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IKENGA, after which this journal of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has been named, is a cult object of the Igbo-speaking peoples to which traditionally is attributed success or good fortune in the professions or in life generally. It is also closely associated with the right arm with which a man hacks his way through life. *IKENGA* could, therefore, be briefly described as the Igbo god of achievement. The journal is dedicated to the critical study of the fortunes of the black man down the centuries, and of his contemporary problems and dilemmas. Its interest covers the entire spectrum of African Studies.

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**ARCHAEOLOGY AS A RESOURCE OF THE PAST:
A RE-APPRAISAL OF THE USE OF ORAL TRADITION**

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Abstract

Oral tradition is a practical source of information for the archaeologist who seeks to excavate lands belonging to indigenous people. Many parts of Africa do not have written literature dating back into prehistoric times. Archaeologists therefore employ the use of Oral traditions to help them locate sites as well as to examine the history of the people they seek to study. Archaeology as it is practiced today in Africa originated from the Western world and the practice needs to be re-appraised and adapted to suit the African environment. The problem remains that African archaeologists still do not carry out a comprehensive collection of the oral histories. In many cases, it is seen to detract from the progress of their scientific investigations. This study assesses various viewpoints on the use of Oral traditions and argues that its use should be more intensive and holistic in nature for the benefit of the people whose histories are under study especially in Africa.

Introduction

People's descriptions of the past vary with their experiences, culture, traditions and expectations. The past is continually being destroyed in the present. Excavations, construction and other forms of development have all served as agents of destruction of the past. Archaeologists need to recognize a need for commitment to the representation of archaeology and its research results to the local people through a comprehensive collection of oral literature for future studies. They must never impose their own viewpoints on indigenous people, but must relegate academic biases to the background, in order to imbibe the "truth" as the local people remember it. According to Hodder, "Since the past cannot be known with certainty, we do not have the right to impose our own universals on the data and to present them as the truth (Hodder 1986:102). The people already have a past and archaeologists must

begin from their own conception of the past to build their scientific representation of the people's past.

The practice of Archaeology as we know it today was introduced into Nigeria by colonialists who had no vested interest in the promotion of the cultural heritage of the people they colonized. Excessive promotion of indigenous values would have contradicted the foundation of colonial imperialism and questioned racial theories of the deliverance of backward peoples. In the past, colonialist ideologies also helped to convince the Nigerian people that museums were colonial institutions and contained oddities that were especially geared towards arousing and satisfying the curiosity of foreigners. At that time, indigenous national cultural identities were suppressed and marginalized by the colonialists and the indigenous cultural heritage of the people was subdued in order to promote the new and foreign culture. This state of affairs affected every phase of Nigeria's development including archaeology and the establishment of museums and some aspects of this attitude are still inherent in the pursuit of archaeology and even Museum practice in Nigeria today.



Fig. 1 Map of Africa showing Nigeria

The Past in the Present

According to Appadurai (1981:201), the past is not a “limitless and plastic symbolic resource” therefore there should be a social criterion for assessing rival claims to the past. He explains that members of a particular society have substantial convictions about the past or parts of the past and also have their views of what is historically plausible. They also set up their own limits of what they term authentic versions of their past. The past is a real, living symbolic resource, which is made up of everyday values, involvements and the intricacies of the very existence of indigenous people. The past is over. It is gone. It is finished and has become a mystery that needs to be unraveled by an interpreter. The past is conceived as completed and yet the past goes on. It exists basically in its connection with the present and in the lives of the people who live the past in their present. It is inextricably linked with the present and cannot exist without the present. On the other hand, the present reaches out to the past for stability and cannot seem to find its roots elsewhere but in the past thus making the past goes on without ending. Although the past is regarded as complete, it is also considered incomplete. “The past is imperfect, incomplete, requiring interpretation; it exists as a project in the present, a concern, the object of theory and practice” (Shanks and Tilley 1987:22). The past is complete in the sense that it had happened, and is now past perfect. It however, still needs interpretation.

The importance of the past now lies in the relationship created between the past and the present and this is why oral tradition is an imperative resource of the past in the present. The act of interpretation is emphasized in relation to discovering the past in the present. The past is absent. It belongs somewhere else. Fabian (1983) explains that the absence of the past is not a physical absence because the material remains are still in the present. Rather it is the absence of continuity in the present that makes the past absent. Fabian’s main disagreement is based on the inconsistency that is found between the authenticities of fieldwork that anthropologists write about their subjects in accounts derived from their fieldwork. The ethnographer must become engrossed with the subject while sharing the same “historic time and space”. History cannot repeat itself: it is gone. Whatever creation of history that is recreated, must be done in the present and inadvertently involves the people living in the present.

The archaeologist bridges the gap between the past and the present. He overcomes the distance in time travel and brings the past to bear on the present. All too often, professionals (archaeologists), present themselves as “managers” of a “petrified past which is constantly in the need of preservation; a decaying corpse in need of embalming before the smell becomes too strong” (Shanks and Tilley 1987:25). Shanks and Tilley (1987:12) portray the archaeologist as someone who breathes life into dusty relics. The archaeologist is also capable of breathing inspiration, affective affinity and imaginative reconstruction into dead materials. No cultural artifact can be separated from the conditions or context of its production and use. A cultural tool always speaks more than of itself. It brings together images of people, culture and life. It stretches the imagination far beyond the recesses of time to another society, another existence, different from the present. The archaeologist does not attempt to relive the past or copy the ways of the past.

In experimental archaeology for instance, there is no pretense that the archaeologists have become the people who actually lived in the past. To do that would cheapen the profession. The discipline (Archaeology) itself is a personal confrontation with the past ultimately based on a longing for a discourse with antiquity, seeking to reach beyond the object and get to its human creators, being in their presence but not copying or living in the past. People do not need a mysterious commodity presented to them as their past; a commodity that they are expected to purchase but of which they would never be able to figure out its derivation or even the manner in which it was produced. The public would very much need a past that has been actively reworked in the present by archaeologists who do not see themselves as “managers of some unspecified general heritage, a mythical landscape worn with time” (Shanks and Tilley 1987:25). Archaeologists accommodate the past in a continuous process of interpretation and must involve indigenous oral traditions. It is impossible to create the past exactly as it was. It is also improbable that we will ever find out the truth of “what really happened”. Even the word ‘truth’ is relative and subjective and prone to controversy.

What is the Truth?

The interpretation of the past is often an experiment. Coles (1973:168), shows that “experimental archaeology” itself, “lacks the clear ring of truth, of absolute certainty”. When archaeological finds are

aligned with all other aspects of prehistoric or early historic studies, what remains for archaeologists to deal with are mainly opinions, "with the probabilities and possibilities of past unrecorded events". Coles (1979) summarizes the work of archaeologists by claiming that the ultimate aim of the archaeologist would be to produce texts from survey, excavation, and examination of finds but their main aim would be knowledge of the present. Benjamin (1973) describes it as an act of translation of the empirical past, simultaneous reception and spontaneous elaboration of an original.

Nietzsche (1981) redirects those seeking to interpret truth from relics left behind to the uncertainty of their assumptions. His discourse on "truth" can shatter whatever imagery one had previously built on the meaning of the word. According to him:-

"What then is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms and anthropomorphisms - in short, a sum of human relations which have been enhanced, transposed and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical and obligatory to a people: Truths are illusions about which one has forgotten and that this is what they are; metaphors which are worn out and are without sensuous power; coins which have lost their images and now matter only as metals, no longer coins" (Nietzsche 1981:46-47).

Nietzsche's view about the truth, if accepted by the archaeologist creates a particular understanding of the pursuit of the past in the present. Truth is a metaphor or several metaphors and an archaeologist or any other scientist for that matter, can choose that truth which is acceptable to them as well as make room for the people that are being dealt with to choose what they accept as truth. People make up their own truth based on what has become 'obligatory' to them over the years. On many occasions they cannot even explain why they believe what they do. They just hold onto established beliefs that what they believe is the truth. Nietzsche portrays the truth as an illusion that is elusive. At times scientists believe they have eventually arrived at the truth only to face an upheaval and even eradication of facts that were once believed as truth and watch them slide into oblivion. There is no primary truth of the past. The presentation of the past in itself does not bring truth. Knowledge is

never certain. Knowledge is provisional. It is a practice of invention and discovery.

For example, the pre-Christian, and even some Christian Igbo people, south east of Nigeria, believe that ancestors return in the form of a baby especially those born before, during, or soon after their death. Names like *Nne-nna*, which means 'my father's mother', is given to a new child by parents who believe that the baby is a reincarnation of the mother of one of the spouses. As the child grows, respect is often given to certain counsels given by the child as a way of expressing their belief that this is indeed the dead woman. Sometimes the baby would be born with a mark on its body, which was said to have been on the body of the dead. A male child would be referred to as *Nnam* meaning 'my father'. The physical appearance, attitudes and mannerisms of the dead man would be expected by the society to be mirrored in the offspring. As soon as these are recognized in the smallest detail, the people rejoice with shouts of *oyiri nna ya* meaning 'he is like his father'. In modern times, people do not believe so much in the return of the dead. Interpretation and final conclusion by the archaeologist or anthropologist dealing with the matter will also be biased by what they do or do not believe and so the past is therefore interpreted by the beliefs of the interpreter.

Archaeology and Oral Tradition

The marriage between the study of Archaeology and oral traditions is as old as the practice of Archaeology itself. From our experience in archaeological fieldwork, the use of ethnography (involving the collection of oral traditions) is a pre-requisite for student research into the past of indigenous peoples. These people are the custodians of their own past. Oral traditions are the stories that living people tell about their past. They are based mostly on the political and social conditions as well as on historical reality. Oral tradition has been defined as "testimonies of the past, which are deliberately transmitted from mouth to mouth," (Vansina 1960:46). They are "verbal messages which are reported statements from present generation" that "specifies that the message must be oral statements spoken, sung or called out on musical instruments only"; "There must be transmission by word of mouth over at least a generation" (Vansina 1985:27-28). He points out that "Our definition is a working definition for the use of historians. Sociologists, linguists or scholars of the verbal arts propose their own,

which in, e.g., sociology, stresses common knowledge. In linguistics, features that distinguish the language from common dialogue, and in the verbal arts features of form and content that define art" (Vansina 1985:27-28).

Oral traditions are needed in the interpretation of the African past because one of the weaknesses of archaeological record in the tropical rain forest is the vulnerability of material culture in the tropics. In permafrost areas of the world, very old cultural materials are recovered intact in most cases. In Africa, the iron working cultures and the Stone Age cultures are better preserved compared to other forms of material cultures. Such traditions form the main source for the reconstruction of the past in those parts of the world without writing and even among people who have writing, many historical sources including the most ancient ones, are based on oral traditions (Vansina 1960:11). Archaeologists therefore focus a great deal on these.

Some archaeologists and historians are specifically critical of the usefulness of oral traditions in establishing more precisely dated history. They base their arguments on the "weaknesses, distortions and limitations endemic to oral tradition" (Henige 1971: 371). So many limitations have been attributed to the use of oral tradition that one wonders why it seems that its use has not been completely dropped over the years. Clarence-Smith (1977:278), for instance, undermines the use of oral tradition by referring to it as a special appeal brought on "in the emotional atmosphere of independence" for African people from colonial rule. Furthermore, he holds the view that

"Oral traditions cannot serve for reconstructing the history of African peoples, firstly because they have an uncertain status as historical signs, and so cannot be verified scientifically; secondly because they fail to satisfy the basic requirements for the ordering of documents, namely, sharing a common structural characteristic which enables them to be precisely within the diachronic grid of the historians; thirdly because they are extremely selective in content and particularly contain information of a political, ideological and legal nature"(Clarence-Smith 1977:278-9).

On the contrary, oral traditions have been scientifically verified many times and have served as a proof of locations for archaeological sites in the past. They have helped to explain mysteries about archaeological findings and have also served as a corroboration of archaeological dates in the past. Clarence-Smith also points out that oral traditions are 'selective in content' and this is very true. The question one would ask is, which history is not selective in content? Recording of historical occurrences often depends on who was there during the event and what were their political, social and even economic persuasions at the time. Oral traditions do have many problems but in spite of these, can serve and have served for the writing of African history and archaeology.

The real issue here is that scholars of African history/archaeology have realized the paucity and inadequacy of written sources for the reconstruction of the past of African people as different from that of the European world. So far archaeology has provided a prehistory of Africa which goes much farther back than oral and even written sources in some cases, but then archaeological investigation is still very much in its rudimentary stages in many parts of Africa, especially when compared with some other continents. Oral traditions still continue to supplement as well as correct some archaeological investigations.

On the reconstruction of African historiography, Henige (1971), states that "oral traditions are peculiarly prone to chronological distortions, because it is given to either synchronizing, telescoping, and/or artificial lengthening of events" (Henige 1971:372-389). He further concludes that the student of African chronology must recognize that because of the refractory character of data, which he must analyze, "his work will be imperfect, his vision transient and his goal still far away" (Henige 1982:191). In addition to Henige's criticisms, Jones (1970:161) also states that the professional story tellers and the official custodians of state histories were the ones who provide the oral traditions and that they usually have a very hazy and miscalculated idea of the meaning of 'absolute chronology' of whatever episodes they relate. This, Jones believes, is one of the problems of oral tradition.

On the other hand, Andah and Okpoko (1979:202) are of the view that the above opinion by Jones and all such criticisms represent early misconceptions of Euro-American extremist views about not only oral

tradition but all Afro-Asian histories which have oral traditions as one of the major sources of historical recollections. According to them,

“...by contrast, this view sees Western society as oriented towards achievement and individual development, highly mechanized; perhaps bound together by artificial rather than natural links and with a well-advanced technology. It is literate, dominated by the tradition of the written word, secular and rationalistic” (Andah and Okpoko 1979:202).

The solution to this problem seems to have been well delineated by Schmidt (1983). “If Africa is to develop an archaeological tradition free from the domination of Western thought and sensitive to local needs, then a number of problems in historical revision remain” (Schmidt 1983:65). He suggests that, while solving the problems of historical revision, all theories of racist origin have to be eliminated and in addition there should be a greater effort to disseminate results of archaeological research that affect African historical identity, to African populations. That effort, Schmidt claimed, seems to have been made by Shaw in *Unearthing Igbo-Ukwu*, and the extensive ethnographic works of Onwuejeogu in *Nri*, (Schmidt 1983:65; Shaw 1977; Onwuejeogu 1974; *Nri and Igbo-Ukwu* are both towns in Igboland). Although I agree with Andah and Okpoko (1979:202), I also appreciate the problem Jones (1970: 161) presents about absolute chronology. It seems that it is his manner of presentation not so much the contents, that may have given rise to Andah and Okpoko’s reaction to his thesis.

In the past, some oral traditions, as a result of the need to protect or preserve people’s integrity, may have been changed or reworked from generation to generation. As a result of the possibility of change, some anthropologists have doubted the reliability of this form of historical record. In a very early article, Murdock (1959) in his study of African people lists six major ways of reconstructing the past in African groups. Of all the six independent methods he listed ranging from contemporary written sources to ethnographic distribution analysis, he acknowledged that the discussion so far had ignored one source of historical information that is the use of ‘oral historical traditions’. Murdock dismisses the need for the use of oral tradition as one of his major sources since he asserted that

“...no dependence whatsoever is placed upon evidence of this type in the present volume, since repeated comparisons of local traditions regarding places or directions of origin with inferences from the six techniques of proven reliability have indicated, for time depths of over a century, an agreement of not greater than 20 or 25 per cent, or approximately what one could expect on the basis of chance alone” (Murdock 1959:43).

To conclude his thesis, Murdock (1959) makes it clear that indigenous oral traditions “are completely not dependable much beyond the personal recollections of living informant, unless they happen to be of the very unusual type...” With such a view, Murdock does not appreciate the use of oral tradition. Quite frankly, his calculations could not be farther from the facts. In the Cross River State of Nigeria, for instance, oral traditions preserved as songs accurately repeated, go as far back as to the Mbiakong war of 1765 and the Duke Town war of 1875, over a hundred years ago. The orally recorded song, now compiled into written text (for the Duke Town war), is referred to locally as *Ekong Nsidung Y'Atakpa* (Erim 1990:56-7). Comments like that of Murdock are however characteristic of comments from early writers about the use of oral traditions in the interpretation of the histories of indigenous people. The use of oral tradition requires careful evaluation. Reliability of the sources must be checked and comparisons of information given have to be made from one person to the other. “Used uncritically,...they can be a source of much confusion and misunderstanding in prehistoric studies” (Trigger 1978:128). Used critically, oral traditions can reveal a lot about why people behave the way they do and why they believe in what they do. When oral traditions are rigorously analyzed with methods that have been developed in history, anthropology and folklore, “the anthropologist/archaeologist, will often observe patterns in content and structure that may correspond to the archaeological record” (Schmidt 1983:68).

The very nature of archaeology is foreign to many people in Nigeria, it is an example of an imported technology, and quite bizarre to the existing practices of indigenous people. Archaeological investigations in developing countries need to relate to the people whose past are being investigated and must take into consideration their beliefs about themselves and their past in a holistic study of their oral traditions.

This will make archaeology relevant to the needs of a people who are at present alienated from the discipline as it is being practiced today. It is only when archaeology plays a role that involves the public in a pertinent mode, which is not just limited to archaeological studies, but encompasses the very existence of a people and all that they stand for, that the discipline may begin to take up a significant position in the inter-relationship that should exist between tradition and contemporary structures in the developing world.

Oral traditions and African historiography

African oral tradition is about Africa and cannot really fit into another cultural enclave. Oral traditions do not revolve around absolute chronology, and therefore do not place utmost priority on the use of chronological devices that seem to be the priority of western historiography. Although history is a chronological sequence of events, African historiography seems to add more to this sequence. Ruch (1973), explains that normally history seeks to investigate the purpose, methods and presuppositions of historical knowledge and then attempts to order them within a framework of already existing laws which were made with the intention of giving meaning and direction to the evolution of human society. However, creating an African historical interpretation of the past using the above perspectives only would amount to missing a large aspect of African history altogether. Historical consciousness does not manifest itself in the same way in African and Western history. It seems that these two forms of history are based on very separate worldviews of philosophies of life. While trying to explain this point, Ruch (1973:113-4) shows that African historical knowledge is based on a completely different vista from that of Western trained historians who try to use both primary, oral, and or archaeological source material in the interpretation of African history. According to Ruch, the study of African history has to involve the totality of the African's historical consciousness. This historical consciousness is manifested in the African oral recordings of genealogies, heroic poetry, dynastic poems, king lists, legends, age grades, war songs, praise songs, titles, names and places recorded in proverbs, in graphic arts and in technology of civilization in kingdoms like Benin, Ife and Abomey. Ruch gave credence to the fact that materials like these constitute not just a source of history, but a lived history, which is part of the everyday culture of the African.

Furthermore, he stated that “western history is always torn between, on the one hand, the temptation of finding universal laws and of creating an intellectually satisfactory method for a scientific history and on the other hand the need to be true to its particular object, that is essentially particular historical events and to the emotional import of a humanistically relevant history” (Ruch 1973:115). African history does not have this problem. African history came through time as a humanistic endeavor. Ruch concluded with regret, that it seems that African history, under western educational systems, is being studied with the same science versus art dichotomy with which western history was studied and this has ‘disastrous consequences’. The study of African history, of which oral tradition seems to form a large part, is not just the study of the actual sequence of events which took place during a particular period of time. It is much more. Oral tradition is an embodiment of a people’s past in its totality (holistically). It is made up of all that made a people what they were in times past and what they believe they are today. What a historian believes about a people is very important, but must be treated as secondary to their oral tradition, until disproved.

In summary, oral tradition could be represented thus:

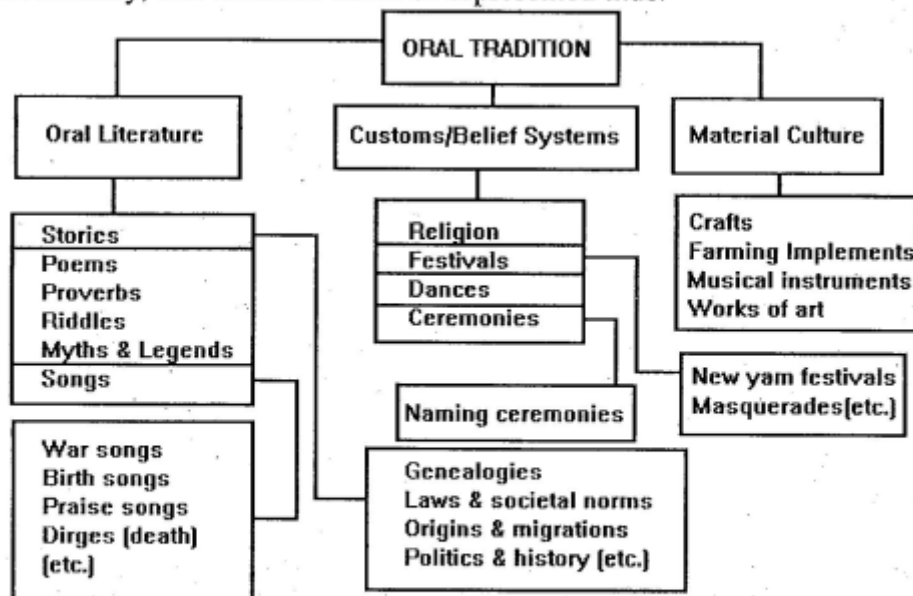


Fig. 2 The components of oral tradition (Eze-Uzomaka 2000)

It is while trying to understand the make up of the African and their conception of oral tradition that the apparent distrust of the stranger comes up. There is a definite resistance to the interference of strangers and a reluctance to share their secrets with foreigners. Information is seen as personal and the presence of the ancestors who have passed away is very real. There is a closely-knit relationship among the various kins and anyone who does not belong is an outsider. There is no desire to learn about the histories of other tribes and there is also a reluctance to learn about foreign cultures.

Maintaining Traditional Knowledge

Oral tradition always seems to mean more to the African archaeologist than it does to archaeologists from other parts of the world. Most of the studies I reviewed emphasize the importance of incorporating the people's oral histories into many historically oriented studies. The reason for this preoccupation must be as a result of the fact that as Ruch (1973:117) explains:-

“The works of the African historian are orations rather than exposés. They are not meant to be an exercise of memory or of rational deductions, but a concrete narrative of events which should produce in the listeners a feeling of tribal pride and ‘patriotism’”(Ruch: 1973:121).

There is emotional involvement throughout and those things that do not make for the pride of one's tribe to be preserved, for instance, incidents, which evoke feelings of shame and defeat, are quickly erased or changed for more suitable stories. After a while versions of a particular oral tradition keeps getting deleted until only one version of the incident remains. It therefore becomes more difficult to recover the contents of the original versions and to record what really happened. In a bid to explain why people often erase versions of oral history that do not appeal to them, Ruch (1973: 122) explains that:

“African history is not meant to be an ‘ivory tower’ occupation for disincarnate-incarnate academics, but plays a central role in ensuring social cohesion and in regulating tribal behavior.... Indeed one could say that traditional African History has a sacred and religious rather than a secular character....It is not an

occupation for academic specialists, but is an integral part of the very socio-religious life of a community”.

Some of the accounts about traditions of origin are not logical to the academic. They sometimes border on myth (for a timeless past), repetition (for a cyclical period), and recent accounts (for linear time). Other accounts are cumulative in nature including genealogies and king lists in areas where such obtain. Epics are used mostly in traditions that have tales of great heroism in the old world centered on heroes and stories of past accomplishments. Greek mythology is full of epics although there are many different versions that have emerged over the years. The wording could change but the form should be kept intact, as this is very important to the survival of the tale. It is however very pertinent to remember that not all oral traditions are epics or about heroes, king lists, genealogies etc.

Some political systems simply do not favor the use of historical oral tradition while the make-up of other political systems requires the need for historically precise traditions. In Burundi for instance, Vansina (1965:160) observes that a royal family known as *abaganwa* politically governed the country. These *abaganwa* were grouped into two or three blocks each with a reigning chief. At the demise of a chief, the son did not necessarily succeed as heir because the other reigning chiefs contended for the throne of the demised chief to install their puppets on the throne. A struggle for power ensued and whoever got the throne dismissed the council of sub-chiefs and appointed his own set of sub-chiefs. In consequence, royal families did not have local kingship traditions and no family histories as such. In addition provincial boundaries were always changing and there was no central government that would have necessitated the rise and maintenance of official historians. Vansina points out that it was actually in everyone's best interest to forget history. No one in the courts was interested in history thereby reducing oral traditions to folklore, proverbs, songs etc.

On the other hand Rwanda, who are the immediate neighbors to the Burundi, had a completely different tradition. The king was well established and had great powers. He ruled the country using the Tutsi families and had an organized military force working under him. Kingship in Rwanda was entrenched in the *ubwiiru*, *ubucurabwenge* and *ibisigo*. The *ubwiiru* was the king's ritual and legal code, which

contained the genealogy of the royal line of descendants. The others, the *ubucurabwenge* and *ibisigo* were propaganda, poetry, and traditions of the military and local histories of the administration. Rwanda also had a number of other types of historical dynastic tales and genealogies, which were carefully preserved through the use of officially, recounted oral tradition. In such a country, oral tradition was not only rich in content and very interesting, but also it had a ring of truth and authenticity when recounted. Another study on Rwanda (Kagame 1951) shows that failure to deliver the *ubwiiru* text accurately was met with death. The teacher of the person reciting the *ubwiiru* was always present during the recitation and would be expected to object if the performer deviated from the accepted version in any great detail. A protest from such an authority leads to a death penalty for the performer.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the African past depends heavily on extensive use of oral tradition. This arose as a result of lack of comprehensive written records of social systems, which existed in the past. In western societies, the past was documented on paper and turned into texts. Some African people did not possess western writing skills, although some had forms of writing such as the *Nsibidi* (a form of early writing in prehistoric Nigeria) (Isichei 1976:36-38). Most however, preserved their history in the form of oral traditions, thereby making scholars refer to them as oral cultures. Many non-western cultures are orally literate and archaeologists must preserve these traditions as a comprehensive resource for future scientific investigations into indigenous histories. Oral cultures are usually regarded as lacking in the matter of literacy. The relevance and significance of people's cultures and of their traditions is often underestimated or outrightly downgraded. A number of misconceptions have arisen over the years in various literatures about literacy and non-western societies. Archaeologists, both of African and non-African origin, are making great efforts to eliminate all theories and writings that have a colonialist origin. This is very important so that Africans can build a new history, from scratch, that would be worth the name African history. Consequently, this could be applied to the study of archaeology in Africa using paradigms, theories and methods that are suitable to Africans and their type of history/archaeology.

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**CONSERVING THE UNKNOWN HERITAGE:
A TESTIMONY FROM OKU N'ERERE ADORATION
MUSEUM, NSUKKA, SOUTHEAST NIGERIA**

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Abstract

About a century now, heritage objects of the Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria have suffered from iconoclasts. Though modern museum practice was introduced years back in the 1920s, the propagators of the newly acquired religion saw no reason why the objects (more of indigenous religious' objects) should exist and be conserved in a museum, not even after they are 'exorcised'. Same story is told about Nsukka part of Igbo land where this Armageddon had lasted for more than four decades. In the year 2000, Oku N'erere Adoration Museum surfaced to help rescue these heritage objects. The move to establish the museum is a laudable venture but the atypical is that ethnographic information about the objects are lacking, they are poorly conserved and exhibited with little or no public patronage. Lessons from this work will show the dangers of destroying heritage values, and hopefully help to organize such 'evangelical museums' in tune with proper conservation practice. Ethnographic techniques were used to elicit information in order to achieve the above aims.

Key words: Conservation, Heritage, Museum, Oku N'erere Museum, Nsukka, Southeast Nigeria

Introduction

*"Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it"
(Todorov, 2004). "Heritage objects are a looking glass*

that reflects the image we hold of ourselves – our values, our beliefs, our understanding of who we are – as a product of a common past” (Jensen, 2000). “The strategic-political and ultimately moral-historical question is how to move towards understanding without ever forgetting, but to remember without constantly rekindling the divisive passions of the past. Such an approach is the only one that would allow us to look down into the darkness of the well of the atrocities of the past and to speculate on their causes at the same time as we haul the waters of hope for a future of dignity and quality” (Neville Alexander in O’Reilly, 2004).

In the recent past, the attitude of Africans, Nigerians, and the Igbo in particular towards their cultural heritage is such that have dismissed the idea of cultural continuity. Iconoclasm, one of the post-contact syndromes emanating from the superimposed alien religion and education system is focused on getting rid of all the historical objects left of the people. First, the religious crusaders burnt, destroyed and carted away many of the precious heritages, and on departure, they had taught our brothers and sisters how to deal with the remainders.

Before the contact, heritages were preserved in palaces, shrines, and monuments were protected with taboos, sanctions and their likes. Although Nigeria witnessed for the first time modern museum practice in the 1920s, Simpson (2007) had argued that museum-like models have existed traditionally for many years, and some facets of conventional museum practice conform to this indigenous model. Many museums in Nigeria started as traditional museums that existed in palaces, shrines and temples purposely for adornment and worship with little or no conservation and exhibition intensions. The idea behind modern museum approach is to uphold the fivefold objective of collection, documentation, conservation (preservation and restoration), exhibition and education. Collection policy is based on the aims and objectives of the museum and should consider most importantly terms of reference, geographical boundary, collection usage and ethical responsibility. Okpoko (2006) avers that documentation is very important in aiding the authentication of an object; hence any object should be properly documented as soon as it is acquired. Information to document are sources of the object, its type,

name, uses, owner, dimension, height, length, maker/producer, age, country/state/place or clan of origin, description of its physical features, and other history associated with it. The purpose is to ensure proper handling to avoid mix-up and misplacement of both the objects and the accompanied information. Such documentation serves the legal purpose of proving ownership at any given time (Arinze, 1990). Conservation on the other hand is the required action taken to prevent deterioration by adopting approaches that extend the life and basic functions of a heritage (Avrami *et al*, 2000). However, exhibition is a planned display of heritage aimed at arousing public interest and promoting socio-cultural, economic and political activities for the society (Adams, 1978). Exhibition is meant to catch the attention of the public for research and enjoyment; by this function, education is inevitable.

The establishment of Oku N'erere Adoration Museum under the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka was proper as it was expected to stop iconoclasm and help to conserve the heritage objects of that part of Igbo land. Since its inception, the museum has been busy with acquisition without any attempt to document, conserve (in this case, proper housekeeping and restoration) and exhibit appropriately the heritages to serve museum purpose. The posers are whether there was a standard set on how to collect the objects? What was the aim of the museum? Was it to save the people from acculturation, or aimed at reducing tensions raised by the ongoing iconoclasm? Was there any meaningful conservation intention for the heritages? This work therefore derives impulse from these questions that are yearning for critical answers.

Study setting and methods

The place under study is a museum (Oku N'erere Adoration Museum) situated at the cathedral premises of the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka in Nsukka Local Government Area with an extension located at the centre of Oku N'erere Catholic Adoration Ministry (OCAM), Umushene Umuida, Enugu Ezike in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area all in Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. The use of the term 'Nsukka area' is necessitated by the activities of OCAM which covers the seven local council areas (Nsukka, Igbo-Etiti, Isi-Uzo, Udenu, Igbo-Eze North, Igbo-Eze South, and Uzo-Uwani) created out of the old Nsukka division which constitute the diocese. Heritage objects contained

in the museum were collected from within Nsukka area (the diocese) with little exceptions.

Onlooker observation was the major data collection technique for the study, this also involved physical observation of the objects. It was supported with in-depth interview and written records. All the authors of this piece reside in the study area and have severally participated in the activities of OCAM for about a decade now and have observed the collection process of some of the heritage objects. Physical observation of the objects in the museum revealed much information that was helpful as well. The 'spiritual' director of OCAM, who is also the owner, curator and manager of the museum is Rev. Fr. Dr. Paul Obayi. He and members of the OCAM congregation, as well as members of this locality whose heritage objects have been taken, constitute the study population. The 'spiritual' director was purposively selected for in-depth interview. Convenience sampling technique was used to select other respondents; at the end twenty-eight (28) persons were interviewed in all. And data obtained through interviews and physical observations of objects were combined with literature.

Findings

The Oku N'erere Adoration Museum started its collection in the year 2000 as a result of the activities of OCAM pioneered by Rev. Fr. Dr. Paul Obayi which commenced the same year. The OCAM was founded to:

- a. fight evil/oppressive traditions that discriminate against the weak such as the orphans, the widows, ethnic and tribal discrepancies.
- b. wage war against all social and spiritual ills that hinder human progress namely poverty, illiteracy, sickness and spiritual bondage.
- c. lead all souls to God through the message of the gospel and teaching of the church.
- d. demolish wicked strongholds of diabolic altars and deities.
- e. guide the youths and people to attain the divine blessings and destiny designed for them by God. (Ezugwu, 2013)

To meet these objectives, the ministry adopted weekly prayer vigils, clan/village/community cleansing and deliverance. At such occasions, clan/village/community as a group and as individuals

relinquish to OCAM their political, religious, cultural and economic objects believed to have hindered their progress and development. And such objects usually include religious figurines from shrines, insignia of political status, musical instruments of cultural significance, amulets, war instruments etc. Unlike such other Christian organizations in Nigeria that would have those objects destroyed instantly, the spiritual director of OCAM collects them for his museum.

The museum is a room that is directly opposite the episcopal office of the catholic bishop of Nsukka Diocese, located in one of the buildings within the diocesan secretariat. It is 24m by 3.5m, stocked with heritage materials on both sides of the wall with a little walkway in-between. It now has an extension that is about 7m long and 4m wide with a raised wall of about 1m. In both rooms, objects are jam-packed without any housekeeping, written record and proper exhibition. And it is permanently locked, only to be opened on demand. In fact, the museum rooms are possibly a dwelling place for all kinds of bacteria, insects and rodents known to cause damages to such heritage materials. A look at some of the plates in this paper will speak volumes. Meanwhile, a more spacious hall in a new building (under construction at the time of writing) within the diocesan secretariat is proposed to house the museum collections.

The OCAM “heritage dump” was originally conceived to be an evangelical museum that would serve as a museum in which religious and cultural materials would be kept for posterity; to inform future generations about their forebear’s ‘idolatry’. However, we found that beyond being conserved as exorcised objects, there was no attempt to document information about them. Although, it was told that a high ranking person in the diocese had earlier advised the owner to collect ethnographic information about these objects, this suggestion our observations show, does not appear to have been taken. They appear to have only been kept to serve as proof of the people’s worship of “small gods” and “mere objects” in the past. But can this aim be achieved without documenting the original information about the objects? Could there be a heritage without information about it? Could there be a museum without information about its collections? May be there is a plan to fabricate information about the objects to favour Christianity! But this will mean lying to the upcoming generations.

However, these objects were collected from many prominent oracles, shrines, great diviners, priests, indigenous medicine men to mention but a few. Very prominent among the oracles and shrines that were dismantled and their objects collected are the Adoro of Eroh, Adada from Lejja, and Edi Ogbene from Nguru all in Nsukka Local Government Area and Ngwueje from Ezimo in Udenu Local Government Area and so on. And great diviners and medicine men that subscribed to this activity are Okaramadu Okaramuo from Enugu Ezike in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Benard from Igah in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area, and a host of others. Contained in its collections are objects of wood, clay, metal, bone, rubber, leather, feathers, stone etc. Because there is no entry form and accession number attached to any of the objects, there is no accession register for the museum; and because the objects were collected (more being acquired as the activities of OCAM grow) and lumped together for more than a decade now, most of the objects can hardly be separated and documented according to these oracles, shrines, diviners and medicine men. Whether the collector can still remember from where the objects were collected to see if one can revisit the owners (if alive) to enquire and document information about them is now a huge concern. On arrival to the museum, one will begin to wonder if the place is a museum or a dump of heritage materials; the objects are jam-packed, one obstructing another. No wonder Eke (2006), having observed the museum, lamented: "at St. Theresa's Catholic Cathedral, center of Nsukka Catholic Diocese, a mountain of cultural objects combined with some obnoxious charms, already exorcised, and therefore innocuous, have been sentenced to death and are waiting for execution any moment soon." His expression reflects the true state of the museum, which is graphically portrayed in the plates below.



Plate 1: Northern view of the 'heritage dump'



Plate 2: The dump from Southern view



Plate 3: North-west view



Plate 4: A section of the dump



Plate 5: Mid-west view

Discussion and Conclusion

We have been able to demonstrate here the extent of negligence on the conservation of the objects in this museum and the level of the museum's irrelevance to the society as a result of poor documentation, conservation and exhibition. Also suggested above is the fault history that the 'museum' would represent. These anomalies were made glaring after a brief chat with the owner of the museum. A question was raised as to the appropriate ways of exhibiting the objects with their proper information, to which he replied, "I will try to cogitate on what the information about the objects could be". An important question that his statement then raised was, "which, out of the hundreds of the objects in the 'museum' will he cogitate on?"

In a multi-religious country like Nigeria, where the constitution allows for free religious association, museum exhibition of this nature is capable of causing an unsettling memory and may raise historical and religious controversy now and in the future, because it is a falsified history. Also, the intention to present these heritages in a negative memory which will suppress their general historiography is a plan on the wrong direction which will make the museum lose its conservation relevance in the future (a time when it will be highly useful to the society). The intension is to discourage the people from patronizing the

objects seen as an incarnate of African Traditional Religion (ATR) not knowing that what they patronize is not the objects, but through blood sacrifices and invocations made on the objects, they commune with the supernatural beings. Outside this, the objects are just symbols of worship which is not common only to ATR. It is therefore supposed that after exorcism, the objects were to be acquired, documented and preserved in the museum as a symbol of worship; hence, the core value of ATR is not inherent in the objects as the invoked spirits exorcised exist by and by. This misconception of the core of ATR had led to the religious syncretism that is very common in Africa nowadays.

Stressing the importance of heritage memory in the society, Macdonald (2008) affirms that the memories that heritage inscribes and the histories that it indexes are integral parts of what is presented as shared public narratives, bolstering senses of identity and legitimacy. He further decried that these have come to be accompanied in memory - though by no means in all countries - by unsettling, competing or contested memories, narratives and heritage. And he attributed it to identity politics in which diverse groups seek public recognition, crafting self-narratives and claiming legitimacy through memory inscribed as heritage. In our understanding, this is exactly what the museum under study is craving to do. The heritage in its possession are already suppressed, denied of their appropriate historiography by being starved of their accompanied information, reduced to nothing and be propagated to canonize Christianity among people that have a totally different type of religion and culture. It is regrettable that this is happening at a time when the intersection of heritage and identity, which helps define the essence of the cultural realm, is fundamental to the political negotiation not just of the state, but also of polities and societies (Graham and Howard, 2008). The continual acquisition and keeping of these heritages in their present form is an attempt to enclave and/or to relinquish the people totally from the Nigerian, African and the world politics, which is fast transcending into identity politics.

However, museum is seen as a fallback for a society that has attained cultural and historical crossroads. Ottenberg (2009) in Ugwu (2011) narrates how Native Americans (known popularly as Indians) in recent years have gone back to museum to pour over the material objects of their own past stored there in order to understand their past cultures. Ugwu (2011) further points out that they were leveraging on relevant

aspects of that knowledge system in the modeling of their present society. And he avers that human groups who have succeeded in the present order of the world are those who carefully guard their own useful local possessions while appropriately borrowing from outside, that which they do not have. Our position is not that all the objects in this museum are useful but there are many among the collections that are carrying with them such historical, religious, medical, technological, scientific and artistic information that would help to elevate the people in a competing world of today when properly utilized. There are also some indigenous knowledge embedded in the activities of the diviners, medicine men and priests whose operations were cut short and their materials collected without any documentation. Our concern is that information about such objects within this category should be properly documented for posterity. Cogitation of any form which may never be true story of the objects will be tantamount to cultural genocide against the people.

One cannot hastily forget the aftermaths of colonialism in Africa, where before and after independence, most African communities, nation states, and countries had embarked on in-depth research to prove to the world that they were not “barbaric”, “backward” and “uncivilized” in the past as portrayed in the writings of Euro-American scholars. African and few Euro-American archaeologists, anthropologists, sociologists, historians, linguists and many others went into the field at the eve and early morning of independence to prove this point. Their writings were so influential that continued researches have placed Africa on the debate as the foundation of world civilization. If their forebears had destroyed the heritages (now relevant in our time), the falsely packaged history of barbaric, backward and uncivilized African people would have succeeded in subjecting the people to perpetual servitude to the world that is presently faced with identity politics.

To salvage the heritage in this museum from being useless now and in the future, we therefore suggest that the activities of OCAM be revisited. At this point, information about many of the objects can be retrieved through an extensive research since most of their owners are still living. This is to ensure that the objects serve both the present and the future generation the purposes of education, research and enjoyment through tourism promotion. The general public should understand that the originator of the museum has made a remarkable attempt to conserve their history, and in their contribution, they should donate more objects

to the museum (instead of destroying them) and with their detailed information. Owners of the already acquired objects should be bold enough to give out information about them when approached to help the museum play its roles in the society. The owner should employ the services of ethnographers and archaeologists who will help to inquire about the objects at the point of collection; during his activities, he should instruct the owners of the objects to attend to the interviews of the ethnographer/archaeologist after exorcism, deliverance or prayers. He may also engage educationists, conservators and cleaners to work in the museum for proper housekeeping and the education of museum visitors. The National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) empowered by law to approve of any museum that is privately established and maintained in Nigeria, should assist and direct the collector appropriately. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the International Council of Museum (ICOM) could extend a hand to enable him carry out an extensive research on these objects and to encourage proper acquisition, documentation, conservation and exhibition in the museum. This will help the organizations to achieve their goals of safeguarding the cultural heritage of mankind for posterity.

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**SLAVE-OWNING ORACLES IN IGBOLAND,
SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA: SOME DEVELOPMENTS
AFTER THE ABOLITION OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC
SLAVE TRADE IN AFRICA**

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Abstract

The caste system in Igboland has become a major problem affecting the social and political lives of the Igbo people. The system, no matter how latent it may prove to be, has polarized most Igbo communities, making developmental efforts in such communities unrealizable. The abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade was not the abolition of slavery in Igboland. Igbo merchants engaged in the slave economy stood their grounds in defiance to the abolition. The result was that slave trading went on in Igboland even until the 1960s. Paramount among the recalcitrant traders was traditional priests of some Igbo oracles. These oracles had hitherto held sway in Igboland and had been providing slaves to the coastal traders in hey days of the trans-Atlantic business. The abolition of the trade in slaves did not stop the 'inertia' that was involved in the procurement of slaves through a well laid down system of oracular judgments. Those who were purportedly killed by the oracles found their ways to the coast. However, with the abolition and stoppage of immolation, they were made to remain at the oracular grooves ministering to the priest of the oracle. The paper contends that it was this development that led to the prevalence of Osu (cult slaves) among the Igbo and the continued denigration of them.

Key words: Osu; Oracle; Slave; Trans-Atlantic; Igboland; Caste; Abolition

A Prefatory Note

"The belief that the bulk of the slaves handled in the Atlantic trade were captives from tribal wars or that kidnapping and raids were the normal methods of obtaining the human victims is now seen to be a half

truth when applied to the tribes east of the Niger. The oracle directed by the Aros, was the medium through which the slaves exported from the Delta ports were largely recruited” (Dike, 1956, p. 40). The myth surrounding the Aro oracle, claim that the supreme God had descended from heaven to Arochukwu and has appointed the Aro as his agents in Igboland (Oriji, 1981, p. 35-52). The oracle was not primarily instituted to facilitate the Atlantic trade but merely cashed into an established social structure to swindle the people. This view is also corroborated by Basden, (1982edn. p.244). “Akin in several respects, yet quite different from and additional to the religious rites and ceremonies of the Ibo people, is the veneration accorded to certain local deities accredited with supernatural powers of divination. These deities inspire great awe and they are consulted on various pretexts, and in case of serious dispute they are the final courts of appeal, and no one dare question their verdicts... of all the [frauds] practiced in Africa there can be none greater than those connected with these principal deities; a steady source of income to their guardians”.

Evidently, the Igbo society was stratified before the trans-Atlantic slave trade era, and it is probable that the Osu formed part of the premier Igbo victims of this trade. This view is reinforced by Uchendu (1977, p.121-132), who succinctly stated that slavery in Igbo society constituted a continuum of status disabilities. The oracular priests enslaved the Osu, or cult slaves, and others who were said to have committed acts of abominations or have come to seek refuge at the shrine. The priests traveled freely in parts of southern Igboland, establishing shrines of their oracle and buying the Osu from the Eze-Ala (Priests of the earth goddess) and other sacred authority holders. The oracular priests of Agbala and some of the itinerant Awka blacksmiths associated with them might have also sold the Osu and other slaves to Aboh, Ossomari, and Igala middlemen on the Niger (Oriji, 2011, p.106). It is significant that Ryder has noted a similar trend in the Bight of Benin, where religious institutions provided the early slaves sold to the Portuguese, including cult slaves and those found guilty of committing serious offenses in their communities (Ryder, 1969, p.35).

African traditional religion, like Christianity, has sacrifice as a paramount part of the liturgy. Sacrifice, therefore, is a central and unifying force in most religions. The bone of contention among these religions appears to be: who will carry the object of sacrifice to God?

Christians will advocate that the objects should be brought to Christ; Buddhists; Krishna; the deities in African traditional religion; among others, will claim they are the real messengers of God. Even when the Moslems advocate that Mohammed is the last messenger of God and has brought the most authentic message from the almighty, other religions contest it.

For Obianyo (1993, p.14), oracles are forms of divination that employs magic or rituals to uncover hidden information or to foretell the future by signs and omens. Oracle may refer to a divine message; a god who foretells the future; or the priest of the god who mediates between the god and the client and interprets the decisions or judgments of the god. In this discourse, oracles were used interchangeably with deities because there is a thin membrane of difference between them. Whereas oracles perform the duties of deities and speak directly (through the priests) to the people, deities' injunctions can be ascertained through diviners who may not be connected to them. In other words, when a deity incorporates divination into its operations, it becomes an oracle. The fact that the Igbo believe in oracles made them appeal and offer sacrifices to them to obtain favour in terms of rain to avoid drought, prosperity in agriculture and in human procreation, fortune and luck in business, protection, as well as demand for impartial arbitration, among others. It was, therefore, as a result of the belief and faith of the Igbo people on these oracles that some of them were used to perpetrate heinous acts against the very people they were supposed to protect.

The best known oracles in Igboland at the inception of colonial rule were the Ibini Ukpabi of Arochuku, Agbala of Awka, Igwe ka Ala of Umuneha and Kamalu of Ozuzu. What made them great at the time was not that they did what other oracles in Igboland never did, but because of the craft of their priests. Igbo communities are dotted with a pantheon of deities performing different functions and acting in consonance with those major oracles. Nwala (1972, p.30) observed that Igbo oracles were intimately called to the service of men and groups with adventurous and expansionist spirits such as the traditional Aro and Awka.

In Igboland, oracles abound and their shrines form places of worship. Even after the 'destruction' of the Ibini Ukpabi oracle of Arochuku in 1902 by the colonial officials, the existence and function of oracles did not cease in Igboland. In several Igbo communities a pantheon exists with different altars and priests ministering to them. Most of them own

human and material properties, including human beings – men, women and land. Because the deities play the role of social control in the communities, anyone who fell foul with the established norms was appropriated, including the property. By so doing, the deities through its priests had significant influences in the communities they operated. It is noteworthy that the deities were not established as tool for slave trading but as time went by, it became an ally in trans-Atlantic slave trade through the dubious machinations of the priests. Nwala (1972, p.25-35) contends that, “the process by which control of an oracle was acquired was somewhat political, in that those with leadership qualities and with religious zeal usually took control of the oracle”.

This study examines the prevalence of the Osu in Igboland and not in any other ethnic group in Nigeria that was a theatre of slave trade. It reveals that the descendants of the Osu, who now receive denigration from the Amadi in most Igbo communities, were actually the *unsold wares* of the oracle priests while the *Ohu* were the *purchased wares* of the Amadi. Many who could talk to this researcher were able to trace their genealogy to between four to five generations before it joins the priestly generation of the deity. This ability to remember and the number of generations, suggest that it was an aftermath of the abolition and not knowing where to go, they remained at the shrines performing functions as dictated by the priests. Even when they know where they came from, the relations were not willing to accept them again because they have become properties of the oracle and, therefore, sacred. The study advances that the so-called Osu were products of the abolition of the trans Atlantic Slave Trade. That prior to the abolition, the priests sold away the excess of human sacrifices offered to the deities while retaining some for immolation; with the abolition, the excess could no longer be sold and the introduction of Western civilization made immolation, criminal, thus making the slaves settle and live around the deity grooves. Their descendants form the bulk of what is today denigrated as Osu in Igboland. Before the trans-Atlantic slave trade, oracles demanded human sacrifices for appeasement. Men of honour were usually buried with a number of slaves. Slave immolation was part of the culture.

Outside Igboland, in the Bini Kingdom, a princess, Emotan (Ide) was sacrificed for the survival of the kingdom. Among the Igala, another princess, Inikpi was sacrificed to obtain favour from the gods to win an impending battle. At Ile Ife, Oduduwa migrants struggled with and

conquered the Igbo through the efforts of Moremi who sacrificed Oluorogbo, her only son, to the goddess of Esinmirin River to ensure victory for her group (Oguntomisin 1988, p. 229-230). In Northern Igboland, among the Alor in Nsukka area, the woman who instituted the Adoro deity was sacrificed immediately after¹. The man who made the Agbachi in Umuagama sacrificed his first son to institute the deity² and so on. Human blood has been a rare gift and has featured in the making and institutionalization of deities. Most of the deities at one time demanded human sacrifice for the reinvigoration of their potency or as a form of atonement for the wrongs done to them by the people. In the various cases, the princesses sacrificed volunteered, so that the kingdoms would survive the impending wars³. Then, the question: how does one know the desire of the gods? Among the Igbo, this knowledge was obtained through diviners, who play central role in ancestor worship, which characterize the traditional religion of the people. Malinowski (1958, p.3) suggests that, "the real power in ancestor worship lies in its deep association with the constitution of the family". This study centres on Igboland and will examine the oracular situations in the area before and after the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade with a view to identify the historical processes associated with the Osu caste system.

Oracles before the Trans Atlantic slave trade era

Fallon (1979, p.1018) contends "from the ancient times, man has been anxious about his future and fortune. There have been many different ways of foretelling the future." As the ancient Greek had oracles that provided answers to the puzzles of their life, pre-trans-Atlantic slave trade Igbo societies had oracles that helped them fathom the truth about certain events in the society as well as foretell the future. Apart from the oracles, there are other various forms of divination. Among the Igbo, it is called *afaleha*; the Idoma (*ogbodaga*); among the Yoruba, Igala, and Edo (*ifa*) while in Nupe (*eba*), among others. The Ifa system of divination is prevalent in the western part of Nigeria and in some West African countries like Togo, Benin Republic and some parts of southern Ghana and even in the Atlantic world of the Caribbean, though with some modifications. This form of divination is believed to have entered these areas through the African slaves who were taken there in course of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Divination thrives because of man's uncertainty of the future and the quest not to be taken unawares by

tomorrow or future events. Individuals and families embark on sacrifice when prescribed by the diviner or the oracle⁴.

Oracles exist because of the worldview of the host society. The view that up in heaven is the abode of God almighty; on earth surface, is the abode of men and some elemental spirits, who had not yet qualified to transit to the great beyond; and inside the earth (ground), were the abode of the ancestors. However, Dike and Ekejiuba (1990, p. 131) agrees that,

the material world of these societies was governed by a hierarchy of spirits and spiritual forces which are believed to act in an essentially regular manner: certain actions at individual or societal level bring this mystical agents into play with broadly predictable results – to punish or to bless. The aim in settling disputes or punishing criminals therefore was not only to punish the culprits but to restore the delicate ontological order which such acts are believed to disturb. ...it was an important mechanism of social control and adjustment as it provided legal and moral sanctions, preserved moral standards and enforced social codes of conduct.

It is common belief that mystical agents played vital roles in the affairs of men and nature spirits intervene in the life of the society as regards fertility (of men and of the soil), disputes, adventures and the general well-being of the society. As the society became complex, most disputes or cases transcend human judicial processes and the services of diviners or oracles were sought to settle such cases. This may be in form of oath-taking at the altar of the oracle or the outright revelation by the oracle of the guilty one. The belief that the oracle kills anyone that swore falsely by it was generally acclaimed and when that happens, the earth has to be propitiated. It is the oracle that determines who defiles the earth as well as the mode of and materials for propitiation. This placed the priests of the oracles at a vantage position against the people.

Oracles were established as a medium between the people and *Ezechukwuokike* up in the sky and the ancestors below them. Chosen persons served as intermediaries, priests. Ifesieh (1989, p.53) suggests that oracles,

deals with man's relationship with his maker, which gives meaning to his life... People have times in their

worldview when they consult oracles and diviners in order to find out the strength of their relationship with the spirit world, to maintain healthy relation with it, to appease, and to maintain the ontological balance.

