIATED WITH ROYALTY	
EKWE EBO	—do—	—do—	
IAU EKWE	—do—	—do—	
ISI EKWE	—do—	THE CAPACITY OF THE MASKED SPIRIT TO CO-ORDINATE THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE EXPERIENCES	
EHYA EKWE	—do—	UNKNOWN	

Name	Source	Iconography	Motif
Omabe Calligraphy	Ekwe	Letters (caps) (NOPQRS)	
-do-	-so-	TUVWXYZ	
Extra Novelty	-do-	MKT	

DISCERNIBLE MOTIFS

NAME	SOURCE	ICONOGRAPHY	Motif
1. Enyanwu	Sun from the eye-slits of Omabe	Power	
2. Omabe	from the headmask of Igele	Uprightness	
3. Mkpochi	from the buttons on the Omabe bodydress	Beauty	
4. Ebuba Ugo	Eagle feathers on the Ugele's headdress.	Purity and strength	
5. Ekpelekpe	Strips from the Agbeji mas- ked type	Peacefulness	
6. Kpakpando	Star from the Igele bodydress	Timeliness Timelessness	

CHAPTER FIVE

(a) ADAPTATION AND APPLICATION: OMABE IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN

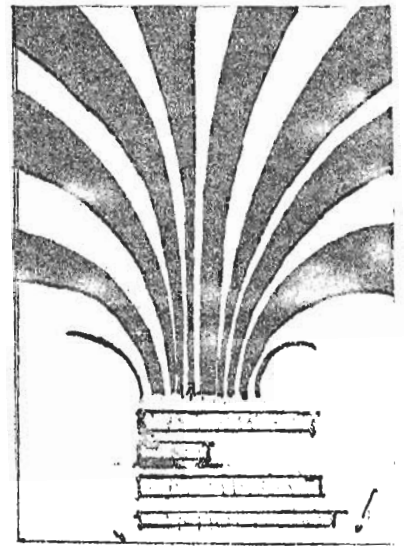
The variety of layouts that could be derived from the adaptation of the Omabe motif can be seen in the various category of posters, labels, package designs, manuals, security, logos, headed letters, call cards, and record sleeves. For corporate identity designs, these pattern elements could further be adapted for creative designs suitable for hoardings, stickers and autographics.

Fig. 1 shows a stylised motif of the ONYEKURUNYE masked type anthropomorphized to depict the invisible Omabe spirit that operates only at night. The Onyekurunye motif in the poster which dramatises the notion of evil deeds and their punishments, is designed "to frighten anyone who enters, to give an example to those who wish to take to it, and to let those led here see quickly what their end will be." (Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, "Omabe masked spirits as agents of social control", oral interview, Ibagwa Aka, 1987.)

The concept of growth, deriving from the adaptation of the Izu glass or the Igele head dress, forms the dominant



(fig 1)



(fig 2)

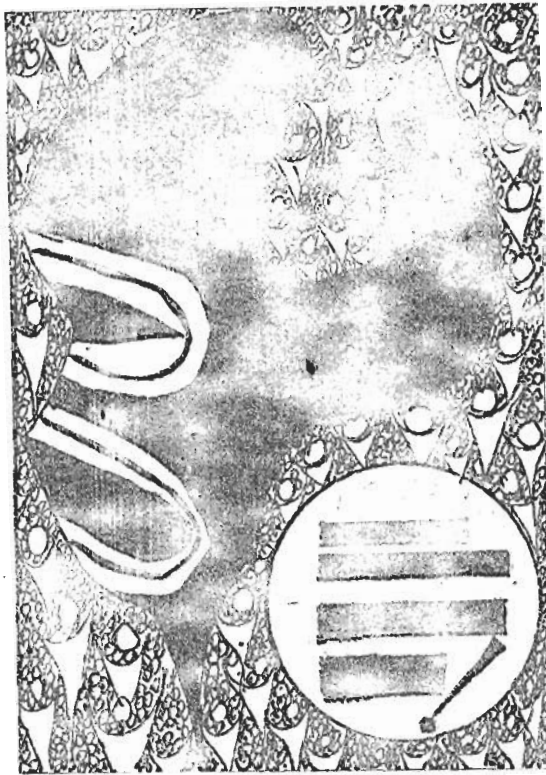


fig 8.

