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The Problems of Nigerian Education and National Unity

Osilama Thomas Obozuwa
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THE PROBLEMS OF NIGERIAN EDUCATION
AND NATIONAL UNITY

BY
OSILAMA THOMAS OBOZUWA

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

November

1980

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VITA

The author, Osilama Thomas Obozuwa, is the son of Okigba Obozuwa and Isome (Ototo) Obozuwa. He was born in the early 1930's at Iviukhua-Agenegbode, Bendel State of Nigeria.

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In September, 1958, he entered the SS Peter and Paul Major Seminary where he studied Philosophy for three years and Theology for four years. He was ordained a Priest on June 26, 1966.

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On his return to Nigeria in January, 1973, he was made the Vicar General of the Diocese of Benin City, appointed the State and Diocesan Co-ordinator of Projects/Social Welfare Services, and the Administrator of Holy Cross Cathedral Church, Benin City.

In September 1975, he was admitted to the Loyola University of Chicago, where he received his degree of Masters of Education majoring in Educational Psychology in January 1978.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation addresses the problem of Nigerian education and national unity. Nigeria is a nation of ethnic diversity in a modern world. Like most African post-colonial states on the road to modernization, Nigeria¹ faces many educational problems. One of the major problems arises from the fact that Nigeria is predominantly a multi-ethnic society. It is an historical fact that at the time of independence on October 1, 1960, Nigeria as a "new" nation was a mere geographical agglomeration of some 250 ethnic groups who had very little in common. Little wonder then, that each Nigerian is equally, if not more strongly drawn to his kinsmen than to fellow Nigerian citizens even after twenty years of independence.

A Nigerian writer reviewing the problem of Nigerian cultural pluralism in the Nigerian Observer stated:

Nigeria as a heterogeneous society is composed of different cultures as a result of historical and geographical difference. Thus we can talk of the Hausa culture, the Bini culture or the Ibo culture. Any attempt to collectivise these cultural groups is an artificial creation that does not have any historical truth nor even realistic truth at that matter. Cultures of course can influence one another as a result of trade conquest or domination.²

¹The locale of this study is the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the west coast of Africa.

²Basil Onyema Okoh, Nigerian Observer, 25 March 1978, p.5.

The fundamental root of the problem is that Nigerian cultures have not influenced one another. This is primarily because neither the colonial administrators, who brought these different ethnic groups together for easy administration during the colonial era, nor the Nigerian politicians after them did anything positive to bring about mutual understanding among the different ethnic groups. Graf maintains that "The colonial rulers, and Nigerian politicians after them, were never able to resolve the country's acute ethnic and cultural fragmentation."³

Today, cultural pluralism is a problem in Nigeria because the different ethnic groups have not been taught to know and respect one another's culture. These ethnic groups can neither appreciate nor love one another's culture which they know nothing about. Consequently, each group clings to its cultural values, beliefs and customs at the expense of national unity.

The author claims that cultural pluralism could be an asset to Nigeria if there were a mutual interchange of cultural values which would bring about mutual understanding. The different cultures in Nigeria have their own uniqueness and beauty. The problem is, that hitherto nothing has been done to enjoin each ethnic group to contribute its cultural gifts to the enhancement and enrichment of Nigerian society.

As to what degree a pluralistic society is desirable is a controversial issue among social scientists. Those who are against pluralistic societies advocate "the assimilation of ethnic minorities into the dominant culture of the society to attain cultural uniformity within the society, and thus eliminate the possibility of internal conflict

³William D. Graf, Elections 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publication, 1979), p.7.

between ethnic groups.⁴ On the other hand, the proponents of pluralistic societies argue in favor of "the cultural riches that accrue to pluralistic societies from accepting and practicing the organic cultural integration, one which allows for mutual interchange of cultural goods on the basis of mutual respect for individual distinct values and in the conditions of free and harmonious cooperation."⁵

The author contends that Nigeria desires a pluralistic society. By a pluralistic society, the author means a cultural heterogeneity of ethnic groups retaining their identity within a given society and at the same time working together to forge a unity based on mutual respect and mutual interchange of cultural values rather than assimilation. Anderson defines assimilation as "the absorption or disappearance of one ethnic group into the life of another ethnic group."⁶

Nigerians are deeply rooted people and have a very strong feeling of ethnic belonging. No group is ready to surrender its cultural traits (values, norms, beliefs, language and behavioral patterns) in favor of another group. This is the main reason why Nigerians refused to adopt one of the Nigerian three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) as a lingua franca.

The circumstances surrounding the Nigerian situation also favor a pluralistic society. From the American experience, we know that assimilation and acculturation are possible to a greater extent.

⁴George A. Theodorson and Achilles G. Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969), p.93.

⁵Otto Feinsein, ed., Ethnic Groups in the City (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1971), pp.292-293.

⁶Charles H. Anderson, Toward a New Sociology (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 236.

Kolm maintains that:

4

The assuming of a dominant status position by the Anglo-Saxon group, who based their claims on seniority in arrival and on providing of the foundations for the institutional framework for the young society, created, of necessity, a hierarchical structure for the next arrival, ascribing to them the status of descendingly ranked minorities.⁷

For the new arrivals to survive and succeed in their new environment, they were compelled to surrender their cultural heritage for the Anglo-Saxon Protestant or Anglo-Saxon-Teutonic heritage. This social assimilation and acculturation policy which called for the blending of different cultures into one culture was later referred to as the melting pot theory. The melting pot idea was developed by Israel Zangwill in 1909, which postulated the ongoing process of blending of the best traditions and traits of all the ethnic groups into a new dynamic unity.⁸ But the Anglo-Saxon conformity doctrine was long preached before 1909.

In the Nigerian situation, the different ethnic groups were brought together under the British rule at the same time. None of the groups could claim "host" society to the rest. Great Britain became the overlord until independence in 1960. After independence, the struggle for ethnic supremacy began. But none of the three major groups was strong enough to propose the myth of the melting pot model. With the creation of nineteen states in Nigeria, the possibility of one group ever dominating the rest of the groups to the extent of imposing its cultural heritage on them is far remote.

⁷Feinstein, op. cit., p. 64.

⁸Ibid., p. 64.

The author shares the opinion of Horace Kallen that cultural diversity is not only a direct implementation of democracy, it is also a direct expression of human nature and one of its primary needs. The strong tendency of Nigerians to maintain their cultures is a sacred human right: "Men may change their clothes, their politics, their wives, their religions, their philosophies to a greater or lesser extent: but they cannot change their grandfathers."⁹

The problem that faces Nigeria, therefore, is how to use education to resolve the country's acute ethnic and cultural fragmentation to bring about unity in diversity. This problem has two dimensions, the first aspect which the author will identify as "ethnicity as a concept of reality" is what we have already discussed above. This concept means that Nigeria as a nation is made up of different ethnic groups. These groups have different cultural patterns and there is strong solidarity or ethnic consciousness among the members of each ethnic group. By ethnic consciousness, the author means "an awareness of ethnic group membership in an individual's relationships with others and also in his own self-conception."¹⁰

The second aspect of the problem, which Ikejiani referred to as "Tribalism as an ideology", the writer will refer to as "Ethnicity as an ideology." This concept means the fomentation of ethnic feelings or the promotion of ethnic strife by Nigerian leaders and politicians to gain political powers, Ikejiani argues that:

The first major overt manifestations of tribalism in Nigeria

⁹Horace Kallen, "Democracy versus the Melting Pot" as quoted in Otto Feinstein, op. cit., p. 64.

¹⁰George A. Theodorson and Achilles G. Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p.135.

started with the political campaign in 1951...The moment the idea of tribal domination and menace was used successfully by certain political parties to win elections in various regions of Nigeria, a deep wedge was driven into the fabric of Nigerian unity.¹¹

It is the opinion of many writers that ethnicity as a concept of reality is not the problem but rather ethnicity as an ideology that militates against the building of one strong nation. For example, Graf claims that:

In mentioning ethnicity or tribalism as a problem, it should be made clear that it is not the existence of different cultural patterns that is at issue but rather the exploitation of these ethnic or tribal sentiments to arrive at policy decisions or the use of ethnicity to disrupt 'unity in diversity.'¹²

On the contrary, this study demonstrates that it is ethnicity as a concept of reality that constitutes a major problem for Nigerian national unity. Ethnicity as an ideology is only a by-product of ethnicity as a concept of reality. Once unity in diversity is achieved through education, ethnicity as an ideology will die a natural death.

According to Kolm, "there is no historical evidence of a larger society not being based on smaller ethnic units."¹³ The smaller ethnic units on which Nigeria is based were described by the colonial administrators as tribes. The early colonial administrators' definition of tribe is "a group of savage men and women ruled by an equally savage chief."¹⁴ Although some of the contemporary anthropologists and

¹¹Okechukwu Ikejiani, ed., Nigerian Education (Ikeja Lagos: Longmans of Nigeria Limited, 1964), pp. 116-117.

¹²Graf, op. cit., p. 46.

¹³Feinstein, ed., op. cit., p. 58.

¹⁴Clara Ikenonwu, West Africa, no. 3240, 20 August 1979, p. 1511.

sociologists are trying to be objective in their definitions of the term tribe, some of them still indulge in the ethnocentric distortion of non-European societies of the 19th century. For Winick, "A tribe is an social group usually with a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity, and unifying social organization. It may include several subgroups, such as sibs or villages. A tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor, as well as, a patron deity."¹⁵ Mitchell defines a "tribe as a socially cohesive unit associated with a territory, the members of which regard themselves as politically autonomous."¹⁶ No one raises objections against these kinds of definitions of the word "tribe".

On the other hand, Lewis claims that "In general usage, the word 'tribe' is taken to denote a primary aggregate of peoples living in a primitive or barbarous condition under a headman or chief." This claim or definition clearly demonstrates the attitude of European social scientists of the 19th century who looked at non-European societies as examples of primal societies. From the word primal or primus meaning first, they coined the word "primitive" to describe societies they thought were at the earliest stage in human evolution. History has proved that this is false.