The oracles served their societies very well through its judgments. The oracles added meaning to the life of the people by providing healing in time of diseases, shielding the weak from the strong, as well as setting moral ethos for the society. This informed the way and manner they were revered in the societies where they are obtainable and beyond. Given the Igbo philosophy of life, the priests of these oracles are the human intermediaries between man and the oracle, and as well the visible representative of the Almighty. As intermediaries, they were regarded as God's representatives on earth and are by that dispensation, infallible when they act on the inspiration of the oracle. In view of this position, the priests or operators of these oracles had opportunity to either work according to the provisions of the oracle or cheat unsuspecting victims to their advantage. The result was the betrayal of the purpose for the establishment of the oracles, as some became agents of death rather than life; courts of injustice rather than justice; perpetrators of the strong dominating the weak rather than the protector of the weak from the strong, and so on.

What soured this relationship? Why did oracles made to protect the weak from the strong turn against the weak and began to sell them into slavery? There were several other ways of obtaining slaves but what kindled the interest in this study is how the people used the name and appurtenances of office of a revered oracle to perpetrate a nefarious act while ministering to God. Man's greed, avarice and desire to rise above established institutions may have accounted for this change. Also, the introduction of modern economy and the availability of market may have given impetus to this.

Before the heyday of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, trials by ordeal characterized the oracles and the victims were immolated, left to minister to the priest of the oracle as *Osu* or made to pay certain amount of money to buy back freedom. During the period, might was right and the weak fleeing from the wrath of the strong often ran to the deities for protection. It was in fact the deities that gave succor to the downtrodden, the fatherless, the poor and the weak. An Enugu Ezike expression: *e nwegh*

ike n'ema kwu (he who is weak has the gods as his friend) reflects the esteem the people held oracles. Rather than allow the weak the freedom the gods has given them, the strong, perhaps in order to discourage the weak from seeking protection from the gods, began to denigrate all those who obtained protection from the gods. Thus, it was a gang-up of the strong men who were, nevertheless, afraid of the wrath of the gods and in their bid to discourage people from seeking asylum with the deities, created an unpleasant social atmosphere for them. This unpleasant social atmosphere has continued until the advent of western civilization and has been preserved by inertia. It has found a place in the tradition and the descendants have roles to play in the traditional religion of the people.

However, with the rise in tempo of the Atlantic slave trade, the oracles became so important that it wielded powers that made the whiteman think that only if some of them were dismantled, the colonial occupation of Igboland may not be realized⁵. This change in the mode of the operation of the oracles created the impetus for this study among the Igbo with a view to examine the operation of this divine media (oracle) by their messengers (priests). It is an attempt to connect local tradition of slavery and the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which has remained an important aspect of African history. This pattern of slave procurement, no doubt, emerged with the introduction of the trans-Atlantic slave trade to increase the supply of slaves. It intends to bridge the existing gap between the studies of academic slave history (Lovejoy, 1997) based on written accounts of slave journey that begins from the coast through the middle passage to the Americas and the oral history that begins from the interior and ends at the coast. However, events at the Coast and in the New World influenced and shaped activities in the interior.

Oracles in the Trans Atlantic slave trade era

The advent of the Portuguese in West Africa and the seizure of some black men who they took back to Europe as domestic slaves could not have attracted scholarship. What attracted scholarship was the great haulage of Africans across the Atlantic to the New World as plantation labourers. The European merchants settled down to persuading coastal chiefs to sell their undesirables into slavery. The chiefs found this business a lucrative one and used all sorts of pretexts to sell more and more of their hapless subjects. With dwindling supply, foreigners and

poor travelers became victims of this nefarious trade. When the Europeans felt that they were not getting enough supply, they introduced another article of trade – the muskets, which intensified and sustained the tempo of the trade for so long a time. With this weapon, kingdoms were instigated against kingdoms and hamlets against hamlets. The result was the shipment of prisoners of war (no longer undesirables) to the Americas. Perhaps, because of the death rate during the inter-ethnic wars because of the use of muskets, there was a balance of power, as the need to obtain the muskets and use them, became the desire of most kingdoms. Forms of slavery in Igboland include the *ohu*, *osu* and a third, but not prominent one was *ume* (Apeh & Opata, 2009).

The Igbo are animistic. The establishments of deities were dependent on the needs, aspirations and interests of the village groups⁶. Every village desired to exist in an era when might was right and the strong saw the weak as an object of prey. In order to exist among their peers, most villages in this study area established deities, to protect them from their strong neighbours. It would be unfair to use today's yardstick to measure the relevance of these deities in the lives of the people. In the Nsukka areas of Igboland, the Adoro was established for supernatural protection from their neighbours and not for destruction in Alor Uno. The Efuru deity came to Idoha to buttress their hospitality to a strange woman who finally translated into a deity to protect them. The Lalau in Umachi, the Lolo Uhere in Iheaka, the Ube in Uhunowerre, the Ohe in Imufu, the Ojiyi in Aku, the Api in Opi, the Ezugwu in Amalla, the Numukwome in Obukpa, the Alum in Amufie, the Amanyi in Orba, the Iyi Akpal in Ugbaike and Orba, Ugwuboshi in Umuagama, all in the Nsukka area were established to cater for the welfare of their host communities. The same goes for the Omaliko deity in Abatete; the Ogwugwu in Okija; the Iyioji in Nkwelle Ezunaka; the Ajana-Ukwu in Omor; the Ekwensu in Anaku; Nobo in Igbakwu; and the Haaba in Agulu, among others. Those who fell afoul of the laws of the land were handed over to the oracles for appeasement. In the heyday of the trans-Atlantic trade, the priests coveted them into commodities and sold them to slave dealers. Nevertheless, after the abolition of slave trade, the oracles became slave owning, having no other vent to dispose of their captives.

Most of these oracles, however, did not blossom as those of the Ibinu Ukpabi of Arochukwu, the Agbala of Awka, the Amadioha of Ozuzu or the Igwekala of Umunoha. These four oracles sometime in Igbo history

held the entire Igboland and some of the Igbo neighbours captive. They were awe-inspiring and no one refused their injunctions or contested their judgments. They had stand-by military troops that physically helped in bringing recalcitrant victims to compromise. They were in concert with each other and their tentacles spread throughout Igboland, Idomaland, Igalaland, and the Niger-Delta regions of Nigeria as well as in Western Igboland and the Edo Kingdom.

A similitude of these oracles is the awe-inspiring abode and their modes of operation. S.R. Smith (Dike, 1956, p.39) suggested that oracles dwell in

a quiet place far from main roads; with natural features to inspire a sense of dread, such as caves, valleys or groves; a system of spies or travelers to get to know local disputes and have them referred to the oracle, and a *secret system* for disposing of victims of the oracles.

The secret system of disposing the victims is the concern of this essay. The Ibini Ukpabi and the Agballa oracles had itinerant traders and smiths respectively with differing sphere of influence. Caves are favourite abodes of oracles and at Ogbunike in Igboland, the feuding groups were allowed into the cave with the belief that only the just among them would come out. It was believed that the Ogba oracle in the cave must have eaten up the wicked and unjust one⁷. At Ibini Ukpabi, the sight of blood on the river attests that it had killed the guilty one.

Parrinder (1961, p.154) avers that the Agballa, the Amadioha and Igwekala were subordinated to the Ibini Ukpabi. This may be an exaggeration as what may have been the situation was that they were in a sort of cartel to preserve their operational secrets. The Aro were long distance traders and the Awka were black smiths whose services were needed beyond modern Nigeria; both used the oracles to safeguard their trader routes and instill awe on unsuspecting peoples. As itinerant smiths and traders, they also hawked their spiritual services in their host communities by suggesting the referral of their domestic problems to the oracles in their various homes. By doing this, they advertised the spiritual powers of the oracle to the people in a way that once they get involved with it, they would not stop fellowship with it. Pilgrims to the oracles were made to visit the oracles through an agent from the numerous

villages in Arochukwu or Awka as the case may be. An informant (Ezeja Ali, 2009) revealed,

my father told me that it was an arduous journey, costly in terms of amount of money, time, stress, torture and oftentimes, death of the pilgrims. This was at a time that might was right...the oracle was the only arbiter but when its agents were involved in bad acts, its activities were silent. An Aro trader he met at Ejule in Igalaland took him to the oracle⁸.

During the period of Aro ascendancy, Ibini Ukpabi was the highest court of appeal and its powers in the identification of witches and wizards as well as culprits who poisoned their victims was widely acclaimed. In the Enugu Ezike area of Igboland, the sasswood ordeal had held sway in the cases of accusations of witchcraft. It was believed that anyone guilty of witchcraft or wizardry dies on the administration of the sasswood. However, this form of trial had to give way for the arduous journey to either Awka to consult the Agballa or to Arochukwu to consult the Ibini Ukpabi. This change is believed to have taken place during the days of the Atlantic slave trade. Perhaps, instead of allowing the victims to die, just like that, the agents of the oracles ostensibly made plans to divert most of the trials to the courts of their oracles. This provided them money, slaves and influence over the rest of Igboland as well as facilitated their trading activities even beyond, as they were *Umu Chukwu* (visible children of God). The oracles within were portrayed as being partial because the priests were from the locality and must have been pre-informed of the bone of contention. Nonetheless, these oracles also had patronage from some other distant places, and that was the exchange.

As artisans and traders, the Awka and Aro traversed the length and breadth of Igboland clandestinely as agents of their oracles. One thing was important about the oracles; a visit to them was a spread of its influence and its presence. A successful pilgrim was always given some water with which to establish the oracle in his domain. In the southern Idoma area of Igumale, the Ibini Ukpabi Ceremony was an elaborate one. At Ndeedzuma⁹ during the ceremony,

a cow, cock, ram or even kolanuts are brought by several persons jointly, but if any individuals [sic] has

offended against the Ibin Okbaabe,[sic] he must provide the offering himself: there is only one Ibin shrine in our area, this being situated at Ndeedzuma. The object of this ceremony is to obtain health and prosperity and it is carried out in May when the yams are planted but not at the time of the dry-season yam-planting” (Makprof AR/INT/I/17, para. 90).

As pilgrims came from far and near, the Ibin Ukpabi gets presents and gains presence and influence in distant lands. Also at every Aro settlement¹⁰, an altar for the oracle was instituted for protection and guidance of the people. To forestall her trading activities in strange lands, the Aro made pacts with the Igede and the Igumale peoples of Idoma promising not to sell any member of the communities into slavery (MAKPROF K. 2012 Vol. I & II, para131). In return, the communities pledged not to hamper their trade or kill any one of them. The Igumale was an Aro ally as they maintained their position as intermediaries between Igbo trade and the southern Idoma while allowing Aro monopoly of Igumale markets.

Aro traders proselytized for the oracle through a chain of conventions. Each Aro settlement is under the guidance of a Mazi, who is the earthly representative of the Ibin Ukpabi in the settlement and around it. The Mazi may not go directly to the oracle but through the head of his ward at Arochukwu. It was, however, mandatory for both the Aro Amadi and non-Amadi¹¹ in the settlement to send all Ibin Ukpabi litigants through their headmen (Dike & Ekejiuba, p.137). These chains of intermediaries made the operation of the oracle a guarded secret by a select group and perhaps the reason it was able to last until 1902. The resilience of Aro traders and Aro settlers in enduring the operation of the oracle was very important as they infiltrated their host communities with the fairy tales of the unimaginable supersensible powers of their oracle that their hosts endeared it.

The Aro enjoyed wide fame and were dreaded because of the powers of their oracle, an advantage they used in slave procurement and supplies to their coastal allies (Onwukwe, [<http://www.aronetwork.org/geography.htm>] [<http://eabuja.com/index.html>]). Using slave raiding and kidnapping gangs, the Aro and their Abam, Ohafia and Abiriba allies raided Igbo, Ibibio and southern Idomalands. It was not until after the

Aro Expedition that it became clear that the Aro were not invincible and that their invincibility laid on the awe already created around their oracle – Ibini Ukpabi and the use of their mercenary neighbours.

In the Awka area of Igboland, there were the Agbala Awka and Agbala Enugwu Ukwu oracles. These oracles during their time, as they were both victims of the 1906 Onitsha Hinterland Expedition, were revered and their oracular pronouncements were laws. Apart from these two oracles, there were many others whose activities were not as pronounced but operated cult slavery that gave birth to the modern day Osu caste system in Igboland. Most of these oracles did not succumb to the British expedition as they formed part of the worldview of the people. Perhaps, that was why the activities of the Ogwugwu deity of Okija attracted the attention of the media after the 2003 elections in Nigeria. Suffice this to say, most of the deities are still operational but not in the same magnitude of operation as during the pre-colonial days. Pilgrims still visit the deities and get oracular pronouncements as bodies of people believed to have been killed by the deities are thrown into the oracle groove to avert the reverberating calamity on the living. It was believed that the oracles expressed their anger by inflicting the communities of the culprit with epidemics to instigate the culprit against his/her community. When that was done, the immediate society of the culprit will help the agents of the oracles in making sure that their brother complied with the dictates of the oracle.

An informant outside Igboland reiterated that,
my father used to say that instead of engaging in war with the Aro to save a guilty brother and endanger the family, let them take him and allow us peace. One cannot doubt the oracle of their deity as it sets to rid the world of double standards...¹²

In the neighbouring Orokam, a southern Idoma community, an informant contends that,

If your 'headstrong' brother believes his innocence and proclaims to prove it only at the Okpaabe [Ibini Ukpabi], if he comes home, you thank your God but if he did not return, he has gone to stay with Owoicho who will teach him obedience.¹³

The above expositions of the Aro oracle in the view of some southern Idoma communities was significant as it connoted submission to the oracular injunctions as 'one cannot doubt the oracle of the deity' and the belief that if one did not return, 'one had gone to stay with Owoicho who will teach one obedience'. This confidence in the oracle may have been cultivated because of the promptness and efficacy with which the oracle was known to have acted as well as the belief in its omniscience and omnipresence (Dike & Ekejiuba, p. 147-148).

Even after the Aro Expedition, the Amuze Aro chief, Kanu Okoro made frantic efforts to get British approval for the reestablishment of the oracle to no avail. He took the laws into his hand by establishing one and this did not go down well with other Aro people as they established theirs to compete with his own thus leading to proliferation of the Ibini Ukpabi and its dwindling influence. Eleven years after the Aro expedition of 1902, it was discovered that Chief Kanu Okoro had a slave harem of about 1500 (Chamley, 1913) behind his palace awaiting prospective buyers. When the British found out, these slaves were set free and Kanu was exiled to Calabar (Arodist 27/1/1A; CSE 1/54/4, NAE)¹⁴. Perhaps, as a result of this, the Aro denounced slavery and absorbed all their former slaves into their folk. Hence, the slaves took the names of their former masters and kept his identity as their erstwhile identities had been forgotten. The freed slaves could no longer find their ways home and settled among their former masters in wherever location they were at the time of abolition. This may have accounted for the numerous Aro settlements in and around Igboland. However, there were several other oracles in Igboland that served as tributaries to the Ibini Ukpabi from where appeals went to the court of Ibini Ukpabi in Arochukwu. These oracles became slave-owning because there was no vent through which slaves acquired could be sold due to European abolition of the trade.

The Abolition of the Trans Atlantic slave trade

The idea that the Ibini Ukpabi was a major factor in slave trading in Igbo hinterland, perhaps necessitated the Aro expedition of 1902. However, the destruction and conquest of the Aro did not after all lead to the capitulating of the rest of Igboland as predicted¹⁵. The British began their various wars of pacification of the African interior ostensibly to abolish slave trade and encourage legitimate trade. However, the African slave traders, resilient in slave dealing, could not understand this development.

Trade in slaves provided its own freight and more lucrative to engage in than trade in oil palm produce, groundnut, cotton, etc. The antiquity of its practice as well as its place in the culture and traditional economy of the people could not be reconciled with the new development.

The turn of events in the Americas began to reshape the activities of the African interior. Over the years, slave trading had been done in a relay system from the interior to the coast, from where the slaves were taken to the plantations in the American continent. The new development at the coast of Africa was not initially understood by the African traders as the end of the game for their *lucrative* business. They felt it was some of those European tactics to beat down the price of slaves offered for sale. What was more; some European traders still clandestinely engaged in the trade¹⁶. Thus, slave trading became a black market affair. Characteristic of black market situations, it was likely that the price offered for slaves rose. It was probably because of the rise in price that encouraged both the Africans and the European traders to continue with the trade despite the presence of British gunboats policing the coasts of the Atlantic.

In the interior, it was rumour and those who were engaged in the relay continued their business with equanimity. Major traders continued to horde the products hoping for a better time to sell. At the grooves of the tributary oracles to the Ibini Ukpabi were numerous slaves waiting the long and arduous journey to the coast. A colonial dispatch reported the presence of 1500 slaves behind Chief Okoro's compound in Arochukwu in 1913 (Chamley, 1913). This was because the focus of the British then was on the Aro - how would they replace the commercial interest of the Aro with that of the British? The slaves that waited at the different oracles in the Igbo interior were not after all taken to the coast and as the news of the ruthlessness of the invaders spread like wild fire, immolation was discouraged. The slaves had to be allowed to settle around the grooves of the oracles and made to continue to minister to the priests. This notwithstanding, they were denigrated lower than the normal slaves in the society. Reason, they were objects of sacrifice and were in fact, living sacrifices to the gods (Basden, 1982). These became the Osu in Igboland.

Among other ethnic groups in Nigeria, the issue of slave trade appears to have been laid to rest. However, among the Igbo of southeastern Nigeria, there were several levels of denigration on the

descendants of former slaves; forms of denigration that might be meaningless to one from outside the culture area, yet it forms the actual ingredient of being in those societies. Below is an examination of the various attempts at abolishing slavery and slave trade among the Igbo.

Indigenous Abolition attempts

With the introduction of Western education, the first to embrace it were the *osu* and *ohu* descendants of the ex-slaves. This was as a result of unintended consequences of the actions of the Amadi, who thought they were punishing these classes of people by sending them to embrace the new civilization. Also included among these classes were the lazy and unloved Amadi, who were not strong enough to engage in serious farm work. As punishment also, they were sent as pupils in the new schools as village or ward contributions¹⁷. A prominent feature of the curriculum was its dual nature – the academic and inherent religious teachings. It had to be so because the early schools were established by the different religious organizations and had the ulterior objective of imparting their belief systems on the pupils.

The result of this embrace was that in due course, the British took over Nigeria and began to use those who had acquired Western education as personnel in the new government. It became a form of revolution in Igboland as those who had been despised by the society and sent to school because they were lazy had been given the mantle of leadership. They became court clerks, court messengers, teachers and administrators. These people knew where denigration hurts and despite the belief by the British that slave trade had been abolished, these people began the holy war against slavery in all forms in Igboland. They were school administrators, key government personnel and policy makers, and with these positions they revealed to the government the intricacies and the continued existence of slavery in Igboland, especially the numerous operations of cult slavery.

Earlier in 1916, a British legislation in Southern Nigeria abolished the buying and selling of human beings (Apeh & Opata, 2009). The Eastern Nigeria Regional Government in 1956 legislated against slavery, imposing fifty pounds or six months imprisonment on any offender. The various church denominations taught about the equality of human beings before the creator and the dangers of slavery on the society. With government backing, and the ubiquity of people of servile descent in

government, former slaves began to assert their rights among their communities - rights that led to the destruction of the various deities that operated cult slavery in Igboland. Of note was the attack on the Ibinu Ukpabi in Aro Chukwu, Agballa in Awka, the Efuru in Idoha, and the several attacks on the Adoro in Alor-Uno, among other deities in Igboland.

Complementary to government's official order to destroy these deities, were the various moves by the different Christian denominations to rid Igboland of deities. Apart from the canvass for membership of their denominations, the churches proclaimed a crusade against the deities, sometimes on the purported claim that the operators accede to the destruction. To this extent, many of the pantheons that dotted communities in Igboland had been destroyed to give way for the Christian religion. The way and manner the Christians carry out this destruction makes one wonder the difference it makes when Muslims burn down church buildings in Northern Nigeria. Unfortunately, most of the deities destroyed 'resurrected' some years after,¹⁸ perhaps because of their role as social control mechanism in those societies. More also, the physical destruction of the altars was not the destruction of the belief system. They destroyed it, but its existence remained in the minds of the adherents.

Conclusion

Before the adulteration of the worship of oracles in Igboland, just as the adulteration of worship in most other religions, it played prominent roles in the society in terms of social control. That was why those who felt unsafe ran to it for protection and it protected until the priests began to 'eat what was offered to the gods'. The problem generated by insecurity in the trans-Atlantic slave trade era must have been the reason most people sought refuge in the oracles for protection. The fear attached to oracles in Igboland did not allow slavers to poach on any person with links to an oracle¹⁹. During the boom in trans-Atlantic slave trade, the priests were perhaps, compelled by economic motives to sell those who had come to be protected by the gods. This went on until the abolition and the emergence of unsold members of the oracular cult that came to be denigrated as *Osu*. This denigration was not unconnected with what Bolaji Idowu (1973, p.33) described as 'priest craft' where the priests in order to fend for themselves began to misinterpret the oracles they

represented. This problem also exists in other religions as most clerics speak of God revealing Himself to them. This has led to the proliferation of churches and sects both in Christianity and Mohammedanism. The so-called *Osu* in the cults are not held by the priests nor were they coerced to the deity by them; they surrendered themselves willingly to atone for their sins or to seek protection. Having done this, they were not in any obligation to be there with the oracle, but it is the society's denigration on them that necessitated the attention paid to this group. For the girls, they could get married to anybody who desires but the priest rather than her parents will accept her bride wealth because by the dedication, she has become an adopted child of the oracle.

The *Osu* caste system in Igboland was borne by a historical process necessitated by the turn of events during the heyday of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and had been preserved by the Igbo society until their encounter with Christianity as a tangible heritage. Despite the years of Christian evangelism in Igboland, the stigma has come to stay, even when most of the oracles had been 'destroyed'. Many communities have denounced denigration in public forum, but that has not yielded the desired results as even Christians have found flimsy reasons to deny the offspring of the *Osu* relationships they desired, especially as it concerns marriage. Until this denial is stopped, the public denunciation of denigration should be discountenanced. The oracles form part of the world view and the religious lives of the Igbo society and their physical destruction may not after all lead to their annihilation. It has to be the task of the church to discourage its worship by deprogramming the minds of the people through the exhibition of 'Christian' living by members of the Christendom rather than mere profession of faith.

Notes

1. Yisa Omeke, c. 60, Alor Agu, 23/6/2001. Most great deities made with human beings, were placated with human beings. However, the human demand rose with the rise of the trans-Atlantic business.
2. Ezeja Ogbaje, c. 70, Umuagama, 10/3/2008.
3. Even Christianity was instituted with the blood of the 'lamb' who voluntarily submitted to becoming man to suffer and die for the redemption of men. Note, the unity of purpose - it is the blood of the only son of God and not that of a slave.
4. The diviner is the mouthpiece of the oracle.

5. This was evident in the elaborate preparation for the Aro expedition of 1902, which became the beginning of colonial endeavours in Igboland rather than the end of it.
6. Deities which foretell the future are regarded as oracles.
7. Okechukwu Okaku, businessman, Ogbunike, information obtained from him in 1981.
8. Ezeja Ali, c. 90, Umuagama, 10/2/09. His father went to the Ibinu Ukpabi at Aro to deny a case of poisoning in the village.
9. The name Ndeezuma [Ndi Ezuma] sounds like an Aro settlement among the Idoma. This may be further investigated. Think of Ndi Ikelieonwu, Ndi Owu, etc.
10. Aro settlements are found in several places in Igboland at, Aro ndizuogu, Ajalli, Ndikelionwu, Ndiowu, Ndiokpalaeze among several other places in Igboland. In Idoma, there were no autonomous communities of the Aro but the origin of some families among the Igumale, Ijigbam, Agila, Ulayi and Utonkon were traced to the Aro.
11. Aro Amadi means Freeborn Aro while non-Amadi Aro means Aro of slave origin.
12. Iyona Ako, c.70, farmer, Owukpa, 3/12/2008.
13. Apeh Okerenyi, c. 60, retired headmaster, Adupi-Orokam, 6/12/2008
14. Some of the clients came from Igala, Akpoto (Idoma) and other parts of Igboland.
15. The British continued their wars of 'pacification' up to the 1920s.
16. The fact that gunboats were stationed at the coast explains that some Europeans still went on with the trade undaunted by the abolitionist laws.
17. At the establishment of the school, the people were made to contribute pupils.
18. The Efuru and the Adoro are still operational.
19. The Aro were feared because of the Ibinu Ukpabi; the Awka because of the cult of smiths; the Nri because of the Aka Nri (midgets) and their role in land purification in Igboland, etc.

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**NIGERIA-CAMEROON TERRITORIAL DISPUTE:
UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICS OF CITIZENSHIP
AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The resolution of the Bakassi conflict offers a primal opportunity to examine the question of citizenship and social exclusion in Nigeria. Dating back to the colonial era, there was a lingering dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. The dispute which was over the ownership and sovereignty of Bakassi Peninsula did not ab initio focus on the territory, but rather on the acceptable delimitation of the lands and maritime boundaries between the two States; turned into a battle field as soon as oil was discovered in the region. The discovery that the Peninsula and its adjoining waters contained rich oil deposits automatically ignited international attention, and heightened the rift between the two states, culminating in armed conflicts and military hostilities. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) intervened in the case and delivered judgment in favour of Cameroon; thus, acquiesced Nigeria to cede the territory. However, the decision of the World Court which was thought to permanently quell the row failed to address some critical issues, such as the question of citizenship of over 300,000 indigenous people living in the territory. This article takes a critical view at this development, particularly, the role of the Nigerian state to have ignored this critical lacuna. Using the social inclusion and exclusion theory, the paper argues that the failure of the Nigerian State to seek a revision of the judgment within the limits permitted by the ICJ statute particularly, the citizenship status of the Bakassi indigenes whose citizenship rights were challenged; portends danger for further crisis between the two warring-states.

Key Words: Citizenship, Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Introduction

On August 14, 2008, a portion of Nigerian territory known as Bakassi was ceded to the Republic of Cameroon. This followed the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) sitting at The Hague, Netherlands on October 10, 2002. Beyond this development, there had existed a long-standing dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon which dates back to the colonial era. The dispute was about the ownership and sovereignty over the Bakassi Peninsula. Initially, the conflict was not focused on the region, but rather, on the acceptable delimitation of the lands and maritime boundaries between the two states. However, the discovery that the Peninsula and its adjoining waters contain rich oil deposits exacerbated social tensions and rivalries between the two states. Over time, the development attracted international attention, reinforced some economic and political alignments among the international community, culminating in the recurrence of armed conflicts and military hostilities in the region. Though, the ruling of the International Court marked a significant shift in the resolution of the conflict, it failed to restore peace and normalcy in the region. This is because the judgment did not address some critical issues, such as the citizenship question of about 300,000 indigenous inhabitants living in the territory; who out of frustration had renewed agitation for self-determination and separate existence (Mbaga and Njo, 2007:8; Cornwell, 2006:49). The inhabitants, mostly Nigerians, are embittered as they seem shortchanged over their rights of citizenship of the Nigerian State consequent upon the implementation of the ICJ judgment.

It is in the light of the above development that this article proposes to embark on this study. Thus, the broad objective of the study is to critically examine the ruling of the International Court of Justice in relation to the role of the Nigerian State; and its implication for the citizenship rights of the Bakassi people. In particular, the study shall examine whether the failure of the Nigerian State to seek a revision of the ICJ judgment within the bounds permitted by the ICJ statute accounts for the recurrence of citizenship crisis and statelessness in the region.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of analysis adopted in this study is the social inclusion and social exclusion theory. The theory is employed to analyze the role of the Nigerian State, particularly, its policy choice not

to seek a revision of the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on suzerainty over the Bakassi Peninsula; and the shoddy manner the rehabilitation of Bakassi refugees were handled. A review of development literature admits that the theory of social exclusion and inclusion are hamstrung by inherent ambiguities. It is argued that these ambiguities arise from the fact that social exclusion is generally not differentiated from poverty, even though it is widely acknowledged that social exclusion can occur in the absence of poverty (Fischer, 2008:1-2). In order to resolve these ambiguities, we propose a working definition of social exclusion in a way that is not grounded with reference to norms, and thus is not dependent on poverty for conceptualization. Thus, social exclusion is defined as structural, institutional or agentive processes of repulsion or obstruction. This definition is meant to give attention to processes of marginalization, disadvantage (i.e. exclusionary processes), discrimination and conflict, all of which can occur across a social hierarchy from any social position, rather than states of deprivation (i.e. the excluded) occurring at the bottom of a social hierarchy (Fischer, 2008:1-2). In this manner, we hope to resolve most of the contentions surrounding the concept.

Gore and Figueiredo (1997:v) define the concept as processes that lead to disadvantage, impoverishment or ill-being, rather than an identification of excluded individuals or groups in an absolute sense. The European Commission expounds this idea when it asserts that each citizen has the right to a certain basic standard of living and a right to participate in the major social and occupational institutions of the society – employment, housing, health care, education and so on; and that social exclusion occurs when citizens suffer from disadvantage and are unable to secure these social rights (Room et al, 1992:14, cited in Silver, 1994-6:566). This view is further elaborated by Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997:415). According to Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997:413), 'social exclusion' overlaps with poverty broadly defined, but goes beyond it by explicitly embracing the relational as well as distributional aspects of poverty.

The social exclusion theory is very relevant to the analysis and understanding of the citizenship question in the Bakassi Peninsula. As Price (2005) noted, the conflict over sovereignty of the Peninsula is much more than just a dispute over boundary, but includes issues of national identity, and environmental change. Beyond the issue of environment and

the possible resources that could be acquired by each country such as oil and rich fisheries, it touches on questions of identity and citizenship. Citizens of Nigeria living in the region had fishing as their main occupation and means of livelihood. Most of them were born in the territory as their forefathers knew no other place as their ancestral origin but the region (Price, 2005; Bekker, 2003:387-398; Mbu, 2001; Bekker, 2003). Either by birth and/or naturalization, the indigenes of Bakassi are Nigerians (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor, 2006:178).

The judgment of the ICJ on October 10, 2002, in addition to other implications; political, economic, external relations, security, the social structure, pride of Nigerians, etc, required Nigerian citizens living in the region to change their nationality from Nigeria to Cameroon without seeking their consent (Akanmode, 2000). As Sanusi (2002) rightly asked "How do you cede a people with different culture, different language and background to another nation whose background differs completely?" This question by Sanusi is at the core of our inquiry.

Clarification of Concepts: Citizenship, Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Conceptualizing Citizenship

Having a clear understanding of the concept of citizenship is vital should one aim at understanding the subject matter of this article. From extant literature, scholars had defined citizenship from different ideological perspectives. For instance, some scholars define citizenship in legal terms to connote a "relationship of reciprocal obligations" between an individual and the State (Hoskins and Abs et al, 2012:7; Obianyo, 2007:2). In this perspective, citizenship is seen as a legal status conferred on the individual as a full and responsible member of a political community. This status gives the individual the legal right to belong to the State, hence all who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and obligations they owe to the State, in return for the civil, political and social rights granted him/her by the State (Marshall, quoted in Williams, 2004:49; Gauba, 2003:26).

However, recent research has indicated that defining citizenship in this manner is circumscriptive and deficient. Rather, the concept has developed to include a focus on "citizens' participation in the political process"; and thus, a strong emphasis placed on individuals' action with the intent to influence. (Verba and Nie, 1972). Consequently, this results

to a shift in the understanding of citizenship to connote not just the legal definition but one of the individual's involvement in participatory governance with a greater focus on the citizens' involvement in decision making, particularly policy development (Barber, 2003).

Impliedly, the conceptualization of citizenship takes place in a wider context of competing ideologies which results in the development of four competing models of citizenship (Hoskins and Abs et al, 2012:9-12). This include firstly, the liberal model of citizenship, which focuses on creating autonomous citizens, promoting citizens' participation and enhancing individuals' basic level of political knowledge and skills (Carpini and Keeter, 1989). Secondly, the communitarian model of citizenship, which focuses on the identity and feelings of belonging to a group, and the need to work towards the collective benefit of this group (Jochum, 2010). Thirdly, is the civic republican model, which is an approach that highlights the need for citizens to learn civic competencies, including the values of public spiritedness, solidarity, and the responsibility to act for the common good (Honohan, 2002:147). Fourthly, the critical model of citizenship, which is seen as the 'catch all' title for various new theories that try to frame citizenship in different terms; by focusing on critiquing and improving society through social and political action, based on the ideas of empowerment and social justice (Abowitz and Harnish, 2006). This model also promotes the need for greater representation and engagement of the lower social classes, and minority and immigrant groups, within decision making and representative politics (Westheimer and Kahne, 2003).

The above characterizations of citizenship give clue to the dynamism of the concept as an analytical tool. Carens (2004), while aligning with this dynamic nature of the concept identifies yet another variant, which he calls the "psychological" perspective. According to Carens, this perspective refers to one's sense of identification with the political community to which one belongs. These varied perspectives he notes, are not mutually exclusive but interact and reinforce each other in complex ways to give actual meaning to the definition of citizenship. It is in the context of these characterizations that we examine the agitation of Nigerian citizens living in the Bakassi Peninsula, whose citizenship has been stranded as an aftermath of the World Court ruling. Despite the possible limitations inherent in these perspectives, they serve as good starting point for distinguishing citizens from non- citizens. As Manby

(2009:1) rightly noted, creating conditions of vulnerability or outright denial of rights to citizenship had been at the heart of varied conflicts immanent in post-colonial Africa, and certainly, the cause of the citizenship crisis ravaging the people of Bakassi.

Understanding Social Exclusion and Social Inclusion

As Pradhan noted, the concepts of “social exclusion” and “social inclusion” are contested terms; used in a variety of ways, and in a variety of contexts (Pradhan, 2006). The imprecision of the concepts has culminated in fruitless debate among scholars, such that questions are asked as to whether it is possible to define the terms in a manner acceptable to all. According to Pradhan (2006:1), the terms social inclusion and social exclusion took its origins from Europe; in response to the crises of the welfare state and the fears of social disintegration occasioned by social and economic crises of the era. Silver (1994:6); De Haan (1998); Sen (2000); Peace (2001); Jackson (1999); Room (1999) noting this issue of polysemy, wonders whether the terms, particularly, social exclusion add value as economists would say it, to the concepts of poverty and relative deprivation; and whether the concepts are applicable to the so-called Southern countries. They argue that invoking the terms has moral and political implications; exclusion is 'bad', while inclusion is 'desirable'. While scholars raise the question as to whether the concepts are relevant for the so-called developing countries, there is unanimity that social exclusion is an improvement over the older and related concept of poverty, relative deprivation, capabilities, etc; and that it could be used for the South. Whether the concepts of social exclusion and inclusion have limited theoretical underpinning is still open to question.

Nevertheless, De Haan (1998: 28), noted:

Social exclusion and inclusion are theoretical concepts and thus ways of looking at society; they are lens through which people look at reality and not reality itself. How we define these concepts and the paradigms we use come with 'theoretical and ideological baggage (Silver, 1994-6; De Haan, 1998; O'Reilly, 2005).

As Durkheim and Rousseau (1972:175) equally noted:

The concept of social exclusion was used in the 1980s to refer to various types of social disadvantage related to social problems arising from economic crises and crises of the welfare state – long term unemployment, ghettoisation, growing instability of social bonds including among family members, in neighborhoods, trade unions, etc. but also of the lack of integration of immigrants...; the rupture of social and symbolic bonds between individuals and society and the failure of the state to maintain the organic and solidaristic nature of society.

Thus, our argument in this paper is that there is no single way of understanding the concepts of social exclusion and inclusion; how we understand the concepts depends on our theoretical and methodological perspectives. For example, Silver (1994:6) discusses three theoretical paradigms within which the concept of social exclusion could be better appreciated. First, is the solidarity paradigm which emphasizes the Durkheimian notion of social solidarity and order. This implies national and group solidarity within cultural boundaries, moral integration, political rights and duties, republicanism, etc (quoted in Rousseau and Durkheim, 1972:175). Second, is the specialization paradigm which connotes discrimination and the drawing of group distinctions that deny individuals full access to or participation in exchange or interaction. According to Silver, this paradigm draws on Anglo-American liberalism tradition, especially those of Locke and the utilitarians, according to which individuals are able to move across boundaries of social differentiation and division of labor (Silver, 1994:6). Thirdly, is the monopoly paradigm which draws from the works of Weber, and to some extent Karl Marx. This model views social order as coercive imposed through hierarchical power relations. It defines exclusion as a consequence of the formation of group monopolies. Powerful groups restrict the access of outsiders to valued resources through social closure (Silver, 1994:6).

Despite their varied characterizations, the definitions of social exclusion have characteristics in common which separate it from other

concepts (e.g. poverty). As summarized by De Haan (1998: 12-13), especially from development and social policy perspectives, the characteristics of social exclusion include: First, as the opposite to social integration, which reflects the perceived importance of being part of society, being integrated. Secondly, as a multi-dimensional concept, which refer to the exclusion (deprivation) of citizens from participation in the economic, social and political sphere. It goes beyond the analysis of resource allocation mechanisms, and includes power relations, agency, culture and social identity (De Haan, 1998: 12-13). And thirdly, as a mechanism by which people are excluded. Here, the focus is on the institutions that enable and constrain human interaction. Another critical definition of social exclusion which specifically deals with citizenship is that given in the European Commission report. Here, social exclusion was defined first and foremost in relation to the social rights of citizens. The European Commission emphasizes the idea that each citizen has the right to a certain basic standard of living and a right to participate in the major social and occupational institutions of the society – employment, housing, health care, education and so on. Social exclusion occurs when citizens suffer from disadvantage and are unable to secure these social rights (Room et al, 1992:14, cited in Silver, 1994-6:566). This view is elaborated by Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997:415).

As to the concept of social inclusion, it is important to state that social inclusion is not just the obverse of social exclusion (Hunter, 2008:4). In the context of our study, citizenship exclusion provides contrasting perspectives that might illuminate the difference between social inclusion and its 'evil twin' social exclusion. Social exclusion is defined as the opposite of social integration, mirroring the perceived importance of being part of society, of being 'included' "(European Foundation (1995:4), cited in De Haan (1998: 26). This dualistic or binary logic has been criticized by several authors on various grounds. O'Reilly (2006: 84) argues:

The language of inclusion and exclusion implies a binary logic, that one is either included or excluded... However, people are included or excluded in relation to some variable. The question of inclusion, therefore, is best conceptualized as a sort of sliding scale rather than as a binary function, so that inclusion and

exclusion are the extreme poles of a continuum of relations of inclusion/exclusion.

Haney (2002) goes further and argues, citing Askonas and Stewart (2000), that social exclusion is not the obverse of inclusion, rather "social inclusion is a distinct project with its own logic" (Haney, 2002: 266). The question then is, were the people of Bakassi excluded, Where, How? This forms the subject matter of this study.

Background to the Conflict and Colonial History

The dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Bakassi Peninsula was like most conflicts in post-colonial Africa, the product of unhappy legacy of colonialism (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor, 2006:177). According to Omeje (2004:7-11) and Olumide (2002:4-16), the Bakassi peninsula covers a land mass of about 665 square kilometers; and are located along the Gulf of Guinea, forming a part of the southerly borderland between Nigerian and Cameroon. The two countries share a 1,600 kilometre-long border area that stretches from Lake Chad in the north to the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic coast. The Bakassi people, Omeje (2004:10-12) notes, are predominantly Efik and in pre-colonial times formed part of the old Calabar kingdom. Based on a "treaty of protection" signed between the Chiefs of Calabar and the British colonial authorities on 10 September 1884, the old Calabar kingdom was brought under the British Protectorate, which was later integrated with other "protected" kingdoms, empires, chiefdoms and territories to form the British colony of Nigeria (Asobie, 2005:74-104). As was characteristic of many colonial treaties, the borders of the old Calabar kingdom and the entire eastern frontier of Nigeria acquired by the British crown were not clearly delineated or demarcated from the neighbouring colony of Cameroon originally acquired and ruled by Germany (Omeje, 2004:7-11).

However, following series of colonial treaties, notably the Anglo-German treaties of 11 March 1913 signed in London and that of 12 April of the same year signed in Obokun, Britain formally ceded Bakassi to the government of Germany, citing "administrative convenience" as the main reason. This was broadly in line with colonial pragmatism because the peninsula was then seen as a relatively unproductive swampy forest with a treacherous terrain. It therefore had little or nothing to offer to a

cash crop-driven imperial regime like the British Crown that had very thin administrative personnel on the ground (Anene, 1970; Omeje, 2004).

Defeated in the First World War by the allied forces, Germany was forced to relinquish its colonial territories based on the treaty of Versailles, and Cameroun was split between Britain and France in 1922 under the League of Nations Mandate system. In the aftermath of World War II, the British-administered western part of Cameroun and French-administered eastern Cameroun was placed under the United Nations Trusteeship Council. For administrative convenience, Britain subsumed the northern part of British Cameroun as it was called under the colonial regional government of northern Nigeria and annexed the southern part to the eastern Nigeria regional government. French Cameroun, on the other hand, was kept administratively and politically distinct by France. Until the late 1950s, there was very little concern over the future statuses of British Cameroun and French Cameroun. Major concerns and anxiety were however aroused when France announced an earlier independence timetable terminating on 1 January 1960 for its administered part of Cameroun. Similarly, Britain promulgated a transition programme for Nigeria's independence scheduled for 1 October 1960 (Omeje, 2004).

Nationalist politicians and leaders from British Cameroun were inspired by the prospects of political independence to make contrasting political demands about their future. Unionists - predominantly from the southern British Cameroun who had significant support from nationalist politicians in French Cameroun advocated a re-unification of British and French Camerouns under the pre-World War I German Cameroun boundaries, while conservatives who were mostly from the northern region of British Cameroun preferred a future political association of British Cameroun with Nigeria. Only a negligible minority of the nationalists favoured the detachment of British Cameroun from Nigeria to form a separate sovereign state. A significant section of Nigerian politicians supported the cause of the conservatives who advocated union of British Cameroun with Nigeria (Asobie, 2005; Omoigui, 2006; Omeje, 2004).

A special UN Visiting Mission despatched in 1958 to assess the situation recommended that a plebiscite be held in the perceptibly more divided southern region of British Cameroun to determine the people's inclination, and that northern Cameroun could be allowed to continue its

union with northern Nigeria. Strong protests from opinion leaders in the northern region of British Cameroun later forced the UN to organise two separate plebiscites for both the south and north of British Cameroun. The plebiscites were held in February 1961. As expected, a vast majority of the people of northern British Cameroun voted for union with Nigeria while a significant majority of people of the southern part voted for union with the French Cameroun already granted independence as the Republic of Cameroun. Although majority of the registered voters in southern Cameroun (65.95%) voted for union with the Republic of Cameroun some on the Nigerian side of the contemporary border dispute have argued that the people of Bakassi voted overwhelmingly for union with Nigeria (Omeje, 2004). While Nigeria accepted the result of the plebiscites in both northern and southern British Cameroun, the Camerounian authorities accepted only the result of the plebiscite in the south, further committing itself to an irredentist foreign policy of achieving a greater Cameroun project based on the pre First World War boundaries.

Post-colonial Boundary Politics and the Bakassi Question

On 1 January 1960 and 1 October 1960, the French Cameroun and Nigeria became independent, respectively. By accepting the result of the 1961 plebiscite, the young post-independence government of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in Nigeria endorsed the transfer of the Bakassi peninsula which fell to the southern part of former British Cameroun to the Republic of Cameroun. Two related foreign policy initiatives of the Balewa government also buttressed this endorsement. The first was Nigeria's declaration at independence of its commitment to the international law principle of *uti possidetis juris*, pledging to respect the existing international boundaries of the country as drawn by and inherited from the colonial authorities. The second was the diplomatic note, accompanied by a map, dispatched to the government of Cameroun by Nigeria in 1962, accepting the results of the plebiscites (Asobie, 2003). The 1962 map originated by the Nigerian side clearly delimited the southerly part of Nigeria's eastern boundary through the bank of River Akpa Yafe, in effect returning to the 1913 Anglo-German border agreement and placing Bakassi and the Rio-del-Rey estuary on the Camerounian side of the border (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor, 2006:177; Mbuh, 2004; Omeje, 2004:63). As Omeje (2004:63-80) noted:

The real territorial dispute between Nigeria and Cameroun in the aftermath of political independence, especially during the first decade of self-rule, was the unsettled issue of former northern British Cameroun, which merged with Nigeria following the 1961 plebiscites and which the Camerounian authorities were determined to sever. At the official political level, the Bakassi peninsula and the entire southerly border area between the two countries were deemed a settled matter, despite the fact that the vast majority of the Bakassi indigenes were ethnic Efik with a nexus of age-old consanguinal and ethnocultural ties throughout the Efik-dominated Calabar area of southeastern Nigeria.

The discovery of crude oil in the Bakassi peninsula in 1967 dramatically changed the equation, with the result that from 1970 onwards the hitherto unattractive and neglected peninsula became the major bone of contention. The ethno-cultural identity and affiliation of the local population with kinfolks across the Nigerian border practically complicated the matter. In 1971 when Nigeria had just emerged from the devastating 30 month Biafran civil war (1967-1970), the military government of General Yakubu Gowon, re-opened the issue of ownership of the Bakassi peninsula under the pretext that the lives and properties of Nigerians living in the territory needed to be protected. As a result, a bilateral Permanent Consultative Committee was established by the two countries to delineate their common boundaries and develop a general framework for technical, socio-cultural, economic and security cooperation between the two countries. This bilateral channel culminated in a series of agreements and protocols between Nigeria and Cameroun between 1971 and 1975, especially as it concerned fishing and oil prospecting rights in the disputed territory (Nnekwe, 2011; Mbuh, 2004).

In two major agreements signed in April 1971 and June 1975 in Yaounde and Maroua, by General Gowon of Nigeria and the Camerounian leader Ahmadou Ahidjo, both sides agreed *inter alia*: to delimit the maritime boundary between Nigeria and Cameroon from the

point where the relevant colonial treaty ended, down the Calabar and Cross River estuaries and out to the sea to a point south of Bakassi thereby re-confirming Cameroun's ownership of the disputed peninsula; that the Nigerian populations of the disputed territory were free to pursue their legitimate occupations without molestation, provided they were law abiding (NISC, 2002; DTI, 2002). It is widely believed that General Gowon was partly inspired by Cameroun's vital support to Nigeria during the Biafra war to formally cede the Bakassi peninsula to Cameroun based on the Yaounde II agreement and the Maroua Declaration.

Subsequent Nigerian leaders from 1976 onwards have tended to ignore the preceding treaties and legal facts of the case and have largely enforced Nigeria's claim over Bakassi through regular military surveillance and *de facto* occupation. Most of the disputed territory has been administered as a local government area under the Cross River State of Nigeria for many years. Cross-border patrol between the Nigerian military and the Camerounian gendarme in the disputed territory have on many occasions resulted in mutual hostilities and infringement of the local populations, in particular, over fishing and property rights. On different occasions in 1981, 1991 and 1994, mounting hostilities and military confrontations between the two countries nearly degenerated into a war over Bakassi. The most volatile episode was the May 1981 clashes in which Camerounian gendarmes killed five Nigerian soldiers at the disputed territory. This led to tremendous domestic pressure on the Nigerian President to go to war with Cameroun. The Nigerian House of Representatives passed a resolution urging the President to launch military reprisal against Cameroun. President Shagari ultimately resisted the pressure by opting for bilateral diplomacy (Nnekwe, 2011; Omeje, 2004; Mbuh, 2004). It was after these incidents that Cameroon decided to take the dispute to the International Court Justice for its adjudication.

Issues in Contention and the ICJ Judgment

The real issues in contention over the Bakassi are economic and strategic. As Nnekwe (2011) noted, interest over the ownership of Bakassi by Nigeria and Cameroon began immediately it was discovered that the peninsula is floating on reserves of crude oil. It was essentially a struggle between the Nigerian and the Cameroonian ruling classes. The

struggle was not dictated by any nationalistic interest or concern for the well-being of the residents of Bakassi. The primary motive was the rich oil reserves and fishing grounds found in the area and its strategic location in the Atlantic Ocean. If the peninsula were to be of very little economic or strategic value, neither the Nigerian nor the Cameroonian capitalist elite would have shown any serious interest in the territory (www.socialistworld.net/doc/403#).

The first major open hostility which saw to the deaths of soldiers of both countries took place on 18-19 February 1994. It was after this incident that Cameroon decided to take the dispute to the International Court Justice for its adjudication. Cameroon's application was deposited on March 29, 1994, amidst accusations from Nigeria that Cameroon was not committed to bilateral negotiations to resolve the matter locally. (www.postwatchmagazine.com). In a bid to consolidate its suit, Cameroon filed an additional motion on July 16, 1994 to extend its case to a further dispute with Nigeria over a "part of the territory of Cameroon", which it claimed was also occupied by Nigeria (Onuoha, 2008:167).

In their submissions, Nigeria relied largely on the 1884 "Treaty of protection" between Britain and the old Calabar, *de facto* occupation of the territory and provenance, while Cameroon on the other hand, pointed to the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, which defined the spheres of control in the region, as well as two agreements signed in the 1970s, that is, the Yaounde 11 Declaration of 4 April, 1971 and the Maroua Declaration of 1 June, 1975. General Yakubu Gowon, former Nigerian head of state, and Ahmadu Ahidjo, ex-Cameroonian president were signatories to the agreements (Olagunju, 2009; Onuoha, 2008:167). After reviewing the submissions and the proceedings which lasted for eight years, the President of the ICJ, Gilbert Guillaume, sitting at The Hague with other judges on 10 October, 2002, ruled that, "sovereignty over the Peninsula lies with Cameroon". According to the learned jurists, Cameroon's title over the area was rooted in the agreements reached between Germany and Britain before the First World War. They added that the agreement signed on March 11, and April 12, 1913 in London, and Obokun respectively, delimited the boundaries of the two countries as they then were. The Court, therefore, held that treaties entered into during colonial period had fixed the land boundaries between the two countries, and it upheld the validity of the treaties

(Onuoha, 2008:168). Consequently, it instructed Nigeria to transfer possession of the peninsula. Cameroon was thus given a substantial Nigerian population and was required to protect their rights, infrastructure and welfare (www.en.wikipedia.org/bakassi).

Implementation of the ICJ Judgment: Citizenship Question and the Politics of Social Exclusion

On 14 August 2008, the Nigerian troops in the disputed Bakassi territory formally handed over control and administrative authority to the government of Cameroon. This followed the ICJ judgment and an agreement signed on 12 June 2006 by Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Paul Biya of Cameroon at the Green Tree Estate, Manhasset, New York. By this, Nigerian citizens living in the Bakassi were left to decide whether to accept Cameroonian nationality, remain as Nigerian citizens, or relocate to Nigeria. Even though the ICJ decision was not welcomed by most Nigerians who had preferred to go to war with Cameroon, the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, using his diplomatic good offices, worked on the Nigerian and Cameroonian leaders to accept the ruling, and comply with the judgment. However, scarcely did any of the parties pause to consider the fate, sentiments, wishes and aspirations of over 300,000 Bakassi indigenes whose ancestral territory was the subject of the dispute. (Omeje, 2004:58; Tarlebba and Baroni, 2010; Cornwell, 2008).

At the prompting of the international community, the UN's Secretary General, Kofi Annan, inaugurated a Nigeria-Cameroon Mixed Commission in November 2002 to assist the two states to implement the ICJ's ruling. The commission was chaired by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for West Africa, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. The Nigeria's National Assembly opposed the plan to implement the judgment, and rather called for a referendum, arguing that any attempt to handover the peninsula to Cameroon without giving the Bakassi people an opportunity to vote on where they would wish to belong amounted to illegality. Meanwhile, the dominant opinion among the people of Bakassi indicated that they strongly favored a Nigerian identity and nationality. To give vent to this, the paramount chiefs and leaders of Bakassi sought an injunction from an Abuja high court to restrain the Nigerian government from transferring their homeland to Cameroon. They threatened to seek

unilateral independence if Nigeria renounced sovereignty over the territory (NM, 2002).

Regardless of this opposition, the Nigeria-Cameroon Mixed Commission went ahead to create an agreement popularly known as the "Green Tree Agreement". The agreement which was signed by Obasanjo and Biya in New York, USA, was witnessed by Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Thereafter, the commission successfully delimited the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary from the Lake Chad area to the Bakassi peninsula. Villages further north and around the Lake Chad Basin were exchanged with more than one hundred and thirty villages handed to Cameroon and about twenty three villages handed to Nigeria, hence, throwing thousands of Nigerians in the Bakassi to wallow with uncertainty as to where they stood in terms of their citizenship and future (Omeje, 2004).