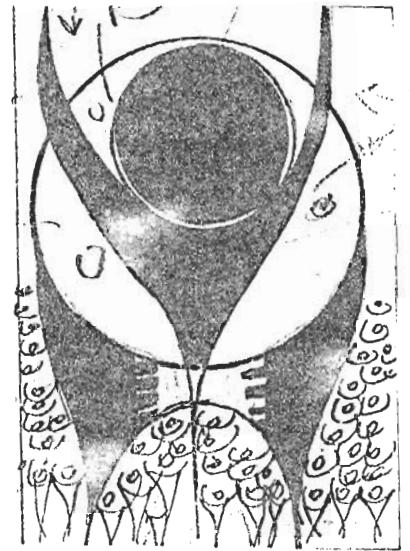


fig 3

motif for the defence of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) Fig. 2. This could be employed by the Information sector of Government to propagate the intention of SAP which, though painful, is in the best interest of the nation. The elements of propaganda by means of appropriate motif and phraseseology situate this point. With a combination of suitable motif from the chart, two posters seem to express the people's consensual views on SAP. In figure 8, however, two contrasting themes could be derived from the illustration. The first seems to call for maximum sacrifice as a condition for a better tomorrow with the caption: "Suffer And Prosper" or "Sacrifice and Prosper" (SAP). The perceptive shape of the Ajulaka motif as an agonized profile of a human head and the suffering masses stylised in the background reinforce this view.

The second theme re-echoes the people's feeling on the austere economic policy and their demand for the mitigation of the programme. Ajulaka masquerade is a social critic in the Omabe context, and the background motif further highlight the people's mood. A favourable caption for this is "LISTEN TO THE MASSES: RE-ADJUST SAP!" In relative

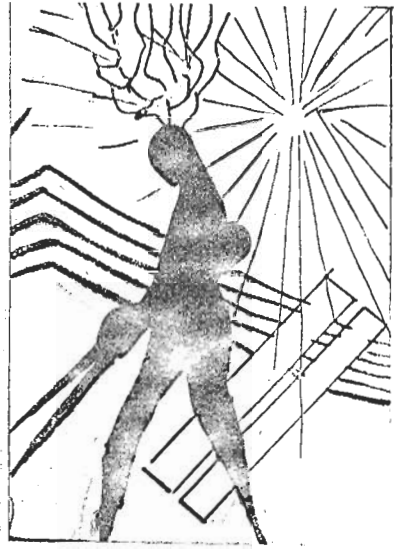
iconography, the Ajulaka motif might stand for Tai Solarin of our time.

The next poster (fig. 3) is a composition based on the combination of abstract shapes from the visual data bank on page . The central motif is a non-representational human figure with both arms vigorously stretched above the head forming a semi-circular arc. Below the thin torso is a firm grip which seems to explain the source of the violent struggle to break loose. Stylised motifs representing the suffering masses serve as a background design. A good colour scheme¹ together with the copy, "SAVE THE PEOPLE: BREAK THE BOND OF SAP NOW!", would greatly enhance the effectiveness of this poster.

Due to the inviting and friendly nature of Omabe, a political aspirant could employ the Ugele factor to rally round a large support from the masses. Fig. 6 is based on this concept. In this poster, a named political party, the People's Dynamic Party (PDP) shows itself capable of moving the masses with the attractive aura of Omabe. Fig. 4 appeals to the universality of Omabe as the people's favourite. This, therefore, gives the PDP a chance above



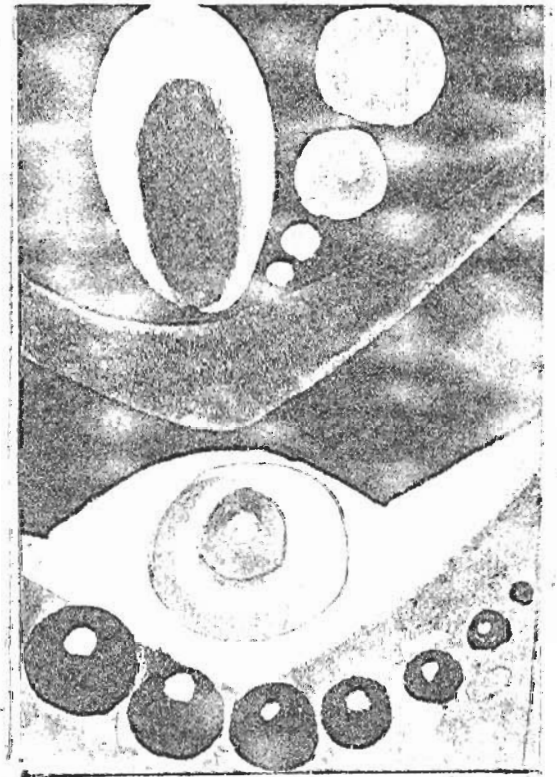
(fig 4)