The Portuguese who visited Benin, in 1484 were amazed at the beauty of the city and at the artistic genius of the Benin people. When Benin was conquered by the British in August, 1897, the British people stole all

¹⁵ Charles Winick, Dictionary of Anthropology (New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams and Company, 1970), p. 546.

¹⁶ G. Duncan Mitchell, ed., A Dictionary of Sociology (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968), p. 214.

the beautiful works of art and bronze that were not burnt. The Symbol of the Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC) which the British government refused to loan to the Nigeria Military Government in 1977 for the FESTAC was one of the items stolen from the Oba's palace in 1897. Crowder described this rapacious act in mild terms when he wrote, "The Beni were conquered, the town burnt and nearly 2,500 of its magnificent bronzes were taken by the British back to Europe."¹⁷ One wonders why Crowder used the phrase "back to Europe" as if the bronzes were originally brought to Benin from Europe.

From some of the definitions and statements above, it is clear that the use of tribe or tribalism in an African context has acquired very uncomplimentary and often pejorative connotations. Many writers have questioned the derogatory use of the word tribalism in relation to African situations. For instance, Andreski asks:

Why should 13 million Yorubas be called a tribe but the much less numerous Latvians a nation? Because the former are Africans and the latter Europeans?...Why should we call the opposition of the French Canadians to the English Canadian domination nationalism, and the analogous attitude of the Ibos to the Hausas tribalism? Are the protagonists of official views of African affairs not indulging in crypto-racialism when they call the same thing nationalism (which sounds good) when it occurs in Europe or America, but 'tribalism' (which sounds bad) when it occurs in Africa?¹⁸

For the purpose of this study, the use of ethnic group is preferred to the use of the term tribe. There are many definitions of ethnic group. For Max Weber, "an ethnic group is a human collectivity based on

¹⁷ Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 203.

¹⁸ Stanislav Andreski, The African Predicament (New York: Atherton Press, 1968), p. 59.

assumption of common origin, real or imaginary."¹⁹ Rose defines ethnic group as a group whose members share a unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to another."²⁰ According to Anderson,

While man may be a mongrel lot, most people nevertheless recognize divisions between themselves and other people, based on ethnic background. The word 'ethnic' stems from the Greek ethnos, meaning people. Men who share a sense of peoplehood or identify with one another, who feel an irrevocable affinity with persons who have common roots in a meaningful historical tradition, are members of an ethnic group.²¹

From the three definitions of ethnic group given above, one can easily see that the members of ethnic groups share a feeling or sense of peoplehood based on common history or cultural roots.

In this study, ethnic group is stipulated to mean a group sharing a feeling of peoplehood, occupying distinct territorial limits, having a common name, descent, cultural identity (customs, beliefs, norms, values as well as language) and a sense of mutual solidarity. In this definition, the shared phenomena that serve as a basis for an ethnic group in Nigeria are very clear. It has nothing to do with immigrants from other countries, professions, religions, social classes or politics.

It must be remarked that in Nigeria there is no segregation. By that we mean that there is no isolation of one ethnic group from the other. Although the different ethnic groups have their own geographical

¹⁹Joseph A. Ryan, ed., White Ethnics (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1973), p. 13.

²⁰Peter I. Rose, They and We: Racial and Ethnic Relations in the United States (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 11.

²¹Charles H. Anderson, Toward A New Sociology (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1964), p. 234.

locations, the people from one group are free to move to the different parts of the Federation for search of jobs or trade. There is no segregation in terms of housing, schools, churches or clubs.

Although there is no segregation, there is what President Alhaji Shehu Shagari described as "ethnic rivalry of inimical intensity." Nigeria lacks harmony and unity at the national level. Interethnic marriages, which are indicative of a high degree of integration, are rare. In most cases, friendship is ethnically determined. There is dislike and distrust among the different ethnic groups.

Chukunta, quoting from the studies of Klineberg-Zavalloni (1965) on six African nations including Nigeria, shows the height of the lack of national consciousness in Nigeria. To the question "Who are you?" 56 percent of the Igbos and 60 percent of Yorubas replied in terms of ethnic references. The Yorubas disliked the Igbos more than the Igbos disliked them (74 percent Yoruba as opposed to 59 percent Igbos), and Yoruba in Nigeria felt closer to Yoruba in the Republic of Benin than to a non-Yoruba in Nigeria.²²

In this study, integration means the uniting of the Nigerian peoples in interest, attitude, knowledge, values and action in terms of breaking through the linguistic affinity and cultural barriers to arrive at a national consciousness. All Nigerians, irrespective of their ethnic groups, should develop national interest and realize that they have a stake in the healthy development and progress of the nation. Without national interest and unity of purpose, it will be impossible for Nigeria

²²N. K. Onuaha Chukunta, "Education and National Integration in Africa; A case study of Nigeria," The African Studies Review no. 2, vol. XXI, (September 1978): 67.

to make a meaningful attempt towards the attainment of her national objectives of building "a united, strong and self-reliant nation with a great and dynamic economy, a just and egalitarian society, a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens and a free and democratic society."²³

Justification of the Study

The importance of the Nigerian problem of ethnicity cannot be overemphasized. This problem has hitherto militated against the bond of Nigerian national unity and national consciousness. Nigerian politics have been marked by a succession of internal crises. It is public knowledge that the first Republic collapsed as a "result of the accumulated problems of corruption, patronage, disunity, sectionalism, factionalism, 'primordialism' and many others."²⁴

Nigeria became an independent and sovereign nation on October 1, 1960. At that time Nigeria was a Federation made up of three semi-autonomous regions: Western, Northern and Eastern regions. A fourth region, the Mid-Western region, was created out of the Western region, in 1963.²⁵ The main political parties were: 1) Action Group (A.G.), 2) The Northern People's Congress (N.P.C.), and 3) The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (N.C.N.C.).²⁶

²³Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, Printing Division, 1977), p.4.

²⁴Graf, op. cit., p.7.

²⁵The Federal Territory of Lagos was not regarded as a region but Lagos remained the Federal Capital of Nigeria.

²⁶The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) changed its name to the National Convention of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC) when the former British Cameroons separated from Nigeria in 1960.

These main political parties represented the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. Although the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons originated as a nationalist movement before becoming a Political party, it was regarded as an Igbo party because it was led by Igbos. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was its president from 1946-1959. Another Igbo, Dr. Michael Okpara, assumed the presidency from Azikiwe. The Action Group party, headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, was associated with the Yorubas; the Northern People's Congress was for the Hausa-Fulani. These parties drew the bulk of their support from their respective regions.

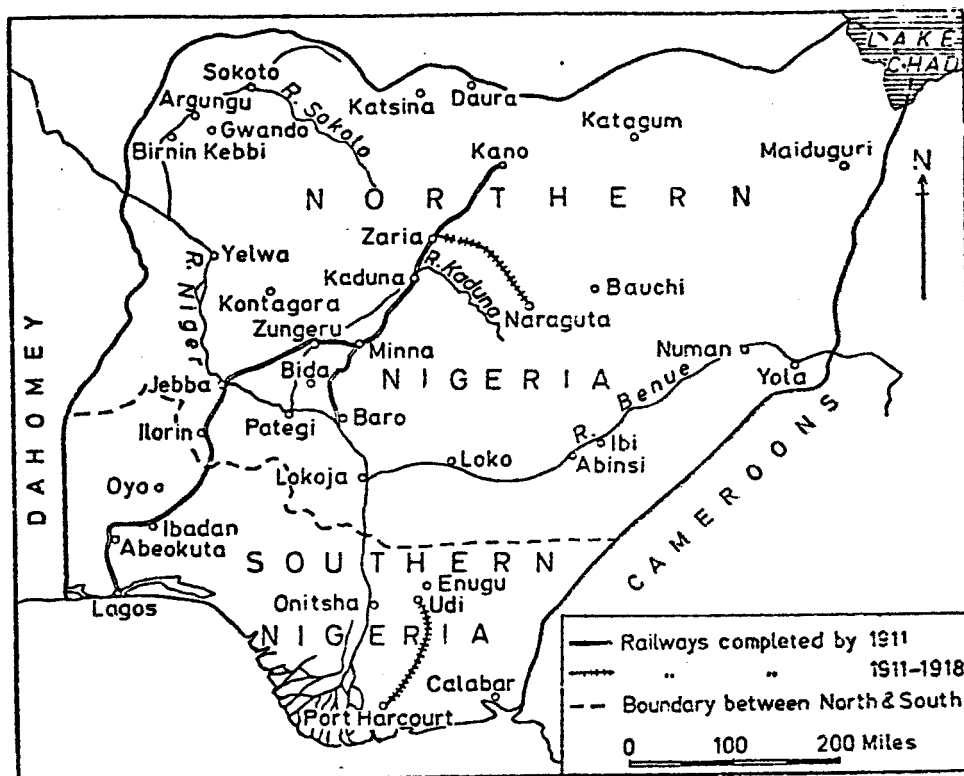
The Northern region by virtue of its size and population dominated Nigerian politics. Figure 1 shows the boundary between North and South while table 1 shows the state of affairs at independence and after the creation of the Mid-Western region in 1963. Since the number of electoral constituencies was based on the population, the results of the 1963 census became a big political issue. Although the results were widely disputed, the population of the Northern region remained larger than that of the three regions in the south combined.²⁷ It is clear from the preceding account that the base of Nigerian political parties before the Army take-over was predominantly regional, parochial and ethnic.

Since the political parties operated on an ethnic basis, they were bound to represent ethnic and regional interests vis-a-vis national

²⁷ For more information on Nigerian political crises from independence to the end of the civil war, the reader is referred to Peter Obe, Nigeria: A Decade of Crises in Pictures (Lagos; Peter Obe Photo Agency, 1971), pp.10-24.