On the outset, it must be noted that boundary disputes come under civil law and not criminal. Most times, judgments are based on the balance of probability, and not proof beyond reasonable doubts. On this, Shaw (1996) noted that "The state succeeding in its claim for sovereignty...over the claims of other states, will in most cases have proved, not an absolute title but one relatively better than that maintained by competing states"(Onuoha, 2008:168). The question one would ask is why did Nigeria consent in the first instance to judicial resolution of the case since it had the advantage of *effective* occupation of the territory? Again, what was the urgent need for Nigeria to rush the implementation of the court judgment instead of pushing for a revision of the judgment as provided by the ICJ Statute?

In the first place, on point of law, Nigeria should have raised a preliminary objection against the president of the ICJ, Mr. Justice Gilbert Guillaume of France who presided over the case. This is because, being a French national, it was clear that he directly or indirectly had interest in the matter since the ratio *decendedi* was the 1913 treaty between Germany and Britain, which France inherited and passed onto Cameroon. On this, Chief Richard Akinjide, former Nigerian Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, a leading member of the legal team that represented Nigeria before the ICJ had described the judgment:

... has "50% international law and 50% international politics", "blatantly biased and unfair", "a total disaster", a "complete fraud", a rape and unforeseen

potential international conspiracy against Nigerian territorial integrity and sovereignty", a "part of a Western ploy to foment and perpetuate trouble in Africa. ...Cameroon was just the proxy for France. ...In reality, the dispute was between Nigeria and France (Omoigui, 2006:8-12).

To this end, the legal principle of *Nemo judex in sua causa*, meaning that no man shall be a judge in his own case, an ecclesiastical law designed to guard against real likelihood of bias in judicial process would have been pleaded by Nigeria against Mr. Justice Guillaume (Onuoha, 2008:168; Check, 2011:5).

Secondly, the Green Tree Agreement entered into and signed by former Nigerian President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to implement the ICJ judgment without the approval and ratification of the National Assembly, as provided in section 12 (1) and (2) of the 1999 Nigerian constitution was an illegality. The agreement being a bilateral treaty under international law ought to be validated by the National Assembly before it could have the force of law. As representatives of the people, the validation process would have afforded the National Assembly an ample opportunity to critically appraise and address the implications of Nigeria's compliance with the judgment. From our conception of citizenship, Nigerians living in the Bakassi are *bona fide* citizens of Nigeria. Most of them were Nigerian citizens by birth since their parents, grandparents and forebears were born in the Bakassi, originated from the Bakassi and lived in the Bakassi long before the Nigerian independence in 1960 (see sections 32, 25(1) and 25(2) of the Nigerian constitution). This being the case, the Bakassi indigenes had the legal and civic rights to be consulted in issues that affect them; in decision-making, in social justice and in the identification with the political community to which they rightly belong (Carens, 2004; Jochum, 2010; Verba and Nie, 1972; Obianyo, 2007). It, therefore, amounted to social exclusion and deprivation of fundamental human rights of the Bakassi people when the Nigerian state was acquiesced to implement the ICJ judgment without a plebiscite to determine the choice of Nigerian indigenous population in the Bakassi who had turned the judgment victim and refugees in their own land. The same argument would suffice

in the failure of the Nigerian state to pursue a revision of the judgment in accordance with the provisions of Article 61 of the ICJ Statute.

The Green Tree Agreement in Article 3 placed a number of obligations on both the Nigerian government and that of Cameroun to protect the welfare of the Bakassi inhabitants consequent upon the execution of the ICJ judgment. For example, Cameroun guaranteed Nigerian Nationals living in the Bakassi the exercise of their fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in international human rights law and in other relevant provision of international law; in particular, that Cameroun shall not force Nigerian Nationals living in the Bakassi Peninsula to leave the zone or to change their identity. However, in spite of these commitments by Cameroon, several incidences of brutality, arrests, tax-drive and armed assaults, harassment and forceful eviction of Nigerians on the Peninsula have been reported. Also, little was being done by the Nigerian government to secure the freedom of those arrested and detained in Cameroon by the Cameroonian security forces. It was estimated that more than half of the over 300,000 people resident on the Peninsular have been displaced from their habitual residences in the Peninsula since 2004. Most of these displaced persons were scattered around several states in Nigeria without resettlement or reintegration (RCIDC & NCR, 2013:3).

The seriousness of the citizenship crisis and statelessness in the Bakassi Peninsula is such that Nigerian indigenous inhabitants in the Bakassi are now required to present 'Resident Permit' before they could be allowed a residency right or permitted to transact business in the region. Yet, they are in the land of their birth and lifelong residence, and have no claim on the protection of any other state as long as they in the territory. By this, they have been rendered homeless; forced to become street beggars, live under bridges, make-shift camps and/or uncompleted buildings around the borders or nearby calabar. Thus, they have been forcefully turned emergency foreigners or at best strangers in their own fatherland. Although, there is not yet an official policy or statement denouncing Bakassi refugees Nigerian or Cameroonian citizenship, they have become vulnerable because the legal basis of their citizenship rights are non-existent, in question or under threat (Manby, 2009).

Conclusion

This study appraises the Nigeria-Cameroon border conflict. In particular, it examined the ICJ judgment over the Bakassi Peninsula vis-à-vis the recurrence of citizenship crisis and statelessness in the territory. The paper argues that the failure of the Nigerian state to seek a revision of the ICJ judgment within the timeline permitted by Article 61 of the ICJ Statute is responsible for the current politics of social exclusion meted to the Nigerian indigenous population in the region. Nigeria had a whole ten years based on Article 61 of the ICJ Statute to appeal against the judgment, yet due to complacency and political irresponsibility, she allowed the opportunity to slip away. But conscious of the enormous oil wealth in the region and the contemporary struggles of the oil-bearing communities in the adjacent Nigeria's Niger Delta region, the Bakassi people had grown more assertive compared to the 1960s. They demonstrated that they were now more conscious about their nationality and development-related expectations from the state and the petro business in the region. Hence, a solution derived essentially from a legalistic framework such as the decision of the ICJ would not ultimately have provided the needed remedy for the permanent resolution of the dispute. In other words, Nigeria would not have consented to the ICJ adjudication of the case *ab initio*, especially being aware that Cameroon stood on a firmer ground in view of the numerous colonial treaties ceding the territory to Cameroon.

Consequently, one of the critical issue which none of the actors in the dispute bothered to address was the people's legitimate concern for identity, citizenship and nationality which clearly contradicts the now well established legal victory of Cameroon's sovereignty over the territory. The 1913 Anglo-German treaty which ceded the Bakassi to Cameroon though valid in international law, was a blatant act of imperial indiscretion, which given the complex nature of the problem it had created, calls for an extra-legal remedy. As Obasanjo did say in the wake of pressures for Nigeria to accept the ICJ judgment, "What is legal may not be politically expedient". Similarly, the post-colonial agreements between Nigeria and Cameroon, which reinforced the dubious colonial transaction despite also being valid in law, were to say the least, an act of naivety on the part of the leaders of the two countries. Even though both states were extremely beleaguered, Cameroon should be more worried about acquiring the peninsula than even Nigeria. Beyond the obsession

with the prospects of earning additional oil revenues, the Cameroonian authorities must appreciate the strong aversion of the Bakassi people to Cameroonisation; the uphill nature of the tasks as well as the real strategic danger and threats it connotes. To allude to this, in his submission to the ICJ, Akinjide (2002:5) succinctly framed the threats in the following puzzle:

Why should Cameroun want a large group of Nigerians who feel very strongly about their nationality and ties to Nigeria? It seems to me that Cameroun would only be storing up trouble for herself with the people of Bakassi if she were to succeed in her claims.

A negotiated bilateral settlement which among other things guarantees to Cameroun greater oil revenues from the peninsula without necessarily altering the nationality of the inhabitants would certainly have been more proactive for both parties. On the side of Nigeria, the shoddy and haphazard manner it employed in handling the resettlement issue of Bakassi returnees is only but a ploy to deepen the politics of exclusion of the Bakassi people; and this could portend danger for further crisis between the two neighbouring states.

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REVEALING CLOTHES AMONG WOMEN IN POST-COLONIAL IGBO SOCIETY: A MORAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL REFLECTION

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Abstract

History shows that before many African groups made contact with Europeans, appearing naked or dressing oneself scantily was a norm. Among the Igbo of Southeast Nigeria, for instance in the past, a good number of adults went about topless while children remained stark naked. This mode reflected the people's aesthetic, moral, cultural and technological standards. However, the advent of European explorers, merchants, missionaries and colonists, especially in the 19th century and early part of the 20th century, signalled a radical change in the people's clothing practice. Within a short period, western sartorial tradition became the fancy of the Igbo as well as that of many other groups in Nigeria. This was largely due to several internal and external factors. The missionaries, school administrators and colonial government insisted on certain dress codes for the Christian converts, students and civil servants including the military and paramilitary groups. Besides these, the Igbo adopted a host of other western clothing styles during the colonial period. However they all differed markedly from the revealing clothes discussed in this paper.

Introduction

The place of clothes in the fashion world is quite conspicuous. There is hardly any group of people who, at the moment, can be described as an unclothed or naked today. In most cultures, keeping certain parts of the body covered with clothes or related material is in keeping with a sense of modesty. The naturists who reject such idea of

modesty and thus prefer to go about naked are just a tiny minority of people. Among those who are not averse to clothing practice, there are people who do not believe in the use of jewelry, artificial hair or other related hair attachments, footwear or body markings among other forms of dress.

In the context of this study, revealing clothes refer to clothes that show more of the body than usual. The recent coinage, "*onu gbajie* boys," used among the Igbo to describe such clothes literally suggests one of the major aims of such clothing which is to arouse the curiosity of the male gazers. The term implies that the garment has the capacity of breaking boys' necks. Depending on the design or material, clothes could expose those parts of the wearer's body which are supposed to be covered in accordance to societal norms. The exposure may stem from the way a particular garment is worn. Many African groups of the past generation clothed themselves in this way. Such clothing style became an object of much debate among the people when the early European explorers, missionaries, and colonists visited and lived among them about a century ago.

It must be noted that the parts of the body that deserve coverage vary from one society to another. In most cultures today, people, especially adults, cover the breasts and the genitals. Africans seem to favour this style of dress because of their social cultural orientations and the nature of their environment and technology. Many believe that nudity among Igbo girls in the past was to check promiscuity (Afigbo and Okeke, 1985). Igbo traditional fashion generally offer clues about one's cultural, social, religious orientations as well as one's status, age, authority, accomplishments and values. Other variables that sustained the popularity of such style of clothing in Africa in the past are quite subtle and may be connected to an individual's taste. Of course, fashion is an aspect of non-verbal communication.

The traditional designers lacked sewing machines and sufficient materials with which fitting clothes could be tailored. They, nevertheless, exploited the available natural resources at their disposal as fully as possible, turning them into items of body adornment. These designers provided the people with what satisfied their sense of modesty and adornment. This explains why nude Igbo girls could pose proudly before European photographers without any sign of shame.

Today, adherents of Christianity and Islam among others groups discourage their members from fashioning themselves unbecomingly. They warn against wearing revealing clothes or any fashion that has to do with vanity and seduction. This explains why revealing clothes worn by women are considered unacceptable among some denominations. Some people believe that such attires are capable of staining one's conscience (Onwochei, 2012: 106). Yet, it is common to see young girls in public dressed solely in what may appear to many as outrageous. Some claim that such clothes as ultra-low-rise trousers, among others either give them confidence or make them appear smart.

It is particularly worrisome today to see in places of worship people in such attires. Indeed this tends to be a shift in the wrong direction. Little wonder, the high moral standard of past Igbo society has declined significantly in recent times. In the past, the Igbo men (husbands) sometimes rewarded their wives for maintaining their virginity till marriage. Diligence and moral uprightness were of higher value than physical beauty which fades with time. This explains why parents inculcated highly esteemed values in their children early in life. Hence, for instance, no sensible Igbo child dared to come back home late in the night except in the case of an emergency.

Igbo society and her indigenous fashion

The Igbo occupy mainly the Southern Nigeria territory, particularly the eastern part. In a land generally grassy with few hills, the Igbo have both Guinea savanna and Rain forest. Overtime the people have devised strategies for harnessing their natural resources in their environment. Except in urban cities, farming remains the economic mainstay of the Igbo. Civil servants, traders, artisans, students, among others are found more in urban cities in Igbo land and beyond. Although there are many dialectal and cultural differences in Igboland, shared identities like language and values are strongly evident. The Igbo people also share common cultural traits with neighbouring ethnic groups like Ekoi, Yako, Efik, Ibibio, Ogoni, Ijaw, Urobo, Idoma and Tiv. According to Ottenberg (1926: 13), Igbo society, had over 200 independent territorial groups, each composed of one or more villages with residential groupings based on internal socio-political organizations. Igbo had their own distinct culture, even the culture of fashioning themselves in a particular style.

It is difficult to say exactly when the Igbo started to wear clothes. The earliest known textile in Igboland was *Aji*, bark cloth (Afigbo & Okeke, 1985). Prior to this, the adult Igbo must have covered their nakedness with leaves and animal skins while their young ones went about naked and unashamed. The tropical nature of their environment, technology and artistic inclination must have been responsible for their type of fashion at each stage of development.

Besides scanty dressing, the Igbo have marked desire for jewelry and other forms of body decorations. In the remote past, the people wore a number of bracelets, anklets, necklaces and earrings. For instance, women have been described as a symbol of fertility (Dike, 1978: 9). This may explain why they preferred ornaments of the body to clothes. Their torsos were usually left bare. Few pictures probably taken during the colonial period show how much the Igbo women adored their bodies in the past. For instance, those shown in G. T. Basden's books, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria* and *Niger Ibos*, illustrate the traditional fashion among the colonial Igbo girls.



Fig.1 Three Stages of Girlhood



Fig. 2A Proud Trio (Affianced Igbo Girl)

Source: G. T. Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria* [1921]

The dress style is quite revealing. Clothes were sometimes used symbolically rather than for protection. This is evident in Figure 2. The girls described as the "Proud Trio" by G. T. Basden were prospective

brides of rich men. Yet, their lengthy loincloths were not used to cover their nakedness. They had costly and precious appurtenances including elaborate headgear and jewellery worn around the neck, wrist and ankle. These include teeth of a leopard, stringed beads and ivory bracelets. Some of these appurtenances symbolize authority and accomplishments which give one a sense of fulfillment. Waist beads, rings, among other traditional attire were popular among girls generally. Their bodies were often smeared and decorated with local cosmetics such as *edo* and *ufie* in addition to *uli* and *ngalo*. The clothing tradition has a long history.

By the 9th century when the Igbo-Ukwu artifacts were allegedly created, the use of cloths appeared scantier Shaw (1974: 72). For instance, one of the Igbo artifacts, a cylindrical bronze open-work used as an altar stand has a nude female figure sandwiched amidst curvilinear patterns. Her bare breasts and barely covered genitals are quite conspicuous. Her face is scarified characteristically like those of titled men from Nri and some other northern Igbo towns. The figure is depicted topless but wears a small loincloth.

Changes in Traditional Igbo Fashion

During the colonial period, the tradition of leaving the torsi bare began to diminish markedly in intensity. A glance at some photographs taken during this period attests to the gradual but steady abandonment of indigenous fashion. They began to put on Western styled clothes like shorts and shirts (singlets), especially in those places with heavy European presence. Women adopted the use of wider wrappers, skirts, blouses and gowns manufactured locally and abroad.

By the 1930s and 1940s, the effect of urbanization and western influence became more and more evident in the way the Igbo dressed themselves. By this period, virtually every village and town in Igboland had at least a church building and a school. This was an era of western fashion. Women favoured the voluminous Calabar styles of gowns and skirts while men continued to wear singlets, shirts and khaki shorts (Dike, 2006: 3). However, nudity of some sort existed in Igbo land at this period. Women in the rural areas could still go to the farm or market half naked. It appears however that at this period, people could no longer leave their breasts bare as in those old days.

By the late 1940s, traditional dressing culture of the Igbo were rapidly giving way to western modes as a result of the influence of

colonists and missionaries. Photographs of the 1940s show Igbo people wearing more of foreign readymade shirts, skirts, suits and undergarments in cotton and velvets. Raffia skirts and other materials of local origin diminished in popularity. By the 1950s, young men and women could hardly appear half naked except within the confines of their homes or during certain events.

Campaign against nudity in parts of Igboland

The vigorous campaign against nudity which began in earnest in 1953 in Eastern Nigeria contributed significantly to the trendiness of European clothes and fashion accessories in Igboland. How was this achieved? The Honourable Minister of the Local Governments through the office of the Local Government Secretary of Eastern Region based in Enugu informed all the District Councils, Native Authorities and all Residents and District Officers in Onitsha, Awka, Udi, Awgu and Nsukka that the Executive Council had had under consideration, measures to prevent within the region, the habit of appearing naked or nearly naked. The minister demanded to know (i) The age, class and occupation of people who go naked, (ii) The willingness of the native authority or council to prohibit the habit if given the power and (iii) if any class of people should be exempted? To these questions, Uzo-Uwani Native Authority Office replied thus:

- (i) Young girls and boys from the age of 8 years upwards normally go about naked; adult male farm workers are often naked.
- (ii) Yes.
- (iii) No.

On the other hand, Igbo-Eze Native Authority Office returned:

- (i) Male farmers of the age of 5 years and upwards normally go about naked or half naked.
- (ii) Yes.
- (iii) No.

However, the Native Authority of Uzo Uwani who recommended that children of both sexes below the age of 10 years be exempted from the prohibition shared the view that the Council was willing to make such rules against nudity if empowered to do so. The Clerk of the Council noted that although no custom of the land prohibited people from

wearing clothes, young children up to the age of 14, farmers, and fishermen as well as some girls (over 14 years) in some villages such as Umumbo, Igga, Omasi and Anaku in Uzo-Uwani area went about naked. (Order Against Nudity, No Uz: 284/31). This campaign brought a measure of success in the Onitsha Province which encompassed the entire northern Igboland. On the other hand, the campaign as well as the government's developmental efforts in Ezza in the northeastern part of Igboland could only yield little result. There were civil disturbances caused by women who were uncomfortable with the introduction of education rate in Abakiliki and other towns in the northeastern cluster (Alagu, 1989: 164). Some people so resisted the order against nudity that there was food shortage in the area. This is because farmers stayed at home and refused to go to farm for fear that if they were caught naked, they would be forced to pay a fine of £ 25 (N50) or undergo six months of imprisonment. However, it was rather the ban on nudity 3 months to Nigeria's Independence (July 1960) by local authorities and the subsequent law by the Eastern Regional Government in this regard that brought considerable control on the culture of nudity among the people of the northeastern cluster (*Nigeria Magazine*, 1979 : 37).

Incidentally, the period of campaign against nudity was a period many people were aware of the heavy presence of European dress in Igbo land. These dress fashions were seen on the British colonists and missionaries, court messengers (*kotuma*), interpreters or other civil servants. Also in Mbari house, local artists made clay figurines in such European dresses as shorts, sun-helmets, ties and shirts. (Moore & Beier, 1956:191). There were also local dress makers who could sew both foreign textile prints and locally made woven fabric. For instance, the photographs of an Igbo tailor shown in a popular journal known as *Nigeria Magazine*. The tailor worked with a sewing machine just as three Igbo girls knitted freely and happily. These photographs attest to the fact that modern dress making techniques were already in place by the 1940s (Duckworth, 1947:130). Yet, some people still preferred to appear completely nude or half-naked, perhaps, for economic, ritual, social and personal reasons. For instance, during traditional festivals like *Ila Oso* festival at Ozuakoli and *Iwa akwa* ceremony at Okigwe in the mid 1950's, people usually appeared half naked or topless. (Moore, 1956; Nzekwu, 1966)

Revealing clothes among women in post-colonial Igbo society

There are reasons, occasions or situations in which a level of nudity was tolerated in Igbo land in spite of the ban on nudity in the area. Children's nudity was not usually a matter of concern. Hence, it never engendered public outcry. A mad person going about stark naked did not also attract so much attention. A criminal or a witch could be stripped naked as part of the sanctions for breaking a particular law. Someone might be stripped naked publicly in the course of a duel. Some people could protest in a state of nakedness perhaps, in a bid to make a stronger statement or give some weight to their action or cause as in the case of Aba women riot of 1929. Such group nudity was a potent example of social nudity (Bastian, 2005:45).

Hitherto, farmers at work and such people as wrestlers and those engaged in sporting or recreational activities of some sort, especially in the context of rural setting, do appear nearly naked without any fear of criticism. Dancers and wrestlers prefer to appear topless or scanty in dressing in a bid to avoid any form of encumbrance that could limit their optimal performance. The dancers could sway their hands freely and make staccato earth shaking foot beats among other graceful body movements. (Nzekwu, 1962: 35). The young Igbo male dancer could wear a locally woven cloth around the loins, black woolen cap with tassels or an *ata* grass cap from which flutter a solitary ostrich or eagle feather (Nzekwu, 1963:165). The upper body could be left bare. Also, other instances of nudity in the public include breastfeeding of children, traditional festivals which often go with certain rituals that demand nudity and baths in streams. The sight of one's nudity in any of these instances did not usually lead to criticism.

Igbo dress fashion in the 1960s and 1970s, according to Dike (2007: 1), was predicated upon two important events which were the notions of independence and the upheavals of the Biafran Nigeria civil war. Perhaps, as a result of the introduction of miniskirts in Europe, there was recession of the volume and length of the gown in the 1960s. Again, not only did gown recede to the knee level but also was trimmed down; the slim-fit "A line" style was sewn as midi gowns and this appeared more fitting to the body. In fact, body fitting clothes that give the body minimal allowance became voguish at this period. People began to pay more attention to exotic and elegant appearance than modesty based on dresses that camouflage body contours and cleavages. By so doing, they

rejected dresses designed for full body coverage. Renowned artistes around the world influenced some of the slim fit styles which bore their names. For instance, twist style was named after Chubby Checker, a renowned singer (Dike, 2007: 4).

Mini dress reigned in the late 1960s in Igbo land especially during the Biafran-Nigerian civil war mainly because of economic hardship engendered by the war. The problem of scarcity of basic necessities of life made life miserable and unbearable. People seemed to be much more concerned with what to eat than what to put on. Hence, indigenous textile technology was almost at standstill position for those 3 years (1967-1970).

At the end of the war, dresses that enhanced sexuality and femininity appeared trendier. Of course while the war lasted, fashion had undergone certain modifications. Revealing clothes such as show back style, hot pants, singlets and sleeveless tops among others became a staple of the fashion magazines. The sex distinguishing role of dress appeared more and more subtle as women adopted trousers and shorts believed originally to be men's. Some women seemed more eager to attire themselves to the delight of the opposite sex. Hence, a number of styles with erotic and exotic character became fashionable (Dike, 2007: 5).

This trend continued in the 1980s in spite of the general belief that trousers and knickers are women's immodest attire (Okeke, 1982: 29). The locally made male and female loin cloths known as *Ekwerekwe Ovuvu*, *Ubocha* or *gburu-wara* formerly used as wrapper waned in intensity with the heavy supply of modern textiles coming from home and abroad. The modern wax and fancy prints (Abada and Joj) used as wrapper, and the local variants, Akwete and Akwa-ocha were worn by adults during traditional festivals or other important events (Okeke, 1982: 31).

In spite of the abundance of cloths since the establishment of local textile firms and local cottage industries, some people in the late 20th and 21st centuries still prefer tight-fitted dressing to loose clothing. They appear to have realized another dimension of the power and politics of fashion. To many, fashion has remained a tool with which people assert their identity, articulate personal wishes and realize their set goals - vengeance, trick, praise, comfort or decency. For instance, in Isikwuato in Abia State, if a woman is angry over an injustice against her, she

might strip herself and urinate on the ground. Such action portends grave danger on the guilty. This explains why women who wish to resort to such means of redress are begged not to do so.

Similarly in Nsukka area, some people, on account of their belief in the retributive power of certain deities or spirits, may consult the spirit to carry out vengeance on their behalf. In the ensuing customary rites, the prosecutor or the priest might carry some ritual objects to the site of the crime in a state of undress, usually in broad daylight. This is known locally as *Ikpo maa* (calling the spirit). Again, in Amagunze town, the headquarters of Nkanu East, certain deities cannot be approached by women unless they (women) are naked (F. Nnaji, personal communication, 10th March, 2013). It must be noted that the use of modern miniskirts and other revealing clothes apparently originated from the western world especially from the 1960s. In fact, a recent visit to Google site where images of revealing clothes were posted confirmed this view. Such styles of clothing have spread to other places where western ideologies hold sway. The spread of such styles to Africa and beyond was no surprise to many because of the instance of culture contact. Again, fashion itself is dynamic. Indeed, the change tends to be erratic from time to time.

Other reasons for this fashion trend are supposedly linked to the state of the economy, an attempt to appear fashionable or sexy and a means of attracting public attention. For instance, directors of such pop music as ragga and jazz tend to prefer female dancers who dance virtually naked. The latter view seems to explain why some dancers dress themselves unbecomingly. Today, even the fans of popular artists may be seen at shows dressed in miniskirts or micro skirts and pants, singlet, leggings, camisole, tube top and spaghetti top, chin-chin blouse/show navel top, slit up skirts or gowns, bum shorts, low - rise trousers or hipsters among others. Ordinarily, these wears ought to pass as underwear or night wears. Incidentally, they have become popular clothing styles among some Igbo girls at the later part of the 20th century. These alien styles made serious inroads into African cultures as result of globalization of the transport cum communication industry which hinged on modern technologies.

Selected samples of revealing clothes



Fig. 3.
Show-belly blouse / Leggings
© Odigboh, 1992



Fig. 4.
Mini gown
© Dike, 1978



Fig 5.
Micro - mini top/ hot pants
© Odigboh, 1992



Fig. 6.
Mini skirt/'show-navel' blouse
© Odigboh, 1992



Fig. 7.
See-through garment
© Prince-Cather, 2002



Fig. 8.
"Onu gbajie boys" mini gown
© Ogbona, 2003

The implications of revealing clothes

Since the era of social nudism is past gone, the nudity of adults or any sexually developed individuals who do not exhibit signs of insanity has some negative implication in contemporary Igbo society. Of course, there is no evidence that the law against nudity at the early part of the post-colonial era has been revoked. In fact, about a decade ago, a Catholic Chaplaincy in Nsukka banned the use of certain revealing clothes within the church premises (Ogbonna, 2003: 50). Also, there are some denominations that forbid their members from wearing such outrageous clothes. Those who defy this order are usually humiliated by church ushers and zealous individuals and refused entry into the church. Today, an average upright Igbo man or woman would readily condemn those who appear publicly in revealing clothes. The reason for their position is that revealing clothes could be seductive to the opposite sex. Consequently, they could further lead to immorality, assault, negative criticism, rejection and low public esteem. Each of these will be examined further albeit briefly.

Immorality

Indeed, clothes as an aspect of non-verbal communication have social significance for people. The fashion of girls and boys of easy virtue often suggests a loose life style. It seems that revealing clothes such as the type shown in Figure 7 could easily allure most Igbo men. Men appear to be more concerned with what they see than women do. The following brief but true story will highlight one of the effects of seductive dress on the opposite sex. An academic staff of a College of Education located at Eha-Amufu in Enugu state once narrated to his colleagues how felt after gazing intently at the breast-revealing attire of a female student in an examination hall where he served as an invigilator. According to him, he was tempted to go and hold her breast. He, however, managed to control himself. Nude fashion might give most people in this part of the world the impression of sexual recklessness. Many fashion styles of today are designed to titillate. Improper dressing at present is perceived as one of the contributory factors in incidences of rape. Women who engage in sex trade are so dressed to attract customers.

Assault / Negative Criticism and Rejection

Another problem of indecent dressing in Igbo land is the resultant negative criticism. Negative criticism could be demoralizing. An individual might lose self confidence when disparaged for what he/she wears. Such a person may not be allowed to participate in certain events or associate with certain people. During ceremonies like weddings, funerals, birthdays, festivals and other ceremonies of significant importance, those who dress unbecomingly are always the subject of discussion or gossip among various groups of people. Some dare to boldly chide or correct the person for bad dressing. As earlier observed, those who dress aberrantly might be sent away or barred from entering some places of worship. Moreover, in Igbo society, people who are badly dressed are considered to be irresponsible or insane. Although such dresses could be attractive and sexually exciting, many consider them to be unpleasant and offensive.

Low Public Esteem

Another side effect of revealing clothes is that of low public esteem. People tend to disregard any sane and mature person who is not properly dressed. They view them as social misfits who lack good sense of discretion. People tend to call them such names as dogs, prostitutes, depending on the orientation of the onlookers. In most Igbo rural areas, girls or young women who put on revealing clothes are not treated kindly. In some instances, children and/or some adults could jeer or throw pebbles at them. Up until today, women who dress in trousers are not respected in some parts of Igboland, especially in rural areas. Perhaps, this is because of the indigenous belief that it is a taboo for women to wear anything that passes in between their thighs. Some Christians still hold the view that women ought not to put on trousers because they are considered to fall within the ambit of male clothing. Some simply forbid female Christians from wearing trousers because the practice is not just alien to indigenous clothing practice but also connotes, especially in the early part of the post-colonial era, a loose woman. Aware of this impression, some denominations advise women against wearing trousers because it could adversely affect the spread of the gospel – the message of love, forgiveness and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ who died for the sins of mankind.

Conclusion

Why did the past generation of the Igbo fashion themselves scantily? Three main reasons readily come to mind: belief system, environment and technology. The Igbo believed that clothes should be worn solely by adults. This explains the proverb: *okoro erughi eru waru ogo, ikuku eburu ya buru ogo* which suggests that if a child wears clothes prematurely, he or she stands some risks. Again, women were prohibited by custom from wearing anything that passed in between both thighs like pants or loincloths. The body was a social skin which provide platform for artistic and symbolic decorations in form of markings and paintings. It is believed that these art forms ought to be laid bare so that people could appreciate them as they were.

The nature of the Igbo environment is another factor that encouraged "open body" fashion. The tropical climate of the area, especially during dry seasons, is such that one may not be comfortable, at some points, in voluminous clothes. Scanty dress was just appropriate for farming and other vigorous activities done in the area. With such clothes, people aerated their bodies from time to time. The materials used for these dresses were sourced locally. This is true of the dyes with which the people decorated themselves. One may wonder how the people make for the warmth that clothes offer during cold weather. Besides the sun, there were alternative sources of heat. People relied on the hearth and burning coals beneath their beds, especially during harmattan or rainy seasons. The fumes from such fireplaces could also be used to drive away mosquitoes, flies and other harmful insects.

Diogu (2010:96) rightly observed that "the scanty dressing of the Igbo during the traditional and transitional period was as result of the indigenous loom, which had technical limitations." Native looms could only be used to produce cloths of small dimension with limited design. With the modification of native looms, these limitations were somewhat overcome. Advance of science and technology also brought about power looms and spinning and knitting machines. Thus cloth manufacture became less laborious; the quantities of cloths available for use increased. Thus, people began to wear more voluminous clothes.

Indeed, the Igbo clothing tradition like every other aspects of culture has not been static, but dynamic. People must not throw caution to the wind by embracing every dress styles that tend to nudity. The ban on nudity in Igboland in 1960 implies that its continuity tantamount to

civil disobedience. Incidentally, it was still the same year that the British youth populations showed strong visible approval of the wearing of miniskirts, such seductive cloths seem to have assumed seeming universal acceptance (Brodgen, 1971: 78). However, the trend has become a matter of concern to many level-headed adults (Onwochei, 2012). Indeed, some Western clothing styles which some Igbo women slavishly and indiscriminately copy are not appropriate in Igbo culture.

The practice of wearing materials that expose underwear pants, brassieres and parts of women's breasts could indeed be more lethal than acid rain and the extent of the damage more far-reaching than one could fathom. This is also true of men who sag or expose their hairy chest and muscles in other to entice ladies. To Diogu (2010: 96), "the concept of size or volume considered in the production of *Ijele* masquerade should be adapted for Igbo mode of dressing, especially in formal and ceremonial occasions". Even causal wears should not be scanty or revealing so that the prestige associated with voluminous clothes will not elude the Igbo women in particular and the Igbo in general.

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**RECONSTRUCTING AFRICAN HISTORY THROUGH
ORAL TRADITION: THE EGWU ALIJAH EXAMPLE
SINCE THE 20TH CENTURY**

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Abstract

The continuous reconstruction of aspects of history of Africa derives largely from oral traditions. Scholars in the post-colonial era rely on oral traditions, culture implements and eye witness accounts for information, analyses and interpretation a of aspects of African past. Apart from the contributions of archaeological evidence, information on African and indeed Igbo historical past relies more on oral sources. The challenges of oral source of history notwithstanding, it remains invaluable to the continuous effort at reconstructing Igbo history. Consequently, this paper on Egwu Alijah is an effort towards the on-going reconstruction of aspects of Igbo history. The paper portrays Egwu Alijah as heirloom, which embodies values, norms and customs as well as some socio-cultural, economic and political events of historical significance in Obollo-Ugiri in Isiala Mbano. Information for this inquiry relies largely on oral interviews from elders and members of the communities. Relevant secondary materials on historiography are consulted. Attempts have been made to adequately interpret, analyse data obtained and present results thematically and chronologically. The paper contributes to existing literature to bridge the knowledge gap in the on-going reconstruction of the history of the many micro-Igbo communities yet to be studied.

Key words: Oral tradition, Egwu Alijah, Minstrel, Dede egwu.

Introduction

From the colonial and post-colonial times, scholars of African extraction have been saddled with the herculean task of reconstructing African historical past. Much of the information or data used derive largely from oral traditions and knowledge of the cultures of the

societies. The written records by colonial anthropologists and historians also depended on oral traditions and culture implements within the environments studied. However, before the end of colonial rule, some literature on the African past had emerged. The bulk of the works again depended on oral tradition. Oral traditions, since the post-colonial period have helped tremendously in the efforts at reconstructing African history especially, the Igbo preliterate history.

Professor Okon Edet Uya (2009:33) has written extensively on oral tradition and some problems of African historiography. He avers that there has been tremendous use of oral tradition in African historiography especially in post colonial era. He observes that "since the 1960s, thanks to the pioneering efforts of Jan Vasina, there is a growing group of historians who have come to accept oral tradition as perhaps the most important hardware for the reconstruction of African history". Oral tradition has come to occupy truly an invaluable spot in the ongoing efforts at reconstructing the Igbo past. Since the 1950s, some developments which followed were felt properly in the 1960s, when oral tradition took a positive step to bridge the existing historical gap. The agitation for African independence called for a new historical image within which the heralded benevolence of all European actors would be deflated (Uya: 10). The era that followed exposed that Africa had a glorious and sophisticated history as shown by the states in the different parts of the continent. This history that sparked off the quest for historical reconstruction was well documented in the Arabic record and the oral traditions of the people. It also brought about greater insistence upon indigenous African sources for historical reconstruction. The emphasis on oral traditions as valid historical source gained respectability and validation from the works of Jan Vasina and the young Africans he trained, especially Alagoa (Uya:11). Consequently, the new nations in Africa made rewarding investments in reclaiming their past by supporting the opening of national archives, research institutes, national museums and the like. This observation no doubt, saw too the establishment of the Institute African Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Since inception, the institute has channeled efforts at solving the numerous challenges facing the effective repositioning of African nay Igbo history. These efforts have been continuous through the very many local and international seminars, symposia, conferences, and public lecturers organized by the institute over the years.

Most of the Afro-centric perspectives expressed in these efforts have yielded positive results. A lot of the micro and macro African societies have had their histories documented and reconstructed. The European records in which most were based on hear say and/or with out a mastery of the African cultural homestead are being challenged through new researches and re-interpretation through oral tradition, hence, the emergence of what Uya (11) called the “defensive history designed to counter the dangerous lies Europeans had systematized and institutionalized about African past”. This has been mainly through oral tradition. According to Afigbo (1987:23) the resources of oral tradition for historical reconstruction have proved most useful and effective to historians, hence, the process of African historiography has undergone fruitful transformation in the handling, analysis, and manipulation of research, data gathering technique, data sources and quality. Thus, rather than rely heavily, as was previously done by researchers, on documentary evidence from early or written sources, there is a radical shift to the use of oral data so that internally derived evidence may be matched by internally derived interpretative methods or approaches. Therefore, as Chike Aniako (2010: 60) posited, the material that is most useful in coming much closer to the understanding of existential and ideational premises of objects of material culture are utilized.

The thrust of this paper is on the relevance and contributions of oral tradition to the reconstruction of aspects of Igbo history using “*Egwu Alijah*” as an example. It demonstrates that the songs in *Egwu Alijah* as heirloom are in themselves, quintessence of the historical past of Umuche, Umuanu, and Alaiyi-ama in Obollo and Amaukwu-Obollo communities in Ugiri Clan of Isiala Mbanu Igbo. The communities are located in Imo State Nigeria. *Alijah* gives an insight into the political, social, cultural, and economic life of the people. As Afigbo (1987, 23-24) suggests,

In the methodology of the study of historical past of a people, we should rather concentrate on detailed micro-studies than presenting panoramic views of a large group of people. Hence, the approach to the study of micro-communities should be specific of their economic, linguistic, political and social relations and so on.

The study of *Egwu Alijah* therefore hopes to be an interesting addition to the growing literature of micro-Igbo communities. Effort is made to explain the concept and provide some songs that embody aspects of the people's historical past. The data used in this *expose* are mainly from oral interviews conducted for this purpose. They are interpreted, analyzed and presented chronologically to reflect historical events of note in the culture area. The writer as a participant observer contributes from an inside-out position and with firm understanding of the culture he has been part of. The songs are presented in the raw nature of the people's dialect to reflect originality, and then English translations are also provided for non Igbo readers. The study adopts historical narrative and analytical methods. The inquiry ends with a conclusion interspersed with suggestions.

Conceptual Framework

Oral tradition is an important part of oral evidence. Scholars have diverse explanations and understanding of oral tradition. This study would concern itself mainly with the definition proffered by Jan Vasina albeit the consideration of some scholars views. In his book, *Oral Tradition as History*, Jan Vasina ((1985:27) writes that oral traditions are "verbal messages which are reported statements from the past beyond the present." This definition, essentially, specifies that the message must be oral statements spoken, sang or called out in musical instruments only. This distinguishes such sources not only from written messages, but also from all other sources, except oral history. It shows also that all oral sources are not oral traditions. He further asserts that there must be transmission by word of mouth over at least a generation. Sources for oral history are therefore not included. On the other hand, the definition does not claim that oral tradition must be "about the past" or that they are just narratives. (Vasina, 25) In a similar vein, J.C. Miller quoted in Vasina, sees oral tradition as only conscious historical documents; the person who tells them wants to communicate the past to us. It is "a narrative describing or purporting to describe an era before the time of the person who relates it". Vasina had made a conscious analysis of the views of scholars of other disciplines on oral tradition, noting that his definition is a working definition for the use of historians. However, he stated that sociologists, linguists, or scholars of verbal art propose their own, which in the case (sociology) might well stress common

knowledge; in the second emphasizes features that distinguish the language from common dialogue (linguists); and in the last stresses features of form and content that define art (folklorists). Such specialists he said normally would be less impressed by the importance of oral transmission over time than historians will be. Indeed, in practice they fuse oral history and oral tradition, by stressing the features most crucial to their analyses. Understandably, they stress the features most crucial to their analysis just as he stressed the ones that are crucial to oral tradition as a source of history. (Vasina:29) Besides, another important aspect of oral tradition worthy of note is "oral tradition as evidence." This transcends different stages, there by providing a link from observation to permanent record. In this regard Jan Vasina had noted that "there must be a link between the record and the observation. If there is none, there is no historical evidence." He also states that a "tale that has no beginning, in time is of itself no evidence. He had identified two models operational in using oral tradition. The first model presupposes that an observer reported his experience orally, casting it in an initial message. The second party heard it and passed it on. From party to party, it was passed on until the last performer acting as informant told it to the recorder. A chain of transmission exists in which each of the parties is a link. Hence, oral tradition must have truly distinctive characteristics in its transmission by word of mouth over a period longer than the contemporary generation. From our definition oral tradition as a process and evidence for historical reconstruction must pass from one generation to another, by word of mouth from the narrative to the recorder. This suitably applies to this discourse on *Egwu Alijah*. As heirloom, *Alijah* is a historical warehouse containing aspects of economic, social, political and cultural past of some communities in Obollo/Amaukwu-Obollo Ugiri in Isiala Mbano L.G.A. Imo state. As stated elsewhere that in the wake of the scholarly renaissance which studies in Igbo history witnessed in the late 1970s and 1980s, what was known about the Igbo was scrappy and indeed, very scanty. However, there have been more researches on Igbo history in the recent past. In tandem with the fore-going, *Egwu Alijah* is explored to a greater degree of whatever little information that exists to explain aspects of the peoples past. Within this trajectory of preference to conceptual framework over theoretical framework, *Egwu Alijah* is examined to somewhat reinforce its place as oral tradition and its contribution to Igbo history.

Egwu Alijah Explained, its Processes and Methods

In an interview, Mr. Bartram Akubelem (2013) explained that

“Egwu Alijah wu ejiri mara na odinala anyi. O wu uzo anyi shi ehekwa ma na-edokwa otutu ihe mere mgbe oshie obodo anyi. Ihe obula di oke mkpa na omenala anyi, dika emebeghi mbu, alulu nwanyi, omume, oma, odinala na onwu. O wu site na Alijah ka anyi si ehekwa ihe ndi a”.

Meaning; “Egwu Alijah is the cultural identity of our people. This is a way through which our people record and retain historical events of note in our community. It covers any event that is important to our culture especially, taboos, marriages, good deeds values, norms, tradition and deaths etc, It is through Alijah that such things are preserved.”

Alijah is a form of cultural dance, but what distinguishes it from other cultural dances is the fact that membership is open to all indigene of the community. The reason is to ensure that the value of *Alijah* is known to all and the songs are learnt by every generation. This is why the rich and the poor, young and old, men and women participate without discrimination. It serves as a unifying factor because there is no discrimination. It is for both the young and old in the community. The elders train the young to ensure that the *Alijah* lives on”, Akubelem stated. Felix Nwaneri, (2013) says “*Alijah* is a means through which the people express their culture, traditional values and belief systems. *EgwuAlijah* speaks and narrates stories about our past and how we live in our environment. It is how we preserve our history and all that people do in our society. It has a lot of implications for our history and our belief”. Remembering what his late father, Pa Nwaneri Osuji told said about *Alijah* music and belief system, Nwaneri fondly called Oriokata stated thus; according to his father,

*Obodo obula na agba Egwu
Alija, enweghi nwanyi biara di na*

*obodo ahu na anaghi amuta nwa. O na-
eso Akpobata Umuaka na alulo uwa.*

Any community that dances *Egwu Alijah*, there is no woman married into the community that does not give birth. It helps in bringing children into the world by way of reincarnation. (my translation)

Historically, *EgwuAlijah* did not originate from Mbano perse, neither of the communities that participate in *EgwuAlijah* claims to be the original initiators of the cultural dance. However, all the communities agree to have borrowed the cultural dance from Akpohia Ikewere in the present River State. This was during the late 1880s. It was borrowed when the people traded with the Akpohia people in commodities such as palm oil and kernel, fish, salt during the long range trade in Igboland. According Mr. Bartram Akubelem (2013) in an interview, he narrates that,

Egwu Alijah a prominent cultural dance our people borrowed from Akamma, Akpohia in Ikwere, Rivers State. It was borrowed by our forefathers from the people before colonial rule. Ikwere used *Alijah* to tell tales of their past in music form. That was why our fathers copied it. We use it for the same purpose as the Akpohia about our past. It is our history in music form.

Akubelem had provided some names of persons who were among those that brought *Alijah* to Umuanu Village. The names he remembered include, Christopher Ofoegbu Bernard Ofoegbu, Alexander Abazie, Ihekoromadu Ihezic, Vincent Anyanwu, Ambrose Ijezie and in recent times, John Amajoyi, Akubelem Bartram and Akubelem Levi among many others. He stated that most of these people are dead, but they had transmitted the *EgwuAlijah* institution to different generations before them.

Besides, in a group interview with some members of *EgwuAlijah* and community leaders in Umuche village, they claimed their fathers had

borrowed the cultural dance from Ogbakiri village in Akpohia Ikwere. These informants, Felix Osuji, Samuel Mbalisi, Joseph Eleagu, and Godwin Mbaegbu Enereji were interviewed together. Hence, Felix Osuji disclosed that

Egwu Alijah came from Ogbakiri in Akpohia Ikwere. It is one of the great legacies of our forefathers who went there to trade in fish, salt and periwinkle. The music helps us to store our past events. In fact, *EgwuAlijah* contains as well helps to retain our history since it was introduced. It is part of our History told through songs.

Egwu Alijah is a well organized music in the villages that participate in it. Its importance as heirloom makes it part of the people's culture, tradition and an instrument for peaceful coexistence, love and unity. The songs and dance are for all members of the community both old and young. According to the group through Osuji, "*Alijah* has seven (7) key members; these include, Nwachukwu Ezeala (*DedeAlijah* and minstrel), Ahaotu, Godwin Madujiweonweya, Okoroji Asimandu, Adanma Asimandu, who was the *AdaAlijah*. *Alijah* has seven key instruments namely, *ekwe ukwu*, *ekwe nta*, *udu*, *oyo*, *ojo*, *ogene*, *okpokoro ekwe*. These instruments combine to make *Alijah* what it is." The minstrel is the soloist known as *dedeegwuin Alijah*. He is usually intelligent and has good sense of history and philosophy.

Writing on minstrelsy in Igboland, O.O. Enekwe, O. Udechukwu and R.C. Okafor (2002:386) stated that, in Igboland, there is a form of performance that has been described as minstrelsy. Although this type of performance is inevitably peculiar to the Igbo in many essential details, it embodies the basic characteristics of minstrelsy as a universal musical phenomenon.

Besides, Beckerman (1970:14) stated, these features include entertainment, education, dramatic imitation, and presentational activity that form of performance sense of which aims to appeal to the sense of wonder and admiration of the audience by sheer artistic skill, such as acrobatics dance, etc. The minstrels, therefore, is a versatile performer who seeks to hold the attention of his audience with all the talents and

skills he can muster. In his art, words and singing are all of the essence. The soloist- *dede egwu* in *Alijah* is its minstrel. He is a person with good memory, skill, intelligence and ability to compose songs with historical event of note. Basden G.T in his book *Among the Ibos of Nigeria* (1983:190) noted that, the leader of a chorus is accorded much the same honour amongst the Igbo as that granted to the minstrel in ancient days in England. He must possess not only the musical gift but the poetic instinct also. He creates his theme as the song proceeds, and great ingenuity is displayed in fitting words to time and tune on the spur of the moment. Any usual incident is seized upon and utilized as material by the leader, and when this fails he has recourse to the retelling, in song, the exploits of old. The descriptions of Basden could be applied to *EgwuAlijah* in Obollo and Amaukwu, Obollo communities of Igboland.

Again without much contention Mr. Calestus Emeagi (2013) head of *Alijah* in the Alaiyi-ama community also explained that their *EgwuAlijah* came from Akpohia. Those that brought *Alijah* include Emeagi Oguako, Ihejiene Onuoha, Nwagwuisi Ihejiene and John Osuji. Mazi Njoku Abazie was the soloist. He later handed over to John Osuji and later to Calestus Emeagi as *dedeegwu*.

Furthermore, Godwin Mbaegbu, Enereji (2013) of Umuokwaraebo village stated that "they had copied *EgwuAlijah* from Umuche village, their next door neighbours and brothers. This was because we admired the unity and peace that existed in the community through *EgwuAlijah*. It was a form of social control and character formation because good and bad people were praised and criticized in most of the songs. These made people to be cautious in what ever they did. Through this way some aspects of our history were preserved in the songs." However, it should be noted that because of closeness between the communities, most of the songs take the same rhythm and style. What appear to differ mostly are the names and events that occurred in distinct villages. These songs as noted earlier were composed by the soloist and village historian and called-out by instrumental soloist who plays the *Ekwe-ukwu*. The talented soloist and the instrumental soloist add flavour to the *EgwuAlijah*, while the men, women, youths and children do the dancing.

However, it is worthy to note that there is *Egwu Alijah* in Diaspora. This is because some Obollo and Amaukwu Obollo people play and dance the *Alijah* in cities where they reside in Nigeria. They use

it to celebrate their New Yam Festival in the city, child naming ceremony, house opening, marriages, and so on. An example of *Alijah* in Diaspora is seen in Port-Harcourt, River State. On *Alijah* in Diaspora, Bathram Akubelem informed that “Umuanu and Umüche also called - Anu na Uche, sons and daughters in Port-Harcourt have their own *Alijah*. The head of the *Alijah* in Port Harcourt is Akubelem Levi. They bought all the instruments and use it as a mark of identity and cultural unity. They use it to encourage those who achieve greatness and criticize the “*efulefu*”- lazy people among them. Most of the activities of our people in Port-Harcourt are reflected through the *Alijah* Diaspora. Some times people from other parts of Obollo and Mbano join them in dancing the *Alijah*”. Akubelem Bartram also states that certain prices are collected from people who may wish to hire the *Alijah*. These prices include:

1. *Udu nkwu elu abuo* -two gallons of palm wine
2. *Oji Igbo asato*- eight pieces of Igbo cola nuts
3. *Efere nri* - a basin of food (fufu or rice)
4. One pound - (pound was used in the colonial times and Biafra, in recent times the price is bargained)
5. Transport money – (depending on the distance).

All members of the *Alijah* Diaspora in Port-Harcourt dress in their uniform to differentiate them from visitors and non indigenes. It features prominently during *ekweji* celebration by our people in Port-Harcourt.” (Bathram, interview cited)

Some *EgwuAlijah* Songs and their Meaning/Interpretation

In this segment, some of the songs of *EgwuAlijah* that explain socio-cultural, economic and political activities among the people are considered. The songs are presented in the people’s dialect and then an English language version is provided. These songs eulogize good and criticize bad people. They also show taboos, events, beliefs and value systems of the people. One such song that shows what was considered a taboo in the area is titled “**AdaMbeyi**” composed by Nwachukwu Ezeala, is rendered thus with its chorus.

Call: *Ada Mbeyi oo,*

Chorus: *I natara onye ike na aka oo!*

Call: *I wu nwanyigi mara akwa riwa elu oo*

Chorus: *I natara onye ike na aka*

*Call: O wu maka nna gi wu eze ka iji aria elu
I na-tara onye ike na aka oo*

*Call: I maghi na nwayi anaghi ari elu nkwu,
I mela aru megide odinala anyi,
Mana I bu nwa eze kwesiri idokwa iwu obollo
Ma ugbua I ebiela iwu obodo anyi oo!
Onye ga emezi ya?*

*Chorus: I natara onye ike na-aka oo
Ada leee; Ada Mbeyi oo,
Ina-tara onye ike na-aka oo?*

The English translation of *Ada Mbeyi* by the present writer who is also a member of the *EgwuAlijah* goes thus:

Call: Mbeyi's daughter,

Chorus: Who gave you the authority from?

*Call: You know you are a lady and you climbed the palm tree
with wrapper*

Chorus: Who gave you the authority?

*Call: Is it because your father is king
That made you climb palm tree*

Chorus: Who gave the authority?

*Call: Don't you know that women don't climb palm trees
A woman that climbs palm tree has committed a
sacrilege? You have committed abomination against the
land but you are supposed to protect the laws of our land
as the king's daughter Now you have despised our
tradition Who will protect our tradition?*

Chorus: Who gave you the authority?

Ada Mbeyi was a song composed when the first daughter of the first traditional ruler of Obollo community climbed a palm tree on wrapper. This act was considered a taboo among the people. The action was seen as a mark of disrespect for men, custom, cultural norms and values of Obollo people. Hence, the song was rendered as a satire questioning the *raison d'être* and authority of Mbeyi's daughter to climb palm tree. Probably, she had done so in her capacity as the daughter of the traditional ruler. The song served as a satire which is intended to

deter other women from doing so. Apart from “Ada Mbeyi’s” action, there has not been any case reported either in a story or a song of a repeat of such act by any other woman in the land. However, as stated earlier, the songs were rendered differently by each village. In Umuche according Mbalisi Samuel, Felix Osuji and Eleagu Joseph, the same story of Ada Mbeyi is rendered thus:

Song: *Egodie (Egodiya), Egodie, Egodie*
 I wu nwoke
 I mana Egodie, nwa Mbeyi wara ogodo
 ria elu oo,
 Egodie leee! Egodie, I wu nwoke?

Transcription: Egodie! Egodie! Egodie are you a man?
 Do you know that Egodiya, Mbeyi’s daughter
 Climbed a palm tree on wrapper?
 Egodie leee! Egodie are you a man?

The two songs speak of the same incident but were composed differently by each village’s soloist -*dede egwu* or minstrel.

Another song used as a satire is titled “Ogodo Onye Nwuru Anwu.” This song is philosophical because the meaning is derived by an in-depth understanding and interpretation by the *dedeegwu* and village historian who tells the story.

The song is rendered thus: (3)

Song: *I si na o bu nke gi eeh!*
 I si na o bu nke gi eeh
 I si na o bu nke gi chiri nu ya!
 I si na o bu nke gi, ogodo onye nwuru anwu
 I si na o bu nke gi,
 Gi chiri mara wa oo!