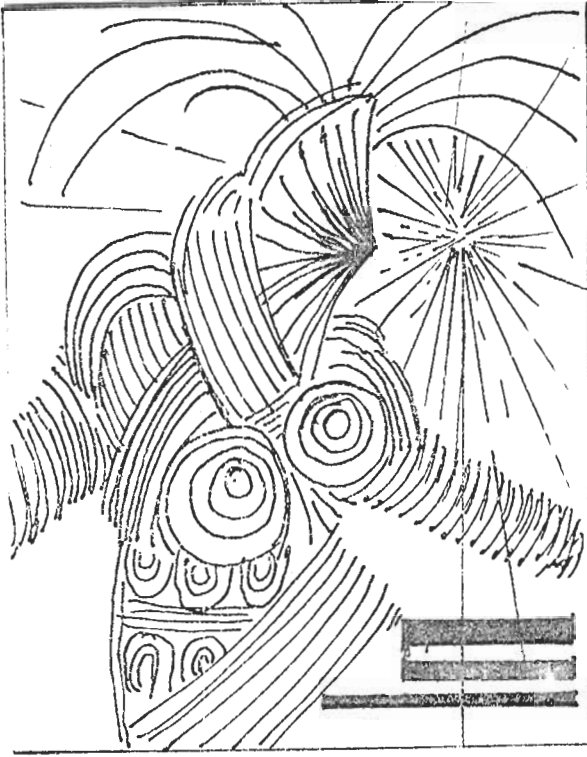
(fig 5)



(fig 9)



(fig 11)



(fig 5)

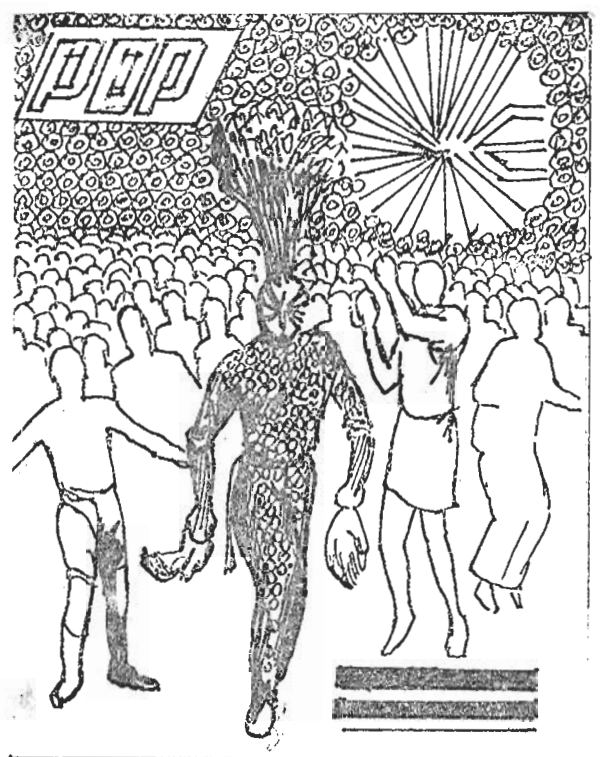
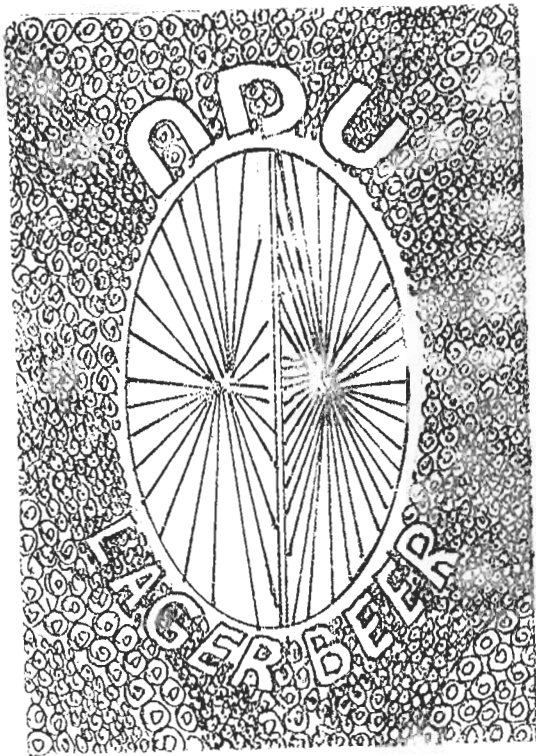
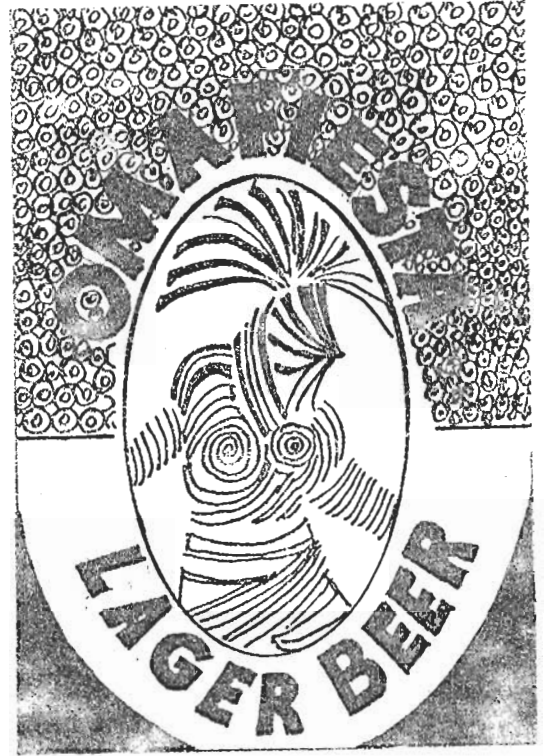


