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# CULTURAL DIVERSITY BETWEEN UKRAINE AND NIGERIA

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Let me introduce my report, it is about the diversity between Nigerian and Ukrainian culture, ideologies and its impact on Nigerian society.

Nigeria's government type is federation, it follows a presidential system and it is a federal republic while Ukraine's government type is republic, it follows a semi-presidential system and it is a constitutional republic. In Nigeria, the president is the head of state, the head of government, and the head of a multi-party system. Nigerian politics takes place within a framework of a federal, presidential, representative democratic republic, in which executive power is exercised by the government, *a bit different from* Ukraine as Ukraine is a republic with a presidential-parliamentary system of government. The constitution provides for a directly elected president, a prime minister who is appointed by the president and confirmed by parliament, and a unicameral parliament. Nigeria has three arms of government, this division into levels makes it possible to divide responsibilities and allows the government to manage the country more efficiently: The three arms of government are

The Executive, The Judiciary and The Legislative. The Federal Executive level is headed by the president. He is the head of state and the main commander of the army. The president takes this position for 4 years after the nationwide election. The executive level also consists of Federal Ministries (the ministries are responsible for various government-owned corporations). Executive level of government is also responsible for such services as education, healthcare, welfare, and finance. The Legislature is represented by the National Assembly: The senate is the upper chamber, it consists of 109 senators. The lower Chamber of Legislature is The House of Representatives. It consists of 360 representatives elected for 4 years term of office. The Chief Justice of Nigeria heads the Supreme Court of Nigeria. The main function of the judiciary is interpretation of law and strengthening of the rule of law, ensuring compliance with legislation and developing democracy. The judiciary's role is also to perform checks on the power of the executive and the legislature.

However, in Ukraine, the President is elected for a 5-year term of office, limited to two terms consecutively. Ukraine's electoral law provides for a two-round electoral system to elect the President; a candidate must win an absolute majority of all votes cast.

The religion division in Nigeria and in Ukraine are almost completely different not only in the fact that Ukraine has a more diverse religion options but also in the ratio division.

**Ukraine.** Its capital, Kiev, features the gold-domed St. Sophia's Cathedral, with 11th-century mosaics and frescoes. Overlooking the

Dnieper River is the Kiev Pechersk Lavra monastery complex, a Christian pilgrimage site housing Scythian tomb relics and catacombs containing mummified Orthodox monks.

**Nigeria.** Protected areas such as Cross River National Park and Yankari National Park have waterfalls, dense rainforest, savanna and rare primate habitats. One of the most recognizable sites is Zuma Rock, a 725m-tall monolith outside the capital of Abuja [3].

*Food:* Due to the fact that there is a huge difference between the agricultural produce, vegetation and most importantly weather/ climate in Nigeria and Ukraine, the food both these countries eat are different and at times even though the same produce is used, the food prepared are totally different to the other [2].

*Ukrainian cuisine:* Ukraine fell under the power of many different countries, including Poland, Austria, and Russia. Despite being under Russian domination for almost 200 years, (gaining independence only in 1991), Ukrainians proudly kept their native traditions, customs, and cuisine.

Although Ukrainian dishes have origins from different countries, how they are prepared are uniquely Ukrainian. Like, Kovbasa (sausage) and sauerkraut have Polish origins. Varenyky (dumplings) and holubtsi (stuffed cabbage) were originally imported from Turkey. Strudels, breaded meats, and desserts, such as cheesecake and tarts, were carried over from Austro-Hungarian times.

In the southern part of the Ukraine, plains called steppes have what is considered some of the most fertile soil in the world. Abundant rain and a mild climate made the Ukraine famous for its *chornozem*, or "black earth."