Translation:

If you say it is your own!
If you claim it is your own, take it
If you claim it’s your own,
A death person’s clothe,
If you claim it’s your own
Take and wear it.

According to Felix Osuji (Oriokata) “this song has a deep meaning, it is used to discourage people who engage in struggling for a dead persons property with his wife or children over properties such as land, palm tree, house, their wives etc. It is sung when such cases were/are noticed during burials in our community”. In fact, as an eye witness, the fear that a person’s name would be mentioned in such a song, deters people from openly struggling over the properties of the dead in the area.

The next song titled “Bartholomew Nwa Osuji” expresses the clash between Christianity and the people’s culture of ownership of land. The song is rendered thus:

Song:

Call: *Bartholomew nwa Osuji*
Chorus: *Ihe aka-na-anya dara ya na anya*
Call: *Bath, nwa Osuji*
Chorus: *Ihe aka-na anya dara ya na-anya*
Ejenti (agent) akuo ya aka-na-anya
maka nkwu ya,
Ejenti uka, I biara ndozi ka I biara mmegha?
I we kuo nwa Osuji aka-na-anya maka nkwu ya
Ejenti biara a bia, kedu ihe aga-eme-ya?
Chorus: *Ihe aka-na-anya dara ya na-anya oo...!*

Translation:

Call: Bartholomew the son of Osuji
See how he was slapped
Bath the son Osuji
Agent slapped him because of
His palm tree
Church agent, did you come to build or to destroy?
You slapped the son of Osuji because of
the palm tree in his farm.
What shall we do with the church agent?
That slapped Bartholomew Osuji?
Chorus: See how he was slapped ...!

Felix Osuji (Oriokata) explained that the song about Bartholomew Osuji and the church agent was told by his father, Pa Nwaneri Osuji. “The incident happened in 1950 when a church teacher

sent to Holy Trinity Church Obollo, slapped Bartholomew Osuji who had gone into his farm to cut some palm fronds for his goat. He was accosted by the church agents who told him the land was part of church land. When Osuji challenged the agent! He received a slap. The incident was reported to the village elders who chose to criticize the action of the church agent through the song". It should be noted that other songs exist, but our effort here is to select some samples that concern different aspect of the people's past. The clash between Christianity and what was perceived as an attempt to dominate and or influence the Igbo culture was expressed through the song on the contact between the church agent and Bartholomew Osuji.

In the tradition of the old Obollo, it is considered not appropriate for people in authority to engage in some acts not befitting enough for their status, especially, stealing, greed and lying by an *Nze* or *Ozo* title holder. Such incidence occurred when a man called *Nze Okwara Azubuiké* went to pick *Udara* fruits with basket. As a result, a song was composed with his name to deter other title holders from engaging in such an act considered degrading. Hence, the song goes thus:

Song:

Nze Okwara Azubuiké jiri
Nkata ga itu udara
O wughi ihe kwesiri onye-Nze
Nze jiri nkata ga itu udara
Gini ka o si ndi o na-agara
ozi mezie?
Nze, I meruola ala,
Ihe anya-ukwu na-ebuta edighi nma,
Nze Okwara Azubuiké,
Ihe anya-ukwu na-eme, adighi nma.

Translation:

Nze Okwara Azubuiké went too search
For *Udara* fruit with a basket
It is not an act befitting of an Nze
Nze that went to search for
Udara with basket,
What would you want the people you are
serving to do?
Nze, you have committed an abomination

Greed is not good
Nze Okwara Azubuike
What greeddoes is not good.

According too Calestus Emeagi (2013), “it is a mark of insult in a community for a respected Nze title holder to be found searching for *udara* fruit. It is worse when he is seen with a basket. It is a mark of greed. That is how our people see it”. In fact, songs like this helps the titled men to maintain their dignity as community leaders. It also helps them to be contented with what they have. Nze Okwara Azubuike was a good example.

There are songs that expose the atrocities that people commit in the community especially, stealing, abortion and incest. For instance, a girl who got pregnant took paracetamol by May and Baker pharmaceutical company anticipating an abortion. However, the pregnancy was not aborted. When she was caught she confessed she had taken M&B to flush the pregnancy but the drug failed her. Hence, when the act was exposed, a song was composed thus:

Song:

Nwanyinma nuru M&B ka ogwo ya oria
Nwa-agboghobia nuru M&B ka owepu afo-ime-okwa
Nwanyinma chere na M&B na ewepu afo ime
O maghi na M&B na-eme ka nwa
Ebu na-afo gbasieike
Mgbe ochere na nwa obu na-afo apuala
O maghi na nwa o bu na-afo noshiri ike ebe ono.
Chukwu kere nwa na ekpuhe ihe ezoro ezo.

Translation:

Nwanyinma took M&B to be healed
Young lady took M&B to abort unwanted pregnancy
Nwanyinma thought that M&B was an abortion pill
She didn't know that M&B strengthens a baby in the womb.
She thought that the baby had been aborted
She never knew the baby was in good shape
God the giver of child exposes hidden things.

This song simply exposes those that engage in premarital sex and sexual immorality in the community. The song acts as a satire to the evil of abortion and serves as a warning to youths that involve in such acts considered inhuman in the land. It extols the moral values of the people and discourages promiscuity.

In a similar manner, there are songs that express intra-group and inter-group relations among the people as well as the kind of peace, unity and love that existed between the people. There are also those that promote truth, hard work, and economic activities. For instance a song titled "Anu na Uche Wu Umu Obollo" extols the virtues of brotherhood between Umuche and Umuanu villages that are seen as brothers in history. Hence, they live happily to the admiration of other communities. They inter-marry and drink palm wine together which most other communities never did in time past. As the people continued in that practice, promoting their love and unity through *EgwuAlijah*, other communities began emulating them. The song as composed by late Godwin Madujiweonweya goes thus:

Song:

Anu na Uche na-alu nne Obollo eee
Anu na Uche na-alu nne Obollo eee
Anu na Uche na-alu nne Obollo
Anu na Uche kuta nmanya ha anuo
Anu na Uche na-alu nne Obollo
Eyee uwa m ooo!

Anu na Uche wu nwa Obollo eee (X3)
Anu na Uche kuta manya ha anuo
Anu na Uche lua nne Obollo
Eyee uwa m ooo!

Translation:

Umuanu and Umuche are the children of Obollo (X3)
Umuanu and Umuche tap their palm wine and drink,
hence they are the descendants of Obollo.
Any one that wants to learn about human relations
let him come and learn from Umuanu and Umuche.

This song is a historic and philosophical one with deep meaning. Its interpretation also varies. In his words, Mbalisi Samuel states that

“The music explains the occupation of our fore-fathers as palm wine tappers. They produced palm without adulterating it with water. On *Orie* market day, all palm wine tappers from other villages carried their wine to a central place. But in Umuche, the people gathered to drink their wine in their village hall as a sign of unity and love. This resulted in the name “*ulo onu manya*”. Our fathers told us that was how the village hall was built and other smaller villages copied from *Anu na Uche*.”

Another interpretation provided by Eleagu Joseph suggests that “the song shows that Umuche is the second in command in order of seniority among the villages. That is why they drink their palm wine and other villages took theirs to a central place.” From the writer perspective as a member of *EgwuAlijah*, the song expresses economic, socio-cultural and political situations prevalent in the relationship between the people in earlier times. It was largely cordial and symbiotic in nature, though occasional skirmishes did exist. Hence, other villages appear to have envied them.

Again song titled, “*I Marala Uri Agba*” as composed by Nwachukwu Ezeala was used to admonish youths to copy good character, hard work and determination as virtues of good life. Through the praise showered on achievers, youths are encouraged to copy from men of honour and integrity. Hence the song is rendered philosophically thus:

Song:

I marala uri agba eee!
I marala uri agba eee!
Onye na amaghi uri agba ee!
Ya lee dee John anya eee!
Dee John amarala uri agba eee!

I marala agwa oma eee!
I marala agwa oma eee!
Onye na enweghi agwa oma eee
Ya lee ndaa Adaku anya eee
Ndaa Adaku bu onye agwa oma eee!

Translation:

Do you know how to dance? (x2)
If you don't know how to dance,
Look at brother John,
Brother John knows how to dance.

Are you of good character (X2)
If you don't have good character,
Look/emulate sister Adaku
Sister Adaku is an example
of good character.

In this song, the *dedeegwu* or continuously mentions all what constitutes the qualities of a good person and gives examples with a person with such qualities in the community. The song encourages good leadership, truth, love and unity.

Dede egwu is the lead singer and the composer of songs. The terms used are creatively employed by the *dedeegwu* to suit the dance. His voice is usually clearly heard and understood by all. The competent *dedeegwu*, therefore, usually have a large repertoire of songs and expressions which he enlarges regularly. This skills, talent and intelligence sustain *EgwuAlijah*.

Importance of Egwu Alijah

EgwuAlijah is used for and serves different purposes in the communities as a historical and cultural institution. In his words, Mbalisi, Samuel informed that "*EgwuAlijah* since inception is a multi-faceted institution. It helps in ensuring unity as friends and enemies dance and rejoice together. It reduces enmity because the people come together and dance together. Through *Alijah* relationships among individuals and families improve. It educates, entertains, and serves as a watch dog on the behaviour and character of the people. It is also a source of income

for the youths and the community when they are hired to play in cultural festivals, burials and other ceremonies within and outside the town.”

Apart from being an heirloom, the *EgwuAlijah* provides entertainment. A great deal of the cultural festivals such as *Ekweji*- new yam festival, burials, naming ceremony and marriages etc, were/are serviced by *Alijah*. During these ceremonies, the soloist or *dedeegwu* as he is called composes a song with the events. He demonstrates his proficiency, firm knowledge and mastery of his cultural and traditional homestead. His singing ability is such that he could compose songs on very short notices and during events, performs effectively without the aid of amplification. Hence, as key performer in *Alijah*, his ideas and views are so important to the audience because his words reflect important events of some historical sort. Despite the influence of Christianity and Western systems, *EgwuAlijah* has remained resilient and continued to exist strongly. The reason for this is partly that *Alijah* does not involve rituals and sacrifices of any sort. Besides, it has no restriction for any class in the society. As heirloom, it extols the virtues of the society. Both Christians and traditionalists participate in it. As Felix Osuji, Mbalisi Samuel, and Joseph Eleagu aver, “*EgwuAlijah* has survived because of its resilience in continuity and change as it promotes the good and rich cultural heritage of our people and condemns evil deeds. It does not involve ritual sacrifices. *Alijah* is a way we remember our past and entertain ourselves.” *EgwuAlijah* has continued to exist both in the area and in the Diaspora.

Conclusion

The paper demonstrates that the depth of a people’s culture is better understood through the various channels they had evolved in time to pass it onto their younger generations. Oral tradition as a valid source of history, especially, African history, has contributed in presenting African past in its right perspectives. Its contributions to the reconstruction of aspects of the histories of micro-communities would not be overemphasized. Hence, oral tradition has been employed here to explain *EgwuAlijah* as heirloom. *EgwuAlijah* is one of the ways through which the Obollo and Amaukwu-Obollo communities entertained and presented notable historical events. The didactic benefits inherent in the songs make it very central to the development and sustenance of Obollo/Amaukwu culture, life style, values and norms of the people. In

the face of global changes arising from so many factors including technological advancements and modernization, efforts should be made to safe-guard such cultural practices and other institutions that emphasizes the cultural essence of the people, the Igbo and Africa at large. Through such institutions like *EgwuAlijah*, the cultural life and history of micro-communities in Igbo societies are preserved and reconstructed.

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**THE CULTURAL LOGIC OF RACE, COMMUNITY,
AUDIENCE AND IRONY IN HARRYETTE
MULLEN'S MUSE & DRUDGE**

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Abstract

Mullen mixes black vernacular and standard English being fluent in multiple vernaculars and cultural traditions to broaden and diversify people's understanding of black culture, including black speech so that it is not conceived of in monolithic or essentialized terms. As she says to Calvin Redient "we are all mongrels" ("Solo Mysterioso" 652). Muse & Drudge actually explores the "ideologically contested space of ...difference" between black and white English and black and white cultural discourses. She seeks to expand her readers' linguistic experience and highlight the social and historical implications of what they have experienced – in a sense serving as their educators – in order to produce an emancipated, multi-culturally literate audience. There is need to consider carefully the effects on the audience of Mullen's particular ways of deploying two languages – one culturally dominant, the other repressed, though powerfully influential on American culture. I am particularly interested in the function of irony, or ironic relations between fragments of racially inflected discourses, in shaping the audience that responds to them.

Introduction

Harryette Mullen is a young African - American female poet. The fact that she wants to build a new readership for her book *Muse & Drudge* is clear from her brief essay "Poetry and Identity". There, she reconsiders the reception of her first three books and ponders on the marginality she experiences as a "formally innovative black poet". Mullen reports that her first collection of poetry, *Tree Tall Woman* (1981), allows her to be placed "rather neatly within the category of representative blackness as well as the categories of 'feminist' and 'regional' poet". Her second and third books, *Trimmings* (1991) and *S**

*PeRM**K*T* (1992), have been “more frequently described, as ‘formally innovative poetry’ rather than as ‘black poetry’” and often attracts to her readings entirely non-black audiences. Following the same logic, editors assembling African - American anthologies have been interested only in the work in *Tree Tall Woman* “or similarly ‘speakerly poems’” (86). From Mullen’s perspective, the widespread assumption that black and formally innovative are mutually exclusive literary categories “drains the category ‘black’ or African American’ of its complex internal diversity, by removing from the category anything so eccentric or innovative that it seems unaccountable to a ‘traditional’ or ‘canonical’ notion of what properly belongs to a black or African – American heritage (87). With her fourth volume, *Muse & Drudge* (1995), she deliberately sets out not only to bridge a perceived “gap” between her work as a “black” poet and her work as a “formally innovative” one, but also, drawing from two formerly distinct audiences, to generate a more inclusive audience with less divisive and limiting assumptions. This is because she saw signs of success when selections from this volume were chosen to appear in publications devoted to African – American writing in mainstream publications seeking diversity, and in journals “devoted to, a racially unspecified ‘avant-garde’ (“Poetry and Identity”).

Textual Analysis

The opening words of *Muse & Drudge*, “sapphire’s lyre” signal Mullen’s “bilingual” mixing of Anglo –European cultural traditions with African-American ones. This is evident because sapphire is typically an African-American female name, and actually in African-American parlance, Sapphire is in fact, a derogatory designation for a black woman who is loud, disagreeable, and emasculating. (Smitherman, 251). The colour it designates is blue and brings to mind the blues, while the lyre represents the classical tradition of western lyric.

In an interview with Calvin Bedient, Mullen revealed that the phrase alludes specifically to a particular book of ancient Greek poems translated into modern poetic idiom by Diane Rayor, titled *Sappho’s Lyre*. That collection’s prefatory material by Rayor and by W.R. Johnson provides information worth pondering in relation to Mullen’s project and her audience. According to Johnson, the archaic poetry collected in Rayor’s volume differs from other lyric poetry in two ways the first having to do with the poem’s function in relation to their initial audience

and the second, the processes by which the poems entered (or failed to enter) the European lyric canon. Johnson emphasizes the extent to which the poems initially were reminders of a group's cultural repertoire and a clarion call that reaffirmed the individual listener's identity as part of a group. If you were a member of that audience,

sharing the cultural codes, learning to imagine them better in these beautiful versions of them, possessing them ever more profoundly and thoroughly as you learn more of them in the company of these people ...means that you are one of them. It is at the symposium ... that you reaffirm and deepen your sense of being part of this city, or, more exactly, part of this group, this clan, or this fellowship that claims to be the city's center, to be at the core of its legitimacy, vitality, and prosperity (xi)

In her introduction, Rayor adds that sappho, who wrote for her local community, using her local Aeolic dialect, probably sang most of her poems "in small gatherings among a group of women friends". As a creator largely of monodic rather than choral lyric, Sappho produced lyric that "stresses the unity of a group with common interests as separate from other groups in the same city". (Rayor, 6). Mullen's invocation of sappho's lyre may be intended to redirect the expectations of today's readers, who tend to think of lyric as a private genre dealing largely with private emotion.

Most certainly, due to the history of cultural and linguistic repression associated with slavery, many African elements in African-American culture survive in highly coded, fragmentary, and hybridized forms. In addition to that, because of continued patterns of racism and racial oppression, African American elements in contemporary American culture are often unrecognized as well.

Muse & Drudge is replete with allusions and symbols from the works of Sappho or Zora Neale Hurston and from oral traditions of 'jump-rope rhymes', blues, rock songs and the like.

The first few stanzas go thus:

sapphire's lyre styles
plucked eyebrows
bow lips and legs
whose lives are lonely too

my last nerve's lucid music
sure chewed up the juicy fruit
you must don't like my peaches
there's some left on the tree

you've had my thrills
a reefer a tub of gin
don't mess with me I' m evil
I' m in your sin
(*Muse & Drudge, I*)

In these lines, Mullen appears to be using this technique to re-create a situation of fragmentary transmission and preservation. She is imitating the kind of textual situation in which bits of Sappho's works survives. At the same time, Mullen is also re-enacting the ways in which African and African - American cultural materials have been transmitted and preserved; as she notes in a scholarly essay:

African cultural systems were not utterly destroyed by slavery, but rather survived in fragmentary, dispersed, and marginalized forms that continue to exist alongside dominant cultural traditions that also significantly influence African-American cultural production. (1996).

The eroticized and sexual character of many of the allusions in *Muse & Drudge* links the poem to both Greek and African-American precedents. The sexually suggestive material establishes continuity with the nearly obliterated gynocentric lesbian lyric tradition of Sappho while it also follows cultural traditions of black Americans, who as a group have been subject to grotesque sexual mythologizing and, particularly during slavery, pervasive sexual abuse. However, they have managed, even in adverse circumstances to celebrate their own sexuality as a way of celebrating themselves.

In the opening quatrains, we see how Mullen constructs her multi-cultural mosaic of allusions and how her techniques shape the audience she desires. The lines - "Sapphire's lyre styles/ plucked eyebrows/bow lips and legs" link the black woman's art with her body, suggesting simultaneously that bodily adornment, which is performed partly to enhance sexual attractiveness, is a form of art and also that a

woman's body is her musical or expressive instrument. Through puns, Mullen suggests that rather than bowing or plucking strings, the black woman performs comparable actions on her eyebrows and lips. The three quatrains that follow appear to offer samples of black women's blues, all of them involved with sexuality. Taken individually, in couplets or quatrains, these snippets of song hit a range of tones - regretful, teasing, hurtful, angry, disgusted, mournful - as they speak for black women's powers and speak to the negative stereotypes and the commercialized norms that restrict them.

The poem is full of irony. The ironies tend to carry the poem's more sobering messages about oppressive racial history and oppressive gender norms. The "clipped bird eclipses moon" whose remembrance is fading and who remains invisible, then, is not just the mourned lost lover but also the black singer whose cultural contribution has been reduced or obscured. The reader who recognizes the allusions both to black folk art traditions and to white performers' commercial recordings is likely to recognize the irony of this situation. The rhyme of "gin" and "sin" is probably an echoing tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks Black Arts era poem "We Real Cool" and to her deployment of black vernacular, but also a sad reminder of the continued short life expectancy of the contemporary African-American youth- ("we die soon"). "I'm in your sin" indicates that blacks seen as evil-doers are as much sinned against than sinning. The point here is that their errors are generated by a controlling system that envelops them. Gender-based ironies emerge in the invocation, of a misogynist double standard as old as the Bible. Consequently, men are entitled to pick a woman's peaches, but a woman is seen as evil within the Christian circles if she is sexually available. The eroticized figures plucking fruit from trees also recall the book of Genesis and the evil accorded to Eve for giving in to her desire for forbidden fruit, appearing here as juicy fruit chewing gum.

The French critic, H el ene Cixous (1975), arguing about female characters created by male authors of the past, finds that there are innate psychic as well as biological differences between the sexes and that these differences are of primary importance in the formation of two separate bodies of literature. These innate feminine characteristics are of course said to diverge from traditional, definitions of femininity. Cixous' essay begins by decrying the standard associations of passivity and corporeality with the feminine activity and abstraction with the masculine. Cixous

writes of an ideally bisexual woman who would erase traditional boundaries between masculine and feminine, but then goes on to grant her a kind of writing that scarcely differs from the old notions of women's capacities. Elaine Showalter (1977) concludes her otherwise extraordinarily effective *A Literature of Their Own* with an exhortation to women writers to concentrate unflinchingly on "female experience", by which she means primarily the experience of the body.

Few critics have acknowledged the special situation of women poets or have widened their theories to include a less accessible literature. It may also be because there are fewer women poets than women novelists that criticism about women authors tends to ignore the poets. Rosalind Miles (1974), for example, says bluntly, "when we say, 'women authors'we mean women novelists", casually explaining the scarcity of women poets as an accident of history. Margaret Homans in *Women Writers and Poetic Identity* (1980), asserts that:

THE LITERARY IMAGES (emphasis hers), available

to women all demonstrate to women their unfitness for poetry. Equally responsible for negative models of feminine poethood is the patriarchal tradition of Christianity, which, unlike as it is to Wordsworthian paganistic reverence for Mother Nature, fosters an analogous view of femininity. The Judaeo-Christian tradition is notoriously misogynistic. The Church Fathers and later interpreters did a great deal to augment the identification of woman with sin, thereby justifying her religious and secular oppression, but there is ample evidence of misogyny in both old and new testamentsThe creation story, both in Genesis and in Milton's retelling, makes physical creation the power of a masculine deity, depriving the feminine figure of her one remaining prerogative.

However, Mullen paints a generic picture in these lines:

womanish girl meets mannish boy
whose best buddy's a doggish puppy
he dictate so dicty, she sedate so seditty
the girl get biggity when the boy go uppity (63)

Derrida's term "phallogocentrism" is useful here. Derrida is concerned to distinguish Logos as voice as opposed to writing, but the term is applicable even if we take logos in the more general sense of language. The speaker is at the center, just as Freud believed that the possessor of the male genital was at the center, and the female, a deformity or variant, an eccentric male. Writing should be just as susceptible to assimilation with phallogocentrism as voice, because of the connections Derrida demonstrates elsewhere between the pen and the phallus. The written word distances its referent while making it present, veiling while unveiling. For Nietzsche (1973), the woman's "castration" causes her to stand for lack or absence, so that the woman is the absent and literal truth. Derrida (1975) points out in a reading of Lacan:

Phallogocentrism is one thing. And what is called man and what is called woman might be subjected to it ... Androcentrism ought therefore to be something else. Yet what is going on? The entire phallogocentrism is articulated from the starting-point of a determinate situation ... in which the phallus is the mother's desire inasmuch as she does not have it ... The sequel is familiar: phallogocentrism is androcentrism with the whole paradoxical logic and the reversals which it engenders: for example that "in the phallogocentric dialectic, she (the woman) represents the absolute Other (*Graphesis*: 1975).

Homans is of the opinion that deconstruction ought to help displace phallogocentrism, though the discrepancy between signifier and signified has long been recognized. However, women writers like Harryette Mullen, dislocated from the phallogocentric community, must have understood the subversive implications of this discrepancy with greater intensity. Dislocation from the phallogocentric community causes Mullen great difficulty in creating a central sense of self in poetry. The desire to be at center generates hierarchical thinking, but even the potentially neutral concept of opposition also turns into hierarchy, because it is impossible ever to be entirely disinterested and one element must be primary and the other secondary. This is true for both sexual and linguistic oppositions. In his discussion of Nietzsche's views on women, Derrida first shows that Nietzsche's "eternal war between the sexes" is "based on what might be called a process of appropriation;" and then adds that "appropriation" is all the more powerful since it is its process that

organized both the totality of language's process and symbolic exchange in general. (*Spurs*: 1976).

Deconstruction has also been subjected to many interpretations and, misinterpretations. Howard Felperin (1986), opines that:

the strongest reaction by far to deconstruction, no less allergic but much more alarmist than that of the Marxists, has come from the upper reaches of the literary critical establishment across the English-speaking world. This is not really surprising, since it has the most to lose. For such figures as Ren  Wellek, M. H. Abrams, and E. D. Hirsch - to confine ourselves for the moment to America - deconstruction poses a fundamental threat to the institutional and pedagogical practices of a long dominant critical and historical humanism going back to Renaissance.

Before analyzing the poem further, there should be a general consideration of how irony functions in poetry such as this. Irony demands an active reader who, having recognized the need to reject the literal meaning or straight forward suggestions of a text, tries out alternatives that seem to harmonize with the author's unspoken beliefs or at least the stance implied by the text. In his classic study, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974), Wayne Booth observes that the predominant emotion experienced by a reader of stable ironies is often "that of joining, of finding and communing with kindred spirits". He goes on to assert:

The author I infer behind the false words is my kind of man, because he enjoys playing with irony, because he assumes my capacity for dealing with it, and - most important - because he grants me a kind of wisdom; he assumes that he does not have to spell out the shared and secret truths on which my reconstruction is to be built ... (E)very irony inevitably builds a community of believers as it excludes (28).

Booth, who is not in sympathy with postmodern writing might not find the same community-building force in the less stable ironies typically found in formally innovative poetries, but I contend it operates there as well. The process of deciphering any irony prompts a sense of solidarity with the active critical intelligence of the writer, and with other readers, themselves- necessarily complexly active minds, responsive to that same critical intelligence. In some sense, any ironic text presents

insider codes, only with unstable ironies is one's feeling of being in the know tentative and temporary. The community generated is potentially very broad; it is also neither stable nor fixed. Consequently, the common complaint that ironic texts are elitist or obscure has little ground. Similarly, the complaint offered by Frederic Jameson, among others, that the unstable irony associated with postmodern texts is politically and ethically vacuous, may also lack substance. Rae Armantrout, an innovative white poet who has written about "Irony and Postmodern Poetry," notes that "irony marks the consciousness of dissonance and to the extent that can foreground social dissonances, it can serve a political end by increasing people's discomfort". She uses a passage from a poem by Charles Bernstein to demonstrate how irony, in its "understatement and double dealing" may mimic the effects of psychological denial and ideological repression, it can enable writers to represent the way our speech can turn against us, causing us to incorporate oppressive ideologies. Armantrout argues further that the ironic post modern poem can "stage a return of the repressed, representing both the mechanism of repression and the nature of repressed desire. When we show the speaker/thinker in error, we may open up possibilities for action. We are that thinker; irony is the stubborn mark of the divided psyche.

The thesis I posit here in effect, is that irony, even the multivalent and often unstable ironies of a linguistically innovative text like *Muse & Drudge*, may function as a call to community; that community, drawn from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, may be a politically energized and politically coherent one. The ironies in *Muse & Drudge* highlight racism embedded in familiar speech, emphasize stereotyping and reductive thinking about race and gender. They also signal historical betrayals particularly of African-Americans in which Americans of multiple ethnic backgrounds have been complicit. The reader's experience of recognizing that stereotyping, those betrayals and, and that complicity which Armantrout labels "dissonance" is discomforting.

As it turns out, some of the ironies in Mullen's text are in fact quite stable. As Booth notes, "puns of all kinds are close to stable irony in intending a reconstruction". Mullen's text appears to follow a tradition particularly strong in African-American literature, either oral or written of using relatively stable irony to call attention to historical injustice. Mullen's poetry however presents some historical material unironically, for instance when asserting cultural continuities with Afro-Caribbean or

African cultural and spiritual histories as in “scratch a goofered grapevine telegraph/drums the wires they hum” (9) or in Dahomey the royal umbrella/roof sky tree dome/heads up the procession of saints/balling the Jack back home”.

Mullen may well have gleaned the effectiveness of such use of irony from poetry of the Harlem Renaissance. Works like Sterling Brown’s “Strong Men,” for example, use linguistic irony to point to the situational irony of white slave owners teaching black slaves the Christian religion they themselves disgraced, as well as the irony of black survival, cleverly achieved through the mask of stupidity. Langston Hughes’s poems often dramatize the irony of a colour struck African-American society where the valued light skin in fact derives from the slave masters’ rape of dark skinned women or from white economic oppression forcing black women into prostitution. Hughes uses irony to present the illogical situation of disempowered, oppressed people, being blamed for the poverty or illiteracy forced upon them as well as the irony of black cultural achievements being attributed to the white performers who appropriate them. He consistently plays with the fundamental irony of the blues itself, wherein “To keep from crying/ I opens ma mouth an’ laughs” (“Homesick Blues”). All these ironies recur in *Muse & Drudge*, so that Mullen pays tribute to and joins a community of her literary predecessors even as she comments on social history.

Conclusion

One rhetorical consequence of presenting historical injustice through the indirect form of irony is that the readers, in this case particularly the white reader, is not made to dwell on guilt for what her society or her ancestors have done, or to feel resentment at being lectured and scolded. Rather, she feels the pleasure of respectful inclusion- the invitation to join a clear-sighted community of those with the spirit to face uncomfortable realities. This strategy is crucial to Mullen’s sustaining a multiracial audience for *Muse & Drudge*.

Irony used as a means of sustaining a historically informed social critique generates among readers a political solidarity born of shared experience- an example is the phrase “stark strangled banjo” (18). Its ironic punning allusion to the “Star Spangled Banner” signals the betrayal in the treatment of African-Americans of admirable values that supposedly define the nation, while the reference to banjo points

especially to the devaluing and silencing of African-American artists. These are hardly new revelations, but the striking phrase gives them renewed impact. Given that the primary instruments of *Muse & Drudge* is the African-American woman, the word 'stark' may resonate in gender-specific terms with the book's epigraph from Callimachus that urges the poet to keep his or her muse slender. Mullen certainly follows that advice in the extreme compression of this text with its densely overlaid allusions.

Mullen however carries on throughout the text a critique of white standards of feminine beauty that emphasize thinness—a reduction of the female body which suggests a constraint on female expression both sexual and literary. Her presentations of women's experience—their labour (drudgery), the abuses they suffer, the pleasure they take in haberdashery and hair dos—may seem particularly fresh, but again, novelty of insight is not part of his goal:

you can sing their songs
with words your way
put it over to the people
know what you doing (17)

The formally innovative character of *Muse & Drudge*, where a web of varied and sometimes conflicting allusions is further complicated by "missing referents murking it up/with clear actors lacking" insures a kind of humility in its readers. None will dare imagine that she or he has detected all the allusions, all the jokes and ironies. Even if black traditions predominate, these are themselves multiple, and no reader is overtly and thoroughly privileged above others. The process of interpreting this text is a highly individual one and Mullen enjoins you to "carve out your niche/reconfigure the hybrid". Yet that reconfiguration joins us to a community of readers who have been taught by the text to relinquish limiting preconceptions about black writing and black identity, a community who emerge from the "ludic routines" of this text bounded by a politicized appreciation of the rich syncretism of African-American culture.

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AMERICA-TRAINED NIGERIANS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES

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Abstract

From the 1920s, Nigerians began to go on study sojourns to the United States of America, and became the largest group of African students in that country since the 1940s. It is instructive that this was the era of European colonial imperialism in Africa, and so the Nigerian students left African shores quite aware of the colonial injustices and racial prejudices precipitated by the growing nationalist ferment at home. The dramatis personae in this endeavour included such personages as Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Mazi Mbonu Ojike, Dr. K. O. Mbadiwe, Dr. Nwafor Orizu and Prof. Eyo Ita, among others. Worthy to note is that this era also coincided with the period when the misconception of Africa as a Dark Continent that has contributed nothing to human civilization, gained currency. Under this debilitating climate of opinion, the Nigerian Students, during the course of their studies, took time out to write and give lectures on the rich African history and culture, to prove to the world that Africa truly constituted a historical part of the world. With particular reference to two: Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Mazi Mbonu Ojike, this study demonstrates that these unaccredited ambassadors and spokesmen of Africa contributed immensely to the development of African Studies while in the Diaspora.

The Backdrop

Euro-American racism, against continental Africans and peoples of African descent throughout the world, has a long history. Beginning from the trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery, which occurred between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, and which became a major factor

in the continued African economic underdevelopment as it led to the largest involuntary migrations of African peoples, the African, whether in the Diaspora or in the homeland, has always been conceived as savage, evil, barbaric, sensual and very close to the ape. This was inspite of the fact that proceeds from the labour of African slaves in the European plantations and mines of the New World, triggered and sustained the industrialization of Europe. It is disheartening to note that even to the present, the world nay Africa is yet to recover from this stereotype of black inferiority. Thus, among the prominent of the dubious justifications for the enslavement of African peoples in the Americas was the myth of black racial and cultural inferiority (Ajaebili, 2013).

This assumption was strengthened by the theory of polygenesis of the human race whose advocates maintain that Africans are sons and descendants of the accursed Biblical Ham, and are therefore destined to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water." The eighteenth century British philosopher, David Hume summarized the black situation when he opined that "Blacks were naturally inferior to Whites; no civilized nations had ever emerged among them; no individual eminent either in action or speculation; no ingenious manufacturers; no arts, no sciences" (Uya, 1987: 2). The result was the rationalization of slavery as a natural condition for the Africans as there was general unanimity in the perception that Africa, their homeland, was the Dark Continent and therefore, the backwater of world history.

Even as it is the second largest continent in the world, with a land mass of 11.7 million square miles, as well as the antiquity of its civilizations dating back to ancient Egypt, Africa and its peoples and cultures became victims of monumental historical distortions throughout the Western world. The Philosopher George Hegel had bluntly declared that "Africa is no historical part of the world. It has no movement or development to exhibit". Jean Jacques Rousseau, expressing admiration for the toughness of the Negro concluded that "they can go naked without experiencing pain; can sharpen their appetite with pimento, and can drink European liquor like water". As early as the 17th century in the United States, slavery was adjudged a blessing to the African because through it he came into contact with Christianity. Slavery was therefore accepted and defended by its proponents as the most appropriate school for the "benighted, culturally backward and spiritually bankrupt

Africans". After a visit to Africa, an American naval officer, Andrew H. Foote, told the American people that:

Cruelty and oppression were everywhere. It is not easy for us to conceive how a living man can be moulded to the unhesitating submission in which a Negro subject lives.... There was no scruple at cruelty when it was convenient.... They can worship nothing good, because they have no expectation of good from anything powerful (Uya, 1987: 2).

Others who contributed in perpetuating this climate of opinion about Africa as having no history included Hugh Trevor-Roper and A. P. Newton. This was the prevailing wisdom up to the first half of the 20th century.

By the close of that century the situation had changed as Africa nay Nigeria produced several historians of international repute who worked either in Nigeria or in the Diaspora to decolonize African history and portray the continent in its true light. This bunch of Nigerian historians included K. O. Dike, S. O. Biobaku, J. F. Ade Ajayi, E. A. Ayandele, A. E. Afigbo, Toyin Falola, E. J. Alagoa and O. E. Uya. With effective use of oral tradition as an authentic source for historical information, this galaxy of African scholars presented African history as a legitimate subject of scholarly enquiry. The development was made possible by the establishment of universities by the newly independent African states (Njoku, 2012). But prior to this period, because of the absence of that level of education some Nigerians had gone to the United States of America on study sojourns and were faced with the same climate of African primitivism. Among these were Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Mazi Mbonu Ojike, Dr. K. O. Mbadiwe and Dr. Nwafor Orizu. During the course of their studies, they took it upon themselves to debunk most of the Euro-American fallacies about Africa through their writings and lecture tours, and thereby promoting African Studies while in the Diaspora. The problem of space will confine us to the discussion of only two of these Africanists that is, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Mbonu Ojike.

Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and African Studies

Upon his arrival in the United States in 1925, Azikiwe enrolled at the Storer College, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. He then called at the house of the President of the College; but he was shocked to meet a middle-aged man who identified himself as the President, vigorously working with a rake in the garden and covered with sweat like a hired labourer. The episode had a lasting impression on Azikiwe because "in Africa I and my colleagues thought it *infra dignitatem* even to wash the plates used for eating. It was the job of stewards" (Ebo, 1989:33). Azikiwe therefore resolved to do any manner of work no matter how menial, to support himself through college.

After completing the preparatory studies in the secondary department, he entered the Junior College department as a freshman and took such courses as Astronomy, Geology, Trigonometry, Latin Language and Literature, Philosophy (Ethics) and Sociology. He left Storer College in 1927 to complete his education at Howard University. Because he was financially incapacitated, he had to work at odd jobs to make ends meet. But while still at Storer College in 1927, Zik received a letter from Malcom I. Nurse who later became known as George Padmore, then a student at Fisk University. In the said letter, Nurse solicited Zik's cooperation "in a movement that I am hoping to work out along with Mr. Davis, a student from Monrovia, Liberia". According to the letter, Mr. Nurse and Mr. Davies were planning to found a political organization among foreign black students in American Colleges and Universities. "The primary object will be to foster racial consciousness and a spirit of nationalism aiming at the protection of the sovereignty of Liberia" (Azikiwe I, 1970: 138); Liberia was one of the only two sovereign black states in Africa at the time. Azikiwe's answer at this material time was to reveal his incipient stance on the order of priority to be accorded development at the mental and political levels, i.e., which approach will be beneficial and of lasting results for Africa: the revolution of the mind or political revolution against imperialism.

Azikiwe agreed that the time had arrived to intensify the propaganda of African nationalism aimed at crystallizing racial consciousness, yet he was of the opinion that mental emancipation should be the primary task. Though he was attracted to and believed in the ideas of Sun Yat-Sen, and has read about the victories of Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek in his attempts to unify China; nevertheless, he felt

“that an intellectual revolution was more potent as a foundation for the superstructure that must inevitably be built” (Azikiwe 1, 139). But he was bereft of systematic philosophy as a credible guide in the crystallization of the mental emancipation project for Africans.

Thus, when he entered Howard University in 1928, he majored in Political Science but took courses in Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology and Education, “calculated to improve his skill in constructive and systematic thinking”. According to him, such a broad spectrum of courses should not be misconstrued to mean that “Howard University crammed my head full with a lot of digestible and indigestible stuff. It simply means that I was exposed to those academic disciplines which challenged my mental faculties and facilitated the process of self-expression and thus developed my personality”.

Still for financial reasons, Azikiwe transferred from Howard to Lincoln University in 1929 and the following year he graduated with B.A. During the following Summer Session, he enrolled at Columbia University to study journalism for which he registered three courses: International Law, Labour Problems and Principles of Journalism. On his return to Lincoln at the end of the Summer Session, Azikiwe was appointed a Graduate Assistant in the Departments of Political Science and Sociology. He also enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania for post-graduate studies leading to M.Sc. with Anthropology as his major and Political Science as minor. Simultaneously, he enrolled for another Post-graduate work at Lincoln University for the M.A. degree with Religion as Major and Philosophy as Minor subject. In June 1932, Lincoln University awarded him the M. A. degree, and the following year, the University of Pennsylvania conferred upon him the M.Sc. degree. After securing these academic laurels, Lincoln confirmed his appointment from part-time to a full-time Instructor, and he taught courses in his faculty. He also stood in for professors who were on sabbatical leave especially in the Department of History where he introduced African History as a Course, and which “almost caused an uproar at Lincoln University, because some of the professors felt that the African had no history worthy of academic attention” (Azikiwe 1, 157).

Thus, Africa’s image in America constituted a challenge to African students in general and Nigerian students in particular. This was so because most Americans saw Africa, as Era Bell Thompson observed:

a mysterious land full of dense jungle growths and wild animals, of ignorance and danger, a land where white men bartered bright cloth and cheap beads for priceless ivory, gold and diamond; where missionaries fought with doctors to bring the light of Christianity to heathens; and where bush politicians promised their naked constituents a live Englishman in every iron pot (Thompson, 1954: 16).

They held Africa as being inhabited by “jet black savages with thick lips, kinky hair, and teeth like the tusk of the elephants that roamed their muggy swamps.” African students therefore took it upon themselves to ensure a permanent erasure of this climate of ignorance, for they knew the Africa they came from did not fit the above description. Such descriptions were no more than malicious fabrications. However, beneath this conception of African primitivism lay a burning desire among Americans to learn more about the continent. Indeed, most African students found themselves in demand to give lectures on African history and culture within and outside their university campuses. Although enlightening Americans on Africa became a pass-time of most African students, the Nigerian students as mentioned above, distinguished themselves in this pursuit (Edunam 1, 1985: 135-138).

In the desperate bid to permanently expunge the notion that Africa did not constitute a historical part of the world, Azikiwe had in July 1929 published an article titled “Nigerian Political Institutions” which he contributed to the *Journal of Negro History*, in which he gave a geographical sketch of Nigeria and traced the history of Nigeria’s three major ethnic groups – the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa. This was one of his earliest excursions into academic disquisition. The article was followed by another, “Fragments of Onitsha History” published in 1930 in the same Journal. In the “Fragments of Onitsha History”, emphasis was laid on the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural origins and composition of Onitsha people. This he did through the instrumentality of oral information and it is pertinent to note that this was a time when oral tradition was hardly valued as a valid source of history. Other articles which Azikiwe published to enlighten the Americans were “Murdering Women in Nigeria”, *Crisis* (May, 1930); “Ethics of Colonial Imperialism”, *Journal of Negro History* (July 1931); “The Negro in Greek Mythology”, *Crisis*

(March 1934); and “How shall we Educate the African”, *Journal of African Society*, (1934).

Moreover, the year 1925, when Azikiwe arrived America, was the heat of Harlem-based literary search for African-American self-identity called Harlem Renaissance or the New Negro Movement. The Movement was aimed at creating a new assertive image for the African-American which had its foundation in a glorious Africa. The result was that it created Africa-consciousness among African-Americans, and called for more authentic information about the African continent for the edification of Americans. It is probable that this was the root of Azikiwe’s research interest in ancient Africa. It could also explain why he closely associated with such scholars as William Leo Hansberry and Allain Locke who manifested abiding interest in Africa (Edunam 1, 138). According to Professor Brinkley, “Harlem Renaissance” was a flourishing African-American culture created in New York City by a new generation of black intellectuals who “drew heavily from their African roots in an effort to prove the richness of their own racial heritage and to provide a basis for a cultural and political challenge to racial injustice” (Brinkley, 1993: 670). Other black writers in Harlem like James W. Johnson, Counten Cullen, Zora N. Hurston, Claude Mckay as well as black artists and musicians contributed in establishing a thriving “culture rooted in the historical legacy of their race”.

During his stay at Lincoln University, Azikiwe was known to have visited African-American families in the immediate vicinity to lecture them on the African homeland they knew so little about. Not infrequently, he visited Black Churches for the same aim of disseminating information about Africa.

Frank Akintunde Brown, a Yoruba man who at this time was doing graduate studies at the University of Chicago, had tremendous influence on Azikiwe. In a reply to Azikiwe’s letter, Akintunde informed him that he had long ago cast off his foreign name when he became “converted”, and that their African parents made a great mistake when they adopted European names. According to him, his family name ‘Dipeolu’ was rich in traditions and that the name ‘Brown’ would soon be discarded. He was of the opinion that as future leaders of African people, it was proper “to inject into them this sense of pride and appreciation of our rich cultural heritage”(Azikiwe 1, 140-141). This sentiment of race pride made a profound impression on Azikiwe who

there and then decided to discard his foreign name, Benjamin, which incident occurred in 1929. Thus, Azikiwe received his baptism of Cultural Nationalism from his friend and contemporary, Akintunde Dipeolu.

In his student days, Azikiwe would appear to be the keenest for the Black Press. He was a campus reporter for two papers – the *Baltimore Afro-American*, and the *Philadelphia Tribune*. His critical reports on the inter-racial squabbles at Lincoln contributed to his abrupt departure from the United States. The University authorities took a pique against him, and therefore did not recommend a renewal of his student visa, thereby terminating his stay in the United States in 1934 (Edunam 2, 1984).

Azikiwe constructed the ideology of New Africa as a revolutionary philosophy. But there were concepts or schools of New Africa which preceded his own formulation. The 1920s and early 1930s saw the emergence of the New Negro Movement in the United States, which subsequently took the shape of a new Africa movement in the African continent. This was the natural outcome of a fermentation of ideas among scholars, intellectuals, writers, artists and politicians who demanded fair play and improved living conditions for the underprivileged people of African descent in all parts of the world. Azikiwe's concept of New Africa had great links with the views and activities of Marcus Garvey and Dr. J.E.K. Aggrey because all were mostly concerned with the conditions of Africans and Africa.

Marcus Garvey published his "Philosophy and Opinions" and so "struck the first blow for a new Africa that would be politically-minded" (Azikiwe 1, 1970). The Universal Negro Improvement Association which he founded became an organizational weapon with which to unite "all Negro people of the world into one great body and to establish a country and government absolutely their own" (Coleman, 1958: 189). Garvey's intention was to bring together into one nationalist ideology all the currents of cultural, economic, and political nationalism which had been manifesting for several decades in black circles in America since his basic argument was that there existed "no other salvation for the Negro but through a free and independent Africa" (Ebo, 42).

James E. K. Aggrey on his part "confined his ideas to the need for a social rebirth and a new spiritual outlook among and towards the

Africans.” The major element of Aggreyism is a profound love for and attachment to indigenous African life and values since the ideal society it aimed to realize “was to be essentially African”. Aggrey constantly stressed the need to assimilate the good and desirable in Western culture, but “let Africans remain good Africans and not become poor imitation of Europeans.” Aggrey expressed displeasure at those Africans “Who having made a position for themselves, refuse to identify themselves with and help their fellows.” Aggrey’s two priceless assets are “faith in God and faith in his people”, for “though untutored, [Africans] could be redeemed and join the angelic train.” As a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission on African Education in 1920 and 1924, Aggrey saw the stirrings of a new world coming in Africa, and these he called “a New Africa.”

Azikiwe’s version of New Africa dubbed “Zikism” (Orizu 1, 1944: 297) inherited a rich legacy from the concepts and principles of Aggreyism. Zikism represented a direct evolution from the ideas Aggrey had propagated. And so a basic bond united the two tendencies in the New Africa ideology. According to Nwafor Orizu this linkage derived from the fact that the ideas of both men were directed at reshaping the mental kingdom in Africa. Aggreyism predated Zikism and served as a forerunner of Zikist ideology: “Zikism did not drop from the sky upon the naked earth as did the *dues ex machina* onto the Greek stage. Rather it is an offspring of previous ideas and ideals” (Orizu 1, 288).

The gospel of New Africa or Zikism is set forth in Azikiwe’s book, *Renascent Africa*, published in 1937 while he was still in the Gold Coast (Ghana). According to him the concept of New Africa “is used in a psychosocial sense. It is the renaissance of Africans and the reformation of African Society.” He also explained some of the terms which appeared in the book thus:

Old Africa refers to the Africa of yesterday
Renascent Africa refers to the Africa of
today. New Africa refers to the Africa of
tomorrow. African refers to any indigenous
black person.
(Azikiwe 2, 1937: 7-8).

He further maintained that the Renascent African is in a transitional stage between the old and the New Africans, adding that the New Africa

is never physical in conception. It is absolutely a mental state where the mind is “brought into harmony with matter. And when such co-operation exist the old order (where matter is master of the mind) will have passed away. It is therefore a psychological conception which is deeply rooted in a material environment” (Azikiwe 2, 17).

Even in America, Azikiwe’s thesis was on Liberia entitled “Liberian Diplomacy, 1837 – 1923”. His work, *Liberia in World Politics*, published in 1938 was an outgrowth of this thesis, and succeeded in dispelling some of the misconceptions held about Liberia on the international scene. It also contributed in sharpening the perception of black consciousness around the world, particularly in Africa.

Perhaps, Azikiwe’s era as Premier of the Eastern Region of Nigeria will be best remembered in terms of general development and social change in the fields of education, particularly higher education. Because he realized that education is a modernizer, he gave it almost the greatest attention with the establishment of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. According to P. O. Esedebe:

In 1954 the Eastern Nigeria Government under the premiership of Azikiwe began arrangements for the establishment of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka whose opening in October 1960 coincided with Nigeria’s attainment of independence. Its motto ‘To Restore the Dignity of Man’, bears witness to Zik’s enormous contribution to what became the country’s first autonomous university. Partly because of its independent status, the new institution succeeded in Africanising its staff and syllabus to an appreciable extent right from the start. Its motto and the recruitment of Black Americans and Afro-West Indians in general and of a grandson of Edward Wilmot Blyden in particular gave the University a Pan-African aura. The History Department not only made African history the centre piece of its programme but also insisted that no student could pass with honours in History unless he took a prescribed number of themes in African history (Esedebe, 1989: 102).

Mazi Mbonu Ojike and African Studies

Widely known for his phraseology of “Boycott the Boycottable”, demonstrated in his rejection of all forms of Western culture, Mbonu Ojike’s nationalist aspirations spread beyond the confines of politics to cultural nationalism and the arts. A celebrated apostle of African traditions, Ojike wrote that the “names of persons and places hitherto spelled or called in English should be returned to their Nigerian identities” (Ojike 1, 1946: 26). Practically, Ojike generated greater enthusiasm for Nigerian traditional clothes as opposed to Western styled ones.

In 1938, Ojike ran into Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe who at this time had become the mentor and role model of young men (Uwechue, 1991:582). Thus, under his inspiration, Ojike in company of Etuka Okala, Nnodu Okongwu, Nwankwo Chukwuemeka, George Mbadiwe, Okechukwu Ikejiani and Kingsley Mbadiwe, left for the United States of America in 1938 to continue his education at LincolnUniversity. He soon transferred to the University of Illinois and in September 1940, Ojike joined Nwafor Orizu at the Ohio State University, Columbus. Both lived in the same room for Ojike needed Orizu’s assistance at this initial stage of his arrival in Columbus. Ojike did not have job but Orizu was getting stabilized at his odd jobs. As pressures were mounting from the authorities because Ojike could not pay his rentage, he decided to leave. Orizu on his part reasoned that for Ojike to get into the city alone and rent a room, feed himself and pay his school expenses would be most difficult. He therefore decided to join him in the City in order that their combined economy would lighten the burden on him (Orizu 2, 1994).

While at LincolnUniversity, Ojike spent most of his leisure moments in the family homes of some lecturers who were eager to learn the other side of Africa’s story (Ojike 2, 1947). But it was at OhioStateUniversity that he made regular appearances before the congregations of Black churches. Ojike made this the focus of his weekend activities, and was elated at the receptions from such fora that he stated: “Nothing was worth the chance to meet Americans. No money could buy them. In fact, I used to think that I should pay Americans to hear my people’s story” (Ojike 2, 1947: 47). The result of this sustained initial encouragement was that Ojike adopted lecturing on Africa as a means of livelihood to round off his studies.

Nigerian students were noted for representing Africa in hitherto uncommon places. Thus, in 1941 Ibanga Udo Akpabio was nominated to represent Columbia University in an International Conference on Education, held at the University of Michigan. Akpabio exploited the opportunity of the Conference to denounce the form and content of education in colonial territories thereby creating awareness among those who were hitherto ignorant of the inadequacies of the colonial system (Ajuluchukwu, 1960). Similarly, in the summer of 1943, Mbonu Ojike who had become a post-graduate student in the University of Chicago, was invited to the White House, as Africa's representative in the gathering of youth from fifty countries on the occasion of President Roosevelt's radio address to the youth of the world. This occasion was rounded off with a party in honour of Ojike given by his friend from Howard University. But during the party, Dr. Ralph Bunche of the US State Department stepped upon Ojike's sensitive anti-colonial toes when the former stated that Africa would be worse off in independence than in the clutches of colonialism (Ojike 2, 1947).

To fill the lacunae on the dearth of information on African developments, African students engaged in literary pursuits. And while some student-writers concentrated on Africa's rich past, Ojike delved into the sociology of Africa. Thus, in 1945, he made a debut when he published *Portrait of a Boy in Africa*. The work was an account of his childhood, and describes in vivid details a typical village life in Africa. But the book became a forerunner to a more ambitious one titled, *My Africa* published in 1946. In the book, Ojike espoused the richness of Africa in cultural effervescence, thus:

To the people of the world everywhere, Africa pleads for mutual understanding. She has a culture of her own, a way of life which is rich in color and indeed in art. Although there are superficial differences between cultures, yet they have fundamental similarities upon which peaceful relations can be built. This book is not an autobiography of a thirty year old; rather, it is a human story of Africa, particularly of this century.... The world has shrunk into one neighborhood. To achieve peace and prosperity, the neighbors must treat one another as brothers (Ojike 1, 1946: xiii.)

African students also realized the need for a cohesive body in their struggle for social justice and African Independence, as well as “for creating a long-lasting climate of understanding and co-operation between the two continents”(Edunam 1, 145). Thus, between January and August 1940, Nwafor Orizu and J. K. Smart, a Sierra Leonean, both students of Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio initiated discussions among African students in America which led to the founding of a body known as the African Students Service on January 1, 1941. The Students Service had Ojike as President, Mbadiwe as Executive Secretary and Treasurer and Orizu as Director of Information. But between September 2 and 5, 1941, the fledgling organization convened a meeting of African students in New York City and resolved to change its name to African Students’ Association of U. S. and Canada (A.S.A.). Again, the preponderance of Nigerian students was manifest as reflected in the composition of its leadership – Ojike - President; Mbadiwe - Executive Secretary; Orizu - Director of Information; and Ibanga Udo Akpobio – Treasurer (Edunam 1,146).