Figure 1

Map of Nigeria showing the Boundary between the North and the South at the time of Nigerian Independence in 1960.



SOURCE: Sonia F. Graham, Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria 1900-1919 (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1966), p.2.

Table 1

Shown below is the area in square miles, population, and percentage of population of the different Regions in Nigeria at the time of Independence in 1960 and after the creation of the Mid-Western region in 1963.

REGION	Area in Square Miles	Population	Percent of Population
North	281,782	19,100,000	56
East	29,484	8,000,000	23
West	45,798	7,000,000	20
Federal Territory of Lagos	27	350,000	0.9
Non-African		27,000	0.1
TOTALS	357,091	34,477,000	100

When the Mid-Western Region was created in 1963 and again when Nigeria had a population figure of some 55 million, the area and population picture of the Federation remained virtually the same:

REGION	Area in Square Miles	Population	Percent of Population
North	281,782	29,808,658	53
East	29,484	12,394,464	23
West	30,454	10,265,848	20
Mid-West	15,344	2,535,839	3
Federal Territory	27	665,246	1
TOTALS	358,091	55,670,055	100

SOURCE: William D. Graf, Elections 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publications, 1979), p. 49.

interest. The Federal House of Representatives became a place where politicians fought for a part of the national income on behalf of their ethnic groups or regions. The struggle for ethnic supremacy led to the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) in which Nigeria lost both a great deal of money and human resources.

Since the Igbos were responsible for the first military coup of January 1966 and formed the first Military Government under Major-General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, it seemed that the Igbos desired to dominate the other ethnic groups. Andreski claims that the Igbos acted to forestall Hausa-Fulani domination:

To be sure, the first military coup, which overthrew the post-independence government, was directed by Ibo Officers; and although the initial leaders were jailed or at least pushed out, it was another Ibo Brigadier Ironsi, who took over. It is also true that while killing Hausa and Yoruba politicians and officers, the conspirators have spared the lives of the Ibo luminaries of the civilian regime. However, before we put the blame on the Ibos for first drawing the sword, we should make sure that there is no substance in the claim that the revolt was in fact a pre-emptive strike aimed at forestalling a coup from above accompanied by a purge of southern officers, planned by the Hausa leader, Ahmadu Bello, and his puppet prime minister, Tafawa Balewa. Anyway, whatever might have been the real moves behind the stage, many people suspected Ahmadu Bello of harbouring such design, particularly as he did not conceal his desire to establish a Fulani Hausa domination over the southern infidels.²⁸

The northern soldiers in July, 1966, successfully staged a second military coup to put an end to Igbo domination by killing Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi and replacing him with General Gowon. One wonders what role the Yorubas played in the interethnic competition for power and dominance. When thousands of Igbos who were traders and civil servants

²⁸Stanislav Andreski, The African Predicament (New York: Atherton Press, Inc., 1968), pp. 75-76.

in the north were massacred and the rest fled for their lives, many Yoruba job seekers rushed to the north to fill the posts vacated by the Igbos. Andreski gives a graphic account of the Yoruba dilemma.

He writes:

The refugees, who had been filling all kinds of skilled jobs in other regions, had to abandon all their property and have also left a vacuum which has greatly impoverished the Northern Region. As education-shy Moslems could provide no replacements many Yoruba job seekers have found an opportunity in the north, which partly explains their acquiescence in the Hausa domination of what remains of the Federation. Neither this advantage nor the bait of partaking of the spoils of office (including the Ministry of Finance for the Yoruba leader, Awolowo) can eliminate a widespread, though forcibly muted, desire for independence from the North, and the dislike of the Hausa soldiers among Yorubas, which must be the reason why Lagos has the appearance of a city under foreign military occupation.²⁹

The problem of ethnicity has eaten deep into the political, economic and social fabric of Nigerian society. Ikejiani contends that:

It is glaringly evident that the distinguishing mark in Nigerian public life presently is not a man's political philosophy, or religion, or party, or education, or wealth, or personal qualities, but in the last analysis his tribe or origin. Nigerians carry these tribal thoughts into all aspects of their daily life. They carry them into their friendships, into their occupations, into their loyalties and their prejudices.³⁰

Another cause for anxiety is the creation of states on an ethnic basis. To keep Nigeria one, General Gowon announced the creation of twelve states in Nigeria on May 27, 1967. Three days later, Lt. Col. Emeka Ojukwu announced that the Eastern Region had seceded from the rest of the Federation and that it had become an independent country known as Biafra. But the timely announcement of the creation of twelve states

²⁹Ibid., p. 76.

³⁰Okechukwu Ikejiani, ed., Nigerian Education (Ikeja: Longman of Nigeria Limited, 1964), p. 122.

was a skilled political stratagem. It helped the minority groups in former Eastern Region to get some degree of political self-determination. Because they were granted their own states, they refused to cooperate with Ojukwu when he seceded.

With the creation of twelve states, the Northern Region which was the political giant in terms of size and population was divided into six states. On February 3, 1976, seven more states were carved out of some of the already existing twelve states. Today, Nigeria has nineteen states. (See figure 2).

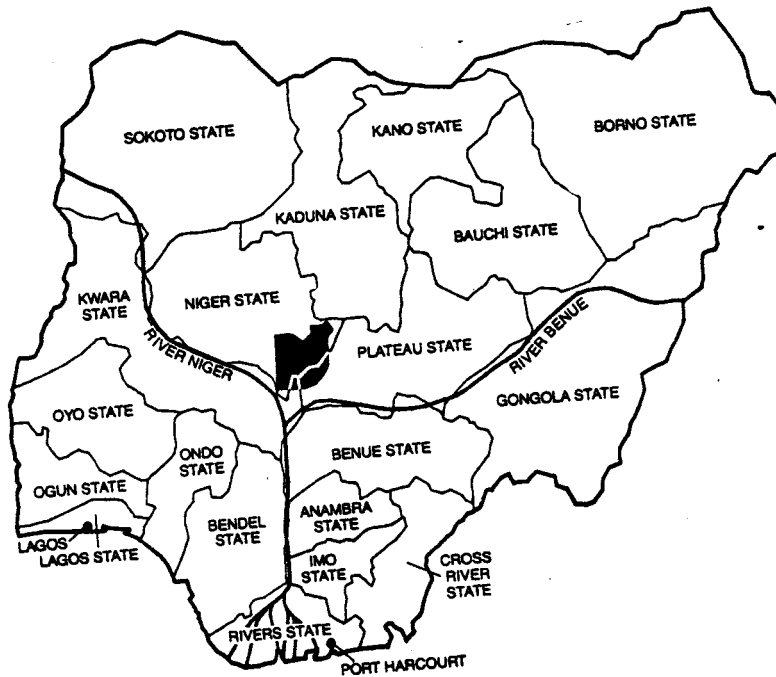
The creation of these states has been beneficial in many ways: it has helped to keep Nigeria "one"; it has also given some minority groups an opportunity for self-determination and a fair share of the national income; and it brought development closer to the people. However, well-meaning Nigerians are worried that the exercise seems to be designed to ensure that people of the same ethnic origin are grouped together in order to protect them from injustice and domination by others. According to Ani, "the creation of twelve states followed by a bloody civil war has helped to keep the country one. But the big question is whether it has also succeeded in keeping the country truly united."³¹ Ani's question reveals an underlying anxiety that the creation of states on an ethnic basis now constitutes one of the major disintegrative forces in Nigerian society.

Some states are known to indulge in certain practices that are diametrically opposed to national unity. For example, some states prefer to employ Indians and Pakistanis in their State Public Services even if

³¹O. Ani, Daily Times, 4 February 1976, p. 17.

Figure 2

Map of Nigeria Showing the Nineteen States



NOTE: The black area indicates the New Federal Capital Territory

SOURCE: Federal Nigeria, July - September 1977, p. 16.

there are qualified Nigerian applicants from other states. Dr. J. D. Ojo could not help asking: "How can we preach 'unity' where it is held as an anathema for a citizen of Nigeria to work freely in another state which is not his state of origin?" He further commented:

One feels rather horrified at the attitude of some states to members of staff who are in their employment but who are indigenes of other states. In some cases many have been forced to go back to their states under the threat of non-promotion and some others are forced to leave the service of such states through frustration since they are conspicuously by-passed to please indolent subordinates whose passport to such claims was that they were sons of the soil.³²

The importance and seriousness of this problem could also be seen from the fact that Nigeria's post-independence history has been a search for national unity, justice, peace and political stability. Nigeria needs unity, justice, and political stability in order to grow nationally and take her place in the community of nations.

For twenty years, since independence in 1960, ethnicity has been the basis of distrust, strife and discord among Nigerians. Ethnicity is also responsible for the evils of disunity, injustice, nepotism, political unrest, interethnic competition for power and dominance that ended in a bloody civil war. There is a serious need for the integration of the peoples of Nigeria, but the forces of ethnic diversity have continued to generate social friction and bring about disintegrative results.

Olisa has sized up the situation adequately when he remarked:

Nigeria's number one roadblock to national integration is ethnicity, popularly known as tribalism. In spite of the

³²J. D. Ojo, Daily Times, 22 March 1977, p. 7.

shapeless prosperity and modernization which the country appears to have attained through the recent expansion of oil revenues, Nigerian political culture is still dominated by numerous levels and assortments of primordialism. The ethnically emancipated Nigerian is still a rare phenomenon.³³

The retired Head of State General Olusegun Obasanjo in his final broadcast to the nation appealed for peace and unity among the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the first President of the Second Republic of Nigeria, in his broadcast to the nation after assuming power on October 1, 1979, claims that "the slogan 'One Nation, One destiny' shall be translated into reality." Furthermore, he said, "National integration requires hard work... There is a need for a dedicated leadership and citizenry imbued with faith to cultivate a widespread national feeling for Nigeria."³⁴

In brief, one of the major problems Nigeria is facing today is how to use education to bring about unity among the different ethnic groups. The post-independence government or the first Republic of Nigeria collapsed because it was dominated by the interethnic political struggle for power. Professor Ola describes the first republican era as "Five years of fierce party trouble which unstabilized the Nigerian political system. First, there was the inter-party street fighting; second, there was the inter-tribal street murders and lastly an outright civil war."³⁵

The military regime that took over from the First Republic was also dominated by interethnic military struggle for power and dominance. The

³³M. S. O. Olisa, "The Constitution of Nigeria and the Condition of Nigeria," being the text of the Presidential address of the Nigerian Political Science Association Annual Conference, Kaduna, 1977, p. 14.