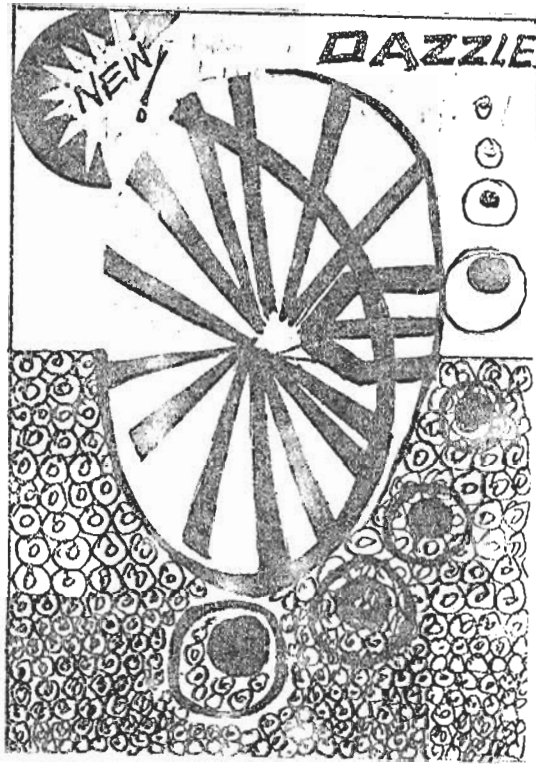
fig 6



(fig 12)



(fig 14)



(fig 13)

others. The same poster might also serve as an announcement poster for the outing and arena display of Omabe characters during the festival, or simply an end-of-year fund-raising launching of the Ibagwa-Aka community.

In fig. 5, the profile of a silhouetted Ugele masquerade from the chart, is placed against a stratified anticline of the Ibagwa-Aka hills, above which is the radial luminacy of the sun. This can provide the visual bait for a seminar poster by, say, the Institute of African Studies, University of Nigeria. The copy is arranged obliquely to form an assymmetric balance. Other categories of poster include works on "Omabe Cultural festival 89" and "National Trade Fair, Abuja" as shown in figs. 7 and 9 respectively. The all-over design in fig. 9 are further adapted for mural decoration (figs. 10 and 11). The motifs from the head and body dress of the Echarichama and Oshagenyi masquerades or the totality of the masked types could be a favourable composition for an instructive or didactic poster. Suitable motifs could be found on the chart to produce announcement posters prefacing on-coming events, for example the Mmanwu festival. Such posters (figs. 6 and 7) could still be adopted for multi-purpose cards.

In the industrial sectors where the policy may concern new or modified products, rationalisation or diversification, changes in distribution methods, or even entry into new markets, the effective use of motifs (figs. 12, 13, 14, 23, 24 and 25) would attract the needed attention for the desired communication. In other words, the evocative shapes are persuasively rendered to form a strong visual device for public relation-designs. Ndu (fig 12) is a larger beer label. Deriving from the vital life force of the sun, Omabe, the sun spirit, enlivens and energises anyone who drinks the Ndu lager beer. The Omafiesta beer label (fig. 14) with the Igele motif, portrays a festive mood which suggests that Omafiesta is a beer for great occasions.