Perhaps, this meeting was stimulated by Winston Churchill’s retraction of the Atlantic Charter as it concerned colonial peoples. Franklin D. Roosevelt had said the Atlantic Charter applied to all nations and races. But for Churchill, it only applied to the White non-colonial races, because, he had not become the first King’s minister “in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire”(Orizu 2, 264). The result was that at this second conference, the Association’s Charter said:

... we strongly urge the governing bodies of the British Empire, and their Allies, in the cause of democracy, to grant internal self-government to the colonial peoples of Africa.... The fundamental principles of democracy as expressed in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter... must be applied immediately [We] emphatically demand that those who claim to be fighting for democracy implement their expressed ideals by considering Africa a sovereign land in all its glorious heritage and history (Coleman, 1958: 242).

To further propagate its ideals, the Association commenced the publication of an official organ, the *African Interpreter*. And as was the Association, the *African Interpreter* had its administrative headquarters in the residence of Nwafor Orizu: Room 411 International House 500 River Side Drive New York City. Edited by K.A.B.Jones-Quartey and assisted by Nnodu Okongwu, the journal was published with four main objectives:

to interpret Africa to America and thus lighten the burden of those non- Africans who had for years tried to perform this duty from their own perspectives; to acquaint Africans in Africa about the rapidly changing international scene; to inform members of A.S.A. about its activities; and finally, to strengthen affiliations with the West African Students Union (WASU) and other bodies in America and Africa in the fight for human justice and decency (Edunam 1, 146).

As part of its editorial policy, the journal desired to cooperate with all democratic nations of the world interested in the democratic development, and the colonial emancipation of Africa. Although, *African Interpreter* had lofty ideals, it was financially straight-jacketed, resulting in the publication of only five issues. But it had made indelible imprints on the sands of time, for according to Hollis R. Lynch, "although relatively short-lived, the *AfricanInterpreter* served to project the image of the association as a militant nationalist organization" (Lynch, 1980-1981: 184-203).

Conclusion

What we have demonstrated above is that the Nigerians, during their studies in the United States of America, became unaccredited ambassadors of goodwill and spokesmen of Africa and made adequate contributions to the development of African Studies during the first half of the 20th century. With the present onslaught of globalization in this 21st century, it should not be an over-statement that the fortune of Studies in African history and culture is fast declining. This is against the backdrop of near irresistible influence of Euro-American civilization in the daily African life as well as the over-concentration on Western-based

history and culture courses in our tertiary institutions. It is, therefore, imperative that the propagation of indigenous African heritage, history and culture be sustained and promoted in the African educational institutions through a policy framework by individual African governments. Such a policy, if adequately enforced, will, no doubt, ensure the reclamation and sustenance of the African identity throughout the African Pluriverse.

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UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF POLICE MISCONDUCTS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Misconduct and poor relations with citizens are known to be pervasive in the Nigeria. Police service (NPS). Police deviance or misconduct permeates all levels of the NPS and has continued to threaten the sustainability of even the best efforts in the country's police sector.

Although police corruption is only an aspect of police misconduct, it is most generally perceived by Nigerians as having the most devastating effect on the nation's socio-political development. The purpose of this study is therefore to underscore the scope of Police misconduct in Nigeria. In addition, the study also examines public perception of the police in the nation, using documentary data from a pilot study conducted in Anambra State as a yard stick. Variations of police misconduct that were scored high by respondents include; corruption, threat, harassment, excessive use of force and sexual abuse. These findings suggest an urgent need for improving police-citizen relations as a means of reducing police misconduct in Nigeria. The paper discussed other solutions while emphasizing democratic policing reform.

Key words: Police misconduct, police corruption, police brutality, police-citizen relation, community policing.

Introduction and conceptual clarifications

The entire Nigerian society has been engulfed by the virus of corruption. This endemic and deadly disease has systematically permeated the entire fabric of the nation, including law enforcement agencies and organizations. According to Ugwuoke (2010:114), government agencies responsible for law enforcement in Nigeria include; the Police, Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), the Prisons, the customs, Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC), National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in

Persons (NAPTIP), Civil Defense Corp (CDC), Federal Road Safety Corp (FRSC), etc. Although corruption is a notable feature of these law enforcement Agencies in Nigeria, the Problem is obviously more pronounced in the Police organization. In this paper therefore, emphasis is placed on Police corruption with a view to underscore the magnitude of the problem which is expected to be similar in other law enforcement organizations in the country.

In Nigeria, Police corruption has become synonymous with police misconduct. This misconception however requires some clarifications because police corruption is only an aspect of police misconduct. For avoidance of doubt, police misconduct is a broader concept which refers to a number of illegal activities usually perpetrated by some members of the police personnel. Such illegal acts include; police corruption, theft, armed Robbery, brutality against members of the public, sexual assault, extra-judicial killings, etc.

For a comprehensive understanding of police misconduct in Nigeria, see (Amadi, 2000). Both old and contemporary literature have continued to indicate that a vast majority of research on police misconduct focuses almost entirely on the aspect of police corruption. In fact, the literature on police corruption is so dominant that most people like in the Nigerian situation observed above, regard police corruption as police misconduct. A detailed examination of the concept of police corruption is therefore justifiable for two major reasons.

In the first place, given the abundant attention devoted to the concept in literature, its careful examination seems to be perfectly in order. Secondly, since corruption has remained an endemic virus in Nigeria, a careful examination of the concept especially as it applies to security operatives promises to be a rewarding enterprise.

Lar Grange (1993:226) has defined Police corruption as the inappropriate use of an officer's job for Personal gain. He explained that the personal gain may be in the form of direct monetary benefits to officers such as bribes from speeding motorists or in kind such as forceful collection of consumer goods from defaulting motorists. Similarly, Albanese (2001; 424) has defined police corruption as illegal acts or omissions by police officers in the line of duty who, by virtue of their official position, receive or (or intend) to receive any gain for themselves or others. Albanese further observes that nonfeasance is a form of Police corruption involving failure to perform a legal duty. The

major forms of police corruption in Nigeria include; exploitation, nepotism and favoritism, bribes, kickbacks, diversion of funds and deceptive practices. Some of these are very much related but for analytical purposes, they are briefly discussed separately below.

The Problem

Among Security experts, there seems to be an overwhelming consensus that police misconduct has been, and continues to be a serious social problem in Nigeria. However, no aspect of police misconduct in the country attracts more negative and constant consternation than the problem of police corruption or police indiscretion and dishonesty. Thus, we can argue without fear of contradiction that from its inception in 1930, few police administrations in Nigeria have been spared the misfortune of corruption. Since her independence, Nigeria has had to wrangle with the pesky problem of dishonest and corrupt police Force. Thus, to a very large extent, the history of policing in Nigeria can be described as the history of corruption, brutality and incompetence.

LaGrange (1993:214) has identified a number of valid reasons why citizens should be greatly concerned with the integrity of the police. These reasons are most appropriate especially in the context of police misconduct in Nigerian. Thus, according to LaGrange;

- (i) Police misconduct detracts from the effectiveness of the police and their willingness to perform required tasks;
- (ii) Police misconduct hurts people (financially, emotionally, and physically) without justification.
- (iii) Police misconduct helps undermine the credibility of the police, thereby diminishing citizen support.
- (iv) On a large scale, police misconduct invites disrespect of the entire government system.
- (v) Police become the hypocritical enforcers of the law.

In the same vein, Dambazau (2007:256) has noted that Police Corruption impacts directly on the police ability to prevent and control crime in the following ways;

- (i) Corrupt policemen will devote time and energy in pursuing graft rather than the fulfillment of their responsibilities to the society.

- (ii) Police corruption facilitates the commission of crime or the escape from justice by others, leading to more criminality in society.
- (iii) Where the police are deemed corrupt and inept by the wider society, people tend to take measures into their hands to protect themselves or seek revenge. For some, according to Dambazau, this generally means investment in private security; caged or Prison-like residences with high fences as seen in most Nigerian cities; and for others, he maintained that it means either a return to traditional forms of justice or carrying out 'jungle justice'.

It must be emphasized that the above observations have very serious consequences especially in the Nigerian context. In fact, it could be argued that police misconduct which includes corruption as we have earlier observed is mostly responsible for the lack of co-operation between the police and members of the public in Nigeria. Ugwuoke, (2010:133) has noted that this problem of lack of co-operation with members of the Nigerian public, has remained the bane of successful policing in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study relied extensively on documentary data derived from a pilot study on police negative behavior conducted in Anambra state. The data were examined to reveal respondents perception concerning police misconduct.

Typologies of Police Corruption in Nigeria

I. Exploitation.

Ugwuoke (2010:138) has noted that Police corruption in the form of exploitation is usually observed in a wide spectrum of interaction between the Police and members of the public in Nigeria. Below, is a brief explanation of various categories of police exploitation in the country.

i. Exploitation of motorists.

This form of corruption is perpetrated when the police forcefully request and collect money from motorists by intimidation and other forms of harassment. Ugwuoke, has emphasized that

the twenty Naira (N20) hand shake between the police and bus drivers, taxi drivers, okada riders and indeed motorists has become a regular and shameful sight on our roads and streets. It is an open secret that many recalcitrant motorists who fail to comply with this type of exploitation have often paid the supreme sacrifice under the guise of what the police frequently refer to as 'accidental discharge'.

ii. Exploitation of crime victims. In Nigeria, crime victims who go to the police stations to make reports are usually requested to provide money for buying the writing materials for making their statements and also for fueling the police vehicles used for investigating the scenes of crime. This form of exploitation has inevitably reduced the number of such reports by crime victims in the country. For this particular reason, one can argue that the dark figure of crime in Nigeria is expected to be very high.

iii. Exploitation of accident victims. Ugwuoke, had observed that some police officers in Nigeria are often accused of robbing accident victims who in some pathetic cases include dead victims. This may sound incredible, but it happens in Nigeria.

iv. Exploitation within the police organization. It has also been noted that police personnel exploit themselves within their organization. In fact, it is unfortunate to observe that the regrettable and unusual police strike of early February 2002 in Nigeria, was a direct consequence of the persistent and intolerable exploitation of the rank and file officers by their senior colleagues (Ugwuoke, 2010:138-139).

2. Nepotism and favoritism.

In Nigeria, this form of police corruption is usually observed in the areas of promotions and duty postings schedules. Allegations are rife among police personnel that only officers that have good *connections*, benefit from regular promotions and favorable postings.

3. Bribes.

Lagrange (1993:229) has defined bribery as normally taking the form of payments to the police to guarantee the non enforcement of the law. In Nigeria, members of the public offer bribes to the police in a number of situations. For instance motorists with expired particularsoften try to persuade the police or members of the Road Safety personnel to accept bribe in orderto avoid prosecution. Crime suspects of different categories in police custody are often inthe habit of persuading the police to accept bribes in order to facilitate their freedom.

4. Kickbacks.

Kickbacks and bribes are related in many significant aspects. Generally, both are attempts to secure the non enforcementof the law. The major difference however lies in the fact that whilebribes are generally offered voluntarily to members of the police personnel, kickbacks are generally demanded and indirectly collected from law violators by the police with the aim of perverting the causeof justice. In some exceptional situations, the police also demand kickbacks as a pre-condition for providing their services to certain categories of individuals. For instance, the police may demandand in fact collect some money from prostitutes and even criminals in return for providing them withprotection and cover- up. In Nigeria, politicians usually pay fat kickbacks to senior officers duringelections in order to secure police patronage which provides a conducive opportunity for rigging.

Roberg and Kuykendall (1993) seem to have provided a useful insight in the explanation of police misconduct with special emphasis on police corruption. They have noted that the police field provides many opportunities for officers to deviate from legal and organizational standards especially if each individual officer doesnot have an internalized set of beliefs about fundamental moral or ethical matters. These authors noted that such permissive officers are more prone to engage in some deviant behaviors such as corruption and brutality (Roberg and Kuykendall, 1993:144).

It is obvious that most corrupt police officers in Nigeria are morally bankrupt.Dambazau (2007: 256) has observed that police corruption in Nigeria impacts directly and(negatively)on the police ability to prevent and control crime in three principal ways;corrupt policemen devote time and energy in pursuing graft rather than the

fulfillment of their responsibilities to the society. Police corruption facilitates the commission of crime or the escape from justice by others, leading to more criminality in society. Where the police are deemed corrupt and inept by the wider society, people tend to take measures into their hands to either protect themselves or seek revenge... Examples abound in Nigeria to justify the above situations. For instance, the recent exhibition of Jungle justice in River state which claimed the lives of three young undergraduates of the University of Port Harcourt was a clear demonstration of lack of trust on the police by members of the public.

Police Misuse of power

In Nigeria, other aspects of police misconduct include; threat, harassment, excessive use of force, extra-judicial killings and sexual abuse. A study on the police and the democratic process in Nigeria had revealed that the Nigeria Police have performed below democratic expectations in the areas of crime and traffic control, maintenance of law and order, treatment of suspects and relation with members of the public (Ugwuoke, 2003).

Theories of Police Misconduct

It might be easier to describe the nature and types of police misconduct than to proffer reasons about why such misconducts occur in the first place. The complex nature of police misconduct suggests that no single theory can adequately explain their causes. We shall now briefly examine the three major theories of misconduct which in the opinion of this paper are all relevant for explaining the concept of police misconduct with special reference to police corruption with a view to suggesting the one that is most appropriate for explaining the incidence of police corruption in Nigeria.

The three major theories of police misconduct include; the bad egg or rotten apple theory, deviant police subculture theory and the theory that attributes police misconduct to the nature of police work.

(i). Bad egg/Rotten apple theory.

This theory is generally of the view that despite the relative small number of the so-called 'rotten apples' or corrupt police officers in a particular police organization, their presence is capable of tarnishing the

image of the rest of the entire members of the organization. Dambazau (2007:271) contends that this theory is one of the most popular and traditional ways of explaining police corruption in Nigeria. It is however obvious that not all Nigeria police officers are corrupt. Although it is difficult to ascertain the percentage of the bad eggs or corrupt officers in the employment of the Nigeria Police Force, their corrupt influence has contributed in no small measure in rubbishing the image of the Force organization in the country. Although this theory can not provide all the explanations for police misconduct in Nigeria, it is useful because its application requires examining the barrel ie the entire organization, and not just the apples, ie the individual officers. Thus, overhauling the entire organization, through the process of re-orientation of officers, might reduce the level of police corruption in Nigeria.

(ii). Deviant Police Sub-culture theory.

In most formal organizations, there are usually subcultures which facilitate or promote solidarity and cohesiveness among workers. Such subcultures have the capacity of either contributing to the success or failure of such organizations. These conditions are most appropriate in Police organizations. Deviant police subculture is usually obtainable when a group of officers who have a distinctive set of customs, rules, morality and a strong feeling of loyalty, actively encourages and supports police misconduct (LaGrange, 1993:235). This theory is also relevant for explaining police misconduct with special reference to police corruption in Nigeria. It is obvious that many young men are good at the point of their recruitment into the police, but soon become socialized into a deviant sub culture during and after their orientation.

(iii) The nature of the police Task.

Another model which seeks to explain police misconduct or police corruption is the nature of Police work perspective. Roberg and Kuykendall (1993:144) have noted that the police field provides many opportunities for officers to deviate from legal and organizational standards especially if such officers did not internalize appropriate set of beliefs about fundamental moral or ethical matters. It is obvious that the enforcement of vice laws such as prostitution, gambling and narcotics is specifically

conducive to corruption especially in the Nigerian context. LaGrange (1993:235) has noted that not only are the opportunities for easy money, drugs and sex abundant in police work, but that there is the added encouragement from fellow officers to deviate and this actually makes misconduct almost irresistible. The constant media reports about police officers who take advantage of their profession to commit various crimes is a reminder that this problem actually exist in Nigeria.

Theoretical Orientation

It is obvious that the three theories reviewed above are all important in explaining police misconduct in Nigeria. However, the deviant police sub-culture theory seems to provide the best explanation especially against the backdrop of the endemic corruption that has become part of the Nigerian culture. Thus, in a general context, it could be argued that Police misconduct in its various dimensions, is a product of a negative sub culture that is applicable to various sections of the Nigerian society including the police organization.

Public perception of the Police in Nigeria.

According to a report of a survey study on security component conducted in Anambra state by the Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in 2008 which was later submitted to the British Council and the Department for International Development (DFID), there is poor public perception of the Police in Nigeria (Egbue, N.G, Ugwuoke, C.U. Obiajulu, A.O.and Ezeah, P.C., 2008). Table 1 Below shows the findings of the study upon which the conclusions of this study are predicated.

Table1: Respondents' Opinion on Police Negative Behaviour in Anambra State.

Responses	Strongly agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
Corruption	489	51.8%	210	22.2%	63	6.7%	89	9.4%	93	9.9%
Threaten citizens with a gun/weapon	118	12.7%	240	25.8%	122	13.1%	177	19.0%	274	29.4%

Harass suspects while being arrested	330	35.5%	269	28.9%	107	11.5%	121	13.0%	103	11.1%
Maltreat suspects while in detention	285	31.1%	264	28.8%	148	16.1%	126	13.7%	94	10.3%
Abuse of power	310	33.6%	256	27.8%	131	14.2%	122	13.2%	103	11.2%
Excessive use of force	295	29.5%	284	31.1%	118	12.9%	120	13.1%	96	10.5%
Favouritism	313	34.2%	257	28.1%	120	13.1%	124	13.5%	102	11.1
Sexual abuse	138	15.2%	134	14.7%	268	29.5%	193	21.2%	175	19.4%

Source: Report of a Baseline security Study conducted in Anambra State in 2008 by the Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Respondents' views on the eight aspects of Police behavior as shown in table 1 above indicate very high positive responses concerning Police negative behaviors. This implies that the people of Anambra state and by extension, Nigerians, view the police in bad light. The specific results show that those who agree that the police in Nigeria are corrupt constitute 74% while 38.5% of the respondents affirm that the police threaten citizens with guns/weapons. In addition, 84.4% of the respondents believe that the police harass suspects while being arrested. Those who perceive the police as maltreating suspects while in detention constitute 59.9%, those who believe that the police abuse their power and those who agree that the police use excessive force constitute 61.4% and 60.6% respectively. Finally, those who think that favoritism and sexual abuse are part of police misconduct in Nigeria constitute, 62.3% and 29.9% respectively.

Table 2. One-Sample T-Test Statistics For Respondents' Opinion On Police Behaviour

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CORRUPTION	944	3.9672	1.3599	4.426E-02
THREAT	931	3.4028	1.4043	4.602E-02
HARASSMENT	930	3.6473	1.3655	4.478E-02
MALTREATMENT	917	3.5671	1.3262	4.380E-02
ABUSE	922	3.5944	1.3603	4.480E-02
USE OF FORCE	913	3.6156	1.3336	4.414E-02
FAVOURITISM	916	3.6059	1.3650	4.510E-02
SEXUAL ABUSE	909	2.8515	1.3120	4.352E-02

Source: Report of a Baseline security Study conducted in Anambra State in 2008 by the Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka..

Table 2 above shows the results of one sample t-test conducted to ascertain significant deviations from the median value for each of the eight variables that constituted police negative behavior in this study. To test participant's opinion about accusations against the police in the eight items represented in the table, a medium value of 3 from the rating scale of strongly disagree 1, disagree 2, uncertain 3, agree 4 And strongly agree 5 was used in one sample t-test to ascertain significant deviations from the medium Value for each of the eight variables. The results have shown that significant agreements have been observed on all the accusations. Corruption (M = 3.97, SD= 1.36). 'threatening of citizens with guns/weapons' (M =3.40, SD =1.40). 'harassing of suspects during arrests' (M =3.65, SD =1.37).

'Maltreating suspects in detention' (M =3.57, SD =1.33). 'abuse of power' (M =3.59, SD =1.36), 'excessive use of force' (M= 3.62, SD= 1.33), and favouritism' (M= 3.61, SD =1.37). Majority of respondents however disagreed that the police 'abuse people sexually' (M = 2.85, SD =1.31).

The Way Forward

As the gate keepers of law, the police represent other law enforcement agencies in mostmodern jurisdictions, including Nigeria. It is in this

respect that we wish to emphasize that the importance of honesty in police work and indeed in law enforcement can not be over emphasized. As Roberg and Kuykendall (1993:155) have noted, the idea of professionalism in law enforcement professions is concerned with honest, responsible and competent behavior of officers. Unfortunately however, policing in Nigeria as we have earlier observed, has become synonymous with corruption and dishonesty. While we commend the idea of police code of conduct recently introduced by the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Abubakar, the following additional recommendations are considered imminent if Nigeria must aim to have a professional police organization in which corruption and other misconducts will be reduced to the barest minimum. These include;

- (i) Adequate remuneration of the police. In order to reduce corrupt practices among police officers in Nigeria, the government must not only enhance the salary of the police, but it must set up a powerful monitoring unit to ensure that junior officers are not exploited by their senior colleagues.
- (ii) Adoption of the principles of democratic policing. This style of policing recognizes individual human rights and consequently does not encourage abuse of the citizenry.
- (iii) An urgent need to upgrade recruitment standards in the police in Nigeria with a view to improving the overall level of training of officers.
- (iv) An enabling law that would warrant the prosecution of officers who are found to have breached the criminal law of the Nation. This is important because, Jones (2001: 23) has noted that as the police are answerable to the law alone, officers have no immunity, since they can be sued in the civil courts just as any other individual can be.
- (v) Establishment of an efficient reward structure or policy that would recognize and reward meritorious police work without delay.

- (vi) Creation of public awareness with respect to the content of the recent police code. This would enable members of the Nigerian public the opportunity to understand their role in the effective implementation of the code.
- (vii) Regular media conference by the Inspector General of police to justify accountability with emphasis on explaining *what* the police is doing and *how* well they are doing it.

Conclusion

The results of this documentary study have revealed the major areas of police misconduct in Nigeria to include; corrupt practices, threat, harassment, maltreatment of members of the public, abuse of power, favouritism and sexual abuse. The results also suggest both the need and potential to improve police-citizen relations and reduce police deviance in the country.

In most democratic societies, it is the criminal law that provides the required standard for the practice of policing. If the rate of corruption among serving police officers in Nigeria is to reduce substantially, serving police officers would be expected to obey all substantive laws like every other citizen. It must be emphasized that the fundamental duty of a police officer and indeed any law enforcement officer is to serve mankind. This service essentially includes; safeguarding lives and property, protecting the innocent and the weak against deception and intimidation respectively. It also includes, protecting the peaceful against violence or disorder and above all, respecting the constitutional rights of all men with respect to liberty, equality and justice. Certainly, these objectives can not be achieved with a corrupt and dishonest police as it currently obtains in Nigeria.

Although, the nature of police work as we have observed earlier is prone to corruption, and other forms of misconduct, these can be greatly minimized if members of the public refuse to co-operate with corrupt police officers in Nigeria. If the recommendations of this study are taken into consideration by both the government and police administrators, police misconduct especially police corruption will be drastically reduced in Nigeria. It is only then that this country would experience democratic policing which has the major advantage of

ensuring police-public co-operation that provides the foundation of efficient and professional policing.

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CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA AND THE NEED FOR AN ENDURING PEACE: AN ONTOLOGICAL APPROACH

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Abstract

The thrust of this paper is to examine the problems of conflicts in Nigeria and proffer a solution to them. Nigeria today is experiencing different conflicts ranging from tribal, religious, political, and economic to ideological. These conflicts have negative effects especially in the area of national development. The question on every lips is how can Nigeria overcome these conflicts and forge ahead in the task of developing the nation. Using the philosophical tools of analysis, hermeneutic and critical evaluation; this study found out that previous approaches towards solving the problems of conflicts in Nigeria were ephemeral and unsubstantial because they did not address the nucleus of the problem which is the ontological question of the human person. The paper recommended that the adoption of the ontological approach will make Nigerians realize the ontological homogeneity of all human persons by seeing ourselves in others. This will eliminate conflicts and creates an enabling atmosphere for development in Nigeria.

Introduction

Since Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960, she has witnessed numerous conflicts. Shortly after independence, there were series of political violence in the Western region following the general election of 1965. What followed was the entrenchment of ethnicity into Nigerian politics. A year after, this tribal animosity manifested in the pogrom in the Northern part of the country where thousands of people from the Igbo tribe were massacred in what can be described as one of the worst genocide in the history of Nigeria. The event led to agitation

for secession from the Igbo championed by Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu; a young Nigerian army officer from the Igbo extraction. The unfolding events culminated in a fratricidal civil war that lasted from June, 1967 to January 1970. The war ended in a “no victor no vanquished”, but created a permanent scar of ethnic loyalty and tribal affiliation. Ethnicity and tribe were enthroned on the altar of nationalism.

Many years after the civil war, conflicts have remained part of our national history. These conflicts are already shaking the foundation of our very existence as a nation. On daily basis, reports of one conflict or the other abound in the news bulletin. These conflicts range from political, economic, religious, and social to tribal and ideological. The situation has assumed an alarming dimension; thus the need to look at the causes and solutions anew. Many writers and commentators before these writers have identified a number of causes and possible solutions yet the situation remains unabated; rather it is assuming a more dangerous dimension. These present writers, using the philosophical tools of analysis and critical evaluation are of the opinion that earlier writers and commentators approached the issue of conflicts in Nigeria from ephemeral and superficial dimensions. They saw only the shadow without the object thus resulting in their failure to address and find a lasting solution to the problems of conflicts in Nigeria. Thus, they committed a fundamental error. The thrust of this paper is to reverse this fundamental error by identifying the substantial cause(s) of these conflicts and proffer a lasting solution and therefore chart a new course for national development.

Conceptual Explications

Conflict

Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (2004) defines conflicts as

- 1) A struggle to resist or overcome; contest of opposing forces or powers: strife; battle.
- 2) A state or condition of opposition; antagonism, discord; the conflict of testimony.
- 3) Active antagonism; clash; collision.
- 4) Psychoanal, painful tension set up by a clash between opposed and contradictory impulses in an individual; specifically, the antagonism existing between primitive desires and instincts and

moral, religious, or ethical ideals. To come into collision; engage in battle; struggle.

From the definitions above, it is obvious that conflict is a multifaceted phenomenon. It can be interpersonal and intrapersonal. The most noticeable form of conflict is the interpersonal conflict involving human beings; group versus group and to an escalated level state versus state. The intrapersonal form of conflict is psychological and sometimes ethical; when conflict arises as a result of a dilemma in choice-making. However, intrapersonal conflict can develop into interpersonal conflict. Intrapersonal conflict always results in psychological crisis and the victim starts seeing the other person as the cause of his problem. For example, dissatisfaction in a given life situation like unemployment may force the unemployed to direct his/her anger towards the society and even the employed who he or she sees as the cause of his/her problem. Most problems one may see as interpersonal have their roots in intrapersonal conflicts.

The history of conflicts in Nigeria.

The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914 brought into being the entity known as Nigeria today. The main reason for this amalgamation is for administrative convenience of the British colonial administration. While the colonial Northern government was running at deficit with subvention from the colonial home government (Britain), the Southern colonial government was running at a surplus. To balance the equation, the surplus from the South was needed to balance the deficit in the North; thus the amalgamation. This forceful amalgamation has been blamed by many people as the main cause of conflicts in Nigeria.

Okafor (1997), opines that the unhealthy ethnic politics and mutual distrust among the various cultural, linguistic and ethnic groups in Nigeria are the main causes of Nigeria's social and political upheavals.

This was caused by the amalgamation. He asserts further;

Nigeria was put together as one nation by the British at the beginning of the 20th century when Fredrick Lugard; a British colonial administrator and the colonial office in London amalgamated the then northern and southern protectorates of Nigeria in the year

1914. Before then, there was no entity known as Nigeria.

Before the amalgamation, the various ethnic and cultural groups that now make up Nigeria existed as autonomous political entities, having their own political systems, social and religious values. Regrettably, the colonial masters set the battle for tribal, ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria. This was manifested in one of the earliest crises after independence; the massacre of over one hundred thousand Igbo Christians in the Muslim dominated north and the civil war that followed.

Abdulkadir (2011) gave a graphic picture of conflicts in Nigeria between 2001-2011. The conflicts include communal, religious, ethnic/tribal and political conflicts especially the post election violence of May 16, 2011 that turned religious all over northern Nigeria which left several hundreds including corporers on national assignment dead.

Before 2011, there were other serious conflicts in Nigeria. Events preceding our independence indicated a bleak and would be conflict ridden nation. Achebe (1983; 3) wrote;

As a student in Ibadan, I was an eye-witness to that momentous occasion when Chief Obafemi Awolowo "stole" the leadership of western Nigeria from Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in broad daylight on the floor of the Western House of Assembly and sent the great Zik scampering back to the Niger "whence" (he) came. Achebe (1983) notes that someday when we shall have outgrown tribal politics or when our children shall have done so, sober historians of the Nigerian nation will see that event as the abortion of a pan-Nigerian vision which however ineptly, the NCNC tried to have and to hold. That dream-Nigeria suffered a death-blow from Awolowo's "success" in the Western House of Assembly in 1951. Perhaps as Achebe noted, it was an unrealistic dream at the best of times, but some young educated men and women of my generation did dream that dream.

The First Republic was brought to an abrupt end because of what Major Kaduna Nzeogwu described as saving the Nigeria nation from wicked and corrupt politicians. In that coup, many prominent Northern and Western politicians were killed. These included Tafawa Balewa (Prime Minister), Ahmadu Bello (Premier Northern region), S.O Akintola and others in the west. This coup got misinterpreted as Igbo coup because no Igbo politician was killed and secondly Aguiyi Ironsi by virtue of his position in the Nigerian Army assumed duty as the commander-in-chief. This was in January, 1966. By July 1966, there was not only a counter coup by the northern elements in the army that resulted in the brutal assassination of Aguiyi Ironsi but also the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Igbo people residing in different parts of northern Nigeria. These incidents culminated in the agitation and subsequent cessation of the Eastern Nigeria by Odimegwu Ojukwu and the subsequent fratricidal civil war that followed. The war decimated Igbo population by millions. After the war, a no victor, no vanquished resolution was reached but history knew those who were vanquished and those who were victorious. The Igbos were robbed of their resources. In what may pass as the most punitive tribal policy in Nigerian history, the vanquished Igbos were given only £20 in exchange of whatever one may have had in his bank prior to the civil war. Most of their landed property outside Igboland was confiscated. Some were brutally killed for daring to ask of their property in places where they lived before the war.

The period after 1970 (after the civil war) witnessed pockets of religious, political and tribal conflicts but not of the magnitude of the period between 1966-1970. The 1980s witnessed the insurgence of the Maitatsine group which left hundreds of people dead. However, this group was effectively checked by the government of Ibrahim Babangida. Nonetheless, in the second Republic, there were violent and bloody electoral conflicts in Oyo and Ondo following the controversial declaration of Omololu Oluluoye and Akin Omaoboriowo of National Party of Nigeria as winners of the Gubernatorial race in their respective states. Oyo and Ondo states were U.P.N dominated state as U.P.N is a predominantly Yoruba political party headed by Obafemi Awolowo. This crisis of 1983 and other political crises that ensued after that year's general election paved way for the military intervention on December 31, 1983.

The crisis that almost crippled the nation was the crisis following the annulment of June 12 presidential election of 1993 which was believed to have been won by M.K.O Abiola and annulled by Ibrahim Babangida, the head of state and a northerner. According to Okafor (1997;14), "following the annulment, ethnic sentiments were incited and political tension mounted. At a certain point, there were threats of secession by some ethnic groups. The Yoruba ethnic group saw it as a deliberate plan to deny them the first ever opportunity for one of their members to rule Nigeria with the people's mandate".

The annulment of June 12 election was so grave a concern that Nigerians even began to discuss openly and with impunity the possibility of dismemberment of the country through secession. Many tribal or ethnic organisations emerged with constitution of their new nation. Ethnic hatred grew deeper and deeper threatening the peace and unity of the country. It seemed as if the country was preparing for another civil war. Nigerians living outside their tribe returned to their native land. It was as if the nation can not hold together. More pathetic was the many Nigerians who perished on the way in a concerted effort to reach home before a full blown war. That Nigeria was able to overcome this tension was indeed a miracle and the working of God.

When Babangida stepped aside in 1993, he appointed Ernest Shonekan as the leader of the interim government with General Sani Abacha as the secretary, Abacha sacked the interim government after three months and assumed power as the Commander-in-chief.

What could be referred to as the new phase of conflict in Nigeria started in 2000 after a transition to civil rule on May 29, 1999 by the Abdusalami led military rule to Obasanjo's civil rule. In 2000, mayhem was let loose in the city of Kaduna. The controversial attempt to introduce sharia law in the Northern city of Kaduna triggered off conflict between the Christians and the Muslims. Thousands of lives were lost and property worth trillions of naira destroyed.

Incidence conflicts in Nigeria, 2000-2010

From 2000 to 2010 Nigeria lost more than 7,771 lives to religious and ethnic tensions.

2000: Thousands of people were killed in northern Nigeria as non-Muslims opposed to the introduction of sharia, or Islamic law, fought

Muslims who demanded its implementation in the northern state of Kaduna.

September 2001: Christian-Muslim violence flare after Muslim prayers in the city of Jos, with churches and mosques set ablaze. At least 1,000 people were killed, according to a September 2002 report by a panel set up by the regional government.

November 2002: Nigeria abandoned the Miss World contest in Abuja, the capital, following the death of at least 216 people due to riots that broke out in Kaduna after a newspaper article suggested the Prophet Mohammed would probably have married one of the Miss World beauty queens if he were alive today.

May 4, 2004: Hundreds of people, mostly Muslim Fulanis, the world's largest nomadic group based in West Africa, were killed by Christian Tarok fighters in the central Nigerian town of Yelwa. Survivors said they buried 630 corpses.

May 12, 2004: Muslim and Christian fighters waged street battles in the northern city of Kano. Christian community leaders said 500-600 people, mostly Christians, were killed in two days of violence.

February 2006: At least 157 people died in a week of rioting by Muslim and Christian mobs. The violence began in the north-eastern city of Maiduguri when a Muslim protested against Danish cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed runs out of control. Revenge attacks follow in the south.

November 2008: Clashes between Muslim and Christian gangs triggered by a disputed local government election killed at least 700 people in Jos, according to the US-based Human Rights Watch.

February 22, 2009: The governor of Bauchi state imposed a night curfew on Bauchi city, a day after clashes in which at least 11 people were killed, 28 were seriously wounded and several houses, churches and mosques set ablaze.

July 26, 2009: Boko Haram, an organisation that opposes Western education and demands the adoption of sharia across Nigeria, staged attacks in the north-eastern city of Bauchi after the arrest of some of its members. More than 50 people were killed and over 100 arrested.

July 27, 2009: Police in Maiduguri, home of Boko Haram's leader Mohammed Yusuf, said security forces killed 90 sect members on July 27. In neighbouring Yobe state, police recovered the bodies of 33 sect members after a gun battle near the town of Potiskum on July 29.

July 30, 2009: Boko Haram leader Yusuf was shot dead while in police detention in Maiduguri. Meanwhile, Red Cross and defence officials said more than 700 people were killed during the five-day Boko Haram uprising.

December 2009: At least 40 people were killed in clashes between security forces and members of an Islamic sect armed with machetes in the northern city of Bauchi.

January 2010: Hundreds of people were reported killed after clashes between Muslim and Christian gangs in Jos. Violence abates after the military was sent to the area and a curfew was imposed.

March 7, 2010: Hundreds of people were reported killed after clashes between pastoralists from the surrounding hills and villagers close to the central city of Jos. Arrests follow and security forces vowed to hold the state's security officials to account for future outbreaks of violence.

March 17, 2010: At least 13 people killed in attack by Muslim herdsmen in the village of Byei, Just 30km south of Jos.

July 17, 2010: A church was burnt and eight people hacked to death in an attack by Muslims in Mazzah village, located 14km from Jos.

Source: Human Rights Watch, 2010:50-55.

These are some of the cases that attracted national and international attentions. There are thousands of unrecorded cases bothering on rape kidnapping, corruption (economic conflict) political (both inter and intra party) resource control and sharing. The truth is that this is not the best of time for Nigeria as a nation. More worrisome is the prediction of American security network that Nigeria may not exist beyond 2015. This 2015 is a crucial year for Nigeria and Nigerians. It is the year of general election and from experience, our elections had always been characterized by violence, thuggery, ethno religious conflicts, rigging and bloodshed. All these are portent signs that if these conflicts are not controlled or averted, Nigeria and Nigerians may sing a discordant song of secession.

Causes of conflicts in Nigeria

There are many causes of conflicts in Nigeria as there are many writers on the topic. Some writers are of the view that the causes of conflicts in Nigeria are based on a given belief which maybe ideological while others see the causes of conflict from the practical dimensions. However, it is

the general opinion of these schools that conflicts have not only eroded an enduring peace in Nigeria but have also truncated her development.

➤ **Ideological Causes.**

The Passivist-Externalist – This school of Thought holds that Nigeria's (Africa's) conflicts should be blamed on external factors particularly European interference with Nigeria. Proponents of this school endlessly lament European imperialism and colonization. According to Ellis (2011), the main argument of this group is that imperialism and colonization, apart from economically exploiting African communities, disrupted the traditional sources of power in African societies as well as the ways and means of legitimate exercise of power communal control of abuse of power and processes of selecting credible leaders. The effect was indeed very disruptive; the colonial officers removed the natural and legitimate leaders of communities and replaced them with those who would serve their interest. These stooges were people who did not have the quality for leadership according to the standards of the traditional societies. They were people who were capable of betraying and destroying their own people for their personal aggrandizement. More importantly according to Isichei, they followed their colonial master's view on administration.

Passivist-externalism absolves Africans (Nigerians) of all responsibility for their crisis and conflicts. Supporters of this view will point to the problems caused by the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorate. This theory is partly true but not totally correct. There are recorded historical account of problems caused by the creation of warrant chiefs in southern Nigeria particularly in the east. There are also records of the high-handedness of these chiefs who even imposed taxes and all sundry levies on their subject. These chiefs were accountable to their colonial masters. The leaders of Nigeria today are suppose to be accountable to their people but how accountable are they? There is hardly any difference between the colonial leaders and the present crop of leaders in the country. Beside, the colonialists did what they did for colonial exigencies. Must we continue crying over spilled milk?

The second school of thought is the Re-colonization school. This school of Thought is of the view that colonization ended too early in Nigeria. This group will give example with South Africa and other

African countries where colonization lasted for a longer period. This group argues that colonization in Nigeria lasted long enough to destroy the structures and frameworks of the traditional societies but not long enough to replace them with modern structures of governance. This view may sound plausible but it may take the colonial administration a thousand years to fix what this group referred to as “modern structure of governance”. For Onwubiko (1991), it is a case of justifying an evil means because of a supposed good end, which is usually not acceptable ethically. It detracts from the dignity of the African and undermines the development of a sense of self-determination in the Africans.

The third group is Afro-pessimism. The group is of the view that Nigeria’s problems are so deep and intractable that the country cannot develop nor solve her conflictual problems. The best option is to leave her to be groping in her conflict. This view according to them is supported by the facts that Nigeria’s problems are rooted in the values, cultures, institutions and aspirations of the people and their evolution in history; and it is impossible to change these things especially if Nigerians do not want such changes. Hence we cannot expect a conflict-free Nigeria. Andreasson (2010) sums up the opinion of this group; “there is in the end little that can be done with respect to Nigeria’s (African) conflicts. This view is shared by mostly foreigners who demonstrate a high level of prejudice and pessimism to issues relating to African development.

Finally Afro-constructivism maintains a realistic approach to conflict issues in Nigeria. This group is of the view that colonization has come and gone, and we must live with its aftermath. This group holds that previous theories and reactions cannot help develop Nigeria. This view found its supporters in many genuine nationalists like Nelson Mandela.

Proponents of this view are realists because they seek to understand the internal and external factors that have gone into making of the Nigerian conflict. They seek to analyse these factors, understand them, and assign appropriate weight to the internal and external aspects of the conflicts in Nigeria. This enhances full criticism and objective truth and enable us to identify the underlining causes and fundamental solutions to these conflicts so as to achieve an enduring peace.

➤ **Practical Causes.**

Many people are of the opinion that the causes of conflict in Nigeria are practical rather than ideological. Nigerians and their leaders are the causes of conflict in Nigeria. Conflicts in Nigeria are brought about by the way Nigerians interact among themselves and the way the leaders relate with their subject. These relationships have not been healthy and have always fallen short of expectation or what is required to ensure a conflict free society and achieve an enduring peace. These practical causes are:

1. Ethno-Religious Conflict – Many people are of the view that the main causes of conflict in Nigeria are the problems of ethnicity and religion. According to Igbuzor (2002), communal and societal conflicts have emerged as a result of new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often structured around ethno-religious identities. In all parts of Nigeria, ethno-religious conflicts have assumed alarming rates. The Boko-Haram menace is traceable to ethno-religious reason. The mayhem in Jos and other parts of Plateau state, the Kaduna riot of 2000, the clash between Fulani herdsmen and the Tiv and other related conflicts are seen as purely ethno-religious in character. Nigeria has a chequered history of ethno-religious conflicts. There is hardly any year that Nigeria will not witness clashes between Muslims and Christians and between one ethnic group and another. Most reprisal attacks have their foundation on ethnicity and religion. Even the post election violence of 2011 which was seen as political has ethno-religious undertone. Igbuzor (2002) notes that groups and communities who had over the years lived together in peace and harmony now take up arms against each other in gruesome war. The claim over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government, councils, control of markets, "osu caste system" and sharia among other trivial issues have resulted in large scale killings and violence among groups in Nigeria. Okafor (1997) also shares the view that the major causes of conflict in Nigeria are ethnicity and religion. Other conflicts in Nigeria according to him have their roots in ethnicity and religion.

2. Political – According to Adagba et al (2012), politics in the current dispensation like the previous Republics have displayed politics of anxiety which has played down on dialogue, negotiations and consensus.

The anxiety is as a result of perceived or real loss of power by an elite or a hegemonic stratum. These elites or hegemonic class are those who were in power, those who lost power and those who want power back. There are intra and inter party conflicts, politicians changing rules and legislation to retain power at all cost, distorting laws and employing violence and political assassination to settle scores. Party meetings, campaigns and conventions have become war threats where small and light weapons like guns, and cutlasses are freely used to rig elections, harass and intimidate electorates. The list of victims of political violence in Nigeria ranges from the mighty ones like Chief Bola Ige, Funsho Williams, Dikkibo, Uche Ogbonna and Harry Marshal to the unknown victims in the remotest part of the country and the many youth Corp members who lost their lives in the aftermath of 2011 general election.

According to Onyemaizu (2006), a resort to violence, including armed militancy, assassination, kidnap, et cetera have somewhat suddenly become attractive to certain individuals in seeking to resolve issues that could have ordinarily been settled through due process. The end-products of such misadventures have often been catastrophic. They include the decimation of innocent lives, disruption of economic activities, destruction of properties among others. Many politicians prefer selection instead of election. There is no internal democracy in many political parties in Nigeria. This situation always engender acrimony and strife.

Similarly, any party in power must retain that power at all cost. The People's Democratic Party has always reminded Nigerians that the party will rule for fifty (50) years whether they are ruling well or not and whether Nigerians want it or not. This attitude always lead to political tension and ultimately political conflict. The way and manner elections are being conducted in Nigeria encourages political conflict. Winners emerge not through the ballot boxes but by anointment from the federal, state or local government as the case may be. In some states in Nigeria, there are no oppositions. Some of these state are operating a one party state. In Enugu state for example, all the three senators, the members representing the state at the House of Representative, all the members of the state house of assembly, all the local government chairmen and counsellors are from one party; the P.D.P.

3. **Economic** – Conflicts within this area deals squarely with the issue of resource generation and allocation. In Nigeria, the major

economic conflict has always been the oil and the Niger Delta agitation for resource allocation and control. There is evidence to suggest that oil has given rise to vertical and horizontal conflicts between National, state and society or between dominant and subordinate geo-political zones, classes and groups in Nigeria, given pivotal role that oil plays in the restructuring power relations in Nigeria. The insurgency in the Niger-Delta and strained relations among states over the control of oil wells are good examples. The fight over Bakassi Peninsula was purely for the control of the rich oil peninsula. Another area which is not given enough national attention is the frequent conflict between cattle rearers and the owners of the land where their animals graze.

Sometimes, citizens demand certain amenities from government and where government fails to provide them, conflict always ensue. The various industrial actions by workers and the conflict that erupted after the removal of oil subsidy in January 2012 are economically induced conflict. Also related to economic conflict are the problem of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Many politicians from the Northern part of the country are blaming these three elements as being the cause of Boko-Haram insurgency. Others have also attributed the high rate of crime like armed robbery, thuggery, kidnapping, advance fee fraud (419) and other vices to poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Closely related to these is the problem of corruption. Corruption is a source of economic conflict because the poor and impoverished are seeing these corrupt men and women as the cause of their predicament and may one day stage a revolution to flush out these parasites.

4. Organized Violent Groups – According to Igbuzor (2002), organized violent groups take varying dimensions and forms. They include; ethnic militia like MASSOB, MEND, OPC; vigilantes, secret cults in tertiary institutions and political thugs. Various reasons and circumstances account for their emergence. The causes of the manifestations include the culture of militarism that has its antecedents in military rule, the failure of the state and its institutions, economic disempowerment, the structure of the state and Nigeria's federalism, non-separation of state and religion, politics of exclusion, culture of patriarchy, and gerontocracy, ignorance and poor political consciousness. There is no way one can present an exhaustive and comprehensive list of the causes of conflicts in Nigeria. What we have done is to present in a

holistic way some of the key causes. However, other causes can be subsumed into the causes we have identified.

Solutions

The pessimists are of the view that there is no solution to the problem of conflict in Nigeria. They cite thousands of solutions which have been applied to curb or even eliminate conflicts in Nigeria; yet to no avail. Equally, many Nigerians are highly sceptical about finding any lasting solutions to the problems of conflicts in Nigeria. For this group, an enduring peace seems like a mirage. Yet, there are some who are confident that Nigeria will solve her problem and enjoy an enduring peace. This group is made up of politicians and self assumed patriots. Our concern here is to look at the various solutions which have already been employed to solve the problem of conflicts in Nigeria and to what extent these solutions have achieved the desired results.

On the problem of ethnicity, the various governments have made concerted efforts to reduce the menace. Various efforts like state creation, National Youths Service Corps Scheme among others were aimed at integrating the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria so as to collapse ethnic/regional boundaries. The regional structure which Nigeria inherited at independence was abolished by Aguiyi Ironsi in 1966 when he assumed power after the January coup of 1966. The abolition of the regions was resented by some ethnic groups and the regionalist. In 1967, Gowon created twelve states structure. The number of states were raised to nineteen in 1976 by the Muritala Mohammed administration. Babangida increased the state to thirty in 1991 and in 1996, Sani Abacha made it thirty-six. These new states were created following intensive pressure on the government by communities which are ethnically homogenous. These ethnic groups want self-determination and freedom from domination by other more powerful ethnic groups within the federal structure (Okafor 1997).

The complex problem of forming a nation out of peoples from diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds was recognized by the founding fathers of Nigerian nation at independence. This is why the old Nigerian national anthem composed at independence reads inter alia "Though tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood we stand". The inter-ethnic relationship among different tribes and tongues in Nigeria is not that of Brotherhood as urged by the old national anthem

but that characterized by mutual suspicion and distrust. The outcome of this suspicion and distrust have been negatively overwhelming; the bloody civil war, different inter-ethnic and religious crises, annulment of June 12 election, political killings and even killing of Corp members on national assignment simply because they are from another tribe. Today, states in Nigeria exist only for the interest of their citizens and not as Nigerian states. Once one is not a citizen of a particular state where he/she is residing, he/she is a stranger or a settler yet the 1999 constitution recognizes the inalienability of every Nigerian to reside or settle anywhere in Nigeria and exercise his/her full right as a citizen of the country (chapter four of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria). Some states in Nigeria operates what is obnoxiously known as state indigenization policy where the state sacks workers from other states working in the state establishment without remuneration. Where a non-indigene is given appointment, it is only on contract; no promotion, no entitlement and no job security with poor remuneration. It is evident that these solutions to ethnicity have failed.

The causes of political conflict have been identified to include lack of political education, lack or low political consciousness, illiteracy, poverty, flagrant abuse of election rules and constitution, rigging among others. Both state and federal governments have put in place some machineries to correct these anomalies and ensure a conflict-free elections and an enduring peaceful political climate. Such agencies include security agencies, INEC (the party and election regulatory body), National Orientation Agency (NOA) to educate Nigerians politically, the Civil Liberty Organization (CLO), ministry of information, Election monitoring group etc. All these are to ensure a hitch free election. There are even laws stipulating punishment for electoral offences. Today, the political situation in the country remains very dicey and unpredictable. Past elections have been characterized by election fraud and violence. Hundreds of lives were lost after the 2011 general election. The 2015 election is fast approaching and there is apprehension in the air. Many Nigerians living outside their state have started relocating their families. There is fear that the 2015 election will make or mar Nigeria as a nation. Electoral laws in Nigeria lack the power of enforcement. That is why nobody has been prosecuted for breaching them or making incisive statement. Otherwise, why should Buhari tell Nigeria that if he loses in the polling booth, he will contest his defeat in the street. Shortly after the

declaration of Goodluck Jonathan as the president, the street of many states in Northern Nigeria started burning and consuming innocent lives. The zoning and rotational presidency arrived at the 1994-1995 constitutional Conference has not helped our political woes rather it has aggravated it. The agitation in the country by the Northern elements is that he (Jonathan) stole their mandate. A section of the country is laying claim to their legitimacy to be the no 1 citizen as far as Nigeria exist. The agitation from other sections of the country has always ended in political strife.

Chapter four of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states the fundamental rights of the citizens. These fundamental rights include:

- 33 - Right to life
- 34 - Right to dignity of human person
- 35 - Right to personal liberty
- 36 - Right to fair hearing
- 37 - Right to private and family life
- 38 - Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- 39 - Right to freedom of expression and the press
- 40 - Right to peaceful assembly and association
- 41 - Right to freedom of movement
- 42 - Right to freedom from discrimination
- 43 - Right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria
- 44 - Compulsory acquisition of property
- 45 - Restriction on and derogation from fundamental rights
- 46 - Special jurisdiction of High Court and legal aid.

The constitution is very explicit on matter of religion. First, it recognizes the secular status of Nigeria as a nation. There is no state religion and nobody has the right to impose any religion on anybody neither can anybody or group of people impose a particular religion on the nation. Article 38 section 2 of the constitution states:

No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such instruction, ceremony or observance relates to

a religion other than his own or a religion not approved by his parent or guardian.

The question is to what extent has this provision of the constitution been respected by both the people and government of Nigeria? In 1987, Babangida secretly enrolled Nigeria as a member of the Organization of Islamic countries (OIC). In 2000 and beyond, there were moves by some northern governors to introduce the muslim Sharia code in their states where some citizens and Nigerians living in such state are Christians. This resulted in the Kaduna riot of 2000 and other religious and ethnic conflicts in the north with their toll on human lives. The Boko-Haram group has even issued a condition to President Goodluck Jonathan to get converted into Islam and to Islamize Nigeria. The activities of this group have claimed many thousand lives of innocent Nigerians

Different efforts by government to combat poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and corruption have proved abortive. Agencies like National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP), Agency for mass literacy, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Due Process, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, ICPC, among others are avenues by government to make the citizens believe that things are working. Many of these agencies are either avenue for siphoning public fund or instruments in the hand of government to witch-hunt perceived enemies and political opponent. The question which many Nigerians always ask is the neutrality of EFCC.

Other solutions proffered by scholars include the use of technology to detect crimes, integration of people into government and the complete overhaul of the security system (Eme, 2009, 2010, and 2011). For Nwaofia (2012), the only solution to the numerous conflicts is the splitting of the country so that the North will be severed from the South. According to him, Nigeria has never been and will never be a country. Forcing the nation to be one is laying and hatching more conflicts. Abdullahi (2012) opines that the solution to Nigeria's conflict can be found in good governance. This can be achieved through democratic institution, rule of law, transparency and service delivery. Abdullahi (2012), concludes that the only means of ensuring enduring and sustainable development is through creating an enabling stable

political climate that is built on democratic ethos and principles that are practical and maintained in the society.

Abdulkadir (2011) offers the following solutions;

- a) The government at all levels must ensure that their reform programmes extend to the religious sector of the economy, in a view to provide policy-frame-work that will regulate religious affairs in the country.
- b) Both the church and the mosque, must desist from hijacking any conflict that is non-religious in nature.
- c) Religious and community leaders must evolve new ways of engaging the youth in order to divert their attention from violence.