Staple crops include sugar beets, potatoes, grapes, cabbages, and mushrooms. These are often key ingredients in soups and salads. The most popular dish is borshch, a hearty soup made in a variety of ways, depending on the person who is cooking it. Mushroom, bean, and pea soups, and thick millet (a type of grain) chowders are also common. Other vegetable dishes include holubtsi (stuffed cabbage) and kartoplia solimkoi ("straw potatoes"). Kotlety Po-Kyivskomy (Chicken Kiev), a chicken breast stuffed with a buttery filling, is a well-known dish outside Ukraine.

Dinner Menu for Sviaty Vechir (Christmas Eve) include: Kutya (a type of wheat porridge), Borshch (hearty vegetable soup), Baked or fried fish, Oseledsi (pickled fish), Holubtsi (cabbage rolls), Varenyky (dumpling) with potato, sauerkraut, and prune filling, Cooked beans, Kapusta and peas (sauerkraut and peas), Beets with mushrooms, and Stewed fruit.

Around 85 percent of Ukrainians are Christian. Therefore, the most important holiday in the Ukrainian church is Easter, followed by Christmas, but both holidays are celebrated according to the old-style Julian calendar, leading to Christmas Day being celebrated on January 7. Christmas Eve is called the Sviaty Vechir (Holy Evening). To celebrate, a ritual meal is traditionally prepared with 12 mostly meatless dishes, which

symbolize the 12 apostles who gathered at the Last Supper. In some homes, the supper table is scattered with some hay, in memory of baby Jesus in the manger, with an elaborate tablecloth. Kolach is a traditional bread placed in the middle of the table. The meal usually begins with a small bowl of kutya, a mixture of cooked wheat, honey, poppy seeds, chopped nuts, and apples. This is followed by several fish dishes, mushrooms, holubtsi (stuffed cabbage), Varenyky (dumplings), fruits, cakes, such as makiwnyk (poppy seed cake) and bread. Borshch (a hearty soup) is usually included as well.

A Ukrainian Easter meal also has its ritual foods. In the morning, breakfast foods such as hard-boiled eggs, Kovbasa (sausage), baked cheese, breads, butter, and relishes, are placed into a basket and taken to church to be blessed. For Easter dinner, ham or roast pork, vegetable salads, cheesecake, tortes, and other pastries are eaten. Besides Christmas and Easter, there are special breads for almost every important Ukrainian occasion. A bride and groom are blessed, and the dead remembered with Kolach, a rich, intricate, braided bread, which symbolizes good fortune and eternity. For a typical wedding, seven bridesmaids grind flour from wheat grown in seven different fields to bake a korovai, a bread that symbolizes good luck. There are dozens of different ways of preparing and baking breads in the Ukraine.

*Nigerian cuisine:* Nigeria does not really have a general cultural cuisine as it is divided into a lot of different ethnic groups or tribes, each of which have their own cultural cuisine (and there are two hundred and fifty

ethnic groups so that is a lot). Like other West African cuisines, Nigeria uses spices and herbs with palm or groundnut oil to create deeply flavored sauces and soups. Nigerian feasts are colourful and lavish, while aromatic market and roadside snacks cooked on barbecues or fried in oil are plentiful and varied.

River Niger is an excellent source of fish, including carp, Nile perch, and catfish. It also provides the water needed to cultivate crops.

Trade greatly affected flavors of African cuisine however, before trading between continents began, main staples included rice, millet (a type of grain), and lentils. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to reach Nigeria. There, they established a slave trade center around the 1400s. Portuguese explorers and traders introduced cassava to western Africa (including Nigeria). British, Dutch, and other European traders later competed for control of the trade. By the 1700s, the British were the main traders of slaves on the Nigerian coast. European explorers and traders introduced several food staples to western Africa, such as beans, cassava, and maize.

Each area in Nigeria has its own regional favorite that depends on customs, tradition, and religion. The different foods available also depend on the season: the "hungry season" is before the rains arrive in March, and the "season of surplus" follows the harvest in October and November. Fruits, however, are enjoyed year-round. A large part of Nigeria lies in the tropics, where many fruits are available. Some of the popular fruits are oranges, melons, grapefruits, limes, mangoes, bananas, and pineapples [3].