A manufacturing company can use the brilliant quality of the silver-coated button on the Ugele to advertise the efficacy of a toothpaste: "Maclean tooth paste - Go the Omabe way!" One is at once reminded of the phenomenal whiteness of the silver buttons. Fig. 13 is a front cover of package design for a new product which could be a suitable advertisement for a new detergent. Given the dialectics of the Omabe motifs² employed in on this design, nothing could

be more vividly expressive of the effectiveness of this product.

Further examples of the application of Omabe motifs in Visual Communication design can be seen in record jacket designs and logotypes. A combination of figurative, structural and curvilinear motifs have been employed to achieve very unique designs. In fig. 24, the application of the principle of weight-shift and the directional flow of lines and copy, emphasise the dynamism of the Omabe music. Figures 23 and 25 further dramatize the use of figurative and structural lines adapted from the motifs in the chart to visually epitomize the nature of the music being promoted.

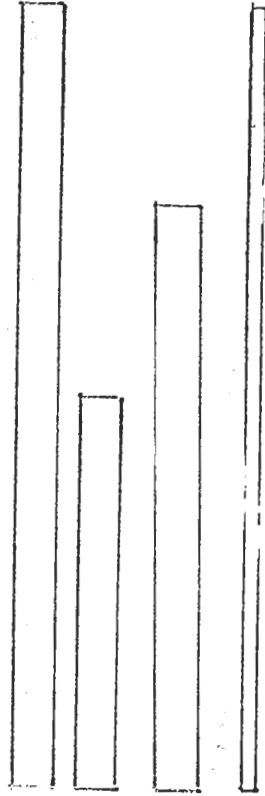
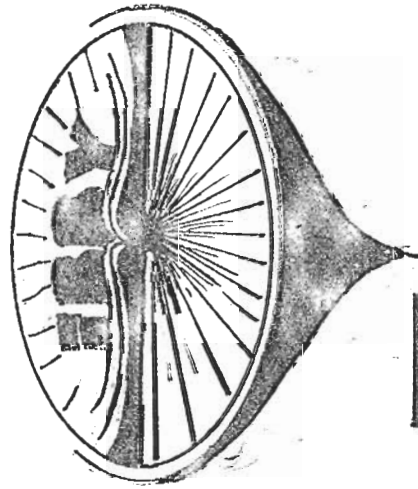
The logotypes shown in Figures 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 are possible for headed letters, call-cards, door and car stickers, billboards and autographics. Figure 15 could be a headed letter for the International Board on Books for Young People. Government departments like the Ministry of Arts and Culture, Education, Information, might wish to use the logotypes in Figure 17 for the appropriate imprints either as a letter head, sticker, season's card, poster,

or publication symbol. The Oshagenyi or Egbe Ocheala motif (fig. 22) could be adopted by the Police Force as a new symbol for the squad in charge of Anti-crime in the State. The same logo (fig. 22) is also relevant for the "Hawk Press".

Finally, it can only be said that the use to which the visual resources of the Omabo art could be put is indeed infinite and varied.

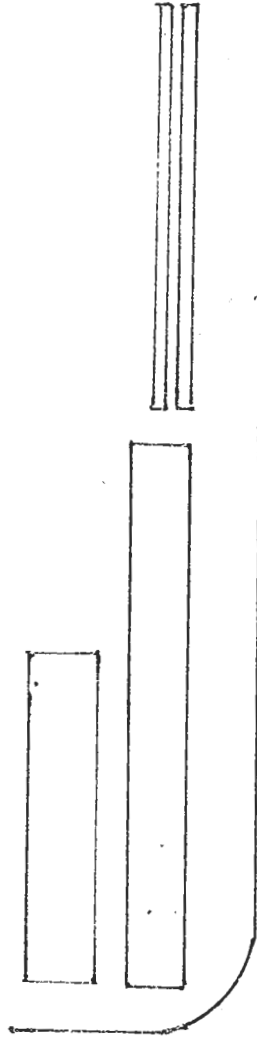
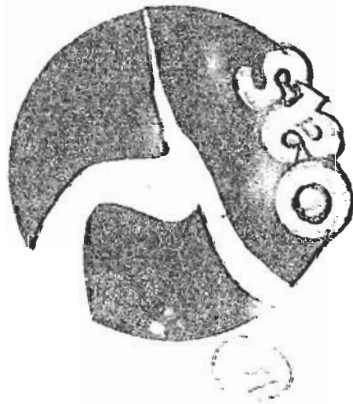
NOTES

1. This should apply to all the examples treated in this chapter.
2. Omabe is regarded as the ideal of anything good.



Headed letter: International Bureau of Books for the Young

fig 16



OKADA AIRSERVICE (Headed letter)

'67, 18 can be adapted for call cards, hoardings, stickers, folders and autographs.