The big question is why have all these solutions failed to arrest conflicts in Nigeria so that an enduring peace will be ushered in? These solutions have failed because they address the how instead of the why of conflicts. Many of these solutions are ephemeral and superficial approaches instead of a transcendental and substantial approaches which the problems deserve. Both Nigerians and Nigerian government and those proffering these solutions are pursuing shadows and accidental manifestations of these conflicts instead of the quintessence and the essence. These solutions bother on the conflicts as they appear and not the conflict in themselves. The solutions are targeted at saving the structure without solidifying the substructure. This is what we refer to as "the fundamental errors" and that is why they have all failed to solve the problems of conflicts in Nigeria and thereby making an enduring peace elusive.

The Fundamental Solution: The Ontological Approach.

Ontology is one of the branches of metaphysics. According to (Nwala 1997), it attempts to answer the question: what is the nature or essence of being? Is it mind or matter? If it is matter or mind, does it exist at various levels or in hierarchy or is it uniform and same at all levels? Igbo (African) traditional thought conceives of reality as fundamentally spiritual, beginning from the Supreme Being to gods, spirits, ancestors, to the hierarchies of human beings, and then to animals, plants and inanimate objects. These beings interact and influence each other.

Webster Dictionary (2004 ed) defines Ontology as the science of real being; the philosophical theory of reality; the doctrine of the universal and necessary characteristics of all existence. The hierarchy of beings constitutes what is referred to as the ontological hierarchy of beings. Ontology is interested in the study of the essence and quiddity of being. It studies beings from a universalist perspective to sieve out what is common to a particular class of being. It views all human beings as a being with essence and endowed with vital qualities. It is not interested in the accidental qualities of beings; neither does it study beings as particular. Ontology is the study of Being qua Being. The question now is what is the ontological status of the human person.

“What is Man”?

For Heidegger, the human person is a being with others. He does exist alone; he exists with and for others. This social ontological nature of man is also buttressed by Aristotle when he asserts that man is a social animal. He who does not live in a society or does not have the need for that is either a beast or a god. Nkrumah (1964:69) remarks that the traditional face of Africa includes:

an attitude towards man which can only be described in its social manifestations; as being socialist. This arises from fact that man is regarded in Africa as primarily a spiritual being, a being endowed originally with certain, inward dignity, integrity and value. This idea of original value of man imposed duties of a socialist kind upon us. Herein lies the theoretical basis of African communalism.

The point we are making here is that the human person is not just an ordinary being. He is different from other physical being because of his position in the ontological hierarchy. He is a being with essence.

Kant (1996) maintains that man is an end in itself and should never be used as a means to an end. The implications of Kant's assertion are many. First, there is no end higher or above man. Man therefore remains the ultimate. His essence is higher and above religious, ethnic, political and other interests. The essence and dignity of the human person becomes the substructure or foundation on which other ends or interest

are built upon. Remove or truncate the substructure or the foundation, other structures will definitely collapse. Once the human person is used as a means to any end, his essence is not only negated but the essence of the entire humanity because all human beings have the same essence. It is this essence that is not only universal but humanistic that informs such declaration as the Universal Declaration of Human Right in 1948, the entrenchment of human rights in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. What qualifies one to enjoy these rights is not his political, economic, ethnic or religious status but for the simple and singular reason that he or she is a human being. The human person must first of all exist before thinking of where he/she comes from, what political, religious or economic position to pursue.

With regard to ethnicity, we are all victims of “the accident of birth”. All us are thrown into existence without our consent. So, any conflict resulting from ethnicity proves our ignorance of our thrownness into being. Sacrificing or killing a fellow human being on the ground of politics, religion, or economic is using “man as a means to an end” and not an end in itself because his ontological status is higher than any other in the society.

Concluding Reflection:

To combat conflicts in Nigeria and ensure an enduring peace, we must recognise the ontological status of the human person which is founded on the universal principle of universal humanism. All human being possesses the same essence. Ontologically, we are equal in dignity and character. The human person is unique. Even though he may be political, ethnic, economic and religious, these are accidental qualities. His real quality or essence is that he is a being qua being. By the time Nigerians realize this ontological fact, we will come to term with reality and then be in a position to distinguish between what is real and what is not real, the essence from the accident, the human person as a being qua being, the human person as an end in itself and not as a means to an end. The problem with Nigerians is not political, ethnic, religious or even economic; it is the problem of philosophical ignorance which induces us to sacrifice the human person on the altar of political, ethnic, economic and religious interests.

When we realize the ontological status of the human person, we will be seeing ourselves in the others and when we Nigerians start seeing

ourselves in the others, all the vices that usually give birth to conflict will be eliminated and we will embrace and enjoy an enduring peace in this country which will pave way for national development.

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**EMERGING TRENDS OF TERRORISM IN NIGERIA:
CAUSES, EFFECTS AND THE NEED TO LOOK INWARD**

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Abstract

For thousands of years in history, terrorism has been in existence dating back to the time when it became human desire and willingness to secure political interest with the use of violence. The act of terrorism, often targeted on unsuspecting group of persons has all through the years, steadily and gradually broken local boundaries to form new links and partnerships with notable terrorist organizations across the globe with the terrorists breaking new grounds in intelligence monitoring and gathering as well as perfecting expertise in the usage of hyper-sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. Recently, verifiable evidences have shown that Nigeria has recorded series of violent terrorist attacks. Analysts and observers have, at different times hinged the reason for the emergence of terror activities in Nigeria on political and religious considerations. Some traced the cause on socio-economic line, while others see it as a by-product of leadership failure. In all, the advocates of ethnicism and tribalism are not rooted out. This paper therefore, is an honest attempt to investigate the root-causes of terrorism in Nigeria, how it has affected us in our march to nation building and where we have contributed by any standard to inflict on ourselves the national security challenges we are facing today. This enquiry will enable us to explore possible ways of stemming the rising tide of terrorism in Nigeria.

Keywords: Terrorism, Violent Crime, Ethnicism, Politics, Religion, Boko Haram.

Introduction

Terrorism is a phenomenon that commands varying meanings to different people and organizations. The differentiations in meaning depend on who performs the act, who is the target, the nature of the

attack and the overriding ideological force behind the act. Ideologically, terrorism can be religious, political, ethnic, tribal, economic, and it could also be cloaked 'state interest' or a combination of two or more of these fundamental considerations. With a closer look at the actors, terrorism can conveniently be narrowed down to state or non-state sponsored violence. To Ajayi (2012), "terrorism is from the word 'terror' which conjures the image of fear and trepidation". He further noted that it could "take the form of hijacking of commercial aircraft, kidnapping, assassination, gun attack, arson, and frontal attacks". Conceived in this direction, the 'reign of terror' can simply be referred to as terrorism. In a situation, where the certainty of peace, security and lawful existing order are no more guaranteed; when people unavoidably live together in fear of one another, without trust for each other, on the ground that any location, at any time harbors imminent danger that can spell doom and unleash disaster on non-combatant individuals, the summation effect is the 'reign of terror'.

Under this condition, the economy suffers retrogression, the legitimacy of government to provide security of life and property can no longer be sanctioned, enemy's border will hardly be defined, social security is undermined and the citizenry lives in total despair. This may have been the reason why Robert (1977) sees terrorism as intimidatory in intent...pursued chiefly through the use of violence, though this need not, of course, consist just in the employment of physical force but may also involve resort to psychological weaponry". Conceptually, Ajayi and Robert's definitions of terrorism are universal in referring to any *act* or *deed* that is capable of evoking the feeling of terror. But this thinking runs contrary to the views of Mark Juergensmeyer when he explains: "whether or not one uses 'terrorist' to describe violent acts depends on whether one thinks that the acts are warranted. To a large extent the use of the term depends on one's worldview: if the world is perceived as peaceful, violent acts appear as terrorism. If the world is thought to be at war, violent acts may be regarded as legitimate" (*Awake Magazine*, June 2011). Therefore, full declaration of war by constituted government authority, which is capable of entrenching the reign of terror and render to naught the right to life and peace of the unarmed, especially women and children who are powerless to resist onslaught, can be rightly described as legitimate.

In her 1999 Convention, OAU (now AU) defined terrorism as “any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a state”. This concept leaves out any action by the state that has to do with the use of its armed apparatuses to suppress, intimidate any form of opposition and secure the loyalty of its citizenry and which, in many cases, violates rights to peaceful demonstration and expression of personal liberty in a liberal democracy. However, the objective of employing the ‘use of terror’ is undoubtedly on whose interest is affected.

While we admit lack of a holistic definition of terrorism, we consider as convenient and in the context of this paper, the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004) which sees terrorism as: “criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act”.

Building on this, we identify as terrorist acts police brutality, unjustified military incursions, attacks on public or private organizations and installations, against an individual or a group of individuals as a means of achieving or sustaining a particular interest, irrespective of who is the actor or sponsor. Violent crimes are for no reason justifiable, “whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them” (UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004)).

On this background, we set out with the quest to unravel forms of terror activities in Nigeria, how it has affected us and the role of Nigerian government at evoking the spirit of terror through: bad governance, negligence, suppression, corruption or failure to deliver public good, which may lead to insurrection. This enquiry will help us identify where possible solutions lie.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted in this work is Capture Theory. This theory was advanced by George Stigler to explain, “how the state relates with powerful groups and the impact of such relationship on the economy” (Onuoha, 2008:13). In evolving this thought, Onuoha further stated that, “two contending social forces, namely the *Nationalists* and the

Reformists are currently struggling for the soul of Nigerian economy. It is this struggle and the consequent *capture* of the state by a captor that has sustained the economic crisis, and made revamping and sustaining the economy impossible” (*Ibid*, p.8). By using this instrument, there is a strong believe that the current ripples of terrorism in Nigeria, is a direct response to the age-long seizure of political power by a group of corrupt, inept leaders who use the state to serve vested interests to the pains of the people, especially the politically powerless. Omelyanchuk (2001:1) aligns with this in his observation to state that, “powerful *oligarchs* who manipulate politicians, shape institutions, and control the media to advance and protect their own empires at the expenses of social interest...and capture state institutions to extract advantages”. This, he opines, creates considerable costs for the whole societies. The idea of these propositions suggests that there is some form of casual relationship between underlying social, economic, political, and demographic conditions and terrorist activity. According to this proposition, certain underlying conditions and grievances help to explain how, where, and why terrorism occurs (Newman, 2006:746).

The basic concept of the capture theory in relation to the emergence of terrorism in Nigeria is that certain conditions provide an environment and widespread grievances that, when combined with certain precipitant factors, result in the emergence of terrorist organizations and terrorist acts. These conditions, such as poverty, demographic factors, social inequality and exclusion, dispossession, and political grievances, can be either permissive or direct (Newman, 2006:752).

Tracing the Root of Violence in Nigeria

Nigeria is a brainchild of the 1914 amalgamation. Before invading the native land by the locusts of the amalgamation, there existed ethnic nationalities with cultures that are domestic and unique to the native people. Their culture and tradition came under direct confrontation with the milk-sucking, market-oriented administration of the colonial lords. “Dragged down by the need for legitimacy and acceptability, colonial rule in Nigeria depended on the use of force and the deployment of terror to enforce its policies, laws and orders” (Oyeniya, 2009:43). Notable among these policies were imposition of taxes and levies, which led to the famous Aba Women Riot of 1929. Again, “the *Oke-Ogun*

uprising of 1921, presented in colonial records as anti-tax riots, was a resistance effort by Yoruba peoples..., at the height of the impasse, the colonial government engaged the local people in a three-year orgy of violence that cost 10,000 lives (*Ibid*, 2009:44). It is mindboggling that this intense force of suppression is a deliberate design to overrun a people that were fighting to protect their culture from holocaust and re-enact their socio-economic and political relevance in their homeland. There was a similar case at Enugu in 1949, where coal miners protesting unfavorable labour conditions faced police brutality and killing en-masse at the instance of colonial masters.

In 1960, Nigeria became an independent state and inherited the colonial system of administration without recourse to the indigenous values. There were notable violent acts against armless persons in Northern Nigeria and also in South-West that fit into this picture during the events of political vendetta in the early days of Nigeria independence, especially in the West between S. L. Akintola, former premier of the Western Region and Chief Obafemi Awolowo as well as coups and counter-coups of 1960s to early 1980s in Nigeria. This is mostly prominent in the events that led to the secession of the defunct state of Biafra. Agreeably, no conflict has ever been settled by the use of arms especially in a civil war that dispersed millions of people, ruined means of economic survival, rendered dozens of thousands homeless, and declared ethnic cleansing of the Igbo race with the use of hunger and starvation. Amidst this chaos, means of livelihood of the indigenous people were submerged by an avoidable civil war of disproportionate arms possessions between the ill-equipped Biafran soldiers and well-trained, sophisticated Nigerian soldiers. Thereafter, the power plays and political games of the post civil war era that gave birth to the philosophy of 'no victor, no vanquished' also brought about the sustenance of the mistake of 1914 which knitted together, under one political entity as a country, a multilingual group of people and their varying cultures and religious affiliations in utter disregard of a proper political arrangement.

It is true that in 1960, we had a regional political order that recognized the ethno-religious boundaries. Under this structure, the military took over, sustained the structure for a short period of time and later navigated the ship of our political movement into the dock yard of presidential system or better still, into the illusion of federal system of government which, in practice, ignored the boundary lines of the

dominantly Islamic North and dominantly Christian South. Since this time, crises of ethnic, religious and cultural dimensions continue to plague Nigeria. Duvalier (1969) identified this to state that, "Federal Nigeria [*has found it*] impossible for her to silent rivalries to achieve that mixture of ethnic/cultural blend required to maintain national unity". Recognizing this fundamental pitfall, some of our leading national leaders, past and present, went further to bring religion into politics in a multi-religious nation where religion can never be used to foster national unity. Today, religious-related violence is a more dreaded form of violence in Nigeria.

Our nationalists also left lofty ideals that would have fostered national integration and opened more wounds that cannot easily be healed. According to Onyejekwe (2011:184), Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, while addressing the Northern House of Assembly said that, "the Southern people who are swamping into this region daily in such large numbers are really intruders...the people are different in every way including religion, custom, language and aspirations". There was, therefore, an indication that the spirit of patriotism and national unity was lacking when Sir Ahmadu Bello demanded that if the Northerners will be part of Nigeria project, 50% of the membership of the national assembly will be allotted to the North, unconditionally. This request "was accepted by the British and 1963 census figures were manipulated" (*Ibid*, p.184). In the 1957 Constitutional Conference in London, Obefemi Awolowo made a submission for a secession clause to be included in the constitution for Nigeria independence, which the Northern delegates and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe vehemently rejected.

A few days after independence in 1960, Sir Ahmadu Bello in a newspaper publication of Parrot Magazine 12 October, 1960 was credited to have said that, "this nation called Nigeria shall be an estate to us from our great-grand father, Uthman Dan Fodio. We shall vigorously resist a change of power. We shall manipulate the minorities of the North, and we shall regard the South as a conquered territory" (Ijeoma, 2012). The Northerners by this statement have vowed to ruthlessly prevent a change of power using the unscrupulous elements of the North as willing tools to unleash mayhem. Using Boko Haram insurgency as a major tool to capture the soul of Nigeria by the Northern bloc, the Southerners "as conquered territories which will never be allowed to have control of their future" reel in their quest for political survival and recognition. This

statement qualifies to be a jihad movement diplomatically covered by a Muslim leader in pursuit of regional interest and so he used his position to work ceaselessly to strengthen his political and religious powers. According to Ajayi (1999) "he successfully dragged the northern region government into the use of religion in the political process".

By this, no one can conveniently deny that the ruling elites took ungainly advantage of the Nigeria ethnic and religious divides. In which case, religion became a strong tool for regional and ethnic interests' expansion; and it brought with it devastating imbroglio into what would have held us together as a people under a common order. Political leaders sat back under the cover of fighting for their ethnic people's interest, and to safeguard it against marginalization, to device means of gaining overhead control of Nigeria commonwealth. This they did whenever they feel being personally alienated from the scheme of things by exploiting the psyche of their weak and uninformed people who had always been instigated to take to the streets and unleash violence without asking questions. Usman (1979:88-89) was lucid in this direction to state that:

The intermediary bourgeois (the ruling eliteours) cannot claim political leadership openly on the grounds that he is, or wants to be, an exporter, shareholder, rentier or rich bureaucrat. He has to take over as a Muslim or Christian. He has to take over as an Ibo [*sic*], Hausa, Idoma or Efik... The manipulation of religion in Nigeria today is essentially a means of creating the context for this fancy dress ball, for this charade of disguise. This game of mistake...

Thus, the people can no more claim the ownership of legitimacy as it is now derived mainly from religion and other ethnic-specific considerations. Undercover power-seeking became nurtured ultimately for self-perpetuation in office and attention diversion from corruption, inert vision, and total incompetence in leadership. Religion became a weapon of political movement in both the Northern and Southern parts of Nigeria. While Christianity is floated in the South, the North is completely immersed in Islam, a religion that "seeks to Islamize Nigeria by whatever means at its disposal and at whatever human cost" (Ajayi,

2012:103). This problem created a deep ideological trench in the Nigeria project, especially in the North, on how to separate religion from secular government institutions, conscientiously constituted to administer public affairs in a multi-religious country.

Since 1960 till date, all the ethno-political violence in the North has successfully been narrowed down to 'commitment to the cause of Islam'. Connell (2012:87) wrote that, "Boko Haram objective is to overthrow the secular Nigerian Government and enforce a Sharia Law based government". Earlier before now in the 1980s, there was the Maitatsine group whose mode of oppression was unprovoked killing and assault. Danjibo (2009) noted that, "Boko Haram had its roots in and drew inspiration from the Maitatsine uprisings of the early 1980s, in terms of objectives but its organizational modus operandi are more in tune with the Taliban" [*a foreign terrorist organization with operational base in the Middle East*].

Besides religion, the ability to identify other conceivable forces that can water and provide enabling environment conducive for extreme acts of terrorism to thrive is the highest principle of state craft.

How the Foundation of Terrorism was laid in Nigeria

Terrorism is an issue that has for long remained at the front burner of thematic discourse for both local and international security experts. Organized bombings and networked terrorist attacks in the North have succeeded in making Nigeria a country set aside for spilling of innocent blood on daily basis. Significantly, Nigeria, a country whose constitution professes secularity, has witnessed reactionary chains of politico-religious upheavals. The worst being suicide bombing of churches and government institutions with "street urchins who were allegedly given between N50 and N150 each, soon took to the streets killing, maiming and destroying anything, human or material which in their judgment constituted a clog on the wheels of Islam" (*TheNews*, 3 March, 2003 p.21). These street urchins that have become ready tools for causing mayhem are signs of neglect by our leaders. Mohammed Yusuf, the fallen leader of Boko Haram, had a training ground where he trained and indoctrinated the *mujahedeen* [Islamic guerrillas fighting a holy war, jihad] for the task ahead, most of whom "were largely illiterate youths, some of whom were school dropouts or petty itinerant traders, who with the ready army of jobless drifters, especially the *Almajiri*, soon bonded

and made their presence felt in Borno, Yobe and Bauchi states” (Ajayi, 2012:105). The founding leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Lawan whose original names were given as Ahlulsuma Wal’jama’ah hijra claimed that his objective was, “to call the government’s attention to the economic hardship and poor living standards the Nigeria people faced” Onuoha in (Connell, 2012:88).

There is therefore, a strong belief in many quarters that these jobless youths, especially the *almajiris* predominantly found in all the nook and cranny of the Northern states, were abandoned, neglected, and never cared for. They were left vulnerable to epidemic diseases and harmful natural climatic conditions in the midst of affluent political gladiators who use them as willing elements to perpetrate violence and seek personal gains under the veil of religion. To this group who has been alienated economically, socially, and politically, the government has also tottered woefully to evolve and maintain a sustainable programme that will not only override religious injunctions but specifically aimed at rehabilitating and sensitizing the group. The CAN political party in *Vanguard* issue of May 15, 2013, submitted that, “the Boko Haram crisis has its roots in years of bad governance that has produced an army of unemployed, unemployable, disenchanting and demoralized youths who are now ready hands and willing tools for those seeking to perpetrate violence. The unprecedented corruption across the land, as well as injustice and extra-judicial killing are also fuelling the crises”.

Similarly, electioneering and inordinate quest to control national wealth are, again, other major contributors to the killings and bombings. In *Punch Newspaper*, 22nd May, 2013 a news report by Olusola Fabiyi read that, “everybody in this country knows that it was Buhari who vowed that if he did not win the election, he would make the country ungovernable for this President. It was this same Buhari, who said during the electioneering period that if the votes were counted and he lost, people should go for blood”. If this is true, Nigeria has become a fallen mammoth prey in the cruel claws of ethnic, religious and political leaders. The people’s voice is no more effective through their votes and the result is the emergence and complete ‘reign of terror’.

Terrorism in Nigeria and its External Links

We must understand that while investigating the causes, objectives, effects and the operational strategies terrorist groups within our national boundary lines, external influences cannot be completely ruled out. Recent strategies adopted by known international terrorist organizations are to support financially and train technically, micro insurgent groups on how to use and manufacture hyper-technological weapons for terrorist attacks. Thus, building formidable networks of terrorism that defies national borders across the globe, to undermine international security and cybernetic monitored intelligence. However, some people hold the opinion that Boko Haram onslaught is a spillover of the Arab Spring. To this group, the downfall of the Libyan leader, Muammar al-Qaddafi led to shift in arms possession and control because, according to (Al-Tamimi) in Connel (2012:89), “stock piles of missiles and other arms were looted and quite possibly fell into the AQIM members who could pass off some of the weaponry to Boko Haram affiliates”. Some believe that terrorism in Nigeria is the aftermath of 2011 general elections result because of some wild statements made by some powerful politicians during the time of the elections. Another group subscribes to economic inequality and hunger. Evidence has also shown that any attempt to join global war against terrorism, you will be declared an enemy. *TheNews* 03 March 2013, reports that,

During the September 11, 2011 attacks in the US, opinions were divided among Nigerians...the Federal Government condemned the terrorist attacks in strong terms...and rendered support to the global war against terrorism, minority Muslim elements in the northern part of the country openly associated with the attacks. When the US embarked on an aerial bombardment of Afghanistan to flush out the Taliban regime in Kandahar, some Muslims protested against the American option on the streets of Kano, Gusau, Zamfara State capital among others”.

Within this period, Boko Haram has built up linkage with AlQaeda led by Osama Bin Laden, who sponsored the popular 9/11

attack in the USA. "It has been established" according to (Dearn, 2011) "that by 2004, the sect leaders had established links with Algerian Salafist Group, now known as Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which gave some of their members training in combat, weapons handling and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)". The affiliation of the Boko Haram to Al-Qaeda added an international dimension to its activities and it informs the professional stratagem engaged by the group to execute their plans, especially to fight and forcefully break down any force that does not conform with Islamic doctrines and belief system and, if it is possible, Islamise those countries where you have a substantial percentage of Muslim population. This they believe, if it is achieved, will uproot and flush out corruption and influences of Western culture and establish government that will align with the principles of Sharia, Islamic Law. Therefore, on the global perspective, the problem is not with whether you are Igbo, Efik, Hausa or Yoruba but the government, which Al-Qaeda believes remains inimical to "uniting all Muslims and establishing a government which follows the rule of the Caliphs" (*TheNews*, 03 March 2003, p.22). The To Osama, the Muslim should stage jihad against those governments that were "corrupt" and are Western lackeys.

Partnership with known international terrorist organizations may have, therefore, informed the reason why the terrorists' operational strategies are the same in execution of their plans. They use the media to reach a wider audience and their operations are lethal as they generally believe in suicide bombing, war on cities and streets to inflict greater harm on their enemies, an operation they believe was never seen in the history of the infidels. Recent realities in Boko Haram's strategic assemblage of weaponry, access to a well-coordinated logistics support, piloting of a technically sound operation speak volume of a terrorist organization with a strong financial base that cannot only be dependent on domestic sponsorship. This is the situation we have today in Nigeria.

Scourging Effects of Terrorism in Nigeria

Recent terrorists' onslaught has again taken Nigeria back to the dark days of bloody history. There is never a passing day without one report of bombings, killings, mass burials, attacks on government institutions, school and markets shutdown, prison breaks or verbal battles between Muslim and Christian leaders and between political and ethnic

leaders with everybody seeking justification for his group. Lamenting the impact of terrorism in Nigeria, Idoko (2014:13) observes that, "in Borno, the poverty level has immensely increased. They are now suffering in abject poverty and penury. The marketers no longer have customers, the government workers are not paid on time. Fear has crawled into every corner of public life...most foreign investors that hitherto had wanted to come into this country have diverted to other African countries like Ghana and South Africa".

In Yobe State, one of the states in the North-East where the presidency has declared a state of emergency to fight the insurgency with full military might, "Governor Gaidam said 209 public schools, vehicles and property worth N2.5 billion, and private buildings estimated at N629 million have been destroyed by the insurgents". He informed Nigerians that, "his government had spent about N4.8 billion and an average of N200 million monthly to contain the terrorist insurgency" (*Vanguard*, March 8, 2013). This is happening in a world where the processes involved in revenue generation, appropriation of funds and projects financing form a major conduit pipe for siphoning tax-payers' money. It is happening in a country where political leaders have assumed the nature of vultures ready to feed on the carcass of Nigeria national oil wealth.

Terrorism in Nigeria has no doubt affected our national growth and development in many ways. Our youths have lost value orientation as they now believe that violence and use of arms are better ways to conflict resolution and emancipation from poverty. Our leaders have lost direction. Women and children are without hope. Our economy is fast collapsing. The school system has been dislodged in vision and there is no difference between religious and political leaders. Holocaust of poverty has visited us and the poor are high in number. All these and many more atrocities on the land, make Nigeria a failed state ready to disintegrate.

Conclusion

It has been established that a number of conceivable factors that are in all human in nature combined to bring about terrorism in Nigeria, starting with the colonial system of government through the mistake of 1914 to the inheritance of October 1, 1960 with utter disregard to indigenous values. In the fight against terrorism, our leaders are not sincere because they rely basically on ethnic and religious politics to

justify heinous atrocities committed on the nation and acquire personal gains. Again, there is lack of necessary infrastructure for self-development, total absence of social security scheme for the unemployed, the aged and children facing the scourge of hunger and neglect. These are direct indices that can fuel revolution and strife. With this knowledge at hand, Onyenekwe (2011:187) believes that, "the time has come for Nigeria to start seeing the recent spate of bombings, financial inadequacies especially from federating states, mass unemployment and general insecurity as a national clarion call for...national conference". There is also the feeling that whoever joins the global community in fighting terrorism either materially, financially, technically, or by verbal action as well as military support, has sanctioned for blood in the hands of terrorist organizations. Nigeria should not be intimidated rather, it should seek dialogue with those who are ready for peace and launch full military attack against those groups that have chosen the way of violence without respect to the sanctity of human life and respect for the fundamental human rights of other citizens to life, to freedom of movement and to security of their persons.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, we recommend that for any nation to contain the growing tide of terrorism in the 21stC, it should create an enabling environment to fast-track industrial growth as a formidable base for economic development and empowerment. Labour laws should be made strong to protect workers' rights and avoid massive exploitation of labour. This will enable the nation, in the long run, to raise its budget on defence.

Nigeria should begin to build new partnerships and define a new road map, which according to Barak Obama in Olive (2008:226), "this is not just about our security. It is about the common security of all the world...to create a Shared Security Partnership Program to forge an international intelligence and law enforcement to track down terrorist networks from the remote island of Indonesia to the sprawling cities of Africa".

Again, Nigeria should seek more cooperation with the other nations to secure its borders, share intelligence information and build a stronger institutional base to monitor terrorist financial networks. Anti-corruption agencies should be stronger and committed to their corporate

mandate. There is need for more powerful technological base. Efforts should be made to protect, against the usage of, by terrorist organizations, the world most dangerous weapons like uranium and plutonium because, terror-based organizations may one day desire and show willingness to acquire and use nuclear weapon on their perceived enemies.

This paper also recommends the option of dialogue, which is a non-violent approach to problem-solving. This ideal, if explored with diligence, will enable our leaders to know what has gone wrong and how to fix it. In doing this, the Nigerian government should know that incessant attacks on armless citizens aimed at drawing attention, must not be neglected. The military might should be applied to flush out those posing immediate and direct threat. Our military outfit requires a new set of reformation in financing, recruitment, training and procurement of modern equipment to face the daunting task within and beyond Nigeria national borders.

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**BUREAUCRACY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN
NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL (1999-2013)**

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Abstract

The main objective of every government, not minding its implicit or explicit political ideology, is to improve the qualitative of standard of living of its citizens in various ramifications such as agricultural development, transport facilities, health services, education, social and welfare services, among others. More importantly, bureaucracy is the instrument or agency through which the government actualizes its basic objectives to the citizens. Therefore, the effectiveness and efficiency of any government towards provision of these essential services is dependent on the nature of its bureaucracy. Consequent upon this, this paper explores the role of bureaucracy in national development in Nigeria to ascertain its efficacy within the period under study. This study interrogates various reforms made to ascertain its effects on development. The study is anchored on qualitative research method and adopts the theory of the developmental state as its tool of analysis.

Key words: Bureaucracy, Development, State, Reforms, Efficiency and Effectiveness

Introduction

The centrality of the bureaucracy of any nation to that nation's development is an undeniable empirical fact. So central is the role of bureaucracy to the development process that the underlying assumption is that while the politicians rule, it is the bureaucrats who actually govern. That being the case, an analysis of the development enterprise of any nation is by and large an evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of its bureaucracy.

Following the lackluster performance of successive governments in Nigeria in the area of service provisioning, the country's bureaucracy has been the subject of scathing criticisms and the target of several

reform efforts. Such reform efforts which date back to the 1970s assumed added impetus with the return to democratic rule in 1999 and the concomitant rising expectations for dividends of democracy from the citizenry. The central focus of such reforms have been on creating efficient, effective and responsive public sector which would transform the country's abundant human and material resources for development and improved lease of life for the citizenry. In spite of these reform efforts however, the Nigerian bureaucracy has remained largely ineffective and inefficient, the government has continued to wallow in its developmental quagmire while the citizens languish in socio-economic doldrums.

While several attempts have been made towards the explication of this disturbing situation, such explanations are by no means exhaustive. Neither have they been able to develop the roadmap for the creation of an efficient and effective bureaucracy which is a desideratum for national development. As a matter of fact, earlier efforts have generally blamed both Nigeria's persistent development challenge and the failure of the various reform efforts to date on the problem of corruption which is said to have eaten deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. While such an explanation is not in the least irrelevant, it is by no means exhaustive. This paper therefore aims to contribute to such earlier efforts in this direction through an appraisal of the reform efforts embarked upon since 1999. In this, we take as our point of departure Dudley Seers' injunction that the questions to ask about a country's development are:

What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development", even if per capita income doubled. This applies of course to the future too. A "plan" which conveys no targets for reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality can hardly be considered a "development plan" (Seers 1972 cited in Oyugi, 2008: 1-2).

Theoretical Perspective

As noted earlier, various analysts have explained the Nigeria's bureaucratic deficit in various ways. The task however is to change it. In our quest to achieve this, we adopt the theoretical prism of the developmental state as enunciated by Adrian Leftwich (2000) and adopted by Pamela Mbabazi and Ian Taylor (2005). According to this theory, one common strategy that Japan and the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) of South-East Asia adopted to overcome their developmental challenges is through the instrumentality of the 'Developmental State. The developmental state model in these countries has taken a variety of forms but one element common to all of them has been the deliberate state intervention in the economy, which marked clear departure from the neo-liberal development paradigm.

Developmental States are defined as states whose politics have concentrated sufficient power, autonomy and capacity at the centre to shape, pursue and encourage the achievement of explicit developmental objectives, whether by establishing and promoting the conditions and directions for economic growth or by organizing it directly, or a varying combination of both.

With few variations, a typical developmental state has the following defining characteristics:

- ✓ A determined developmental elite;
- ✓ A relative autonomy;
- ✓ A powerful, competent and insulated bureaucracy;
- ✓ A weak and subordinated civil society;
- ✓ The effective management of non-state economic interests; and
- ✓ Legitimacy and performance.

Essentially, this involves the creation of a small but professional and efficient state bureaucracy, the existence of a political milieu where this bureaucracy has enough space to operate and take policy initiatives independent of overly intrusive interventions by vested interests, the crafting of state intervention in the economy without sabotaging the market principle, and a pilot organization similar to the Ministry of International Trade and Investment (MITI) in Japan.

The form of state intervention in a developmental state is not merely where a government makes sure there is enough investment in people, fosters a competitive climate for the private sector or maintains

an 'open economy.' Rather, it sees the market as a device that could be utilized for advancing the development agenda whereby the state involves itself in setting substantive social and economic goals. In a developmental state, it is the synergy between the state and the market that provides the basis for outstanding development experience. In other words, a developmental state does not subscribe to the surrender by the state to the 'market'.

The key thing for a developmental state to succeed, or even exist, the primacy of politics in the complex process of development is fundamental and decisive. The question therefore is not how much state intervention should take place but rather what kind. It has therefore been observed that a key force that distinguishes a successful from a failed state is the social chemistry of the dominant class and the discipline of the leadership. With respect to developmental states, it has been said that nationalism and a national vision lie at the heart of a developmental state and in many respects, development is its ideology.

Aside from Japan and the South-East Asian states, Botswana, which is generally regarded as Africa's success story, has also been generally acknowledged as a developmental state. One of the key explanations for Botswana's development trajectory has been the commitment to development and the willingness to articulate a national vision for development by the elite. Botswana is said to have established a national perspective that would carry the national psyche to a level of providence. The centerpiece of Botswana's development efforts since the first National Development Plan of 1968-1973 has been to raise the standards of living of the population. In line with this, development plans have been guided by the planning objectives of sustainable development, rapid economic growth, economic independence, and social justice.

The National Development Plans have had the advantage of granting policy implementers in Botswana a great degree of space between them and the politicians. Under this arrangement, a technical document drafted by experts and approved by the parliament serves as the blueprint for government policy. Once the plan is approved, any proposals not contained in it are turned aside on the ground that only emergency measures can be adopted until the next plan is formulated. In this sense, Botswana echoes the ideals of the developmental state in which 'the politicians reign and the state bureaucrats rule'.

Aside from the commitment to development by the political and bureaucratic elite, another key ingredient for the success of the developmental state is the establishment of relevant institutions that would sustain growth. In Botswana, the foremost institution in this regard has been the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), which has served as the economic high command, generating policy and playing an active roll in economic planning. Others include: Botswana Development Corporation (BDC); The Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) and Citizens Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA); Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA); and the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC).

Summarily, the key lessons for Nigeria from the developmental state model are: the primacy of politics in the complex process of development; the commitment to development by the political and bureaucratic elite; the role of ideology; and the strengthening of institutions of state.

3. Nature and Performance of the Bureaucracy in Nigeria prior to 1999

It has been noted with respect to the bureaucracy in Africa generally that “the administrative system inherited at independence had been influenced both in design and character by the colonial situation” (Oyugi, 2008: 2). With respect to Nigeria, during the colonial administration in Nigeria (1900-1960), the role of the bureaucracy was essentially concerned with the maintenance of colonial law and order and collection of taxes and levies. The colonial bureaucracy was created in the first instance, to prosecute imperial policies. At Independence on October 1, 1960, things changed. The post independence era witnessed “the transformation and redefinition of the role of the civil service to that of nation building that is assisting the new government to plan and accelerate the pace of Nigeria’s socio-economic development” (Nigeria, 1985:15 cited in Okotoni, 2001: 224).

The First Republic that fell in 1966 ushered in the first military regime in Nigeria. During this period, the Civil Service rose to the challenge of the political crisis, which engulfed the nation. The top civil servants openly assumed political responsibilities. They were not only seen, but they were heard. They were in effect, responsible for policy formulation and implementation, while the military were preoccupied

more with the prosecution of the civil war. The era also witnessed the emergence of higher civil servants, dubbed 'Super Permanent Secretaries'. They became highly influential 'political technocrats', particularly between 1970 and 1975. It was an era of highly bureaucratic power. But the fall of General Yakubu Gowon military regime on July 29, 1975 marked the end of the 'golden age' of the civil servants in the act of governance.

The Second Republic commenced on October 1, 1979 after 13 years of military rule in Nigeria. The Second Republic had Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) as the executive president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The regime was terminated on December 31, 1983 via a coup d'état. During this period, the civil service performed several roles. For example, Oyovbaire (1989) highlighted the following functions of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (who was also a bureaucrat):

- Coordination of the activities of Federal Ministries and Extra-ministerial departments.
- Advising the Head of Government on the appointment and deployment of Permanent Secretaries.
- Formulation of policies on and allocation of office accommodation and staff quarters.
- Provision of staff for newly established and *ad hoc* bodies.
- Management of the careers of officers in the administrative cadre and all Senior Management Staff on GL 14 and above.
- All functions at present performed by the Federal Ministry of Establishments and the Public Service Department of the Cabinet Office.
- Liaison with Heads of State Civil Services.
- Providing leadership and direction to the service, maintaining high morale and *esprit-de-corps*.
- Reviews of machinery of Government, restructuring and re-organization of Federal Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments
- Promotion of good relations between Ministries and Civil Servants.
- Relations with the following special bodies:
 - a. National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA)
 - b. Federal Civil Service Commission (Okotoni, 2001: 224).

From the fore-going, the role of the bureaucracy can be summarized as coordination of federal ministries, advising the political officials, formulation and implementation of government's policies, gathering and supplying of data for policy makers, ensuring continuity of services and public relations services. All the roles highlighted above are so crucial to the smooth running of any administration to that one would be justified in concluding that the bureaucracy is indispensable for the efficient functioning of any nation. Thus, it has rightly been said that, the bureaucracy can make or mar any administration.

It has however been observed that the public bureaucracy in Nigeria is beset with a number of problems that have hampered the effective discharge of its all-important role in governance in the country. One of the identified major problems confronting the public bureaucracy in Nigeria is its politicisation. Several offices in the civil service were at one time or the other politicised by the military. These included the offices of the Permanent Secretary and the Head of Service. Although, there is nothing wrong with the bureaucracy performing political functions, but the fear is that unless such political functions are carefully controlled, they can further aggravate the already strained relationship between the political officers and the bureaucrats, with unpleasant consequences during a democratic regime. The political officers would regard such political roles performed by the bureaucrats as usurpation of powers and trespass.

Another identified problem is the high level of corruption associated with the public bureaucracy in Nigeria. As far back as 1995, a World Bank reported that, "Nigeria's public sector lacks transparency and accountability." This fact has been buttressed by the various corruption perception indices published by the global anti-corruption watchdog, Transparency International (TI) beginning from 2002 when it rated Nigeria as the second most corrupt country in the world. It was further reaffirmed by Chief Ernest Shonekan, the then Head of Nigeria's Interim National Government that succeeded General Ibrahim Babangida following the June 12 1993 electoral imbroglio. This was further re-echoed by Adémólá-Olátéjú (2013) when he wrote that the Nigerian public service is irretrievably dysfunctional with the cardinal characteristic as a silo of corruption. In his words:

the civil servants and the amoral middle class are the foremost destroyers of Nigeria. During the

military era, everyone puts the blame of Nigeria's dysfunction on the military. Under various democratic regimes, we blame the politicians for all ills but there is a constant enabling entity common under the various systems of government we have experimented with – the civil service. The civil service is a problem of major league proportions. We cannot achieve meaningful and sustainable development if those entrusted with public office routinely sow the seeds of corruption and partake in its proceeds (Adémólá-Olátéjú: 1).

He further noted that it would be near impossible for politicians to engage in corruption if public servants refuse to be used as means to corrupt ends or if they decline to be willing accomplices in corrupt schemes. As a matter of fact, public sector corruption in Nigeria has become legendary in its notoriety.

All these are in addition to other problems traditionally associated with the bureaucracy the world over which include its rigidity, resistance to change, lack of innovation, impersonality, and "excessive aloofness, ritualistic attachment to routines and procedures". Cumulatively, the public bureaucracy in Nigeria has suffered a lot of setbacks due to its numerous problems and this has in turn resulted to loss of citizen confidence in the bureaucratic institutions charged with the provision and delivery of public goods and services. Empirically, this is manifested in public utilities that have virtually collapsed, an educational system that has become comatose, a deplorable public health sector, and national and state budgets that have become no more than mere annual rituals.

Meanwhile, various reforms had been embarked upon between 1963 and 1999 in attempts to tackle the problems that plagued the nation's bureaucracy. Some of such reforms were the Morgan salaries and wages commission (1963) which was directed towards the review of salaries and wages of workers because of an unbearable high cost of living in the country; the Adebo Commission (1971) which made a number of recommendations on the structure and organization of the Civil Service and also reviewed the salaries and wages of workers and recommended that a public service commission should be put in place to

take up the responsibility of effectively reviewing the salaries and wages; The Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974 during Gowon's regime, which over-hauled the entire public service in a bid to ensure the development and optimum utilization of manpower for efficiency and effectiveness in the service. There was also the Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission 1988 which was set up by the Babangida Administration to re-engineer the Nigeria Civil Service for effective service delivery. In addition, the Commission was setup to study the structure, staffing and operations of the federal Civil Service. There was also the Allison Ayida Civil Service Reform (1995) setup by the Sanni Abacha regime and which recommended the re-introduction of principle of checks and balances between the Minister and the permanent secretaries.

In spite of these laudable reform efforts however, by the time civilian rule was re-introduced in Nigeria in 1999 after prolonged military rule, essential public services were in comatose and bureaucratic corruption had become the norm of governance. In the words of Lawal and Ariyo (2006: 645), corruption had assumed a normal pattern of life in Nigeria; a way of getting "everything" done, a norm in the land. Consequently, the situation has rendered the Nigerian state (governance) – a non – delivery state. Corruption has denied the Nigerian people the beauty of good governance. Bureaucracy and other institutions have become fraudulent, ineffective and highly centralized. Piqued by this state of affairs, but prodded especially by the prevailing global norm of low tolerance for corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency, the Obasanjo civilian government that emerged in 1999, immediately embarked on a two-pronged fight against systemic corruption and the reform of the country's bureaucracy. It would however appear that both efforts achieved very meager results at best as evidenced by the persisting high level of corruption in the country.

4. Bureaucratic Reforms and National Development in Nigeria Post-1999

The various innovations that were put in place by the Obasanjo administration to fight corruption and reform the bureaucracy included the establishment of anti-corruption bodies like the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and the Due Process Unit in the Presidency

commonly referred to as the due process office. In terms of structural changes in the service, the Budget Office was separated from the Federal Ministry of Finance while the Department of Administration and Supplies was put in charge of awarding contracts and the Department of Finance and Accounts was charged with payment for contracts. This arrangement was to allow for transparency in the handling of activities of different departments of government (Omitola, 2012).

Another major reform of the Obasanjo Administration was the monetization of benefits in the public service. This involves converting all the fringe benefits accruable to public servants into cash. These benefits hitherto made available by government to public officers include the provision of free accommodation and its maintenance, furniture, transportation and chauffeur-driven vehicles, payments for utilities in the official residences/quarters, meal subsidy, domestic servants' allowance, leave grant and reimbursement of medical expenses. The essence of monetization was to reduce the financial cost of governance. It would also assist in reducing the waste and, in some instances, fraudulent practices of the past. The aim of the scheme, in a nutshell, was "to reduce wastage associated with careless spending of government money" (Omitola, 2006: 85). And to implement the scheme, the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) was empowered by the Federal Government to draw up the salaries and allowances of political office holders and public servants which was to be the framework of salaries and allowances of political office holders at all levels of government in Nigeria.

There was also the issue of the severance benefits or allowance payable to political and public office holders, based on 300 percent of their annual basic salaries. These benefits are conceived as a means of compensating these officers who might have left their appointments to take up positions in the public realm. The argument of the Chairman of RMAFC is that Severance Allowance would act as a "bridge" for the politician. It is therefore expected that they should be taken care of after their terms of office. It is therefore argued that these politicians would suffer if they are allowed to go back into the society without a reasonable guarantee of means of adjustment to normal life. This way, it was hoped that they would succumb less to the temptation to deep their hands in the public coffers to ensure a secure future for themselves and their dependants.

Another reform of note in the Fourth Republic which started with the Obasanjo administration and has continued till date is the introduction of contributory pension scheme. The need for the pension reform came as a way of finding a lasting solution to the problem of pension payment in the public sector. The Pension Reform Act which gives legal backing to the contributory pension scheme was aimed at allowing for monthly deduction from workers' salaries from July 2004. The objective therefore was to involve public servants by contributing a percentage of their current earnings in salary to a fund that would eventually become their pension at their retirement. For the protagonist of the new pension scheme the belief is that it would allow for consistency, reliability and availability of funds for pensioners as at when due (Omitola 2012). Again, the underlying logic of this reform is that it would reduce the incidence of embezzlement and fraudulent use of public resources.

Laudable as these reforms appear however, various studies have shown them to be of very limited practical utility in terms of instituting an efficient and effective bureaucracy in Nigeria. Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka (2012), for instance, observed that the reforms, starting from the Morgan Commission of 1963 to the Allison Ayida Panel of 1994, tried quite a lot at improving the Civil Service in Nigeria but that by 2005 it had become obvious that a result oriented Civil Service had not emerged in Nigeria, and that the quality of the Civil Service was severely still greatly hampered by cultural, structural, institutional and other management defects. In other words, in spite of the numerous reforms of the bureaucracy, progress towards the eradication of poverty and hunger, which is the *raison d'être* of any state, in Nigeria has been slow. It has, for instance, been observed that although the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the rate of economic growth have improved over the last decade, this has not led to more jobs or less poverty. For example, the GDP at 1990 constant prices increased from 6.03% in 2006 to 6.60% in 2007 and fell slightly to 5.98% in 2008 and grew again by 6.96% and 7.87% in 2009 and 2010 according to NBS (2010b: 8), but the percentage of the population living below the poverty line nonetheless increased significantly from 27.2% in 1980 to 68% in 2010 according to Ezeani (2012: 37). See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Relative Poverty Headcount, 1980-2010

Year	Poverty incidence (%)	Estimated population (Millions)	Population in poverty (millions)
1980	27.2	65	17.1
1985	46.3	75	34.7
1992	42.7	91.5	39.2
1996	65.6	102.3	67.1
2004	54.4	126.3	68.7
2010	69	163	112.47

Source: NBS (2010b cited in Ezeani, 2012: 38)

Distributing the population into non-poor, moderately poor and extremely poor, table 2 below shows a downward trend in percentage of the non-poor reduced from 72.8% in 1980 to 57.3% in 1992 and further to 34.4%, 43.3% and 31% in 1996, 2004, and 2010, respectively. The moderately poor recorded a percentage increase from 21% in 1980 to 34.2% in 1985. It went down from 36.3% in 1996 to 32.4% in 2004 but increased to 39.3% by 2010. Most worrisome however is that the percentage of the extremely poor increased from 6.2% in 1980 to 29.3% and 38.7% in 1996 and 2010 respectively.

Table 2: Relative Poverty: Non-poor, Moderate poor and the Extremely poor, 1980 -2010

Year	Non-Poor	Moderately Poor	Extremely Poor
1980	72.8	21.0	6.2
1985	53.7	34.2	12.1
1992	57.3	28.9	13.1
1996	34.4	36.3	29.3
2004	43.3	32.4	22.0
2010	31.0	30.3	38.2

Source: NBS, 2010c cited in Ezeani, 2012: 39

Table 3 below measures poverty in Nigeria using four measures namely: relative measure, absolute measure, dollar per day, and food measure. The table shows that food poor increased from 33.6% in 2004 to 41% in 2010, absolute poverty increased from 54.7% in 2004 to 60.9%

in 2010, relative poverty increased from 54.4% in 2004 to 69% in 2010 while the number of people living on less than one dollar per day increased from 51.6% in 2004 to 61% IN 2010.

Table 3: National Poverty Incidence 2003/2004 and 2009/2010

Year	Food poor	Absolute poor	Relative poor	Dollar poor
2004	33.6	54.4	54.4	51.6
2010	41.0	60.9	69.0	61.2

Source: NBS 2010c cited in Ezeani (2012:40)

With respect to the education sector, Table 4 below shows that the net enrolment ratio in primary education was 68 in 1990, increasing to 95 in 2000, before reducing to 88.8% in 2008. The proportion of pupils starting primary one who reached primary 5 was 67 percent in 1990, increasing to 97 percent in 2000 and 2001 and subsequently reducing to 72.3 percent in 2008. The primary 6 completion rate was 58% in 1990, increasing to 76.7 percent in 2000 and 2001 and to 82% percent in 2003 and 2004, reducing to 67.5% percent in 2008. The literacy rate of 15-24 years old women was 80% in 2008.

Table 4: Showing the Net Enrolment in Primary Schools, 1990 – 2009

Indicator	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2015 Target
Net Enrolment Ratio in Public Primary Schools	68	95	95	NA	NA	81.1	84.6	87.9	89.6	88.8	NA	100
Proportion of Pupils starting primary 1 who reach primary 5 (%)	67	67	97	96	84	74	74	74	74	72.3	NA	100

Primary 6 completion rate	58	76.7	76.7	NA	82	82	69.2	67.5	67.5	NA	NA	100
Literacy rate of 18-24 year old women and men (%)	NA	64.1	NA	NA	60.4	60.4	76.2	80.2	81.4	80.0	Na	100

Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria (2010b: 17), cited in Ezeani, 2012: 46

While the sector would appear to have recorded some progress, a disaggregation of the data shows that Nigeria still has more than seven million children out of primary school, of which girls constitute about 62 percent. Furthermore, the education system largely excludes disadvantaged groups and the quality of education is poor. A lot still needs to be done in teacher education and the development of infrastructure. In 2006, only 58% of primary school teachers in Nigeria were qualified. The situation was even worse in the northern states of the country. For example, in Sokoto and Zamfara states, only 22 percent of the teachers were qualified, in Bauchi state 21 percent and in Taraba 33 percent (NBS, 2009 cited in Ezeani, 2012: 46).

In the same vein, the Education for All (EFA) Regional overview report which highlights the situation in sub-Saharan countries named Nigeria as one of the countries at serious risk of not achieving the universal primary education goal. The report defines serious risk as 'furthest to go and moving away from goal or progress too slow'. The same goes for the adult literacy and gender parity goals. With an Education for all Development Index (EDI) of less than 0.8, Nigeria is among 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa very far from achieving EFA goals (The Nation Thursday, October 16, 2008). Moreover, in the Global competitiveness report for the period 2009-2010, Nigeria's primary education level was ranked 132nd out of the 133 countries that were surveyed according to Ejere (2011: 221). Similarly, in the Global Competitiveness Index, for the 2010-2011 period, Nigeria's primary education fared abysmally. With a score of 3.0 on a 10-point scale, the country was ranked 137 out of the 139 countries surveyed (See Table 5 below. GCR, 2010-2011: 19).

Meanwhile, in the UBE guidelines, every primary or junior secondary school in Nigeria is expected to have one general science laboratory, one ventilated improved toilet for a maximum of 4 pupils or students per toilet, and, one teacher to handle only 40 pupils or students in a class (Nigeria, 2000). A study by Adepoju and Fabiyi, (2009) however shows that so far these criteria have not been met due to scarcity of funds. The study noted that in some primary schools, the pupils that constitute a class sit on the bare floor in a classroom with no single chair or table, and that it is not rare to see pupils or students sitting under trees in school premises to receive instructions from teachers because of shortage of classrooms. The study further revealed that 12% of pupils in primary schools in Nigeria sit on the floor, 38% of classrooms have no ceilings, 87% of classrooms are overcrowded, while 77% of pupils lack text books.