³⁴West Africa, no. 3247, 8 October 1979, p. 1833.

³⁵Opeyemi Ola, Sunday Times, 11 April 1977, p. 5.

Northern soldiers killed Major-General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi and replaced him with General Yakubu Gowon. The military government did not solve the problem of ethnicity. The creation of states has increased the promotion of ethnic interests rather than national consciousness. For the present government (The Second Republic of Nigeria), the lack of unity among the peoples of Nigeria is one of the major concerns. These statements constitute the justification and an appropriate one, for the choice of my topic. Having stated the problem and its justification, the next question is to look into the effort the Nigerian Federal Government is making to bring about 'unity in diversity.'

The Effort of the Nigerian Government

The Nigerian Federal Government accepts Coleman's claim that "education is the key that unlocks the door to modernization"³⁶ and places maximal premium on education to bring about national consciousness. The Nigerian people see education not only as the greatest force or tool that can be used to solve the national problem of ethnicity and to bring about national integration but also see education as the greatest investment that the nation can make for the quick development of its economic, political, sociological and human resources.³⁷ The people of Nigeria, therefore, aim at revolutionizing and redefining the goals of national education.

On September 28, 1976 a New Nigerian Policy on Education was born. In this policy, the New Philosophy of Nigerian Education was outlined. According to Dewey, "a philosophy of education...is a plan for conducting

³⁶James S. Coleman, Education and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p.3.

³⁷Nigeria National Policy on Education, op. cit., p. 5.

education. Like any plan, it must be framed with reference to what is to be done and how it is to be done."³⁸ Accordingly, Nigeria framed her policy on education with reference to the five main national objectives as stated in the Second National Development Plan, and endorsed it as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education.

The objectives are:

1. a free and democratic society;
2. a just and egalitarian society;
3. a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
4. a great and dynamic economy;
5. a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

Nigeria's philosophy of education, therefore, is based on the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal school system...For the philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national objectives, it has to be geared towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress.³⁹

The Federal Republic of Nigeria holds a broad view of education.

The Nigerian policy on education states that the new philosophy of education seeks to integrate the individual into a sound and effective citizen and aims at democratization of education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.⁴⁰

Here education is viewed as more than schooling. Schooling is only a part of the total process. Education is seen as life's total experience. This view of education is widely shared by many social scientists and educational historians.

³⁸ John Dewey, Experience and Education (1938; reprint ed., New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1976), p. 28.

³⁹ Nigeria National Policy on Education, op. cit., p. 4.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

According to Shermis, the social scientists define education as the transmission of cultural heritage. He claims that:

Anthropologists and sociologists have formulated a definition of education which goes about as follows: All people have a culture, which consists of their learned behavior. This learned behavior includes both the tangible and the intangible: tangible objects, such as tools, clothing and shelters; and such intangibles as language, beliefs, aspirations, attitudes and religion. Education is the passing on of this culture.⁴¹

Guttek, an American educational historian, also shares this wide view of education. He says:

The history of education properly includes the description, elaboration, and analysis of both the formal and informal aspects of education. The informal aspects refer to the total cultural context in which persons are born, nurtured, and brought to maturity. Through the process of enculturation, they acquire the symbolic, linguistic, and value patterns of their culture.⁴²

In this study, the author adopts Guttek's view of education as "the means of cultural transmission and cultural reconstruction; as a process of change; as an instrument of survival; and as a personal right and obligation belonging to every man simply because he is a member of society."⁴³ This view of education perfectly coincides with the Nigerian concept of education. The people of Nigeria believe that education encompasses every human experience and every interaction of man with everything in his environment. It is a continuous process throughout life. This belief implies the informal definition.

As a result of cultural contact between Britain and Nigeria, the

⁴¹S. Samuel Shermis, Philosophic Foundations of Education (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967), p. 11.

⁴²Gerald L. Guttek, A History of the Western Educational Experience (New York: Random House, Inc., 1972), p. 9.

⁴³Gerald L. Guttek, An Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1970), p. 2.

Nigerians have adopted Western-style education. They, therefore, have found themselves in a position where they must call upon a specialized cultural agency--the school, to weld and transmit two cultures--Western and African. Nigerian education draws its substance from both Western and African cultural heritage. This welding and transmission of two cultures requires a careful selection and reconstruction. Formal education, therefore, implies the transmission of preferred norms, attitudes, knowledge, skills and values to the learner within a school setting. Nigerians believe in education as an instrument of survival and change. This is the reason why they have chosen education as a tool for nation building. The government sees the national objectives as the necessary foundation for national policy on education because education progresses and develops according to the objectives set by the society within which it operates. The philosophy of Nigerian education as reflected in the educational policy aims at equal educational opportunities for all citizens.

For the implementation of the national policy on education, the Federal Military Government launched Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme in September, 1976. The running cost of the Universal Primary Education Scheme during its first year of operation was estimated at N515 million (about \$772.5 million).

The Purpose of the Study

This study researches the problems of education in a nation of ethnic diversity in a modern world. In other words, it examines the problems of Nigerian national education with special reference to national integration and national unity. The writer believes that the

major problems facing Nigerian national education are rooted in its past educational systems. In order to appreciate these problems as well as to discover what resources are available, it is of paramount importance to have an understanding of the educational past. Therefore, this study examines the Nigerian educational problems that accumulated from traditional, Muslim, missionary and colonial systems of education. The research also analyzes and criticizes the new philosophy of Nigerian education as embodied in the Nigerian National Policy on Education. The Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme is also critically appraised and recommendations are presented on how Nigeria can best use the educational resources at its disposal to achieve national unity.

It is hoped that this study will prove useful to Nigerian teachers and students of education. It is also hoped that it should serve as a guide to Nigerian policy makers in all spheres of Nigerian national life, particularly the educational, economic, social and political.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, certain types of methodology are relevant. This study utilizes two methods: 1) it uses a documentary research method. For over two years, this author has diligently collected materials on this topic. The Loyola University of Chicago Library, the Chicago Public Library, and the Northwestern University (Africana) Library have some of the materials needed for this dissertation. The materials that were not available in the United States were obtained from Nigeria through correspondence. Materials collected from Nigeria were mostly government official publications, books by Nigerian authors, and daily newspapers. 2) It also uses a

method of critical analysis or John Wilson's methods of language analysis. For Wilson, questions of meaning are not questions of fact. To answer a question of fact involves finding out the relevant facts, either by personal experience or by getting reliable information. Then, after obtaining the facts, one should put them together and work out the problem. Questions of meaning are not questions of value which are concerned with moral judgements, that is, with what is actually right or wrong, good or bad. Questions of meaning are questions concerned with the meanings of words, for words do not have meaning in their own right at all, but in so far as people use them in different ways.

According to Wilson, questions of meaning are concerned with actual and possible uses of words and with the criteria or principles by which those uses are determined. When involved with conceptual analysis, even though the questions contain words with which we are quite familiar, we often cannot but feel a sense of mystery. We become self-conscious about words which hitherto we had used without thinking, not necessarily used wrongly but used unconsciously. According to Wilson, learning to deal with concepts is essentially a process of becoming more self-conscious in relation to one's normal environment.⁴⁴

Wilson suggests several techniques which are very useful in doing language analysis and Krolikowski made a concise summary of these techniques. According to Krolikowski, Wilson made the following suggestions:

1. He [Wilson] suggests that the student isolate conceptual from factual and normative questions. For example, the following questions involve more than conceptual questions: Should people in mental institutions ever be punished? Is progress inevitable in the twentieth century?

⁴⁴ John Wilson, Thinking with Concepts (Cambridge: University Press, 1974), pp. 2-15.

2. He suggests that a good strategy is to delineate a model case, one with typical if not essential features. For example, a good way to think through the meaning of "handicapped child" might be to begin by giving a model or typical case.
3. He suggests that one might wish to contrast the concept under analysis with contrary cases.
4. He suggests that one relate the concept to other quite similar concepts. For example, one might relate "deserving" to "justice" and to "punishment."
5. He suggests the use of borderline, odd, or queer cases. For example, is an electric shock experienced by a child a case of punishment? Is the badly battered boxer a case of someone who has been punished?
6. He suggests that the student invent cases. For example, how is a man different from a computerized man?
7. He suggests that the use of the concept always involves an examination of the context. Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando, meaning who, what, where, with whose help, why, how, and when.
8. He suggests that the student look for the anxiety underlying the use of the concept. Why, for example, are people speaking of equality of opportunity? Why are they asking whether we are ever really free?⁴⁵

In this study some of these techniques are used.

Review of Related Literature

A review of the literature reveals that the proposed topic has not been a subject of a dissertation. Although many books and articles have been written on the problems of Nigerian education, no one to the best of my knowledge has undertaken to investigate the fact that ethnic diversity in Nigeria constitutes a national educational problem. However, the following materials appear to have some bearing on the

⁴⁵Walter P. Krolkowski, "Language Analysis: Wilson" An Alphabetical Companion to Educational Foundations 420, Philosophy of Education (Chicago: Loyola University, 1974). For detailed information on John Wilson's language analysis techniques, the reader is referred to John Wilson, Thinking with Concepts (Cambridge: University Press, 1974) pp. 23-39.

topic proposed:

1) Adeniji Adaralegbe, ed., A Philosophy for Nigerian Education (1972) is a compilation of reports and proceedings of the Nigerian National Curriculum Conference held September, 1969 which was sponsored by the Nigerian Educational Research Council. The main focus was on the Nigerian National Curriculum reform. The importance of this document in relation to the topic proposed is that the recommendations contained in it greatly influenced the new Nigerian Policy on Education.