(NO 17 above): The Abb. ASMAC is an adaptation from

- the Ormaiz type-face derived from the study

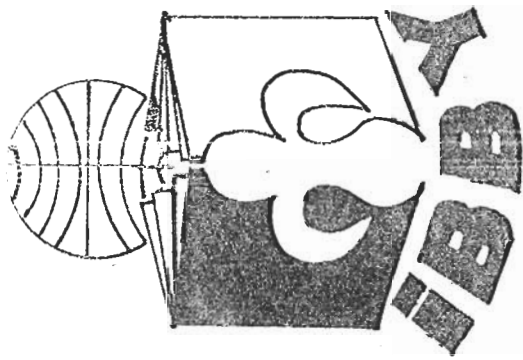
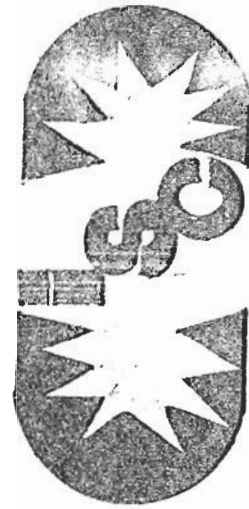


fig 19



fig 20

Bagwa Awareness Club



Bagwa Awareness Club



Fig 23

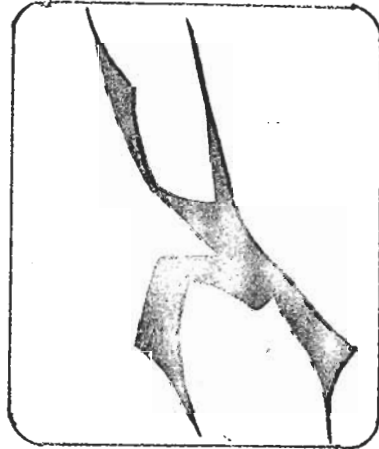


Fig 24



fig 25



fig 24

Latest
fit!

fig 26

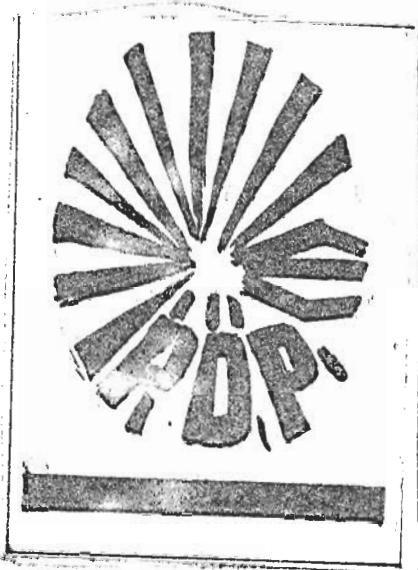
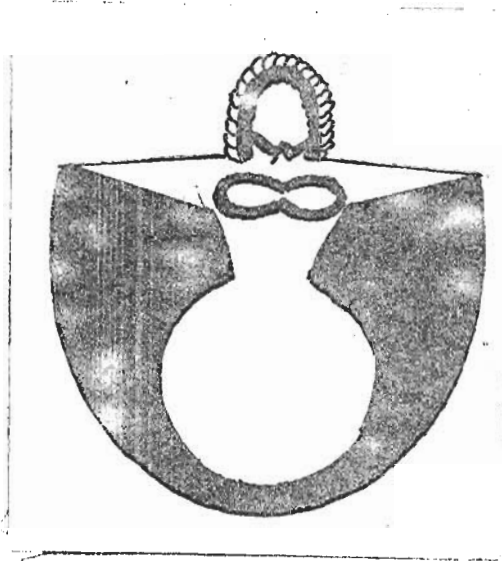
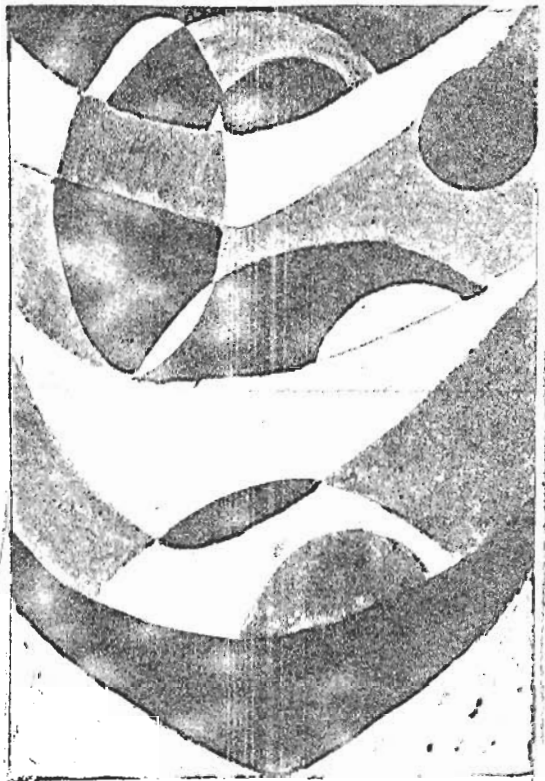