People of the northern region (mostly Muslim, whose beliefs prohibit eating pork) have diets based on beans, sorghum (a type of grain), and brown rice. The Hausa people of this region also like to eat meat in the form of tserere or suya (kebabs, which are chunks of roasted, skewered meat). Muslims love to drink tea, making coffeehouses popular places to socialize.

The people from the eastern part of Nigeria, mostly Igbo/Ibo, eat eba, also called garri (cassava powder) dumplings, pumpkins, and yams. Yams are usually eaten in place of potatoes and are an important part of the Nigerian diet. However, African yams are different than Western yams. They are pale, barely sweet, and are not commonly found in United States supermarkets.

Cassava-based dishes include: Eba, also called garri (a very thick paste that is either rolled into balls or served like amala and made from cassava (manioc)), Fufu (a staple dish in Nigeria and most of West Africa.) and Lafun

There are too many to mention but Nigeria has a lot of soups and stews special to each ethnic groups. Some of them include: Egusi Soup, Okro Soup, Banga Soup, White Soup, Ogbono Soup, Ewedu Soup, Afang Soup and Edikang Ikong, etc.

Some examples of Nigerian snacks are Chin Chin (fried cookies made from wheat flour, eggs and butter), Puff Puff (fried sweet dough balls), Akara (a beignet from a dough based on black-eyed beans), Alkaki (made from wheat and sugar paste), Kuli-Kuli (made from ground



peanuts), Kokoro (a fried dry snack made from corn and garri (cassava)). There are two different kinds.

Meat pie, beef and vegetables enclosed in a pastry case), Plantain chips, etc.

*Festivals:* Each country has its own cultural festivals.

Some popular Nigerian festival. Nigeria has a lot of festivals, few include:

1. New Yam festival: It is an Igbo land celebration. Yams are the first crop to be harvested, and are the most important crop in the east. Thus, the New Yam Festival is a celebration depicting the prominence of yam in the social-cultural life of many communities in Nigeria.

2. Durbar festival: is the most ancient and prominent festival in northern Nigeria. It is celebrated mostly in Maiduguri, Kano, Katsina and Zaria, it is a major part of the Id el Kabir celebrations and the Id el Fitri marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. At first it was celebrated to mark the advent of a war between ancient kingdoms or regarded as a form of military parade to the emirs and their councils to showcase the fighters who defended the territories.

3. Eyo festival (also called Adamu Orisha Play): It is celebrated by the people of Lagos state. It is a 24 days festival featuring a parade with participants dressed in white flowing robes that cover their entire body, top hats and sticks; and masquerades referred to as “Eyo” as well as costumed dancers.

4. Calabar carnival: It takes place in Calabar, Cross Rivers State.

5. Ofala festival: It is a Nigerian Igbo festival that celebrates royalty. It is the official cultural outing of the king and members of the cabinet in the year. The Ofala Festival is an annual ceremony practiced mostly by the Igbos of Anambra state especially Onitsha, Nnewi, Aguleri, Ukpò etc. The festival serves as a rite of renewal of the Eze or Obi (King).

6. Argungu fishing festival: It is celebrated in Kebbi. It features swimming competitions, bare-hand fishing, canoe racing and wild duck hunting.

7. Osun-Oshogbo Festival: It is celebrated in the month of August at the grove. It is two weeks long and starts with the traditional cleansing of the town called 'Iwopopo', which is followed in three days by the lighting of the 500-year-old sixteen-point lamp called 'Ina Olojumerindinlogun'.

There are also a lot of other Nigerian festivals like; Mmanwu Festival, Igu Aro Festival, Sango Festival, Sharo/Shadi Festival, Carniriv, Igogo Festival, etc.

My reason for writing this report is to showcase the uniqueness of my fun and interesting culture as a proud Nigeria.

#### Literature

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