2) Okechukwu Ikejiani, ed., Nigerian Education (1964) is also a compilation of a series of articles written by some eminent Nigerian educators. One of the articles "Education and Tribalism" by Ikejiani showed the evil effects of "tribalism" as an ideology but failed to see that "tribalism" as a concept of reality is the foundation stone on which the Nigerian nation will be built. However, the major contribution of this work is that it highlighted some of the Nigerian educational problems and suggested a Federal Plan for Education.

The two books listed above discuss a common problem, that of improving the Nigerian Educational System. In addition, both prepare the way for the new Nigerian Policy on Education which is the main focus of this study.

3) A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (1974) gave a historical review of the different development stages of the Nigerian education system. This work is a historical account of the three different educational systems in Nigeria; that is, traditional, Muslim, and Western systems of education that exist side by side today in the Nigerian society. The approach is documentary and descriptive. This book is useful as background for the discussion of the historical antece-

dents of this dissertation. Fafunwa's major contribution is that his books is the first systematic historical account of Nigerian Education under one cover.

4) N. K. Onuoha Chukunta has an article "Education and National Integration" in African Studies Review, Vol. XXI, No. 2, 1978. Using a historical perspective, he effectively demonstrated how neither the colonial masters nor the Nigerian politicians that came after them, used education to bring about integration in Nigeria. He concluded that in spite of all the fuss about integration, national integration has not been an aim of Nigerian education. While this article is relatively informative, it fails to recommend or suggest what Nigerian educators or the federal government should do in terms of curricular reform to bring about integration through education.

The significance of this study rests on the fact that if Nigeria wishes to coordinate its efforts and resources, develop a strong and progressive nation and take its rightful place among the community of nations, national unity is of paramount importance. Therefore, it is anticipated that the result of this study will contribute to our understanding of the fact that Nigerian ethnic diversity could become a source of strength rather than of weakness if "correct" education is used as an instrument of nation building. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is that ethnicity as a concept of reality which constitutes the major problem of Nigerian education and national unity can also be the foundation on which Nigerian national unity will be erected if education is wisely used to bring about organic cultural integration.

In brief, Chapter I states the problem, the justification of the

choice of the topic and shows the Federal Government's determination to use education as a tool for nation building. It gives the purpose of the study, its methodology, and the literature review.

Presentation

There are seven chapters in this dissertation. Chapter I is introductory. Chapter II through IV treat traditional, Muslim, missionary and colonial systems of education as the historical antecedents of this dissertation. Chapter V handles the analysis and criticism of the older educational systems in Nigeria. Chapter VI deals with the analysis and criticism of the new philosophy of Nigerian Education. In Chapter VII recommendations and the conclusion are presented.

CHAPTER II

NIGERIAN TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

This chapter briefly discusses Nigeria's geographical location and languages. It reviews the traditional political history of the peoples of Nigeria before and during the colonial era. The traditional political system will be examined to illustrate that the indigenous political system laid the foundation for traditional education. An examination of the political and cultural setting is necessary to understand Nigerian traditional education which serves as an instrument for cultural survival. The philosophical thought, the content, purpose, and the method of approach underlying traditional education will be examined. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of Islamic education which has greatly influenced the life and political system of the people of Northern Nigeria. This great influence occurred after the Islamization of the Habe¹ city states which was consummated by the Fulani Jihad (Holy War) in 1804. .

Geographic Location

Nigeria, on the west coast of Africa, has an area of 358,091 square miles or 962,420 square kilometers. Nigeria is bounded on the east by the Republic of Cameroon, on the west by the Republic of Benin (Dahomey), on the south by the Gulf of Guinea and on the north by the Republic of

¹Habe means the original Hausas before the Fulani rising: the singular of this word is Kado.

Niger. Nigeria lies between 4⁰ and 14⁰ north of the Equator. It has a coastline of about 500 miles, running from Badagry in the west to Calabar in the east.

The most important river is the Niger from which the country derived its name. Nigeria has a tropical climate with warm temperatures throughout the year, but the north is generally hotter and drier than the south. At the moment, Nigeria has a demographic problem. The 1973 census was declared invalid because of some irregularities. All available statistical data reflect the 1963 census results (see Table 2). "No one knows how many Nigerians there are, but estimates range from 80 million to 100 million."²

The population of Nigeria is made up of many ethnic groups of which the major ones are: Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Fulani, Kanuri, Ibibio, Tiv, Ijaw, Edo, Annang, Nupe, Urhobo, Igala, Idoma, Igbirra, Gwair, Ekoi, Mumuye, Alago, Ogini, Isoko, Higgi, Bura, Efik, Ghamba, Shua-Arab, Kaje, Tari, Kambari, Eggon, Koberi, Anga, Karkare, Birom and Yergam.³

Languages

English is the official language of Nigeria and it is taught in all schools throughout the country. English is used as the medium of instruction in all schools. In most cases, the primary schools teach in vernacular for the first two years. From primary three to the university level, English is used. The ability to speak, write and communicate with complete fluency in the English language is a mark of intellectualism in Nigerian society. Nigeria has more than 250 ethnic groups. Graf

²Ray Moseley, Chicago Tribune, 1 June 1980, Section 1, p. 14.

³Nigeria Handbook, 1973, (Lagos: Academy Press Limited, 1973), p. 23.

Table 2

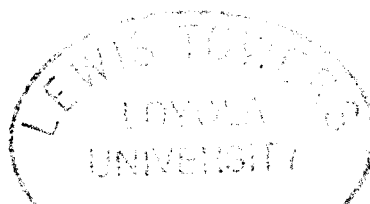
Estimated Area and Population of Nineteen
States in Nigeria

State	Estimated Area Sq. Kms.	Estimated Population		Capital
		(a)	(b)	
Anambra	15,770	2,943,483	3,596,618	Enugu
Bauchi	61,814	2,193,674	2,431,296	Bauchi
Bendel	38,061	2,435,839	2,460,962	Benin City
Benue	69,740	3,041,194	2,427,017	Makurdi
Borno	116,589	2,990,526	2,997,498	Maiduguri
Cross River	29,164	3,600,000	3,478,131	Calabar
Gongola	102,067	3,002,808	2,605,263	Yola
Imo	13,032	3,280,340	3,672,654	Owerri
Kaduna	70,293	4,098,305	4,098,306	Kaduna
Kano	42,123	5,774,842	5,774,840	Kano
Kwara	73,404	2,309,338	1,714,485	Ilorin
Lagos	3,535	1,442,567	1,443,568	Ikeja
Niger	73,555	1,271,767	1,194,508	Minna
Ogun	20,241	1,557,946	1,550,996	Abeokuta
Ondo	18,165	2,272,675	2,729,690	Akure
Oyo	42,862	5,158,884	5,208,884	Ibadan
Plateau	56,245	2,026,657	2,026,657	Jos
Rivers	21,172	1,800,000	1,719,925	Port Harcourt
Sokoto	<u>94,588</u>	<u>4,538,808</u>	<u>4,538,787</u>	Sokoto
Total	962,420	55,740,653	55,670,085	

(a) According to Federal Government White Paper of the Report of the Panel on Creation of States, Federal Ministry of Information 1976.

(b) As agreed at meeting of Secretaries to State Military Governments May 17, 1977. Figures prepared by Federal Office of Statistics.

SOURCE: William D. Graf, Elections 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publication, 1979), p. 194.



mentioned 380 ethnic and linguistic groups in Nigeria,⁴ each of which has its own distinct language. The three major languages in Nigeria are Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba which are widely spoken all over Nigeria. Every literate Nigerian commands at least two languages, his/her own mother tongue and English. Pidgin English is widely spoken in the south by both literate and non-literate. Most Nigerians speak their mother tongue but in interethnic communication, English is mostly used both in Nigeria and outside Nigeria because that is the language Nigerians have in common. In Nigeria, Arabic is used by Muslims for religious purposes.

Nigerian Political History

Nigeria as a political entity in the modern sense is only 66 years old. It came into being, January 1, 1914 when the Northern and Southern protectorates were amalgamated by Lord Lugard. It appears that it was after the amalgamation that the name "Nigeria" was coined. According to Crowder, "Sixteen years earlier, Flora Shaw, who later married Lugard, first suggested in an article for The Times that the several British Protectorates on the Niger be known collectively as Nigeria."⁵

The early history of the peoples of Nigeria is largely a matter of speculation. What is known is based on oral traditions. There are conflicting theories on how to distinguish history from legend. However, the peoples of Nigeria have lived in their different geographical locations for thousands of years and had cultures of great complexity and sophistication. It is known that up to the beginning of the 19th

⁴William D. Graf, Elections 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publication, 1979), p. 7.

⁵Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 21.

century there existed kingdoms, empires and states in the different parts of what is now known as Nigeria.

The Kingdom of Benin

Benin tradition claims that the Binis (people of Benin) came from Egypt. One of the Benin oral traditions⁶ professes that the present dynasty in Benin originated from Ogiso Owodo. He reigned as Oba of Benin around the eleventh century A.D. Eweka I, who established the present dynasty, was the great grandson of Ogiso Owodo. The grandfather of Eweka I was Prince Ekaladerhan who was ordered to be executed by his father Ogiso. However, the executioners took him out of the city and out of sympathy spared his life and allowed him to wander into the unknown. In order to convince the Oba that his son was executed, the executioners killed a chicken and smeared their swords with its blood. The place where Ekaladerhan was supposed to have been executed but a chicken was killed instead, is still called to this day Urhuokhokho (meaning chicken neck).