fig 27



(fig 10)

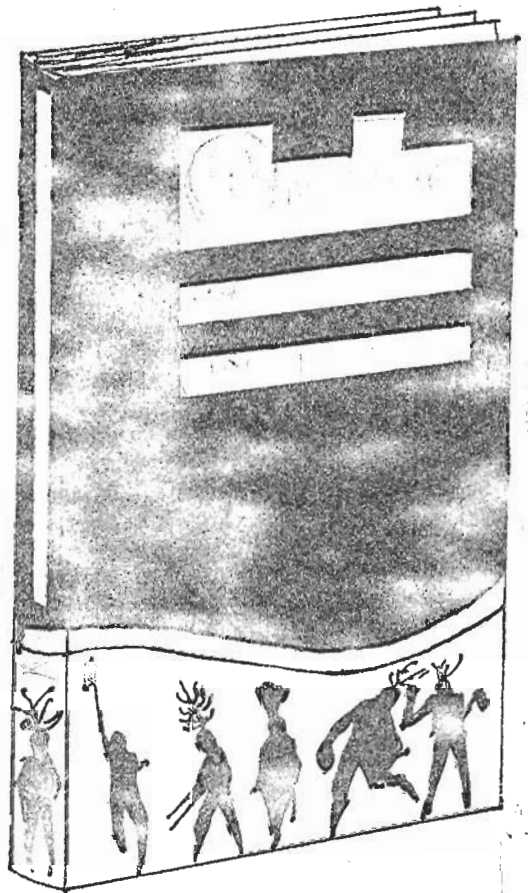
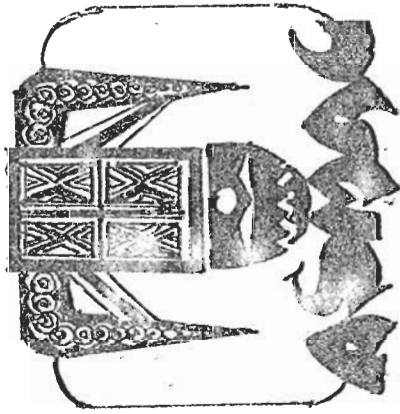


fig 28



ANAMBRA STATE
MINISTRY OF
ARTS & CULTURE
ABUJA

ANAMBRA STATE
MINISTRY OF
ARTS & CULTURE
ABUJA

Anambra State Ministry of Arts & Culture (Enugu, Nigeria)
(All correspondence to The Director, ASMAC, PMB 60001, Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria)

CHAPTER SIXCONCLUSION

In the realm of visual communication, the indispensability of significant forms cannot be over-emphasized. The process of seiving the art implicit in the Omabe masking tradition involves a painstaking probe into the geopolitical setting as well as the socio-cultural phenomenon whose ritualistic essence animates the Omabe festival.

The recurrent constants in the masking tradition are its rituals: , merry-making and sense of re-union among the Ibagwa. This is relevant since the festival itself is built around the theme of kinship and communal solidarity. Furthermore, the festival serves to underline the strong links uniting the living, the dead and those that are yet to be born.

Since visual communication design conveys information more vividly than words, the irresistible and attention arresting power of the Omabe motifs have been put to use in, the foregoing chapter to show the infinite variety of visual communication design that could be possible within the universe of graphic design. The motifs also could be found

to be useful in the relevant visual communication design in the following areas:

- a) Government departments e.g. ministries of arts and culture, education, information.
- b) Professional societies
- c) Trade association
- d) Trade unions
- e) Public utilities
- f) Charitable organizations
- g) Benevolent societies
- h) Sports clubs
- i) Youth organizations
- j) Police forces, among others.

On the other hand, the visual perception of some of the masked types inspired the derivation of a specialised calligraphy which one would rightly call a novelty type face.