Table 6: The Global Competitiveness Index: Basic requirements (showing Nigeria's ranking in Primary Education and Health)

Country/Region	BASIC REQUIREMENTS		PILLARS					
	Rank	Score	1. Institutions	2. Infrastructure	3. Macroeconomic assessment	4. Health and primary education		
Lebanon	166	3.87	113	3.33	125	2.58	44	6.09
Lesotho	124	3.52	100	3.45	120	2.56	77	4.50
Lithuania	88	4.28	111	3.24	95	3.22	7	5.72
Luxembourg	52	4.77	60	3.99	43	4.58	71	4.56
Macedonia, FYR	10	5.81	9	5.73	78	3.96	8	5.87
Madagascar	70	4.45	80	3.75	91	3.45	47	4.51
Malawi	119	3.64	123	3.05	130	2.35	112	2.99
Malaysia	129	3.46	52	4.27	131	2.20	135	2.09
Mali	32	5.19	42	4.82	30	4.97	41	5.01
Malta	128	3.47	109	3.36	121	2.96	66	4.63
Mauritania	40	5.68	34	4.93	40	4.45	52	4.82
Mauritius	131	3.29	119	3.22	104	3.62	118	3.70
Mexico	47	4.82	43	4.61	58	4.18	62	4.69
Moldova	86	4.51	108	3.40	75	3.74	28	5.24
Mongolia	97	4.10	102	3.43	97	3.18	90	4.31
Montenegro	100	3.97	122	3.17	117	2.61	48	4.50
Morocco	45	4.90	45	4.62	67	3.85	37	5.09
Mozambique	64	4.57	66	3.94	71	3.78	31	5.25
Namibia	130	3.43	99	3.48	118	2.56	104	4.17
Nepal	54	4.70	38	4.76	54	4.28	49	5.04
Netherlands	125	3.52	130	3.03	139	1.61	86	4.41
New Zealand	9	5.82	12	5.84	7	5.90	29	5.29
Nicaragua	14	5.71	3	6.00	37	4.82	20	5.40
Niger	109	3.89	127	3.19	111	2.73	110	4.01
Nigeria	138	3.11	121	3.18	135	2.02	97	4.35
Norway	17	5.85	8	5.92	29	5.90	16	5.40
Oman	24	5.41	16	5.37	33	4.94	3	6.11
Pakistan	132	3.39	112	3.24	110	2.75	133	2.15
Panama	40	4.79	73	3.81	44	4.52	38	5.22
Paraguay	115	3.69	137	2.85	125	2.46	82	4.28
Peru	87	4.22	96	3.53	88	3.47	75	4.52
Philippines	99	4.02	125	3.14	104	2.92	68	4.60
Poland	56	4.69	64	4.18	72	3.76	61	4.70
Portugal	42	5.01	48	4.37	24	5.30	94	4.26
Puerto Rico	43	5.01	44	4.58	49	4.44	39	5.07
Qatar	12	5.73	19	5.55	25	5.24	8	5.71
Romania	77	4.26	81	3.74	52	3.44	78	4.90
Russian Federation	85	4.52	118	3.22	47	4.46	79	4.48
Rwanda	94	4.29	19	5.25	101	2.99	106	4.07
Saudi Arabia	28	5.22	31	5.22	28	5.07	22	5.35
Senegal	108	3.80	78	3.77	112	2.71	89	4.34
Serbia	92	4.15	126	3.19	93	3.29	109	4.05
Singapore	3	6.05	1	6.12	5	6.22	32	5.20
Slovak Republic	53	4.77	69	3.80	57	4.19	32	5.20
Slovenia	34	5.18	50	4.37	36	4.83	34	5.19
South Africa	79	4.35	47	4.38	63	3.98	43	4.93
Spain	36	5.13	53	4.25	14	5.67	66	4.80
Sri Lanka	73	4.42	65	4.06	70	3.82	124	2.80
Swaziland	110	3.79	79	3.86	94	3.26	92	4.28
Sweden	4	5.98	2	6.12	10	5.78	14	5.61
Switzerland	2	6.05	7	5.77	6	6.09	5	5.81
Taiwan	63	4.28	78	3.76	196	2.88	98	4.75
Tanzania, China	19	5.90	35	4.82	16	5.83	21	5.26
Tajikistan	112	3.74	77	3.76	116	2.83	131	3.25
Tanzania	116	3.65	83	3.74	128	2.37	115	3.07
Thailand	48	4.82	64	3.99	35	4.84	46	4.93
Timor-Leste	127	3.49	110	3.35	138	1.81	29	5.22
Trinidad and Tobago	95	4.70	60	3.80	45	4.53	79	4.55
Tunisia	31	5.25	23	5.19	49	4.50	38	5.09
Turkey	66	4.49	88	3.61	98	4.21	63	4.47
Uganda	123	3.53	104	3.42	127	2.40	114	3.83
Ukraine	102	3.92	134	2.96	86	3.83	102	3.36
United Arab Emirates	8	5.82	20	5.35	3	6.25	12	5.65
United Kingdom	18	5.58	17	5.28	8	5.88	19	5.46
United States	32	5.21	40	4.67	15	5.05	87	4.39
Uruguay	51	4.77	29	4.72	53	4.29	107	4.07
Venezuela	117	3.66	139	2.43	108	2.82	113	3.98
Vietnam	74	4.29	74	3.80	80	3.58	85	4.47
Zambia	121	3.54	85	3.95	119	2.59	120	3.64
Zimbabwe	137	3.05	105	3.41	129	2.36	129	2.26

Source: GCI 2010 cited in Ngwu (2012: 24)

Concluding remarks

From the preceding presentations, and bearing in mind Seers' admonitions cited earlier, it follows that Nigeria's development challenges remain undiminished since 1999. As a matter of fact, it does

appear to have worsened in spite of the various bureaucratic reforms carried out by the Nigerian government, often in concert with the International Development Partners notably the British Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank Group. The implication of this is that reforms, while not irrelevant, are not sufficient motif force for development. Drawing from our theoretical lens, the key lessons for Nigeria from the developmental state model are: the primacy of politics in the complex process of development; the commitment to development by the political and bureaucratic elite; the role of ideology; and the strengthening of institutions of state. Even more important is the need to transcend the neo-liberal ideological smokescreen of the 'one best method', or the 'no other alternative' interpretation of reality and to tow the part of economic nationalism, which history has shown and common sense strongly suggests is Nigeria's only viable development alternative.

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**ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION A STRONG
TOOL FOR TRANSFORMING NIGERIAN SECONDARY
SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education has been acknowledged as a practical way of developing knowledge and skills in learners in such a way that they can use it to improve their society. Secondary education in Nigeria as presently constituted can best be described as bookish and academic oriented, irrespective of the claims of introducing vocational streams into the system. The need to refocus secondary education towards programmes that will inculcate values that will prepare students for employment and self reliance and bring about national transformation becomes imperative. This paper, therefore, sets out to examine entrepreneurial skills acquisition as a strong tool for transforming Nigeria secondary education in Enugu state of Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. The design adopted for study was descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Enugu state of Nigeria. The population for the study was made up of all 31 academic staff of government technical college, Nsukka and all the 17 academic staff of government technical college Ugbaike, Enugu-Ezike. The sampling technique adopted for the study was census technique because of the small size of the population. Questionnaire of 4-point response scale was developed and used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts and has internal consistency reliability coefficient value of 0.79. Mean rating and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that the respondents were of the view that entrepreneurial skills acquisition is beneficial to students

among others. It was therefore recommended that national policy on entrepreneurship education should be formulated among others.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial skill acquisition and secondary education.

Introduction

Education has been regarded as an important and reliable instrument for national development. It is widely accepted as an instrument of change and development, beneficial to both individuals and the society. It is a veritable instrument for passing on the age long values and norms to the youth. Education is a process through which a society deliberately transmits accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another (Onwuka, 1984, Mkpa, 1987 and FRN, 2004). Education is seen in all modern societies as an effective vehicle for achieving socio-economic growth, progress and social development. Education eradicates illiteracy and ignorance and it is a vehicle for the acquisition of the necessary attitude, knowledge and skills for development and civilization. Education is therefore employed to designate the consciously planned and systematically applied formal training carried out through the various levels of educational system namely pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary and university levels.

Secondary level of education which is the focus of this study is the form of education children receive after primary education and before tertiary stage. It is a gateway to the opportunities and benefits of economic and social development. Globalization and the increasing demand for a more sophisticated labour force combined with the growth of knowledge based economics give sense of urgency to the great demand for secondary education. In Nigeria, it offers a six year educational programme for students aged between 12 and 18 years (FRN, 2004). Secondary education in Nigeria is the level of education that cater for the learning needs of adolescents and young adults who would form the strong link in the population of their communities. It has its articulated goals as preparation of children for useful living in the society and preparation of children for higher education (FRN, 2004) Ejioneme and Ozioko (2008) stated that secondary education prepares its beneficiaries for adult life, promotes social change and social stability. It

helps people to identify and choose their roles in adult life, and motivates them for continuing education.

Secondary education in Nigeria as constituted according to Nwafor (2007) can best be described as bookish and academic oriented, irrespective of the claims of introducing vocational streams into the system. The need to refocus secondary education programmes that will inculcate values that will prepare students for employment and self-reliance and bring about national transformation becomes imperative.

Attempts have therefore been made to help the adolescents in secondary schools acquire entrepreneurial skills to prepare them for employment in the non-wage or information sector. Entrepreneurship education is therefore a key factor to solving the menace of youth unemployment in Nigeria. This will help to produce well seasoned and trained youths who are equipped with relevant skills for self-employment by inculcating in the youth the right types of values, innovative attributes and competencies for survival of individuals and for sustainable developments. The purpose of entrepreneurship education is to foster innovation, creativity and independent manpower development for economic development. This study therefore is set to investigate entrepreneurial skills acquisition a strong tool for transforming Nigeria secondary school education in Enugu states.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study therefore, is to examine entrepreneurial skills acquisition a strong tool for transform Nigerian secondary school education in Enugu state of Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- a. Find out the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition to secondary school students in Enugu state.
- b. Determine factor that militate against the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills acquisition secondary schools in Enugu state.
- c. Determine strategies that should be adopted to achieve entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study:

- i. What are the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition to secondary school students in Enugu state?

- ii. What are the factors that militate against the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in secondary schools in Enugu state?
- iii. What strategies should be adopted to achieve entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state?

Methods

The design of the study was a descriptive survey research design. The design is considered appropriate because Ali (2006) stated that it describes a setting or situation in its natural condition.

The study was conducted in Enugu state of Nigeria. Enugu state is one of the thirty-six states of Nigeria. It has three senatorial zones namely: Enugu North, Enugu East and Enugu West. The study was carried out in Enugu North senatorial zone.

The population for the study was 31 academic staff of government technical college, Nuskka and 17 academic staff of government technical college, Ugbaike, Enugu-Ezike. The schools were chosen because the people are in a better position to give information on the status of entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state. Also the two schools cover both urban and rural setting.

The entire population was used, that is the census of all the 31 academic staff of government technical college, Nuskka and 17 academic staff of government technical college, Ugbaike, Enugu-Ezike were used for the study therefore no sampling. Enugu North senatorial zone was chosen because it has both urban and rural setting. The two schools cover urban and rural areas. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the zone and the two schools.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument titled Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition a Strong Tool for Transforming Nigerian Secondary School Education Questionnaire (EASTTNSSEQ) was developed by the researcher. The instrument was face validated by three experts in the field of entrepreneurship all from University of Nigeria Nuskka. The instrument had a 4-point response scale of strongly agree (SA), agrees (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with a corresponding value 4, 3, 2, and 1. The corrections and suggestions of the valuator were used to produce the final copy of the questionnaire. Split half technique and Pearson product moment correlation method were used to establish or determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and it yielded a coefficient value of 0.79.

A 22 item questionnaire on benefits, factors and strategies was used to elicit information from respondents. The 22 items had three clusters A, B, and C. Cluster A elicited information on benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition, cluster B elicited information on factors that impede or militate against the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and cluster C elicited information on strategies to be adopted to achieve entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools. Twenty-two (22) item instrument (questionnaire) were administered to the respondents with the help of two research assistants.

The research engaged the services of two research assistants with whom the administered the instrument. One research assistant was chosen from each of the schools selected. This eliminates the problem of the respondents misunderstanding the assistant's misrepresentation of ideas of the assistants that could arise due to differing dialects. All the copies of the questionnaire were retrieved.

The data generated were analyzed based on research questions. Descriptive method of data analysis using frequency table, means and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. A decision mean of 2.50 was used.

Results

Results of the study were obtained from the research questions were through data collected and analyzed.

Research Question 1

What are the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition to secondary students in Enugu state?

Table 1: Mean rating of respondents on entrepreneurial skills acquisition for secondary school students.

S/N	Questionnaire items	Government Technical College Nsukka staff			Government Technical College Ugbaike staff		
		\bar{x}	SD	Dec	\bar{x}	SD	Dec
1	Creates necessary awareness and motivation in students for promotion of self-employment	3.75	0.54	SA	3.79	0.64	SA
2	Identifies students possessing entrepreneurial skills for small scale business enterprise	3.33	0.72	SA	3.44	0.76	SA

3	Promotes entrepreneurship among students to enable them contribute effectively to national development.	3.38	0.79	SA	3.45	0.63	SA
4	Develops the interest and attitude of students towards self-reliance and self-employment.	2.78	0.94	A	2.75	0.75	SA
5	Stimulates indigenous entrepreneurship in students to participate actively in societal development.	3.11	0.80	SA	3.24	0.72	SA
6	Provides basis for developing entrepreneurial competencies needed by youths to reduce the rate of business failure.	3.38	0.82	SA	3.56	0.48	SA
7	Traces potential entrepreneurs among students to establish small scale business.	3.29	0.76	SA	3.35	0.64	SA
8	Enables students to acquire knowledge and self-confidence in opportunities that abound for success.	3.31	0.62	SA	3.33	0.66	SA
	Cluster mean	3.29	0.65	SA	3.36	0.66	SA

Key to Table 1:

X = Mean

SD = Standard deviation

Dec = Decision

SA = Strongly Agree

The data for answering research question one (1) are presented in table 1. The data presented on Table 1 show the analysis of mean value opinions of academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka and Government Technical College Ugbaike, Enug-Ezike on the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition for secondary school students. From the table and analysis the academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka rated the items 3.75, 3.33, 3.38, 2.78, 3.11, 3.38, 2.29 and 3.31 respectively with corresponding standard deviation of 0.54, 0.72, 0.79, 0.94, 0.80, 0.82, 0.76 and 0.62 respectively. The academic staff of Government Technical College Ugbaike rated the same item thus 3.79, 3.42, 3.45, 2.75, 3.24, 3.56, 3.35 and 3.33 respectively with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.64, 0.76, 0.63, 0.75, 0.72, 0.48, 0.64 respectively. The cluster average mean for Government Technical

College Nsukka is 3.29 and for Government Technical College Ugbaike is 3.36 with average standard deviation of 0.65 and 0.66 respectively.

It is shown from the analysis that the two groups of respondents agree that entrepreneurial skills acquisition creates necessary awareness and motivation in students for promotion of self-employment, identifies students possessing entrepreneurial traits for small scale enterprise, promotes entrepreneurship among students, and develops the interest and attitude of students towards self-reliance and self-employment. They also agree that entrepreneurial skills acquisition stimulates indigenous entrepreneurship in students, provides for youth's basis for developing entrepreneurial competencies, trains potential entrepreneurs among students and enables students to acquire knowledge and self-confidence in opportunities that abound for success.

Research question 2

What are the factors that militate against the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills acquisition in Enugu state?

The data for answering research question 2 are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on factors that militate against entrepreneurial skills acquisition of secondary school students.

S/N	Questionnaire items (N = 48)	Government Technical College Nsukka staff			Government Technical College Ugbaike staff		
		\bar{x}	SD	Dec	\bar{x}	SD	Dec
9	Lack of awareness of the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition.	3.16	0.56	SA	3.22	0.65	SA
10	Lack of qualified entrepreneurship trained/motivators.	3.12	0.66	SA	3.28	0.64	SA
11	Government policies that limit the powers of school leads to embark on certain programmes without permission	2.78	0.78	A	2.86	0.92	A

12	Resistance to change due to conservatism	2.64	0.82	A	2.72	0.84	A
13	Lacks of creativity and innovative spirit among school heads.	3.16	0.68	SA	3.24	0.74	SA
14	Weak linkages between schools and successful entrepreneurs.	2.81	1.02	A	2.84	0.94	A
15	Poor funding of schools.	2.88	0.93	A	2.78	0.72	A
	Cluster mean	2.94	0.78	A	2.99	0.78	A

Key to Table 2

X = Mean

SD = Standard deviation

Dec = Decision

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

The data presented on Table 2 show the analysis of mean value opinion of academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka and Government Technical College Ugbaike, Enugu-Ezike on the factors militating against entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state. From the table and the analysis the academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka rated the items thus 3.16, 3.12, 2.78, 2.64, 3.16, 2.81 and 2.88 respectively with a corresponding standard deviations of 0.56, 0.66, 0.78, 0.82, 0.68, 1.02 and 0.93 respectively. Academic staff of Government Technical College Ugbaike rated the items thus 3.22, 3.28, 2.86, 2.72, 3.24, 2.84, and 2.78 respectively with corresponding standard deviation of 0.65, 0.64 0.92, 0.84, 0.74, 0.94 and 0.72 respectively. The cluster mean average means are 2.94 for Government Technical College Nsukka and 2.99 for Government Technical College Ugbaike with corresponding standard deviations of 0.78 and 0.78 respectively.

It is shown from the analysis that the academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka and Government Technical College Ugbaike indicated that lack of awareness of the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition, lack of qualified entrepreneurial trainer/motivators, government police that limit the powers of school

leads to embark on certain programmes without permission, and resistance to change due to condensation are some of the factors militating against entrepreneurial skills acquisition. Also the respondents agreed that lack of creative and innovative spirit among school heads, weak linkages between schools and successful entrepreneurs and poor funding are other factors that militate against entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools.

Research Question 3

What strategies should be adopted to enhance entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary school in Enugu state? (N = 48)

S/N	Questionnaire items	Government Technical College Nsukka staff			Government Technical College Ugbaike staff		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
16	Formulation of national policy on entrepreneurship education.	3.06	0.99	SA	3.01	0.84	SA
17	Establishment of national curriculum of entrepreneurship development	3.18	0.67	SA	3.11	0.62	SA
18	The government encouraging schools to engage in entrepreneurship activities to promote self-reliance.	2.89	0.92	A	2.89	0.83	A
19	Every teacher should relate his area of specialization to the study of entrepreneurship.	3.54	0.92	A	2.89	0.83	A
20	Government should invest in training man power for entrepreneurship education	3.51	0.62	SA	3.56	0.71	SA
21	Secondary schools should establish linkage with successful entrepreneurs	3.68	0.62	SA	3.78	0.46	SA

22	The funding of secondary education should be improved.	3.84	0.41	SA	3.86	0.28	SA
	Cluster mean	3.39	0.67	SA	3.41	0.64	SA

Key to Table 3

X = mean

SD = Standard deviation

Dec = Decision

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

The data for answering research question 3 are presented in table 3. The data presented on Table 3 show the analysis of mean value opinion of academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka and Government Technical College Ugbaike, Enugu-Ezike on the strategies that should be adopted to enhance entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state. From the table and the analysis the academic staff of Government Technical College Nsukka rated the items thus 3.06, 3.18, 2.89, 3.54, 3.15, 3.68 and 3.84 respectively with corresponding standard deviation of 0.99, 0.67, 0.92, 0.48, 0.62, 0.62 and 0.41. The academic staff of Government Technical College Ugbaike rated the items thus 3.07, 3.11, 2.89, 3.66, 3.56, 3.78 and 3.86 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.84, 0.62, 0.83, 0.74, 0.71, 0.46 and 0.28 respectively. The cluster average means standard deviation of 0.67 and 0.64 respectively.

It is shown from the analysis that the academic staff of both schools agree that some of the strategies that could be adopted to achieve entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools in Enugu state include: formulation of national policy on entrepreneurship education, establishment of national curriculum on entrepreneurship development, government encourage schools to engage in entrepreneurship. They agreed also on government investing in training man power for entrepreneurship education, secondary schools establishing linkages with successful entrepreneurs and government improving the funding of secondary education.

Discussion of Results

The results of table 1 on the issue of the benefits of entrepreneurial skills revealed that entrepreneurial skills acquisition holds immense benefits. It creates necessary awareness and motivation in students, it identifies students who possess entrepreneurship traits, it promotes entrepreneurship among students, it develops students interest and attitude towards self-reliance, it stimulates indigenous entrepreneurship in students, it provides the basis for developing entrepreneurial competencies need by youth, it trains potential entrepreneurs among students and it enables students to acquire knowledge and self-confidence in the wide range of opportunities available after school. The findings agree with the view of Dike (1994, and Amoh (2006) that the economic importance of entrepreneurship rests on the formation of small scale business units which have potentials for creating new jobs, increasing output and improvement in general standard of living.

It is shown in the results of table 2 that some factors militate against entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools. Some of them include lack of awareness of the benefits of acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, lack of qualified entrepreneurial trainers/motivators, government policies that limit the powers of school leads to initiative any innovative programme without permission, resistance to change, lack of creative and innovative spirit, weak linkages between schools and successful entrepreneur, and poor finding of education. The findings agree with the observation of Adedoyin (2001) that attempts in the past to introduce entrepreneurship in secondary school failed because poor finding and lack of awareness of benefits.

The results of table 3 on the strategies to be adopted to enhance entrepreneurial skills acquisition found out that entrepreneurial skills are achievable in secondary schools if some measures are adopted. Such measures include formulating national policy on entrepreneurship education, establishing national curriculum on entrepreneurship activities, teachers relating their area of specialization to the study of entrepreneurship, government investing in training of man power for entrepreneurship education, secondary schools should establish linkages with successful entrepreneurs, and improving the funding of secondary education. These findings agree with Ojukwu (1999) and Amoh (2006) that it is essential to promote entrepreneurial skills acquisition in

secondary schools for accelerated economic growth, for self-reliance and improvement in standard of living.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Education in Nigeria as presently constituted can best be described as bookish and academic oriented irrespective of the claims of introducing vocational stream into the system. It is perceived as a means of gaining certificates for access to employment in large forms and civil service. The capacity for the economy to absorb majority of our youths in white collar job is very discouraging and has resulted to high rate of unemployment with it social problems. This is based on the fact that the youths have not acquired the required entrepreneurial skills for self-employment and self reliance. The need therefore to refocus education towards programmes that will inculcate values that will prepare students for employment and self-reliance and bring about national transformation becomes imperative. This paper therefore attempted to examine the benefits of entrepreneurial skills acquisition, factors that militate against the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and strategies to be adopted to enhance entrepreneurial skills acquisition in secondary schools. However, it was it revealed that entrepreneurial skills acquisition promotes self-employment and self-reliance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Adequate and qualified entrepreneurship trainers/motivators should be provided for secondary schools.
- Provision of sufficient instructional materials for entrepreneurship education.
- Non-governmental organization and other relevant agencies should assist government in providing adequate fund and materials for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills secondary schools.
- Government should endeavour to retrain teachers to encourage quality in entrepreneurship education.

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RELIGION: ANTIDOTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined religion as an antidote for environmental problems in Nigeria. The qualitative research method was adopted for this study. The findings of the study are infested with various environmental problems in Nigeria in the past fifty years of African Studies. They are environmental degradation, global warming, ozone depletion, biological diversity loss, deforestation, erosion, flood, drought and pollution. These environmental problems are the resultant effects of man's continuous activities in his search for the maximum utilization of the environmental resources. The activities of man include mining; bush burning, tree felling, overgrazing, urbanization and industrialization. These environmental problems have adverse effects on the socio-economic life of the people in Nigeria and the national development for the past fifty years. The environment is exposed to many things such as pollution, emission of gases and flood that are dangerous to human existence. The implication of the study showed that if these situations are not put under serious checks, the tendency is that the environment would become uncondusive for human habitation. Hence, religion is in position to change this ugly trend in Nigeria. The research therefore recommended that religious bodies should be involved in management of environmental problems in Nigeria.

Key Words: Religion, Environment, Environmental Problems, Nigeria

Introduction

In search for economic development and possible ways of alleviating poverty, Nigeria and most other post-colonial countries veered into industrialization at independence. Mabogunie (2000) observed that

“the first 40 years (1960-2000) of Nigeria’s post-independence economic development included the re-hashed colonial development era”. Okonkwo (1998) noted that “the first decade (1960-1970) of Nigeria’s independence witnessed government plan to promote growth of industries in order to contribute directly to economic growth and national development”. Government employed different strategies to move the country forward in the area of economic and human development.

These strategies have given rise to some environmental problems confronting the nation in general. These environmental problems are distributed in every part of the country. “As industrial economic development model assaulted and degraded the environment in the West, so also it did to Nigeria and other developing countries that toed the model, without adopting creative development models that do not compromise the native integrity of the environment” (Eneh and Owo, 2008). The same is the prevailing circumstance in most parts of the country where precautions were not considered before embarking on some activities in the human environment. These human activities include mining; bush burning, tree felling, overgrazing, urbanization and industrialization which brought about environmental problems such as environmental degradation, global warming, ozone depletion, biological diversity loss, deforestation, erosion, flood, drought and pollution. Waste management including sewage treatment the linked processes of deforestation and soil degradation and climate change or global warming are the major environmental problems in Nigeria.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa (Okebukola and Alaka-Osinowo, 2010:220). It is richly endowed with abundant natural resources both renewable and non renewable (NEST, 2004). It has been however consistently reported to experience degradation of its environment. The discovery of oil in Nigeria has helped to expose Nigeria to more environment problems. According to Ogunsanya (2007), the growth of the country’s oil industry combined with population and a lack of regulation led to substantial damage to Nigeria’s environment. These environmental problems have adverse effects on the socio-economic life of the people in Nigeria.

The environment is exposed to many things such as pollution, emission of gases and flood that are dangerous to human existence. Some of them affect the life span of the living organisms especially the human population. It can also lead to the outbreak epidemic diseases that had

claimed many lives in the Nigerian society. Nigerian government has been trying to combat these problems in the area of formulating comprehensive set of policies regarding environmental protection but has fragile infrastructure to implement these policies. Waste management presents problems in a mega city like Lagos and other major Nigerian cities which are linked with economic development, population growth and the inability of municipal councils to manage the resulting rise in industrial and domestic waste. Hence, this paper is meant to see religion as an antidote for environmental problems in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

Nigeria

Nigeria is politically located in the continent of Africa. Nigeria is a Federal constitutional republic comprising 36 states and its Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the East, and Niger in the North. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean. There are over 500 ethnic groups in Nigeria of which the three largest ethnic groups are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The name Nigeria was taken from the Niger River running through the country.

Nigeria became independent in 1960. Some years later, it had a civil war as Biafra tried to establish independence. Military governments in times of crisis have alternated with democratically elected governments. Nigeria, known as "the Giant of Africa", is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world. Nigeria is roughly divided in half between Christians, who mostly live in the South and central parts of the country, and Muslims, concentrated mostly in the north. A minority practice traditional religions, especially the Igbo and Yoruba religions.

Religion

A single and acceptable definition of what religion is, is difficult to attain, but there are several attempts (Imaekhai, 2010:41). Religion is as old as man. It is a universal phenomenon, something known from the very beginning of mankind as a necessary form of human survival; hence the saying that man is "**homo-religiosis**". This means that man is a religious animal and remains religious from the cradle to grave. He

cannot live without religion. He can only actualize himself by being a member of a group and working in co-operation with other people. His needs are varied and complex. He develops a network of social relationship with various individuals, group of individuals and various social levels. In addition, Bamisaye (1990) asserts that "Religion is a human effort to reconcile himself with cosmic forces which he believes to be capable of influencing his fate positively or negatively". Kirkpatrick (2005) sees "religion as psychological attachment, a powerful emotional relationship to things". Arowolo (2007) states that religion is "the relationship between God and man". To him, it is an idea that started at the time men began to respond to the goodness of our God through worship. Again, Okponaviobo (2002) defines religion as "any phenomenon which seeks to help the individual satisfy his or her spiritual thirst as well as prepare the way of the penultimate". In this definition, it helps man to satisfy his spiritual quests. However, religion is the consciousness of a greater being on whose shoulder lies human existence. Man depends on this greater being for life to be meaningful in any environment.

Nigeria is home to a variety of religions which tend to vary regionally. This situation accentuates regional and ethnic distinctions and has often been seen as a source of sectarian conflict amongst the population. Even though, Nigeria is apparently divided equally between Islam and Christianity between north and south, it is evident that across Nigeria there is widespread belief, albeit suppressed for political reasons, in traditional religious practices.

Environment

Environment has been defined from different academic backgrounds. Akinsola (1993) maintains that environment is "the collective term to describe all the living and non living things that make up our surroundings, biological and social environment". Environment means the surroundings. Land, water, air, plants, animals, solid wastes and other things that are surrounding us constitute our environment. Man and environment are closely intertwined with each other, to maintain a balance or equilibrium in nature. Olokesusi (1987) sees environment as "the general surroundings of people wherever they may be living on the earth surface". Different fields of study explain it in various ways. For instance, the physical scientists see environment as the physical

environment that comprises the three inter locking systems: the Atmosphere, the Hydrosphere and the Lithosphere. Oluwanda (2004) opines that environment comprises “the atmosphere, which envelops the earth, the lithosphere or rocky crust of the earth, the hydrosphere or the water bodies; and the biosphere which contains organic or living matter”. For the biologists, environment consists of all living organisms of the Biosphere. Similarly social scientists refer to the social, cultural, economic and organizational environment. Asalu (2005) also asserts that environment “includes not only the air, water, plants and animals but also other natural and man modified features which constitute the totality of our surrounding”. From the definitions above, environment may be defined as the totality of all social, cultural, economical, biological, physical and chemical factors surrounding the 'man' to give necessary protection and provision to him.

Environment is made up of the natural environment which includes: the air, water, solid wastes, noise, radiation, soil, timber, wildlife and living space and the man-made environment that deals with work environment, housing, technology, aesthetics, transportation, utilities, settlement and urbanization. These environmental components are considered as the resources and are mostly exploited and utilized by the man to fulfil his basic needs. Thus, man is firmly placed as an important part of the global ecosystem, which depends on him much as he depends on it. Hence, there is a close relationship between man and environment.

Environmental Problems

Environmental problems are those factors that affect negatively on human existence. A variety of environmental problems now affect our entire world. Olokesusi (1987) maintains that a problem is “the gap between what is and what it is, between we have and what we have or can reasonably hope to achieve. Environmental problems are therefore, needs perceived to require mitigate action” As globalization continues and the earth's natural processes transform local problems into international issues, few societies are being left untouched by major environmental problems. Some of the largest problems now affecting the world are Acid Rain, Air Pollution, Climate Change, Global Warming, Hazardous Waste, Ozone Depletion, Smog, Water Pollution, Overpopulation, Rain Forest Destruction and among others. Essentially,

environmental degradation relates to the depreciation in the qualities and quantities of vegetation, soil air and water resources, among others. However, Miller (1989) puts environmental degradation more succinctly to mean a downward trend in the environmental resources such that their level of use in the human societies equally decreases at an increasing rate.

Causes of Environment Problems

According to Smith (2012), environmental problems around the world are caused by “exploding population growth, poverty, the wasteful use of natural resources, poor environmental accounting and ecological ignorance”. These five factors are useful ways of understanding the causes. For instance, once you understand that the world's population is growing at an unsustainable rate, you can perceive the connecting link between the population and the resources required of the earth to sustain the population.

Population Growth

Population growth is one of the most significant causes of environmental problems. Humans require energy, space and resources to survive. According to the Clean Water Action Council, population growth is the biggest threat to the environment. The human population is rising beyond the earth's ability to regenerate. Population growth leads to scarce sources of water in places around the world, along with scarce cropland, declining fisheries and forests and species extinction.

Poverty

Poverty is a significant cause of environmental problems. Poor nations often engage in land resource stripping just to “survive or pay off debts,” according to the website Global Issues. For example, deforestation leads to increasingly devastated land. Forests in these nations are damaged exponentially because timber companies, agricultural businesses and local populations use forest resources for survival.

Wasteful Use of Resources

The practice of wasting valuable resources by human beings contributes to environmental problems. For example, leaving lights on

when you are away from home unnecessarily uses energy. Many environmental preservationists recommend switching to fluorescent lighting, as opposed to incandescent lighting. Incandescent lights are considered inefficient, as 10 percent of the electricity results in light. The rest results in heat.

Poor Environmental Accounting

Poor environmental accounting is the accounting for "any costs and benefits that arise from changes to a firm's products or processes, where the change also involves a change in environmental impacts," according to James Boyd, author of "The Benefits of Improved Environmental Accounting: An Economic Framework to Identify Priorities." When a business manufactures a product, for example, it often uses raw material that comes from the natural environment. Poor accounting results when businesses do not fully measure and understand the environmental damage done during the course of business. Improved accounting helps businesses understand the impact of their work on the environment.

Ecological Ignorance

The fifth cause of environmental problems is ecological ignorance, or the failure to understand the effects of human behavior on the relationship between the environment and living things. A simple example is deforestation. Human beings, plants and animals rely on the oxygen produced by forests for survival. Deforestation is an example of ecological ignorance when a logging company, for example, destroy trees without understanding the real world impact on living beings in the area.

In addition, Okebukola and Alaka – Osinowo (2010) identified three major causes of environmental degradation in Nigeria. Firstly, poverty as depicted by the relatively low earning and purchasing powers of the majority of the population, constitute a major cause of environmental degradation. In their struggle to survive and escape from, poor people exploit their environment for various resources beyond sustainable level, thus degrading. Secondly, Nigeria has comprehensive set of policies regarding environmental protection but has fragile infrastructures to implement these policies. Thirdly, agricultural practices such as bush burning, tree felling overgrazing, urbanisation, and quest for

industrialization aid the acceleration of the loss of biodiversity erosion and so on.

These causes of environmental problems are prevalent in every country. Currently, Nigeria has risen to the population of one hundred and seventy million people (170,123,740). This estimate for this country explicitly takes into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, higher death rates, lower population growth rates, and changes in the distribution than would otherwise be expected (http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/demographics_profile.html). This development has much effect on the environment which brings about one problem or the other in most places in Nigeria. Today, in most cities in Nigeria, houses are being constructed without full government's approval. Such buildings will create great problem on the environment with their attending consequences on the human population.

Effects of Environmental Problems

Enhances rapid deterioration of physical environment and provide breeding ground for prostitutes, criminals and social miscreants. They constitute affront for human dignity with associated adverse health implications on residents, and thus negate the goal of environmental sustainability. Again, depletion of green areas and open spaces resulting in the loss of biodiversity, air pollution and traffic congestion due to increasing use of private automobiles are effects of environmental problems. There is also the issue of incompatible land use due to lack of planning and haphazard developments.

Pollution generally poses health risks to humans, terrestrial and aquatic lives. Land pollution through indiscriminate disposal of solid wastes provides breeding grounds for infectious disease vectors, while air pollution results in acid rains which destroy buildings and infrastructures. Oil spillage is a threat to the livelihood of oil producing communities. Air pollution contributes to global warming by depleting the ozone layer.

Destruction of human lives, properties and means of livelihood as well as public infrastructures, leading to economic losses. Also, the destruction of plants and animals leads to destabilization of the ecosystem which comes with adverse consequences. Threats to human lives, means of livelihoods and infrastructure as well as loss of land areas

and reduction in biodiversity are also considered as an effect of environmental problems.

In agreement with the effects of environmental problems, Madu (2010) said that “climate change induced disasters such as drought, floods (plates 1-3), severe weather and sea-level rise and wild fire are likely to increase in intensity and frequency with the consequent increases in vector-borne diseases, infrastructure damage, the degradation of natural resources upon which livelihoods are based, food insecurity as well as loss of life and property”. In the same vein, Diara (2011:4) maintains that “the negative impacts of climate change will however, hit poor people and the poor countries disproportionately”. Climate change as part of environmental problems has adverse negative impact on both living and non-living things in the world. These environmental problems, if not controlled can suddenly destroy the entire world, including Nigeria.

Place of Religion in the control of Environmental Problems

There is no doubt that several attempts have been made to control these environmental challenges. Government, Non-governmental Organization, corporate bodies and individual's interests in reducing, stemming and / or mitigating the consequences of environmental degradation is very recent. It was not until December 1988 that the federal Government passed the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) Decree 58 (of that year) setting up FEPA to work out rules governing the handling of Nigerian's environment. The Federal Ministry of Environment was established at the inception of the new Civilian Administration under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in June 1999 to ensure effective coordination of all environmental matters, which hitherto were fragmented and resident in different line Ministries. The creation was intended to ensure that environmental matters are adequately mainstreamed into all developmental activities.

The protection of the environment is paramount to the achievement of the objectives of the country's socio-economic reforms e.g. National Economic Empowerment Strategy (NEEDS) and other regional and global initiatives such as the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Mailafa (2013) once said that “since its establishment, the Ministry has impacted on raising the

issue of environmental consciousness in the minds of Nigerians as well as the interface with the global environmental best practices". Even though these steps have been taken by the government to tackle these environmental problems such as desertification, urbanization, deforestation, overpopulation and pollution but they have continued to threaten human existence in Nigeria in the last decade. This gave rise to the need to approach the control of environmental problems from religious perspective.

The religious institutions refer to the different religious groups of the world religions. These religious groups are meant to shape the society properly. For instance, there are three major religions in Nigeria that have organized themselves into three different religious groups as found in Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion.

Traditional Institution is concerned with the traditional arrangements that helped in the protection of the human environment starting from the family, village or communally owned property. There were also special groups which helped to maintain order in the society with special reference to environmental management, like the age grade and secret societies. These traditional arrangements are usually under religious obligation to ensure strict adherence to the laws guiding the entire environment. Ebo (2003) believes that "age grade is an important factor in the Igbo political arrangements". Age-grade is a political institution that is widespread around Igbo tribe. Every age-grade was responsible for specific areas of community service including environmental management and protection. This often promoted rivalry between the groups of age-grade. This was actually a valuable instrument of social control, in that in order to preserve the good name of their age-group; its members became involved in disciplining and restraining those who tended to cause trouble within the community. Secret societies are also important instrument of social control around the Igbo villages. The members of the secret society would appear at night, masked, in the disguise of supernatural beings. Any offenders in the community would be penalized accordingly. The unknown origin of the members and their supernatural aura (distinctive atmosphere) meant that this whole performance was taken with great seriousness. This brought stability in the management of the environment in the past. Its adoption into the environmental management in Nigeria will to a large extent contribute meaningfully in solving the environmental problems.

The adoption of Christianity as a way of religious worship among many Nigerians is the result of the long years of contact between the Europeans and Nigerians. The teachings of Jesus Christ are the basis of Christianity. The people who believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ are called Christians. The holy book of Christians is known as the Holy Bible. Most of the teachings of the Bible are centered on the need for people to be fair to their environment. For instance, in Gen. 1:26: And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth". Furthermore, in Leviticus 25:1-5 has this to say:

And Jehovah spoke unto Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye come into the land which I gave you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto Jehovah. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruits thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath unto Jehovah: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which grows of itself of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, and the grapes of thy undressed vine thou shalt not gather: it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land (25:1-5).

In these Biblical passages, there is a clear indication the God wanted man to dominate his environment but it must be done with caution. The passage supports an agricultural system known as shifting cultivation. Nanin (2007) defines shifting cultivation as "an agricultural system which is characterized by a rotation of field rather than crop, by short period cropping alternating by long fallow period and by clearing by means of slash or burn." Hall (1986) maintains that "man is to work on it and preserve it from damage." The environment is expected to take rest from time to time as the scripture directed. Continuous cropping on the land without period of fallow can affect its performance and may also result to environmental problem. The Church leaders who have been in the forefront of preaching against bad environmental practices in Nigeria can take a lead in the matters pertaining to agricultural practices.

In addition, Jesus Christ demonstrated that the environment must be kept clean always as illustrated in the parable of feeding of five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish as contained in Matthew 14:15-21:

As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, this is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food. Jesus replied, they do not need to go away. You give them something to eat. We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish, they answered. Bring them here to me, he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

This is another record of miracle performed by Jesus Christ portraying Him as not a mere teacher or prophet. He was able to take the fish and bread and multiplied them to feed the whole company of people, more than five thousand men. The instruction of Jesus Christ to the disciples to pick up the leftover is an indication that He was conscious of the environmental challenges of His time. The leftover if not gathered together would have littered the environment and possibly blocked the water channels, thereby causing erosion or flooding as part of environmental. It could have resulted to air or water pollution which is also part of environmental problems. It reminds Christians to always keep their environments clean at all times, because it is generally said that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness".

Furthermore, Islam means total surrender to God. Islamic religion was founded by Prophet Mohammed who was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in AD.570. The holy book of Islam is known as the Holy Qur'an. Islamic worshippers usually referred to as Moslems believe in one God (*Allah*) and one prophet (Mohammed). Islam has exercised considerable political and social influence throughout its history. In Islam, man does not own the earth, has been granted a stewardship to manage it in accordance with the purposes intended by the Creator (God), to utilize it

for his own benefit and the benefit of other created beings. Al-Duaij et-al (2009) maintain that Prophet Mohammed said in a speech that “the world is beautiful and verdant, and verily God, be He exalted, has made you his stewards in it, and he sees how you acquit yourselves.” Accordingly, the environment should remain healthy and safe by the present generations to be inherited by future generations, since the environmental destruction violates public interests especially when it causes air, soil, or water pollution. Early rulers in the Middle East and elsewhere claimed legitimacy for their authority in the name of Islam, and Islamic teachings gave structure to almost every facet of society. These teachings as applicable in our context have contributed to environmental management in Nigeria.

One might be tempted; especially the young and immature, to think or imagine that religion is irrelevant to environmental management in Nigeria. To dispel this illusion or self – deception, it might be necessary to preface what we are going to say by the assertion that; religion is an essential and inseparable aspect of human existence as environment itself. Religion and environment are so intimately related and connected that in reality, it is quite impossible for a society to go into environmental management without religion. Idowu (1973:1) opined that “religion is much and always with us. It is with us at every moment of life in our innermost beings with regards to the great or minor events of life; it is discussed daily in the newspapers, through the radio and television and in our conversations”. It is with all of us inevitably; whatever may be our individual avowed attitudes to it. Religion has always served a purpose which belonged to the very fabric of life itself. Religion is also pervasive which means that it cuts across every aspect of life: law, philosophy, morality, political, social and economic life of the people and environmental management. Abogunrin (1984:1) stated that “religion had played and would continue to play vital roles in the moral, spiritual, political, educational, and social development of this nation”. In his own view, Anyanwu (1999:11) pointed out that “one of the roles of religion is the role of character formation: Our concept of right and wrong, virtue and vice comes from religion”. Considering the fact that there is need for proper management of the environment, religion becomes essentially very indispensable in people’s lives. We are not quite aware that no society can afford to exist in the absence of morality, trust, justice, liberty, truth, goodness and faithfulness. Only religion

provides all of them. Therefore, for any society to manage the environment well, its citizens must be imbued with good life provided through moral education on environmental management. Eso (2003) was of the opinion that "religion has a place in the live of every nation, Nigeria included". Irrespective of the faith or denomination, religion when truly practised in its truest form and spirit, has been and remains sacred. It is argued that we cannot have good morals without religion. For one of the goals of religion is to ensure that the adherents are morally upright. Most of the religious leaders are the harbingers of good moral codes that have brought the people closer to one another. Akanbi in Adesewo, et-al (2010:43) stressed that "Ethics serve as the bases of all the three religions. From the Christian point of view, Biblical injunctions on ethics deal with 'dos' and 'don'ts' of human conducts in relationship first towards God, and secondly towards one's fellowmen". These moral concepts were divinely revealed through the inspired people of God and mostly Jesus Christ the Saviour. It is revealed that in Islam, besides the Qur'an, the Hadith of Prophets gives Muslims an embodiment of the code of life. Also, in African Traditional Religion, moral and ethical values are held in high esteem.

This is a clear indication that religion has a lot to contribute towards the moral and ethical life of the people on environmental management. The improvement on the moral and ethical life of the citizens will contribute in no small way to the environmental management. Religious leaders see the teachings on the moral and the ethical living as their priority. It will go a long way in improving our moral and ethical standard in our society. Nowadays, Nigerians will become more matured in their approach to environmental matters.

The religious groups have been in the forefront to change the way policies are formulated and implemented in relation to environmental management in Nigeria. Here we are interested in targeting the people who are in the position to create or change and implement policies in the areas of environmental management. Such people include religious leaders, government officials, traditional rulers and opinion leaders. The religious leaders are seen in some cases involved in resolving environment conflicts in society.

Recommendations

- Religious leaders should encourage their adherents to be involved in ensuring the cleanliness of the environment to avoid air or water pollution that affects human being. They should encourage members to be environmental friendly, that is to avoid the activities that will pollute the air or water.
- These leaders should encourage members to take actions to safeguard the global atmospheric system while avoiding unnecessary deforestation and plantations.
- Religious bodies should collaborate with government in the fight against environmental devastation.
- Religious leaders should also encourage members to support afforestation in all places in Nigeria as opposed to deforestation. Different religious groups can establish forests for different purposes.
- Religious groups should establish non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to assist in this great fight for the interest of the populace.
- Religious groups should ensure that economic trees, wind breakers and flowers are planted in their premises as a way of environmental protection to avert some of these environmental problems.
- Religious leaders should encourage families to undergo family planning on time, in order to control the population explosion as witnessed in Nigeria. A family should have not more than four children as stipulated in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- Individual members of religious organization should always pray for the general well being of the environment either in public or private places.

Conclusion

Conclusively, religion has a say in the environmental problems confronting the entire world, especially Nigeria where religion is hidden. Most citizens are affiliated to one religious group or the other like Christianity, Islam or African Traditional Religion. Each of these religious bodies has policies guiding them on environmental management, if properly implemented would be of great use in solving

and preventing environmental problems. Religion can in no small measure be of great help in the fight against environmental problems to complement efforts being made to proffer solutions to the environmental challenges in Nigeria.

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EXPLORATION OF THE THEORY OF NARRATIVE TRANSFORMATION IN ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART

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Abstract

Explication of literary works entails incisive linguistic and structural analysis. From academic discourse and examinations, it has been observed that many advanced students of English and literary studies find it difficult to analyse and understand the style and deep meanings of some literary works. Achebe's Things Fall Apart is not just a story of conflict of cultures but a fictional construction of social transformation through conflicts and changes. Despite the volumes in the literature, critical explication of Achebe's Things Fall Apart has not been exhausted. Besides, some readers of the work understand only the story line from historical perspective without understanding the work as a whole whose parts have been articulated with the apparatus of language theory and use. This paper explores the theory of narrative transformation as adeptly employed by the legendary literary giant, Chinua Achebe, in Things Fall Apart. The paper explicates the novel from the author's statement of the state of affairs which forms the title of the narrative and moves through the events and processes to the changes that bring about the falling apart of things in the social situation presented in the novel.

Introduction

Narrative transformation is an aspect of text linguistics which operates on the theory of transformational generative grammar. Text linguistics is concerned with the way the parts of a text are organized and related to one another in order to form a meaningful whole. Akwanya (1966) notes that

literature is indeed a linguistic construction...a sequence of words in a written form strung together in a particular way according to certain rules that constitute it...and that a semantic analysis of the sentences that make it up cannot yield the meaning of the work"(p.199)

Through narrative transformation, transformational generative grammar and narrative semiotics give account and content of literary texts. According to Olu (1977), transformational grammar was comprehensively formulated and propounded in 1957 and extensively revised in 1965 by Noam Chomsky in his seminal and popular book, *Syntactic Structures*.

Olu (1977) further notes that:

in transformational generative grammars “generate” does not mean to produce. It means to describe. When it is said that a rule generates a sentence, what this means in transformational grammar is that a particular rule or set of rules describes how the particular linguistic element or string is formed. A linguistic transformation is a process that involves structural change of one linguistic structure to another (p. 66).

Texts are generated through transformational rules from a minimal sentence or matrix. The most important thing about a text is that it is made of meaning that has to be encoded in words and structures in order to be communicated. Different transformations expose the deep structure. Optional transformations (alternative phrasings) produce alternate sets of sentences that mean the same thing. Ohman (1973) argues that a writer’s style is his characteristic way of exploiting the transformational options available within the system of a language and in part a way of developing the transformational potentials of a language and that the idea of alternative phrasing is very important in understanding the concept of style (p.113). Thus transformational analysis is a valuable aid to the description of author’s styles. Halliday’s functional grammar is somewhat similar to narrative transformation in that it is a semantically driven grammar which, according to Hasan (1978):

...permits useful movements across the text, addressing the manner in which linguistic patterning are built up for the construction of the overall text in its particular ‘genre’ shaped as it is in response to the context of situation which gave rise to it (p.v)

The deep semantic component of a literary work in the form of narrative fiction could be interpreted through the structural organization

of the work. This brings to mind the mode of analysis in the new criticism. According to Abrams and Harpham (2009),

... the distinct procedure for a new critic is explication or close reading: the detailed analysis of the complex interrelationships and ambiguities (multiple meanings) of the verbal and figurative components within a work. "*Explication de texte*" (stressing all kinds of information, whether internal or external relevant to the full understanding of a word or passage) had long been a formal procedure for teaching literature in French schools, but the explicative analyses of internal verbal interactions characteristic of the New Criticism derives from such books as Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1929) and William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) (p. 216 - 17).

Transformational rules are very important rules used for expansion, and embedding. The author's control of the surface structure determines the progress of the reader to understand of the deep structure.

Narrative Transformation In *Things Fall Apart*

Things Fall Apart is an instance of the process and product of social meaning conveyed through narrative transformation. In the novel, Achebe has employed the principle of expansion right from the title and theme which he got from the third line of a poem entitled "*The second coming*" written by an English poet, William Butler Yeats thus: "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold". Achebe further expands this theme in his accusation of the European missionary through one of the characters in the novel Obierika, as follows. "Now he has won our brothers and our clan can no longer act as one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart". At the beginning of the novel, Achebe states the fame of the protagonist in one sentence: "Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond". He (Achebe) expands the first sentence in the second sentence: "His fame rested on solid personal achievements". This transformation exposes the contents and meaning of the first sentence - the things that made Okonkwo famous - "solid personal achievements" (p.1).

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a novel with a theme of conflict of cultures and changes generated. In it, the author looks back at his Igbo society, specifically at the period the so called white men broke into it as a missionary, trader, and administration. The setting, represented by Umuofia clan, shows a people who "once thought like one, spoke as one and shared common awareness and acted as one". In Umuofia, there had been peace, good government, and justice was administered as much as the people thought acceptable. But the arrival of the Europeans with their Christian religion, different social values and different attitudes breaks the cherished unity and other of the hitherto stable society. The people and their cultural values break and disintegrate. A commentator, Aigboje Higo notes: "many heads rolled; new words, new words, new usages and new applications gained entrance into men's heads and hearts". This process is similar to alternate surface phrasings and constructions of the transformational generative grammar.

As noted in the introduction, different transformations make it possible to expose the deep structure and also to project possible alternative surface manifestations. The transformational process here means the distortions and manipulations in the use of the language of narration. Ferrara (1974) notes that every work of fiction is "the exterior surface of a transformational process which is composed of a deep structure made up of a set of values" (p.113). In *Things Fall Apart*, we can see the conflict between the cultural (or social) values of the sending group (the European Missionary) and those of the receiving group (Igbo society at a point in history represented by Umuofia and its neighbouring clans). In the same process, we see the conflict between the values of the sending group and the values that were dominant in the physical (geographical or cultural) setting, and how the values of the sending group eventually become dominant though still in conflict with those of the receiving group. This is seen in every society which strives to keep the existing balance among the various elements of its structure.

Ferrara (1974) also observes that, in characters as in a work of fiction, there must be a conflict of values. He further proposes structural analysis of character in fictions. In which he sees every work of fiction as the exterior surface of a transformational process, which is composed of a deep structure of a transformational process, which is made up of a set of values. He captures this position as he states that:

Every work of fiction belongs to cultural

communication, which finds origin and purpose in the surrounding society. The communicative process is the transformational structure which has its deep structure in two social groups: the sending group and the receiving group: the sending group aims at shaping the social behaviour of the receiving group by imparting suitable values to it (p. 115).

In *Things Fall Apart*, Umuofia experiences these impulses. We read how the people of Umuofia struggle to preserve the already existing values and order while the European missionary struggle in opposition to modify the status quo. The white men missionary also condemned the people's belief in "Osu" caste system and welcomed people regarded as "Osu" in their fold. The missionary also stopped the killing of twins and rescued twins thrown into the evil forest. Mr. Kiaga explains:

Before God, there is no slave or free. We are children of God and must receive these our brothers... (p. 42 - 143)... The same God created you and them; it is against the will of God, who has promised everlasting life to all who believe in his holy name. (p. 144).

This is a kind of propaganda in support of the new religion. Transformational rules make it possible *for* conversion to take place between deep and surface forms of sentences. The surface structure of a sentence is the form, and its deep structure is its content. Ohman (1973) notes that:

the transformational content of a generative grammar has three characteristics, which elucidate the notion of alternative ways of expression. The first is that the optional transformational rules will produce alternative sets of sentences that mean the same thing. The process of expansion makes it possible to state one thing (meaning or matrix) in more than one way.

It is therefore apparent that transformational patterns constitute a significant part of what the sensitive reader perceives as style. Ohman (1973) however reminds the literary critic that "though syntax seems to be the central determinant of style... it is not the whole. Imagery, figures

of speech and the rest are often important” (p.114). Achebe uses figures of speech and proverbs, which provide analogous imagery in describing events in the novel. In the novel, Achebe narrates events like an eye witness, which he was. He describes, states facts and sometimes presents characters in brief dialogues. He thus makes it possible for readers to understand the meaning of actions and events beyond the literal level of the meaning of his words and sentences. Achebe uses a variety of sentence structures. He scarcely uses periodic sentences. In fact, an analysis of narrative transformation in *Things Fall Apart* such as this serves as a valuable aid to the description and understanding of Achebe’s style. Proverbs and some vernacular registers sometimes complement and colour his sentence variety and transformations. With economy of words and phrases by means of conversion, Achebe achieves economical narration in the novel.

There are several instances of conversion as a process of narrative transformation in *Things Fall Apart*. One of these is seen in chapter five where Achebe described Obiageli’s “inyanga”. He states Obiageli’s “inyanga” in one simple sentence and goes on to narrate the incident in full in compound and complex sentences as follows:

Obiageli had been making “inyanga” with her pot; She had balanced it on her head, folded her arms in front of her and began to sway her waist like A grown-up young lady. When the pot fell down and broke, she burst out laughing (p. 40).