Ekaladerhan wandered in the forest and founded a settlement at Ughoton where he collected many followers. When news reached him that the Binis were searching for him, he moved with his followers and finally came to a place of safety which he named Ilefe (meaning I have escaped them) which was "corrupted" to be Ile-Ife. The people he met at the settlement gave him a warm welcome and accepted him as their ruler, Ekaladerhan on becoming the first Oni (king) of Ife, assumed the title

⁶For detailed information on this oral tradition the reader is referred to Osaze Ojo, ed. Royalty Magazine (Benin: City Publishers, 1979), pp. 1-2.

Izoduwa (meaning I have chosen the path of wealth or prosperity). This same title is referred to as Oduduwa in Yoruba oral tradition.

When Oba Ogiso died, the Binis according to Crowder wanted a "non-hereditary republican type of government, but the first of their leaders, Evian, immediately nominated his own son, Ogiamwe, as his successor."⁷ The Binis were displeased and they organized a new search for their king, Prince Ekaladerhan, who had become the king of Ilefe with the title Izoduwa. Finally, the Binis caught up with him at Ilefe (Ile-Ife), assured him of his safety and pleaded with him to return to Benin. He refused and sent his son, Omonoyan (meaning a pet child) popularly known today as Oranmiyan. Omonoyan became the Oba of Benin but soon discovered that he could not rule the Binis. He decided to leave. Before then, he had a son, Eweka I, who started the present dynasty in Benin. The present Oba, Erediauwa is the thirty-eighth in direct line of succession from Eweka I. Omonoyan left Benin, went to Oyo and founded the Old Oyo dynasty. This is how Oranmiyan (Omonoyan) came to be associated with the founding of two dynasties.

Benin kingdom was highly organized. It was administered by the Oba and his territorial chiefs. Eweka I, appointed his sons chiefs in the different villages which were the basic political units of the Benin kingdom. The Uzama (king makers) were said to have been created by Eweka I. Crowder claims that Oba Ewedo removed the capital of Benin kingdom from Usama to its present site and gradually and effectively reduced the power of Uzama.⁸ Once a person became an Oba, there was no power to remove him.

⁷Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber 1966), p. 54.

⁸Ibid., pp. 62-63.

The Oba was the final and last authority in the kingdom. Traditionally, the Oba overcame opposition by sending an opposition leader to a war front from which he was not expected to return.⁹ He was at the head of both political and religious life of the kingdom. There were many title-holders, who formed a complicated hierarchy which had great influence on some of the Obas. It is evident that Benin kingdom could not have maintained such a large Empire without a well-organized and standing army. The supreme commander of the Benin army was called Ezomo while his lieutenant was known as Ologbose.

Benin kingdom was once the most powerful in the state of the Guinea Coast. It is said to have extended beyond Lagos and Dahomey to Accra in Ghana. The first Europeans to visit the Coast of Nigeria were the Portuguese who visited Benin in 1485. They made an attempt to establish a church and trade with the Binis. The Portuguese were highly "impressed by the size of the metropolis itself with its great streets and rows of neat houses. They also noted the palace courtyards and galleries. The brass figures and the carvings which abounded witnessed to the artistic genius of the Benin people."¹⁰ British ships arrived on Benin river in 1553, some of the crew and British merchants visited the Oba of Benin. This visit broke the Portuguese trade monopoly on the west coast of Africa.

Old Oyo Empire

The Yoruba legends are not in agreement as to whether the founder of

⁹T. A. Osae, A Short History of West Africa A.D. 1000 to the Present (New York: Hill and Wang, 1973), p. 105.

¹⁰J. F. Ade . Ajayi and Ian Espie, ed., A Thousand Years of West African History (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1967), p. 194.

the Yoruba came from Upper Nile or from Mecca. However, the Yoruba oral traditions agree that the founder of the Yoruba was Oduduwa. They further agreed that Oduduwa settled at Ile-Ife where he became the first king of the Yoruba. One of the Benin oral accounts of the origin of Oduduwa was discussed earlier in this study.

Both Yoruba and Benin traditions agree on the following points:

1) that the founder of the Yoruba was a Prince, 2) that the same prince who is called Izoduwa in Benin tradition is also called Oduduwa in Yoruba, 3) that the cradle of the Yoruba culture is a place called Ilefe or Ile-Ife, 4) that Oranmiyan was a founder of two dynasties--Old Oyo and Benin. While the Benin tradition states that Oranmiyan was the son of Oduduwa, Yoruba legend says he was the grandson of Oduduwa. Dahunsi claims that Okanbi, the first son of Oduduwa was the father of Oranmiyan.¹¹

According to Aderibigbe, "by the fifteenth century, the Old Oyo Empire founded by Oranmiyan was well-established; its ruler, the Alafin was regarded as the ruler of a powerful empire, and the 'Lord of many lands.'...For the greater part of the eighteenth century Oyo was still the major power in Southern Nigeria."¹² Many Yoruba historians claim that the Oyo empire was highly organized. With a well organized and efficient standing Army, the empire extended to Dahomey. The political organization of the Old Oyo was as follows:

1. At the head of the empire was the Alafin (king) with his "court of priests, officials and eunuchs." The Alafin was elected from among a

¹¹A. Dahunsi and J. E. Adetoro, A Primary History of Nigeria Book I (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1973), p. 5.

¹²J. F. Ade. Ajaye and Ian Espie, ed., A Thousand Years of West African History (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1967), pp. 188-189.

number of royal family candidates. He has to obtain the Ida (sword), as a symbol of office from Ile-Ife and promise not to wage war against Ile-Ife.

2. The eldest son of Alafin goes by the title Aremo, he could not succeed his father since he had to commit suicide on the announcement of the death of Alafin.

3. Oyo-Mesi (king-makers) were the seven leaders of the seven wards into which the capital of Oyo was divided. At the head of Oyo-Mesi was the Bashorun (the Prime Minister). The Oyo-Mesi controlled the authority of the Alafin and they had the power to get rid of a tyrannical Alafin by ordering him to commit suicide.

4. The Esos (the Army), next in rank to the Oyo-Mesi were the guardians of the empire. The commander of the army was known as Kakanfo. If he lost a battle, he was bound to commit suicide.¹³

5. Next in rank were "The sons of the soil," that is, the children of the land, whom Aderibigbe referred to as "the hard core of the empire" and quoted Johnson, the historian of the Yoruba, as describing them as the "Yoruba proper."¹⁴ They enjoyed ethnic affinity in terms of social aggregate exhibiting a certain cultural uniformity. They had no will for political unification as such, but were brought into the Oyo empire by the force of arms. Hence the Egba people broke away at the first opportunity.

6. The Vassals were provincial rulers in charge of provinces incorporated into the Oyo empire through conquest. They were made to pay yearly

¹³Committing suicide appeared to be a noble thing to do in certain circumstances. It was a practice associated with kings, chiefs and nobles in Yoruba customs. For example, Sango who was preferred to Ajaka as a ruler after the death of Oranmiyan, committed suicide and he was deified after his death because of his magical powers.

¹⁴Ajayi and Espie, ed., op. cit., p. 189.

tributes to Alafin to acknowledge him as their king and ruler. Some of the vassals were Obas.

7. The slaves captured during the war were either kept as the domestic servants of the Alafin or sold in local markets to those who needed them.

The decline and the disintegration of the Old Oyo started about 1754 when Labisi, the Alafin, appointed Gaha, head of the Oyo-Mesi. This appointment started a struggle that weakened the central government. The provinces under the empire took advantage of this central weakness to liberate themselves. The Fulani conquest of Ilorin was the last blow that led to the final dissolution of Old Oyo Empire.

The Hausa Land Before 1804

The kingdom of Bornu was in existence long before the formation of the Hausa states. Bornu has a known history of more than one thousand years. When the Hausa states were formed, Bornu remained the overlord for centuries.

There are two legends on the origin of the Hausa People. One legend says that Bawo was their hero who killed the sacred snake at Daura, which had stopped people from drawing water from the well in which the snake lived. The queen of Daura was so pleased that she married Bawo and they had seven children who became the rulers of the seven Hausa states.

Another version says that the hero who killed the snake at Daura was Bayajidda. After the heroic act, the queen of Daura married him and they had three sets of twins. In addition to these six children, Bayajidda had a son by his former marriage at Bornu and these seven sons became

the rulers of Biram, Daura, Gobir, Kano, Kastina, Rano and Zazzu (Zaria). These were known as Hausa Bakwai (meaning the seven true Hausa states).

There are stories about the other seven illegitimate children of Bayajidda. These seven illegitimate children ruled over the other seven states known as Banza Bakwai (meaning the seven bastard Hausa states). These were Gwari, Kebbi, Kororofa, Nupe, Yauri, Yoruba and Zamfara.

The Hausa Bakwai were very proud of their legitimate origin and always looked for an opportunity to remind the Banza Bakwai of their dubious origin. Naturally, the Banza Bakwai did not take this lightly. So, there was bitter hatred and constant warfare between these two sets of seven states.

In social and political institutions in Hausaland, there was a sharp division between the Sarakuna (the nobles) and Talakawa (the commoners). The system of administration was based on a territorial subunit ruled by the royal appointees, the Sarkin (king), who also ruled through his agents known as the Maianguwas (head of wards). The duties of the Maianguwas were to settle minor quarrels in their wards, see to the welfare of the people and collect taxes. They were directly accountable to Sarkin.

The Hausa political system was highly organized and there were many political officials of different ministries:

Fadawa, the personal advisor of Sarkin;

Maaji, the finance Minister;

Galadima, the defense Minister;

Kachella, the commander in chief of Army;

Alkalis, the judges;

Sarkin Yank, the chief of the butchers who was responsible for the collection of taxes;

Sarkin Kasuwa, the chief of the market who regulated prices and collected taxes in the market;

Sarkin Ruwa, the chief in charge of rain, who advised the farmers whether to plant their crops or not.

This was the political system in Hausaland until 1804.