In conclusion, it is worth reiterating some of the cardinal points that have arisen in the course of this study as follows:

1. Omabe, according to the Ibagwa-Aka, is affiliated to the sun, and the motifs which simulate the various forms of the sun support this view.
2. The charted motifs which are adapted from the typology of Omabe art can be applied to enhance the communications potency of visual communication design.
3. The examples given demonstrate the wide range of uses to which the Omabe motifs could be put.
4. Since the hitherto unadulterated traditional culture of Ibagwa-Aka could be eroded with time by the increasing pressure of modern development, this study serves as a documentary evidence for posterity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The process of advertising the Omabe art and symbols outside the frontier of Ibagwa-Aka would greatly help to extend its aesthetic sensibility and relative meanings to non-indigenes. In this way, Omabe motifs when applied onto designs become meaningful while at the same time defining their indigenous character. One way of doing this is by using the various techniques of creative photography to produce post cards, photo-albums, brochures, calenders and

other public relation materials, all of which could be distributed (on sale if necessary) within and outside the country. The technique of panning, motion, frosting, cropping, panorama, solarization and texturization, among others could be explored for this purpose. The Ministry of Arts and Culture could exploit this seemingly viable venture which, besides the economic factor, also has its cultural significance.

On the other hand, industrial visual communication designers should find suitable motifs from the 'data bank' and apply them in advertising designs for our ever-increasing locally manufactured goods. Among such designs are packages, folders, labels, trademarks and billboards.

Designers in research centres could find the Omabe motifs ideal as favourable themes for printmaking with particular reference to woodcut, etching (dry point, aquatint and mesotint), mosaic and collage. Further study could be undertaken to develop the calligraphic contents spotlighted in the foregoing research.

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APPENDIX IOral Interviews

S/N.	Name	Age	Status/Occupation	Place	Date	Topic
1.	Asogwa Anthony U.	68	Eze of Ibagwa	Ibagwa	18/5/87	The significance of the Omabe Festival
2.	Abugu F.C.	49	Teacher and Carver	Enugu Ezike	10/5/84	The art forms in Omabe
3.	Ayogu O.	78	Headmaster, Central Sch. Ibagwa	Ibagwa	8/4/85	The Symbolism of Omabe
4.	Attamah M.	43	Craftsman	Ibagwa	25/4/85	The Sources of Omabe Motifs
5.	Obayi L.O.	89	Onyishi (elder) Comm. Leader	Nguru	8/4/89	The Omabe Spirit
6.	Obayi S.	35	Teacher S.T.C. Nsukka (Omabe initiate)	Nsukka	5/4/89	The significance of Omabe motifs
7.	Ugwu J.A.C.	64	Comm. leader and Chief (Igwe I of	Ibagwa	17/6/87	Omabe: Origin, form and function of the Omabe motifs.
8.	Ugwuoke I	78	Retired School Teacher	Obukpa	25/4/86	The inventory of the Omabe masked characters
9.	Okoli E.	31	Lecturer, Iheamufu College of Education	Obimo	12/6/86	What Omabe is; Also the discernible motifs in Omabe
10.	Omeje, B.	60	Comm. Leader	Ibagwa	25/4/85	<u>The artistic contents of</u> Omabe
11.	Omeje E	67	Comm. Leader (Ex-Hon. Member)	Ibagwa	2/5/87	The People of Ibagwa

S/n.	Name	Age	Status/Occupation	Place	Date	Topic
12.	Ugwuoke O.A.	110	Ede (title holder Diviner)	Ibagwa	7/6/88	How Omabe come to Ibagwa
13.	Ukwuabe B.U.	58	Farmer	Ibagwa	11/6/88	Omabe as sun god
14.	Eze, G.	30	Teacher CSS Edeoballa Omabe initiate	Obolo	12/7/86	Omabe as the owner of the land.
15.	Aleke, G.	48	Teacher USS Nsukka	Eha-	19/8/86	-do-
16.	Ugwu, C.	40	applique designer	Ibagwa	25/8/86	Omabe Music and acrobatic movement



The Researcher with Ede, aged 110, during
an interview with the latter



At the Local Craftsman's, Ibagwa
(Omabe Paraphernalia)



The Researcher Posing with the Ekwe in one of his
field work trips during an Omabe festival



Ede, 110, Poses for the Researcher
"Okpuni" and "Odu Abu" can be seen.



Chief J.A.C. Ugwu, Igwe I of Ibagwa-Aka here
poses with Ekwa, associated with royalty.



The custodian of the ritual calendar announces
the Omabe's entry to the land



The Victorious Groups



The Otunju masked type