In the passage above, both expansion and conversion have been applied. Embedding is also employed in the last sentence of the passage.

It is necessary to point out that this expansion, on a larger scale, gradually includes several other stories or narratives subordinated in the main story, and these make up the novel as a whole unit. This is also embedding. Embedding is a very important technique of narrative transformation employed by Achebe in the literary work in question. In the study of narrative transformation, embedding is also used to refer to the insertion of one story within another. Achebe uses complex embedding in the novel. He sews together different narratives within one narrative of the theme of things and people falling apart in Umuofia. He tells several other stories through many of his characters. Instances of this abound in the novel. He narrates the event of the wrestling contest

between Okonkwo and “Amalinze the cat” which brought Okonkwo much fame. Through Ogbuefi Ezeugo, he tells the story of killing of a daughter of Umuofia by the people of Mbaino which necessitated sending an emissary of war that brought Ikemefuna to Umuofia. Oberika tells why the snake-lizard killed his mother. Ezimma also tells the story of the tortoise who takes the name “All of you” in order to take advantage of his friends at a feast (p. 89). Uzowulu and Mgbafor tell their stories as statements of their cases and evidence in judgment by the ‘Egwugwu’ masquerade. These and other stories are embedded in the story of *Things Fall Apart* and they account for the episodic plot of the novel.

Conclusion

In narrative semantics, we know that a text is a semantic unit whose meaning is seen outside the novel. In other words, the meaning (content) of *Things Fall Apart* is found outside the novel whereas words and sentences constitute the form. Halliday (1989) notes that “a text is a social exchange of meaning” and that it is a product of its environment, a product of continuous choices of meaning”. (p. 11). The novel embodies the religion, philosophy and cultural history of its environment (its setting).

With narrative transformation techniques, the author shows the cultural conflict and social transformation process which are seen in the falling apart of things in the symbolic setting. Through a character, Okika, Achebe narrates the culmination of the conflict of cultures and the resulting transformation thus:

All our gods are weeping. Idemidi is weeping. Ogwugwu is weeping. Agbala is weeping, and all others. Our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have all seen with our eyes.. Are all the sons of Umuofia here?... They have broken the clan and gone their several ways. We who are here this morning are true to our fathers, but our brothers have deserted us and joined a stranger to soil their fatherland. If we fight the stranger we shall hit our brothers and perhaps shed the blood of a clansman. But we must do it.... (pp. 182-183).

This shows that *Things Fall Apart* a literary text is a process and product of social meaning, and a good example of the application of the principles of narrative transformation. Indeed, the crafting of *Things Fall Apart* is an excellent demonstration of sound understanding of the nature and functions of language and a brilliant proof by the “Eagle on the *Iroko*” that literary merits and contents of literary works are realised through the medium of language.

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**CONCEPTUALIZING DEATH AND DYING AMONG
THE IGBO SOCIETY: A STUDY OF OLD NSUKKA
DIVISION IN ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

To the people of Old Nsukka Division, death means going home to where we came from, where our parents (who are expected to have died before us) have re-joined their forefathers.

The people believed that death is definitely not the end of life. It is only the end of earthly existence. It is a change from one state into another. An aged Nsukka man looks forward with longing to "going home" and often talks absent-mindedly to people believed to be on "the other side". All funeral rites are meant to aid the deceased to gain access and acceptability amongst the forefathers. The people also hold a firm belief in the existence of continuous interaction between the living and the dead ancestors. Masquerades in Old Nsukka Division are believed to be "returnees" of dead relatives in a systematic manifestation of re-embodied spirits to perform some social functions and also entertain the living. This paper, attempts to examine the concept of death and dying among the people of Old Nsukka Division of Enugu State, and to demonstrate that the diversity of cultural reaction to death is a measure of its universal impact.

Introduction

Man is the only introspective animal. For countless generations, inspired by curiosity, egotism, or a desire for self improvements, he has given himself much thought, and it is not too much to assume that this speculation will continue as long as the human race exists. Man's interest in himself has embraced his past, present and future. He has sought

knowledge of all these and though he seems to have found an understanding of the first two somehow more accessible than the last.

Death happens to all living things, but man alone has created out of the constant threat of death, a will-to-endure and the desire for continuity and immortality in all their many conceivable forms, a more meaningful kind of life in which he appears to redeem the littleness of individual men.

In Old Nsukka Division, death is regarded as the mark of physical separation of individuals from other human beings. Death is a necessary end, inescapable and beyond human control. It is also an inevitable factor that concerns everybody and which must befall everyone sooner or later. Human beings are just sojourners on God's own earth who must surely die when the time comes. This is seen in the expressions commonly found in the language of the Nsukka people:

“Onwu Enweghi onye osoro Anya”,
meaning that death spares no one or has no
barrier. Onwu bu ugwo eji ala, aga akwu,
meaning that death is a debt we owe to the
earth”.

The above sayings are among the various expressions common to the people as indications of the inevitability of death. Death is the gateway to the out world, the country of the dead, the city of ghosts. It is a state of transmigration from physical to the spiritual body. The dead travel to the land where the rich remains rich and the poor; poor. The people have firm belief in the ancestors and see death as a necessary precondition for joining the ancestors for them, reincarnation is necessary for the peopling of the corporal segment of the lineage.

Death is non-discriminatory and universal. It evokes an incredible variety of responses from various kinds of people. In some places, corpses are burned (cremation). The ritual of burning the dead was introduced roughly some time after 5000BC. This involves the laying of the ashes of a cremated body in an Urn, or buried, with or without animal or human sacrifice, pithos or jar burials (often associated with the laying of the body in a jar). Secondly burial (the reburial of bones after flesh decomposition or removal), barrows or tumuli i.e. (mounds constructed above the ground covered with earth), collective burial (refers to the burial of a number of bodies, usually over a period of time), sarcophagus (a stone or terra cotta coffin into which the Egyptians placed their

mummies and others placed the human corpse), monument tombs (the most spectacular types of tombs e.g the great pyramids of Egypt). Chamber tombs: (Constructed of stone), Tholos; (a circular beehive chamber tomb such as "Treasury of Atreus") etc (Joukowsky1980:183). They are preserved by smoking; embalming or pickling, they are eaten raw, or cooked or rotten, they are ritually exposed as carrion or simply abandoned or they are dismembered and treated in a variety of different ways. The diversity of cultural reaction to death is a measure of its universal impact.

The Concept of Death

The people of Old Nsukka Division do not see death as a total annihilation. To them, death is viewed as a mere separation, but not a total annihilation. The dead person is suddenly cut off from the human society and yet the corporate group clings to him. It is a kind of official command compelling the soul of a man to shed its bodily husk and become a participating citizen in the realm of the spiritual. To the people of Old Nsukka Division, death is the gate way to one phase of existence as birth is to the other. Both phases are inextricably intertwined. Since these two worlds are related, what happens in one affects the other invariably. The people of Old Nsukka Division believe that one carries one's status achieved on earth to the spirit world, since the spirits affect the living and the living affect the spirits. This firm belief, explains why the people of Old Nsukka Division take extra pains to give the fulfilled elder the proper mortuary rites that will be his passport into the spiritual world.

Death confronts everyone as a *fait accompli*. This is why Mbiti (1970) says that it has no cure, no escape as far as African concepts and religions are concerned. The people of Old Nsukka Division believe that death is something that concerns everyone, partly because sooner or later everyone personally faces it and partly because it rouses a feeling of loss and sorrow in every family and community – "*Onwu bu Ozulu mba Onu*". Every human community, therefore, evolves certain methods and procedures for accommodating itself and its members to the emotional shock of death. To the people, death is the supreme and final crisis of life which is of great concern to almost all thinking human beings. Mbiti, (1970) notes that, "death stands between the world of human beings and the world of spirits, between the visible and the invisible. The people of

Old Nsukka Division refer to it euphemistically as “Egwu atu” (the Brave one).

Ifesieh, (1989:338) points out that death is only a means of passing from the world of men to the world of spirits. Death is a necessary end inescapable and beyond human control. It is also an inevitable factor that concerns everybody and which must befall anyone sooner or later. Awolalu, (1979:253) has rightly observed that,..... “West African peoples believe that life here on earth is not interminable. They hold that sooner or later, the inevitable phenomenon called death will come upon man, who only is a sojourner on God’s earth. No matter how long a person lives, death must come as a necessary end”.

The common orthodox belief among the people of Old Nsukka Division is that *Onwu* (death) is a creation of *Chineke, Ezechitoke*, the Supreme God. According to Igwe Chief R. U. Idah, Ekwuru Orah I of Umuozu, Onitsha Enugu-Ezike (one of my informants) , *Onwu*, which besides being the people’s designation for “dying” was made by *Chukwu* with the specific purpose of recalling any person whose time on earth is fulfilled. It is the agent, which all the people of Old Nsukka Division believe to be under direct commission of *Chukwu*, for killing and removing people from this earth. Because of these ideas about death, the people of Old Nsukka Division had since accepted death as a natural rhythm of life but still, they think of every human death as being caused by external forces making it both natural and unnatural.

According to one of my informants, God does not kill, but kills through His agents like *Ala*, the earth deity (goddess). Therefore the state of existence in this world is regarded as a temporary one and it is very common to the people of Old Nsukka Division to refer to this physical world as “*Ahia*” or “*Uwa bu Afia*” a market place where every body, after buying his needs goes back to the permanent home. In other words, this present life is like a pilgrimage, the real “Home” is in the after-life (here-after) where there is no death.

The people of Old Nsukka Division described death as a “debt” – the debt which everyone must pay “*Ugwo eji ani, Or ana or ala anyi ga akwu ya*”. This is as much as to say that it is the inevitable and ultimate lot of every person who comes into the world. This is seen in the expressions commonly found in the language of the people of Old Nsukka Division, “*O biara ije nwe ula (una)*” or “*O biara ije ga ana*”.

The people of Old Nsukka Division act in the belief that death is meant for the aged and that given the right conditions, every person should live to a ripe old age. Therefore when a young person dies, they consider it to be a tragedy and enter into mourning. On the other hand, the death of an aged person is an occasion for rejoicing because the person has only been recalled home and his children live to bury him. Here the people say that nobody ever pray to bury his children, rather they pray for the children to bury their fathers (Aged ones). Because of the emphasized belief that death is meant primarily to recall home the aged, the people sometimes say that – “*Onwu egburue ala*”. This, of course, refers to the death which overtakes a person violently or prematurely through his own inordinate actions. They differentiate between this and the kind of death which is “normal” and “natural” – the home call of the aged.

According to Ogbunobodo, Onokoro Enyi Nwotiwokoro (one of my informants) of Aku, life and death are both “given” to man by the creator – *Ezechitoke*. They are the fundamental terms of existence and are so closely linked that one cannot be conceived without the other. Death, however, enjoys incontestable advantage over life in that it is necessary for it is not inevitable that life is given, but as soon as it appears death follows. It is fair to say that death seems to be the unavoidable consequence of life. To be born, to live, and to die that is to change form. According to Onokoro Enyi Nwotiwokoro the myth of the origin of death relates to “failed message”, the divinity decides to send man two messages, one of mortality, the other of immortality. The first to reach its destination will determine man’s destiny once and for all. “*Ezechitoke Abiama*” entrusts the message of immortality to a fast animal (dog) while a slow animal (frog) is delegated to carry the message of mortality. On their way going, behold the fast animal (dog) saw some “*ogiri-Akwu*” and started licking them while the slow animal (frog) kept on going and reached to the destination and delivered its own message and behold, before the dog could arrive the message of the slow animal (frog) has been received. The frog delivered its message and when the dog arrived with its errand, men said to it, “you were too late. We have already accepted another message”. This is why men are subject to death. Myths of this type have a wide distribution throughout Old Nsukka Division and even elsewhere in Igboland.

Death is inevitable and unpreventable, at bottom, however, the people of Old Nsukka Division know that little can be done even to defer death when "Onwu" is really ready. Hence the saying, "Anaghi agwo onwu agwo, mana oya ka ana agwo-agwo", meaning that, "it is sickness that can be healed, death cannot be healed". The attitude of the people towards the cruelty of death is often recited under dirges:

Onwu enweghi ogwu -	Death has no medicine
Onwu enweghi enyi -	Death has no friend
Onwu anaghi ego -	Death would not accept bribe (money)

Death is a monster before whom man is utterly helpless. Relatives watch a person die and cannot help him escape death. It is an individual affair which no man can interfere or intervene. It is because of this utter helplessness that the people of Old Nsukka Division give their children such names like "Onwubiko", Death I implore you, "Onwumal" Death may please himself. The people know quite alright that "Death" must surely come and no amount of begging will ever stop it from killing/striking and as such they answer such names like "Onwugbufo" – may death spare.

Death is seen as wicked, it kills even a beloved, rich, poor, innocent and the bread winner of the family. This cruelty of death is manifested in some name of which the people of Old Nsukka Division answered in order to show the wickedness of "Death", such names as "Onwudinjo" death is bad, "Onwudiwe" death is sad/annoying.

Death is a mystery. According Rev. Fr. Timothy Buckley of Ireland (Missionary Priest (CSSP), death is a mystery that has plagued mankind. Throughout the history of man, death has posed an eternal problem which constitutes the focal point of our religious and philosophical system of thought. It is also a prototype of all other human anxieties. One of the major objectives of scientific knowledge was to work towards the alleviation of pain and the final elimination of this mysterious phenomenon, death. Who would think that death could not be overpowered judging from the progress man has made in the course of his evolution? In spite of all man's conquest, death is standing waiting for him at the end of the road, All his scientific efforts even with his most up to date sophisticated weapons to prolong life are frustrated in the face of death. The attempts to erase or expel or failure to take death into

account is but self-deception. It is an established fact that all must die. Death knows no age limit, has no partiality. The philosopher musician, the late Celestine Ukwu of blessed memory sing "*Onwu Omaghi eze, omaghi Nwata...*" It does not select nor spare. It reduces all man to a common denominator. It strips the rich of his millions and the poor of his rag. When life comes a child is born, we rejoice. When life goes, a man is dead, we try to dismiss the thought in the twinkle of an eye. Shakespeare says, "it will come when it will come". Death is and will ever be present. We are its victims and belong to his dominion. It is "the no-longer being-able -to- be-there-of a being", says the famous German Existentialist, Martin Heidegger. But so long as we are yet "beings able-to-be-there" in other words alive, we must continue to combat death.

Types and Causes of Death

In Old Nsukka Division, death is categorized into two types viz, good death (natural death) and bad death (un-natural death). The general belief of the people of Old Nsukka Division is that deaths are either due to poisoning or due to spiritual attack. It is believed also that every death must have one reason or another. There is also the belief that some deaths are caused by the ancestors and spirits of a given family who may have been offended before they die or not have been properly given his full burial rites and rituals or may have grudge against someone or a negligence of a duty. When all these aforementioned forces are not responsible for death, it is believed that *Chukwu*, Himself is responsible for the death, especially those for which there is no satisfactory explanation. Such deaths are those never caused by brief or protracted illness, in which case they are not regarded as natural. They are also neither caused by one accident or another, nor by any known divinity, in which case they cannot be easily described as bad deaths. Both young and old can fall victim of such deaths. Usually before such a victim goes to bed, he would prepare for the next day's programme of activities only to be found lying dead on his bed the following morning. Such a death is usually announced by the greatest outcry of the family members which immediately attracts the remotest relations, each sobbingly narrating his or her encounter with the dead the previous day.

Even when God may be seen as the ultimate cause of death, other intermediary agents are brought into the picture to satisfy people's suspicions. One or more causes must always be identified or attributed to

any death that occurs in Old Nsukka Division. In practice, however, the people recognize that death may be due to natural causes, and particularly in the case of an old person, the "*Igba-Afa*" ceremony may not be performed (that is to know the cause of the death). The ceremony and the belief behind it thus appear to be invoked only when there has been a high degree of social tension in the deceased's immediate environment, or when death occurs in a sudden or unusual way. In Old Nsukka Division, the commonest cause of death are curses, broken taboos or oaths.

Natural Deaths (Onwu Chi)

Death of which the people of Old Nsukka Division considered or seen to be or as natural (Onwu Chi) include especially death as a result of old age. It is only those who die by this means that are considered to belong to the ancestors of the spirit world from where they shower blessing and protections to the family, with the expectation that they later come back to be re-born into the family to continue another circle of life.

Awolalu, (1979:254-255) observed that "although death itself is always regarded as uncanny and disturbing, the death of an aged person is an occasion of much rejoicing and the ritual elaboration is heaviest at their funeral, since people see nothing tragic about it". According to Charles Anumudu (one of my informants) of Aka-Iyi Umulokpa in Uzo-Uwani L.G.A, natural death is regarded as that which comes when people live to a very ripe old age and die without blemish. A natural or good death is a death not involving or caused by the wicked attack of any divinity such as Ojiyi Aku, Emukpa of Ogbodu-Aba, Ehuru Idoha Ukehe, Ogwudinama Nkpologwu, Ohe Nrobu, Adoro Ero, Isi-Eke Ugbene, Iyi-ocha Nsukka, e t c. The reason for the consultation with a diviner at the death of old man or woman in Old Nsukka Division becomes evident here, as a means of finding out whether the deceased has broken any law of the land such as poisoning, theft and adultery, or whether he or she has taken an oath against any of these divinities.

For such deaths to be considered as good, the deceased must have lived an exemplary and extra-ordinarily good life, and must have married and left behind him or her some grown up children so that he/she would not be referred to as "*Omugwo Akpagi*" meaning "issuing without rearing", in which case burial rites and benefits are denied him or her. To be precise, the death of an aged person in Old Nsukka Division is

welcomed as good news because he/she has been recalled to join his ancestors from where he would be re-incarnated [see **plate1**].

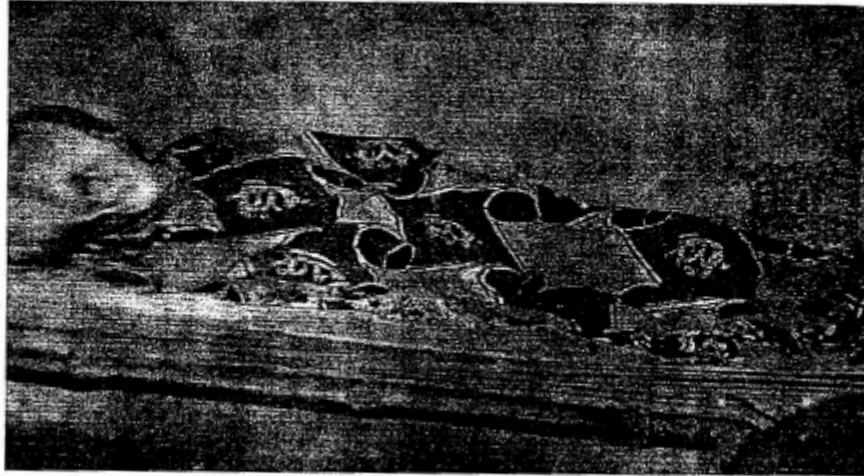
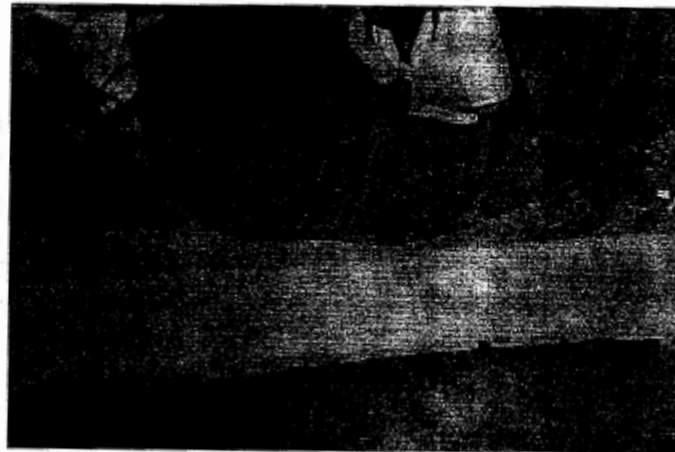


Plate 1: Shows a corpse of an aged man lying in state in a locally made bed 'Okpukpo', with the face powdered.

Death in Old Nsukka Division, is regarded as a passage from this earthly existence to another world, as a process of transition. The funeral rites of an aged person are characterized by feasting and merriment. Aged people are prepared to die in order to enter the next world. It is also a belief that such people can communicate with their ancestors in the "Ala-muo" life beyond [See **plate2**].

Plate 2: shows the corpse of an aged Ozor titled man being put into the coffin or casket for burial.



The people believe that only the aged should die. The death of a young man is regarded as a premature death, the cause of which might be due to some supernatural forces such as witchcraft, etc. The death of an aged person, therefore, does not evoke the same degree of sorrowful feeling as the death of a young man. The death of a young person in Old Nsukka Division is always tragic and it is an occasion for mourning. The people have a firm belief that, it was God who brought death into being in order to take away the one whose work in this world has been accomplished. The fear of the dead man in Old Nsukka Division is a collective feeling induced into the society by the fact that by death he has become the object of dysphonic condition of the collective consciousness.

Longevity, therefore, is an achievement in itself in Old Nsukka Division and enables a man to see his children multiplying like the Biblical mustard seeds. The more descendants a man brings into the world (especially if many of them are male) the more fulfilled his life and the more his death is regarded as a normal and necessary end to a well-lived life.

Unnatural Death (Ajo-Onwu)

Deaths considered as unnatural or bad include deaths by suicide, death by accident, death by murder, drowning, burning to death by fire, women dying in child birth, diseases like swollen stomachs, leprosy, small pox etc. People who die by any of these reasons are buried immediately. In Old Nsukka Division those who died a bad death will not be accorded any burial rites. The people have a belief that those who die bad death will not join the ancestors and they cannot reincarnate. It is also believed that such will not pass through the same transformation like those that died naturally such people do not have a place in the land of the dead. The people considered these types of death as evil and as a result of punishment by the gods on the victim and any attempt to violet the conventions by giving the victim burial rites attracts the wraths of the gods. It is a general belief by the people of Old Nsukka Division this anyone who dies under that circumstance has either cut the thread of his life or has suffered death due to his bad deeds, in which case, no body mourns him.

Death caused by the divinities such as, Ojiyi Aku, Adoro Ero, Ohe Nrobu, Ogwudinama Nkpologu, Ehuru Idoha Ukehe, Isi-eke Ugbene

Ajima, Igbugbu-Eha-Alumona, Emukpa Ogbodu-Aba etc are always regarded as bad death. The cause of death are revealed by diviner who has to be consulted for information (see **plate3**).



Plate 3: Shows a diviner at work, with the deceased relations sitting round with curiosity to ascertain (the verdict of the diviner) the judgment of the gods on the deceased.

The diviner plays an indispensable part, it is he who through the power of his magical dice, is able to discover the cause of every death and trouble in Old Nsukka Division. He may divine the source of the trouble to be a spirit and if so, by another throw of the dice, he is able to identify the actual spirit (deity) concerned, by means of a further throw he divines by what means the angry spirit may be pacified and informs his audience (Usually the deceased relatives) in what the deceased has offended and the best means of propitiation (see **plate 4**).



Plate 4: Shows the deceased's relatives sitting inside one of the shrines (Ojiyi Aku) sacrificing to the deity or propitiation to ward off the wrath of the deceased before burial, while the Atama sitting behind the deity itself with elephant tusk in between his legs.

In Old Nsukka Division, the diviner seeks to interpret the mysteries of life, to convey the messages of the gods to give guidance in daily affairs, and settle disputes, to uncover the past and to look into the future. In an interview with one of the diviners, Madu Nwomugo from Aku, that diviners accumulate a vast store of secrete knowledge and have a deep acquaintance with human nature. The diviner is the wise man of the village and although his practices are open to abuse, in general his profession is honourable and highly respected. A diviner is called a father of mysteries and so he is very properly called a seer in Old Nsukka Division.

Here the diviner uses a cord or chain which has four half-nuts often native mango nuts or cowries or beads, shell of native mango nuts (Ugiri) *Irvingia gabonensis* split in two, at each end of the cord, making eight in all on the cord which is two or three feet long. Each half nut is rounded on one side and flat or hollow on the other, convex and concave. As the cord is held at the end and throw upside down, a figure can easily be made. A concave surface of each nut equals one stroke and a convex surface two strokes. Thus, with one throw of the cord a figure of eight

signs is produced, equal to that made in the longer method with greater elaboration. The diviner commences operations by placing the inverted native mango shell on the ground which contains the "Afa" the medium of divination, commonly called charms. The diviner squats on the ground begins to croon. Presently, he picks or takes up the two strings at interval throw them on the ground and he picks the other remaining two and throws again at interval "yom, yom, kpom, yom, kpom, yom,," and he indicates what sacrifice is to be made by the inquirers.

In Old Nsukka Division, it is an abomination for a man to take his own life. The people regard it as an offence against the "Ala" (earth deity) and a man who commits it will not be buried by his clans men. His body is termed to be evil and in such case, a diviner is usually consulted from another village to bury the death, since his people have nothing again in common with him. It is only strangers that may touch it and they (strangers) only can equally bury him. When such a man is buried by the strangers, sacrifices are made to cleanse the desecrated land. As this is seen by the people of Old Nsukka Division as a "bad death", full burial rites will not be accorded to him no matter his birth, rank or wealth (see plate 5).



Plate 5: Shows a suicide victim. A man who commits suicide irrespective of the manner or means is denied burial rites in Old Nsukka Division. It is regarded as abominable death.

If a man commits suicide in Old Nsukka Division, all the relatives (usually males) are called to the eldest's man in the village "Onyishi" to determine the cause of the tragedy. It is considered that no man should take his life without some outside provocation and so the death is regarded as a form of murder. If no adequate explanation is forthcoming the suicide is immediately buried in the ordinary way, but if on the consultation of diviner, the death is discovered to be the work of a spirit, it is then the duty of the deceased's relatives to go through the necessary channel by which the particular deity may be reached according to the directive of the diviner and his prescription of offerings, they carry their offerings to the particular shrine of the deity and there worship the deity. The body of the suicide victim is buried on the spot *ad a*. The people of the Old Nsukka Division believed that such will not pass through the same vicious cycle like those that died naturally, such person does not have a place in the land of the dead, infact he is not buried with funeral rites and funeral ceremonies. The reason given by the people is to prevent a recurrence in their midst. In their opinion, this death is unnatural as being caused by the intervention of some malignant spirit.

Again, the death of children are considered unnatural by the people Old Nsukka Division. Usually the dead child will be seen as "Ogbanje" or a bad child who does not want to live. According to this view, an *Ogbanje* is a child who repeatedly dies and returns to its mother to be reborn. Any dead child who is suspected to be an *Ogbanje* is mutilated on the body and is held by the ankle or tied rope on the neck and dragged on the ground to the evil forest, where it is burnt or at times buried. In extreme cases, the corpse is burnt completely. In this case, no material remains of such deceased will be available for Archaeologists for further investigation and reconstruction of such burial practice.

The people believe that after such treatment, the "Ogbanje" *would* think twice before coming again, unless it was one of the stubborn ones who returned, carrying the stamp of their mutilation, a missing finger or perhaps a dark line where the medicine man's razor had cut them. There is no mourning for these children and when there is any, the length of time is usually very short except that sympathizers come and go. Death of children are not seen as going home. The people of Old Nsukka Division see them as immature with the expectation that they will come back later to complete their course.

The death of spinsters and bachelors whose parents are still living are regarded as unnatural and painful to the relations. According to William Ojobor of Obollo Afor in Udeno L.G.A., it is the wish of every person in Old Nsukka Division to be buried by his children, but when the reverse is the case, it is always a thing of sorrow. Such death are usually marked by incessant wailing and lamentation. It is on this background that one hears the people of Old Nsukka Division commonly saying "*Nwam lie kwam*" let my children bury me, or "*Nwam, Ikwa m, imechala*" my children, if you bury me, that is all you can do for me. Such death of a man or woman whose parents are alive is viewed with awe and face with revolting reaction. The people of Old Nsukka Division regarded such death as "aborted child" who has failed to accomplish his responsibility to his parents by performing their funeral rites. Because of this reason, no matter his age or status, he is seen as a wasted child and will be denied full burial rites.

Again, bad death includes one drowning in a river. Any person that is drown in a river is buried on the bank of the same river immediately. To the people (especially among the people of Aku) it is unnatural death. The body is never brought home for funeral. In the case of the pregnant woman, her stomach is cut open and the child removed to be buried separately in a grave dug beside that of his/her mother.

Conclusion

Man is unique among other animals with respect to mental abilities. This is a fundamental difference of a kind, not of a degree. This separates man from all other animals and this is a fact that has been long appreciated (Leslie, 1949:46). One of the differences between man and the rest of the animals world is that man can remember his past and communicate and use it to understand the present and to improve the future (Joukowsky, 1980:21). Man develops a culture (a set of shared attitudes and ways of doing things), this culture is learned and transmitted through speech from generation to generation. Man's culture is subject to change; it generally becomes more complex with time.

All questions man asks about his life are multiplied by the fact of "Death". Death is a personal event that man cannot describe for himself. As far back as we can tell, man has been both intrigued by death and has been fearful of it. He has been motivated to seek answers to the mystery and solutions to his anxiety. Every known culture has provided some

answer to the meaning of death; for death, like birth or marriage, is universally regarded as a socially significant event, set off by ritual and supported by institutions. It is the final rite de passage (Herman, 1959: 7 – 37).

The rites of separation begins soon when the eyes of the dead are closed, his hands crossed over his chest, his legs straightened, and the two great toes tied together. Funeral rites and ritual are not simply concerned with religious beliefs alone. They are also concerned with dead people. At burial, the living will be very conscious of the departed person and will have taken particular trouble to do things as He deceased would have wished, either as a mark of respect, but also no doubt out of some fear of being hunted.

Burial and burial ceremonies have great significance in the social life of the people, when these ceremonies are not perform for the dead, he is assumed not to have reached the land of the ancestors. In other words, he hangs between the world of the living and that of the dead. It is belief that non-performance of burial rites and ritual is the greatest insult and neglect that can be shown to the deceased relatives. The ancestors are believed to enjoy a sacred super-human status with special magico-religious powers that can be beneficial or even harmful to his earthly kin.

The people believed in re-incarnation. The spirit of the departed citizens can at times, take on human form and be born again, often with startling characteristics as well as bodily and facial resemblances which leave no one in doubt as to the identity of the person who has come again. The people's belief in "Ilua uwa" is a concept that dead people come back to life, improved in character, built with talents and gifts of nature such as intelligence.

Re-visitation is the re-appearance of the dead in forms of masquerades, possessing human and spiritual qualities and communicating through masked voices. Masquerades are conceptualized as a concealment of a particular identity but which activates the presence of other mystic beings.

Finally, all the rites and rituals performed at death, all the respect and homages, all the different items and activities of the funeral ceremonies as well as their significances and consequences are the bases for our beliefs and continual sustenance of the present tradition of burials and burial procedure in Old Nsukka Division.

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SUSTAINING THE GROWTH OF AFRICAN STUDIES AND AFRICAN STUDIES LITERATURE IN AFRICA

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to determine ways of sustaining and promoting the growth of African studies in Africa and the world at large. Specifically, the study traced the background history of African studies, and examined the contribution and progress made by African studies; challenges confronting African studies literature and also made recommendations for sustaining the growth of African studies in Africa and the world at large. The researcher employed conceptual framework and critical examination to explore the specific areas outlined above. The findings of the study revealed that there is need for Africansto put more thought and action into the organization, funding and running of African studies than they have hitherto done; The private sector should be educated on the need to support African studies so as to avoid whole dependence on government; African studies should be incorporated into the curriculum of primary, post primary and tertiary education; Governments should play active roles in diffusing ICT resources to colleges, universities, and schools that run programmes in African studies to facilitate African studies, research and scholarship; African studies institute should be set up in every university in Africa while its establishment should be encouraged in every university in the western world.

Key words: Africa, African Studies, Literature, Sustenance, Growth.

Introduction

African Studies is both a disciplinary branch of university education and an area study. It can be defined as the complex of sciences which examine the economy, socio-political problems, history, law, development, ethnography, languages, literature and art of the people of Africa (Summers, 2003). Put succinctly, it is the study of Africa. It is a

fringe academic activity carried on for the most part in centres which stand outside universities and faculties (especially in Europe and America) and also a unit attached to and run by the university or college (especially in Africa). In any case, African studies, also called Africanistics, is an inter-disciplinary area of study covering or studied in relation to other fields of study around which the study of Africa, its people, geography, traditions, history, customs and in fact everything and anything about Africa are carried out (Ekere, 2010). These studies are carried out by experts in African studies, also known as Africanists, who have devoted their time to the study of Africa and African affairs. Literature of African studies therefore is an overview of the collections of studies carried out on and about Africa.

Among the objectives of African studies include:

Establish the history root of African people vis-à-vis other historical nations of the world.

Determine the cultural and social identity of African people.

Address the issue of Africa's transition to independence along with her problems of development into a modern society politically, economically, socially and technologically

Establish a basis for a better relationship between Africa and the rest of the world.

Expand the scope of research and develop new tools of research for the understanding of the emergent societies.

African studies as a product of 1960 black liberation movement is currently flourishing throughout many institutions of higher learning both throughout Africa and the western world. In doing so, it has provided students and scholars a dynamic means to investigate the current condition and future prospects of African people (Wisner, Toulmin, & Chitiga, 2005). Over the years, African studies has developed into a distinct field of study drawing on various disciplinary areas and sources ranging from the social sciences and humanities to the sciences. As a study designed to grasp the historical, political, cultural, social, and religious conditions of the African people, African studies have gained wider patronage over the years from both local and international scholars.

Today, the publication of literature about Africa has increased in quantity and to some degree in quality as compared with years before 1990 as publishers now seem as anxious to publish anything pertaining to

Africa, which they think will sell. How can the growth of African studies and African studies literature be sustained? This is the thrust of this paper.

Background History of African Studies

Before most African countries were liberated from colonial dependence, African studies were generally regarded as a part of oriental studies. In 1960, the African section of the 25th International congress of Orientalists meeting in Moscow, adopted a resolution providing for the creation of the International Congress of Africanists (Alkamilat, 1990). The formation of the congress led to the emergence of African studies as an independent scientific field.

However, African Studies captured the interest of the world after the end of the Second World War. Prior to that, most territories of tropical Africa were more or less regarded as special preserves of different colonial powers and this factor, among others, contributed to limiting the scope of independent research in African studies. With a few exceptions, the studies undertaken at this time in the fields of African anthropology, sociology, government, etc, were carried out either at the instance of or in conjunction with the colonial administrators (Kershaw 1989). These writings/studies brought the light of understanding about a continent of which little was known outside, but they also laid a basis for the organization of African studies on a larger and more systematic scale after the war.

The post war process of decolonization resulted in continuing increase in interest in African studies as the activities of the Nationalists and Pan-Africanists provided greater opportunity for the study and understanding of Africa and Africans. Consequently, in 1948, a chair of African history was established at the London School of Oriental and African Studies and also, in that year a centre was opened at the Boston University for the promotion of African studies in America (Ekere, 2010).

The post – independence period of 1960s, however, changed the situation drastically as African studies received a fresh impetus after the end of the decolonization process. As more territories in Africa became independent, their involvement in world affairs began to grow. Consequently, the interest of the outside world in Africa also became more pronounced. This increasing interest had obviously a pragmatic –

utilitarian objective (Karenger, 1993). From the point of view of the outside powers it became increasingly important.

- To know how the minds of independent Africans worked,
- To know how they exercised and stabilized political power,
- And in general, to know what possible impact the new states of Africa had on international relations.

From the point of view of scholars and writers

- To expand the scope of research and develop new tools of research for the understanding of the emergent societies.

Though the interest of the west in African studies was both political and intellectual, it was, however, more of a political than intellectual interest.

A variety of factors – some pragmatic, some academic – created a favourable climate, especially in Europe and America, for the study of new Africa. And it was at this time that generous funding came from private, public and governmental sources as well as non – governmental and international organizations to promote African studies at the university level (hallen, 1997). These bodies saw African studies as holding the key to greater and better international relationship between African and the west and also to the future of Africa.

In America, the attention and support African studies attracted knew no bounds as it was associated to some extent with Afro-American or Black studies. Consequently, in 1967 there were some 41 formally organized African studies units in American universities and colleges, 21 of them at major centres. “In 1966, these later units included 260 faculty members with African specialization and 1,000 graduate students who were continuing their disciplinary specialization with commitments to African area”. In the same year, in Britain (i.e.1967), there were 19 advanced centres in African studies and 6 departments devoted to special disciplines pertaining to Africa(Ekere, 2010). Today, prominent among African studies centres in the United Kingdom include

- 1) Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS) University of London.
- 2) School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London.
- 3) International African Institute (IAS) London.
- 4) Centre of African Studies (CAS) University of Cambridge.

- 5) Centre of West African Studies (CWAS) University of Birmingham
- 6) School of African and Asian Studies (SAFRAS) University of Sussex.

In France, in addition to the Paris universities, several provincial universities, including Strasbourg and Bordeaux started research centres in African studies.

The proliferation of African studies in Britain, America and France had thus been one of the most spectacular of post war university education, but interest in Africa was not limited to these countries only. Even those countries which had smaller resources or which came late on the scene or which – like the socialist countries – expressed ideological solidarity with the African peoples were not slow in setting up African study centres at the institutes of higher learning (Summers, 2003). It is pertinent to conclude here therefore that the promotion of African studies has been given priority in the programme of university education not only in Britain, France and America but also in many other countries of the world.

Contribution and Progress Made By African Studies

In a general sense, African studies have represented a new challenge – a testing ground to the academic world as a whole (Mole, 2012). In political science, for instance, Africa with its problem of change, tensions, and endemic instability has not only provided an excellent opportunity for the testing of general models and theories but also the incentive for reformulating old theories to meet new situational categories.

In history, the search to know and reconstruct Africa's past has reinforced the historian's determination to emancipate human knowledge from its "Euro-centric" chains (Oliver, 1995). In recent times the theories of economic growth and development have come to be tested more and more for understanding African problems and for expanding the range and relevance of these theories in terms of actual life.

African studies have, therefore, helped Africans to understand and rediscover themselves socially, culturally, politically, and economically. This understanding and rediscovery has made Africans to

reclaim their lost identity and confidence as Africans. Africans have now learnt to appreciate themselves, courtesy of Africanistics.

Thus the phenomenal advance African studies have made in recent times represents an advance of human knowledge in the social sciences. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the interdisciplinary approach in the social sciences has become only meaningful in view of the scholar's attempts to come to grips with the problems he faces in studying Africa.

In the last decades, African studies have continued to attract attention and interest from non – Africans, including Long-term and short-term residents of Africa, persons with a long-time interest but not permanent residents, and Afro-Americans. These and other scholars alike have continued to discover Africa and have increased their effort to write about Africa.

Long-term residents of Africa, in addition to missionaries, are now writing relatively more books about Africa. European residents of Africa, especially in South Africa but to some extent elsewhere, continue to write books of varying quality. Persons with a long-time interest, but not permanent residents, in Africa are writing books about Africa too(Ekere, 2010).

Importantly, African school curricula are being localized and the efforts to inculcate national and cultural pride continue. A number of African authors, such as Chinua Achebe, Cyprian Ekwensi, have written fiction for African schools. Books for African schools by African authors usually appear in paperback editions and are published in Africa by such presses as Penguin Books, African University Press, Spectrum Publishers to mention just a few.

Due to increasing demand for African literature, publishers are reissuing literature about Africa. Some books on Africa are also translated from French or other languages to English. Some are also republished in various countries of the world.

There are now special series about Africa or Afro-America to which authors can contribute, for e.g., "The Zenith history series" and "The Watts first book series". The former includes paperbacks for youths, and the later, hard cover books for children.

More biographies of Africans are now available. There are now biographies of both contemporary and past African leaders (Tahar, 2008).

There are also biographies on a number of Africans and on individual African leaders.

With the prevalence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), African studies and African studies literature have not been left out. African studies are now being carried out with the use of ICTs just as there are now electronic versions of various African studies literature. These electronic versions appear as duplicates, supplements or as complete replacement of the conventional versions.

Challenges That Confronted African Studies Literature

After about one and half decade since the boom in African studies commenced in the 1960s, African studies began to lose its support and interest from those organizations that hitherto supported it (Ekere, 2010). These included private, governmental, non-governmental and international organizations. The reason was that the much fancied transition to independence which Europe and America had thought would help to advance western diplomacy and western commerce turned out to be a mere interlude between direct political, economic and cultural dependence and a new form of dependence and powerlessness popularly code-name neo-colonialism. The independence that Africa claimed to have gotten turned out to be a tragedy. The world then began to withdraw her attention from the continent. Consequently, African studies lost its huge funding and other forms of support not only in Europe, America and Asia but also in Africa herself where the various governments, neck-deep in political and economic bankruptcy, began treating education generally, and education in the arts and social sciences specifically, as a luxury that could conveniently be dispensed with. This situation and condition of African studies remained the same up till the 1990s.

Among the reasons for the decline of African studies include finance, shortage of books & other reading resources, inadequate number of publishers, compartmentalization, communication gap, and inadequate resource persons:

The late Prof. Michael Crowder in a lecture which he delivered at the University of Bayreuth in July 1986 summarized the above problem when he stated that

The crisis was easily defined as one of lack of resources in universities where current cutbacks have particularly affected area studies, of the limited funds available to

libraries specializing in African studies; and of the severe reduction in the number of publishers willing to take on monographs relating to Africa, with the result that many scholars are giving up all hope of being published (p.8).

Quite regrettably, most Africans shy away from issues bordering on Africa. A typical African is interested in discussing America or Europe than Africa. The result is that there are only few resource persons to provide background information for the teeming researchers and documentalists on African studies. Additionally, there were inadequate trained personnel who are well-versed in African affairs (Ronen, 1996). This lack of trained manpower has affected African studies especially outside Africa.

There was also the problem of the existence of two separate and compartmentalized worlds of africanists: Africans and Non-Africans or put succinctly Brown cited in Ekere, 2010 noted that "... the compartmentalization of Africans into two worlds of the rich Europeans and Americans on the one hand and the poor African scholars on the other is a general phenomenon". The contacts of most Non-Africans were so minimal that for most of the former, Africa hardly existed excepting as a geographical entity. The African students who go to universities for higher education abroad live generally in their isolated groves.

Although African studies in Africa shared common pitiable fate with African studies in Europe and America, the state of health of the discipline in Europe and America appeared to give better hope than its state of health in Africa. This position was arrived at considering the parameters for assessing the state of health of an academic discipline. These parameters include:

1. the tempo of activities of associated learned societies
2. the flow of publications (books and journals)
3. the incidence and frequency of conferences, seminars and symposia in the discipline
4. the degree of contact, communication and collaboration amongst the practicing scholars
5. the training of post – graduate students.

One of the characteristics of literature of African studies is uneven quality of recently published books. This feature is common in both children's and adult literature.

Secondly, there is a strong bias towards publishing books about English-speaking Africa, which, of course, reflects the bias in the data collected and readily available to English-speakers. African books of folklore and about specific African countries are more often about English – speaking West Africa and South Africa than about other areas. Relatively neglected are books about Portuguese Africa, Rwanda, Burundi, former French Equatorial Africa, and the Sudan (Mole, 2012). This bias is strengthened by publishers obtaining rights to books published overseas, for most books, which first appear abroad are published either in Great Britain or America.

Books on Africa also bear the biases of the persons who write them. Just as the theoretical basis of African scholarship have changed in recent years, so have the books based on this scholarship. And with increased opportunities for living and traveling in Africa, more persons with at least some personal contact with Africans are writing books about Africa, reflecting their little experiences as travelers, developers, administrators, and so on. As more persons are attracted to the writing of books on Africa, new perspectives and their related biases are being introduced into literature about Africa. Visitors to Africa write books which reflect both the length of their visit and their private perceptions of what they have experienced. Many visitors stay in Africa for only a short time, and their books disclose their incomplete grasp of Africa as a whole; for example, "Africa: Background for today" (1967) by Roy Macgregor-Haste, who has visited Africa among other places as a news correspondent. In a book markedly lasting in continuity, he presents a brief history of pre-colonial Africa focusing on the states, followed by a long section on colonial Africa. In a chapter on the independent nations of Africa, Macgregor-Haste categorized them in reference to cold war alignments and the presence or absence of coups. He stated, among other erroneous comments, that all African countries follow similar patterns of economic, social and political development. This is a peculiar feature of the literature of African studies.

One of the major challenges facing African studies today is the inadequacy or lack of relevant ICT resources or poor access to them despite their predominant use in information retrieval, organization and

dissemination. Internet connectivity helps to open the window to global knowledge about Africa. Many of the African studies centres don't have Internet facilities while many even depend on the computer systems of their parent universities to carry out basic operations like word processing.

Unfortunately, many Africana librarians are not experts on African Studies, and it is difficult for them to select from the many titles available, a few of the most accurate books and relevant books for their library collections.

General recommendations for growth of African Studies and African Studies Literature in Africa

A reassessment of recently published books about Africa seems warranted in view of both the rapidly increasing interest in Africa and the uneven quality of the many new books pertaining to Africa. Africanists are in a much better position to select the best from the range of books about African studies than are non-specialists.

British Africanist were, by and large, able to damn and contain the current that nearly swept them into nominal existence because they were able to maintain contact and communication amongst themselves through conferences, seminars and symposia which offered them the opportunity to build up and publicize their case for African studies. In Africa conferences are few and far between and poorly attended when organized. Professional Journals have declined in regularity of appearance. Distribution of publications is very poor and many library shelves are lacking recent literature in various fields. Therefore, it appears the first thing academics in Africa, and therefore African Africanists, should do is to rebuild the collapsed bridges and other lines of communication and contact linking individual academics, universities, learned societies and even countries and regions.

There is a crying need for a strong and functioning organization of Africana librarians, first on country basis and then on regional and continental basis. In times like the one we are passing through when funds are scarce, and personnel severely depleted, no institute or university can hope, on its own, to stock all the books, journals and papers which scholars in its catchments area may need for their work. It is only by means of cooperation, promoting a functioning system of inter-library loans, exchanges and support that these needs can be

adequately met. Furthermore, active cooperation among Africana librarians of Africa will help to make known what records exist and what studies are going on in a local area, in a country or in a region and thus help to expose avoidable duplication. If Africana librarians are better organized than hitherto, they would be better able to link up with their primary clients – the academic teachers and researchers. Interaction between the two groups cannot but be very healthful for the discipline.

From the history and experience of British Africanists in the 1980s, it is clear that African studies discipline is treated as a dispensable luxury outside the African continent. The study of Africa is thus a responsibility which Africa and Africans must recognize lies completely on their shoulders. In carrying out that assignment, they may receive help and encouragement from Europe, America, Asia and other continents. However, they cannot afford to depend on that help. This imposes on the African, whether he is a scholar, a politician or a businessman, an awesome responsibility for putting more thought and action into the organization, funding and running of African studies than he has hitherto done.

The British experience, which arose from the fact that government, until the 1980s the primary financier of research and teaching in African studies, suddenly felt itself unable to do so, serves as an object lesson on the need to diversify the sources of funds for university teaching and research. The private sector in Africa is very weak, and perhaps not as conscious of its responsibilities in the field of education and other social services as its counterparts in Europe and America. But an early effort ought to be made to educate it on this role so that in time academic research will cease to be wholly dependent on people in government who might decide to penalize the educational system because of slights, real or imagined, which they received at the hands of radical and idealistic academicians.

ICT resources should be optimally applied to facilitate African studies. These resources could be employed in the area of data collection, data analysis as well as documentation and presentation of research outcomes and literature of the studies.

Governments should play active roles in diffusing ICT resources to colleges, universities, and schools that run programmes in African studies to facilitate African studies, research and scholarship.

Incorporating African studies into the curriculum of primary, post primary and tertiary education in Africa and making it a compulsory subject for entrance into the tertiary institutions is one sure way of making students and scholars to embrace it. Through this also, students and scholars will learn about the highly unknown historical root and cultural and social identity of African people.

African studies institute should be set up in every university in Africa while its establishment should be encouraged in every university in the western world.

More awareness should be created on African studies and African studies literature by African studies institutes, African studies associations, Africanists, and other stakeholders. This can be done through the organization of conferences, seminars, and symposia. The target audience of such programmes should be African studies students, scholars, and researchers, Africanists, Africana librarians, publishers, teachers, and every one who has interest in African affairs

Conclusion

African studies have represented a new challenge – a testing ground to the academic world as a whole. The search to know and reconstruct Africa's past has reinforced the historian's determination to emancipate human knowledge from its "Euro-centric" chains

African studies have helped Africans to understand and rediscover themselves socially, culturally, politically, and economically. This understanding and rediscovery has made Africans to reclaim their lost identity and confidence as Africans. Africans have now learnt to appreciate themselves, courtesy of Africanistics. In the last decades, African studies have continued to attract attention and interest from non – Africans.

However, African studies and African studies literature have been plagued with numerous challenges as this study have revealed. There was the problem of the existence of two separate and compartmentalized worlds of africanists: Africans and Non-Africans. Books on Africa also bear the biases of the persons who write them. One of the major challenges facing African studies today is the inadequacy or lack of relevant ICT resources or poor access to them despite their predominant use in information retrieval, organization and dissemination.

There is also for conferences, seminars and symposia which offered them opportunity to build up and publicize the case for African studies. Professional Journals have declined in regularity of appearance. Distribution of publications is very poor and many library shelves are lacking recent literature in various fields.

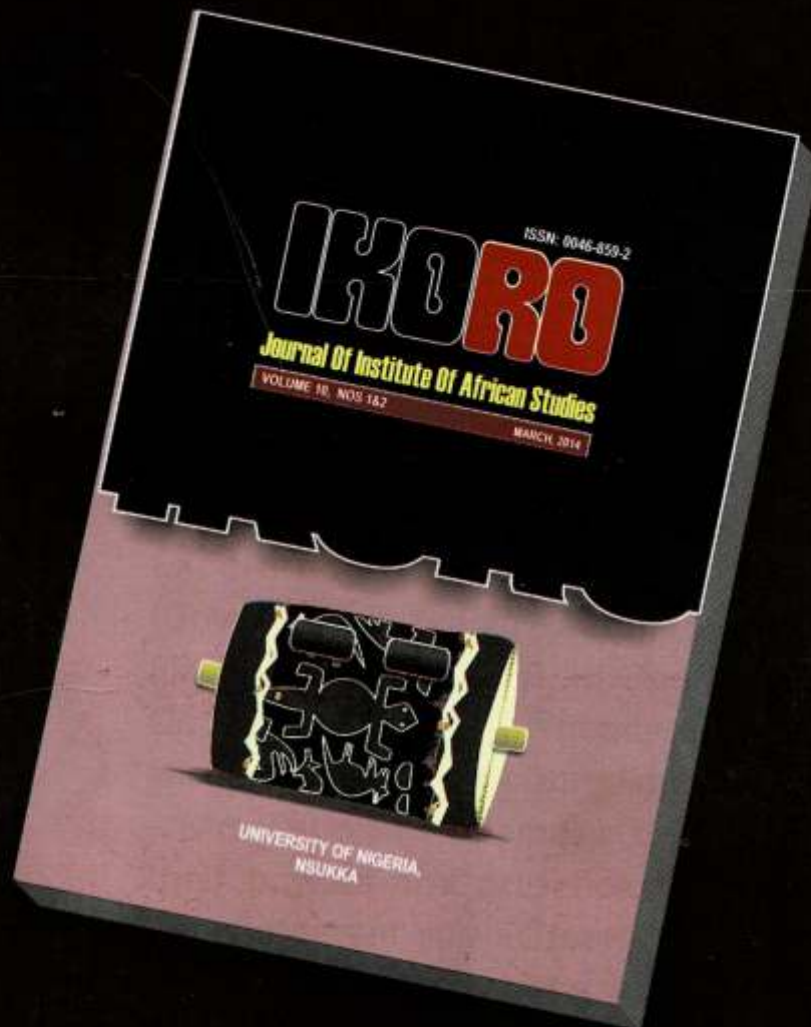
ICT resources should be optimally applied to facilitate African studies. These resources could be employed in the area of data collection, data analysis as well as documentation and presentation of research outcomes and literature of the studies. Incorporating African studies into the curriculum of primary, post primary and tertiary education in Africa and making it a compulsory subject for entrance into the tertiary institutions is one sure way of making students and scholars to embrace it. African studies institute should be set up in every university in Africa while its establishment should be encouraged in every university in the western world. More awareness should be created on African studies and African studies literature by African studies institutes, African studies associations, Africanists, and other stakeholders.

African studies and African studies literature are Africa's heritage. The study of Africa and the development of African studies and African studies literature responsibilities which Africa and Africans must recognize lie completely on their shoulders. As Africans, we must embrace them, support them and help them to grow. This requires the joint effort of every African, either as a researcher, scholar, student, pupil, librarian, government official, policy maker, author, publisher, information seeker, or book seller. Every one has a role to play in promoting African studies.

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