The Holy War of Usuman dan Fodio 1804

The two major ethnic groups in the north were and still are the Hausa and Fulani. The Fulani wandered with their herds all over what is now called Northern Nigeria. Some of them remained aloof from the Hausa people and refused to intermarry with them. However, some of them settled in villages. The Fulani moved in groups and those who settled down in villages did so in groups. One of these groups settled at Degel in Gobir state. Their leader was Fodio.

The Fulani were Muslims by religion. Many of them were Arabic learned Mallams or Imams (religious preachers). Some of the Mallams were irritated by the persecution of Muslims by Yunfa, the chief of Gobir, and this persecution led to the Muslim revolt against the Habe city states.

A Fulani Mallam, Shehu Usuman dan Fodio, a man of great intellectual gifts and widely known for this scholarship and religious devotion declared a Jihad (Holy War).

After the conquest of the Jihad, Shehu Usuman dan Fodio retired to Sokoto which he made the headquarters of his new Fulani empire in 1809. He gave his followers green flags and ordered them to fight the Holy War in other various states that were not yet conquered. Later, he divided the imperial administration of Hausaland between Bello and Abdulahi (Bello was Fodio's son while Abdulahi was Fodio's brother). Fodio made

himself the Caliph (prophet of God). He appointed his followers Emirs¹⁵ to rule each town. The previous offices under the former regime were retained, but Muslims were appointed to head them.

Igbo land

The origin of the Igbos is shrouded in mystery. Osaе argues that "the Ibos themselves have no strong tradition of origin. They believe they have always lived within their geographical boundaries, and migrations were within and not from without."¹⁶

The Igbos lacked centralization of political authority. They lived in communities or villages. Aderibigbe gives a detailed description of the social and political set up of the Igbos. He says:

The basic social unit among the Ibo was the single village made up of scattered homesteads and linked together by ties of kinship. The largest political unit was no larger than the 'village group'. This last consisted of a number of villages sharing the same cultural identity, a guardian deity and a central meeting place or market. But each constituent village retained the right to manage its own affairs and it was still subject to the moral authority of the head of its lineage, called an Okpara, whose symbol was the club-like Ofo. The village group, however, remained an ideological and political unit in the sense that the constituent villages regarded themselves as members of the larger group, a sense of belonging symbolised by the annual performances of religious rites and by the simultaneous clearing of the various paths leading to the central market. The overall picture for the whole of Ibo country, then, was a very large number of separate political units indicative of what has been called an "excess of democracy" but certainly not an absence of "government."¹⁷

¹⁵ Emir was originally used for those Fulani leaders who had received flags from the Shehu Usuman and for their heirs; the meaning has since expanded to cover other Muslim chiefs.

¹⁶ T. A. Osaе, A Short History of West Africa: A.D. 1000 to Present (New York: Hill and Wang, 1973). p. 139.

¹⁷ J. F. Ade. Ajayi and Ian Espie ed., A Thousand Years of West African History (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1967), p. 197.

Although the above quotation contains the essential elements of the social and political setup of the Igbos, for better understanding, an explanation of terms used is necessary. It is also necessary to show that in a kinship society there is some kind of government at different levels.

In most of the ethnic groups in Nigeria, the largest traditional political unit is the clan. A clan has the same meaning as "village-group"--a term that was coined by an English anthropologist, M. M. Green in 1947 when she wrote: "The village of Umueke is one of eleven villages that make up what may be called the village-group of Agbaja."¹⁸

A lineage which is a relationship of genealogy is not a locational term since the members of the same lineage do not necessarily have to live in the same location. On the contrary, the village which is a locational term, sometimes has the same meaning as lineage. Some anthropologists describe villages as major lineages. For example, Imokhai describing the Uzairue clan structure claims:

Uzairue clan is said to have been founded by a Benin emigrant of that name. Eight of his sons founded major lineages, referred to by the people as Evbo (villages)...Each of these major lineages has a compact settlement. These settlements, referred to by the British colonizers as villages, retain the names of their founders.¹⁹

A village as a major lineage consists of minor lineages referred to as wards or homesteads. Each ward or homestead is composed of minimal lineages known as households or compounds. The household also

¹⁸M.M. Green, Ibo Village Affairs (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964), p. 9.

¹⁹Charles A. Imokhai, "The Missionization of Uzairue: A Study of Missionary Impact on Traditional Marriage" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1979), pp. 74-75.

segments into sub-households as its population grows too large to be accommodated in the main compound.

There is a kind of government at each level of a kinship society.

1. At a clan or village-group level, there is an inter-village council of elders. This council is usually made up of the representatives of the ruling elders of the villages that make up the clan. In some places, there are clan chiefs. At the clan council meetings, decisions are taken on matters affecting the clan as a whole.

2. At the village level, there is a village council. In many places this council is made up of a few ruling elders or elders belonging to the different age grades. At the village council, village laws are made and matters affecting the whole village are discussed and necessary action taken.

3. At the ward level, there is a ward council made up of the elders from the various compounds. At the ward meetings disputes between members of the different compounds within the wards are settled.

4. At the compound or household level, the government of the household rests in the hands of the elders residing in it. Ottenberg claims that:

In the few compounds inhabited by more than one lineage, the elders of the component lineages function separately in lineage matters but combine in dealing with those concerning the compound as a whole. The elders' authority within the compound is reinforced by the religious sanction of the patrilineal ancestral shrine,...the central symbol of the lineage.²⁰

From the above discussion, it is clear that lineage at the compound

²⁰James L. Gibbs, Jr. ed., Peoples of Africa (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 26.

level is the most basic social and political unit among the various groups in Nigeria. It is also clear that the village as a major lineage is the most important political unit because it is at village meetings that the laws governing the whole village are made.

Domestic Slavery in Nigeria

The dehumanizing practice of slavery is as old as man on earth. The Greeks built their civilization on the labor of slaves. Consequently, they had many theories on slavery. For example, "The greatest Greek thinkers maintained that there was a slave mentality and that those who had it were only happy as slaves and unhappy when left to themselves."²¹

The Holy Bible is full of many references to slaves and slavery. The Israelites were enslaved in Egypt (Deut. 24:18). Niven defines a slave as one "who is the legal possession of his master, who is bound to absolute obedience and who has no redress in law or opinion against the hard or unreasonable act of his master. A slave had no more independence than a table or chair..."²²

Saint Paul seemed to have condoned the evil practice of slavery. When he charged Titus to teach the Christian life, he said, "Exhort slaves to obey their masters, pleasing them in all things and not opposing them (Titus 2.9). Since slavery was indeed a common and ancient practice, it should offer no surprise, then, to know that slavery existed in Nigeria before the Atlantic Slave Trade. In those days, the Nigerian people fought interethnic wars for the purpose of acquiring more land or more towns. Those captured in wars: men, women, and children were made

²¹C. R. Niven, A Short History of Nigeria (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1958), pp. 9-10.

²²Ibid., p. 9.

slaves by the king of the victorious group. The king would select some slaves for his domestic use and sell the rest to those who needed them.

The Nigerian domestic slaves were very well treated. The treatment of a slave depended largely on his/her good behavior. A well behaved slave was gradually integrated into the family and might be allowed to hold an important position in the community in the future. In the kingdoms of Benin, Oyo and Hausa states, many slaves held important offices in the king's palace.

Grace discusses the good relationship that existed between masters and slaves in Yorubaland:

The slaves and masters in Yorubaland live together as a family; they eat out of the same bowls, use the same dress in common, and in many instances are intimate companions, so much so that, entering a family circle, a slave can scarcely be distinguished from a free man unless one is told.²³

Many are of the opinion that Nigerians agreed initially to sell slaves to Europeans because they thought the slaves would be treated like the Nigerian domestic slaves.

Atlantic Slave Trade

When America was discovered in 1492, the Europeans attempted to use the native Indians for both farming and mining. To their great disappointment, the Indians could not stand the hard labor that was required of them. A Spanish priest de Las Casas suggested the importation of African slaves from the coast of West Africa to work on the new plantations.

Osae argues that:

As a substitute for Indian slaves Las Casas suggested the importation of African slaves from the coast of West Africa

²³ John Grace, Domestic Slavery in West Africa (New York: Barnes and Nobles, 1975), p. 2.

into the New World. The African was robust and much stronger than the Indian. The African was thus regarded as being admirably suited for the kind of labor needed on the plantations and in the mines in the New World. The African lived in a climate similar to that of the West Indies. Moreover, it was said that he was capable of doing the work of four Indians. And so the idea of transporting African slaves across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World began for practical reasons.²⁴

Due to the papal Bull, the Spanish could not come to the West Coast of Africa to buy slaves. So, they got the Portuguese involved. Before long many nations in Europe rushed to West Africa for slaves. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1712 gave Great Britain a monopoly of this trade for thirty years.

This trafficking in human beings went on for almost three centuries. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Europeans who initiated and carried through the slave trade with all its cruelties and horrors for years, showed some remorse of conscience. People started questioning "whether anyone had the right to deprive a fellow man of liberty when he had done no wrong."²⁵

Many nations in Europe and in America began to give the abolition of slave trade serious thought. In 1772 Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice of England, made the first ruling in favor of a slave. Denmark declared the slave trade illegal in 1802. Two years later, the United States of America prohibited the importation of slaves. In 1807 Great Britain passed an Act prohibiting the carriage of slaves in British ships and their landing in any British colony. These initial steps led to the final suppression of slave trade.

²⁴T. A. Osae, op. cit., p. 165.

²⁵C. R. Niven, op. cit., p. 12.

The abolition of slave trade was followed by the "scramble for Africa." On August 6, 1861 Britain colonized Lagos and used it as a base to wage wars against the peoples of Nigeria. They started with the coastal towns and gradually found their way into the interior. Conquering one town after another, Great Britain took possession of the whole area now called Nigeria. Nigeria was first divided into southern and northern protectorates. These were finally joined together in 1914 under Lord Lugard who imposed British rule on Nigeria. The underlying motives for British action will be discussed in Chapter four of this study.

