



PHOTOGRAPHS of Northern architecture were also exhibited

## Nigeria 100 Years Ago on display

**T**HE two-day exhibition tagged Nigeria 100 Years Ago Through The Eyes of Leo Frobenius And His Expedition Team has questioned the view that Nigeria and the African continent was in dark ages until European slave trade and colonisation.

Last Wednesday at the Cyprain Ekwensi Centre for Arts and Culture, organised by the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) in collaboration with the Frobenius Institute, Goethe, Universitat, Frankfurt, Germany, displayed photos of ancient Adamawa architecture, Yoruba art, Nupeland material culture, Tiv and Jukunland arts among other exhibits. These bore evidence of the structured and organised society with a wealth of culture dating back to about one hundred years.

The NCMM Director-General, Yusuf Abdallah Usman, said, "the commission considers this commemoration significant as it provides us the opportunity to take a look at Nigeria's cultural past, albeit through the eyes of a German ethnologist, Leo Frobenius, who was specially inspired by our cultures, defended same to be as genuine

as the cultures of other continents at a time when the western world thought we had no history."

He said through the exhibition of Frobenius's archival materials, Nigerians have at their disposal, invaluable documentation of life in several Nigerian societies as they existed 100 years ago.

According to him, the exhibition is intended to make this pictorial testimony, coming from a time when pictures were extremely rare to the Nigerian public. He reiterated the Commission's readiness to continue to play its role in using the universal language of its collections to create and develop international understanding, within a world in which some parochial people talk of clash of civilizations; instead of seeing the unity in diversity.

While pledging the National Assembly's support through laws to galvanise the culture sector, Chairman, House Committee on Culture and Tourism, Hon. Kanayo Oguakwa, said the exhibition will help sensitise Nigerians "on the importance of cultural heritage and promotion of our cultural industry, by encouraging the local communities to revive them.

Goethe Universitat's Dr. Richard Kuba

said the pictures were archival materials found in the German Institute, which they decided to return to Nigeria in line with the understanding they have with NCMM.

Kuba said, "from our findings, Nigeria was a developed country culturally even 100 years ago and I wonder if the culture is still as varied even though I know the cultures still exist." He urged the Federal Government to preserve the nation's heritage objects through its agencies.



NUPE pottery with characteristic motifs



ANCIENT photographs of Yoruba art pieces like this were on display



WOOD carving on a door