Ethnic Consciousness

From the review of the Nigerian political history, it is clear that the Igbos had the village as a unit of political organization. Their administrative or judicial institutions were within a traditional system of age organization or age-grade association in which the Okpara (head of the village) had the right to command obedience. From the review of the Nigerian political history, there is also evidence that Benin, Old Oyo and the Hausa Fulani states had a centralized government in which different ethnic groups participated.

The author contends that the most important social and political unit among the various peoples of Nigeria was a single village or community made up of different homesteads,²⁶ but linked together by ties of kinship. On a clan level, village-groups have ties of ancestry, language, norms, values, cultural identity and a sense of belonging often demonstrated in organization for collective action. An ethnic group is

²⁶A homestead usually contains many nuclear families. It includes various members of the extended family.

usually made up of many clans. This was the case in Northern Nigeria until a Muslim system of administration was adopted.

Niven warns that we should not make the mistake to think "of ancient Nigeria as being divided up into clear-cut provinces and emirates...There were from the earliest times no particular boundaries but each tribe and people occupied what they could. This changed a great deal from time to time with the energy of the leader of a particular tribe."²⁷

Where a leader of a particular ethnic group had organizing abilities and the resources to wage wars against his neighboring territories, he conquered and enslaved them. This act of enslavement is often described as a centralized government or central authority. The relationship established in this case was that of the oppressor and the oppressed. The relationship was not one of consensus but one imposed by force of arms. The centralized government was a means of exploitation of the oppressed by the oppressor in terms of yearly tributes which were mostly paid with slaves. Ferkiss argues that "kingdoms were expanded in order to have a ready source of slaves..."²⁸

The oppressed had their resentment against the intrusion of the invader and held tenaciously to their culture and their local system of government at the village level. Even among the slaves that were carried away from Nigeria, the Yoruba slaves were able to keep alive Yoruba cultural traditions in Brazil. They were able to retain their languages, religious beliefs and practices in spite of the hard conditions. In Nigeria there were many revolts against central authorities

²⁷C. R. Niven, op. cit., p. 33

²⁸Victor C. Ferkiss, Africa's Search for Identity (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1969), p. 45.

and these were exemplified by demonstrations which were an outgrowth of internal desire to regain freedom by the territories that were acquired through conquest. Those who were strong enough fought and regained their freedom. The Egbas and the people of Dahomey freed themselves from the yoke of Oyo domination.

Crowder describing the relationship between the early nomads and the local inhabitants in Northern Nigeria says:

The local inhabitants were organized only into small village groups...These nomads through the harsh force of circumstances were rigidly organized in tribal groups, acknowledging a chief and hierarchy of leaders, while the local inhabitants were organized politically only at the village level sharing no central authority.²⁹

Smith confirmed this point by saying that the pagan Hausa lived in small villages of exogamous patrilineal kin...³⁰ In those days, the Yorubas had larger towns than any other ethnic group in Nigeria. These towns were ruled by Obas. However, villages that were ruled by the Bales out-numbered the towns.

In the Benin Kingdom the village was the basic political unit.³¹

Nigeria Review describes the political system of a village:

The government was based on age-grade associations that existed in every community. These associations performed both political and social functions. On the political level, the most senior of the age-grade associations ruled. Thus we had the rule of the old men. The age-grade associations of the middle-aged and the youths formed the executive arms of the government to the extent that they implemented the decisions of the ruling group. They supplied the labour for public tasks within the village and in addition, they were potential soldiers in the village's army. Socially, each age-grade association met to discuss

²⁹Michael Crowder, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

³⁰M. G. Smith, "The Hausa of Northern Nigeria" in Peoples of Africa, ed. James L. Gibbs, Jr. (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1965), p. 121.

³¹Ajayi and Espie, op. cit., p. 195.

matters concerning its welfare and those of its members. It had leaders or officers who spoke for it on political and social issues. Every member contributed to the building of his age-grade association while he also derived social benefits from it. Thus in becoming a member of an age-grade association, everyone was assured of full participation in the activities of his community. Indeed, the age-grade associations gave the youths the necessary training in civil and political duties. In some areas, the leaders of the age-grade associations were given titles. Generally, the ruling elders were called Odionwere. Among the Igbo, the recognized head of the village was Okpara.³²

In the village political system, the people practice true democracy. Matters were discussed at village meetings. Such matters were brought before the elders, and every member had the right to air his views. The matter was discussed by the group until a consensus was reached. There was no room for majority votes, every decision had to be reached by consensus.

The following factors contributed to the development of ethnic consciousness in Nigeria, which today militates against Nigerian national unity.

1. The village was the unit of social and political organization. At the same time, the villages of the same ethnic groups were connected with a common belief that they were the descendants of a common ancestor or were connected by the worship of a common deity, language, norms, values and other cultural traits.

2. Each ethnic group was very proud of its cultural heritage and would do everything in its power to preserve and perpetuate it.

3. As a result of ethnocentrism, no ethnic group agreed to sell its own people during slave trade except if one were a criminal. Crowder

³² Nigeria Review, Number 15, 1978, p. 5.

claims that "the Africans were not usually selling their own people, but members of other tribes whom they often considered not only inferior, but also only fit to be slaves."³³

4. Due to interethnic wars, and slave raiding, the ethnic groups in Nigeria developed mutual suspicion and bitter hostility among themselves. In order to survive, the members of each ethnic group were forced to develop a strong sense of loyalties among themselves.

5. The Holy War of the Fulani brought some religious unity to the Islamized northern Hausa Fulani states. The Muslims in Northern Nigeria regarded their fellow Nigerians in the south as infidels, who should face death or slavery if they were not ready to accept Islamic religion.

6. Great Britain is known for her subtle imperial strategy of "divide and rule." During colonialism, the British emphasized ethnic differences to prevent the different ethnic groups from uniting themselves.

The factors listed above were the forces that helped the different ethnic groups in Nigeria to develop ethnic consciousness where everyone is his brother's keeper. The neighboring ethnic groups were viewed with suspicion and seen as either actual or potential enemies. It was this sense of mutual protection, mutual struggle for survival of the members of the same ethnic group and mutual hostility towards other ethnic groups that set the stage for traditional education.

Traditional Education

The oldest system of education in Nigeria is the indigenous educational system. The Nigerian traditional education has its goals, content and methods. The following have been described as the seven cardinal

³³Michael Crowder, op. cit., p. 74.

goals of traditional African education:

1. To develop the child's latent physical skills.
2. To develop character.
3. To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority.
4. To develop intellectual skills.
5. To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour.
6. To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs.
7. To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.³⁴

Goals two, six and seven above, overshadow the other goals in importance. They contain the fundamental purpose of traditional education which is survival of the group. African education is neither subject nor child-centered but community-centered. Busia contends that:

Though traditional Africa had many cultures, they all appear to have emphasized as a summum bonum, a social sensitivity which made one lose one's self in the groups; the kinsfolk were, and lived as members of one another. It was the goal of education to inculcate this sense of belonging, which was the highest value of the cultural system. The young were educated in and for the community's way of life... Traditional education sought to produce men and women who were not self-centered: who put the interest of the group above their personal interest; whose hearts were warm towards the members of their family and kinsfolk; who dutifully fulfilled obligations hallowed and approved by tradition, out of reverence for the ancestors and gods, and the unknown universe of spirits and forces, and a sense of dependence on them.³⁵

The main goal of Nigerian education is the survival and continuity of the group or community. It is for this reason that the accumulated

³⁴A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1975), p. 20.

³⁵K. A. Busia, Purposeful Education for Africa (The Hague: Mouton and Co. N. V., Publishers, 1968), pp. 16-17.

knowledge of the group is transmitted to the young by the elder members of the community. The acquisition of physical and intellectual skills, character training, respect for elders, and vocational training become means of ensuring community survival.

Before the coming of Islam and Christianity, the only system of education in Nigeria was the traditional system. In spite of the influence of Islam and Christianity on Nigerian education, the influence of the indigenous system of education is still very strong. We must not fail to take note of the fact that most Nigerians are non-literate. All they go by is the traditional way of life which was imparted through the indigenous system of education. Furthermore, every literate Nigerian grew up in two worlds--traditional and Western.

The influence of traditional education in Nigeria is still great in terms of the transmission of cultural heritage and the preservation of ethnic identity. In Nigeria, culture has meaning within the ethnic group or community, but not within the national context. The Igbo mother whether literate or non-literate still brings up her children in the Igbo traditional way of life. The Hausa mother does not speak Yoruba language to her child but Hausa. We know very well that language is a means of preserving a people's culture. The Yoruba parents transmit to their children Yoruba cultural heritage. Nigerian children are constantly made aware who they are in terms of ethnic groups. They have to know the community to which they belong and develop keen interest in it.

To be ignorant of the powerful influence of traditional education is to be unaware of the greatest force against Nigerian national unity. For example, in a heterogeneous city like Lagos, the different ethnic groups living there see it as a duty to search for members of their own

ethnic group for the formation of different associations and unions.

Another effect of traditional education is great love for one's ethnic group or community. Consequently the people of Nigeria are deeply rooted. People always go back to their villages to build houses. When they retire, in most cases, they return to their villages to spend the rest of their lives. At the end of every year the different ethnic groups always return to their towns of origin or send a delegate to hold the annual meetings which are popularly known as "progressive Unions." The common agenda is to discuss the development programs of their ethnic group or village-groups.

In discussing the content of Nigerian education, Fafunwa claims that children were involved in practical farming, fishing, weaving, cooking, carving, knitting, wrestling, dancing, drumming, acrobatic display and racing. Intellectual training included the study of local history, legends, the environment, poetry, reasoning, riddles, proverbs, story-telling and story-relays.³⁶

For the Nigerian child, education was an integrated experience. It combines "physical training with character-building, and manual activity with intellectual training. At the end of each stage, demarcated either by age level or years of exposure, the child was given a practical test relevant to his experience and level of development and in terms of the job to be done. This was a continuous assessment which eventually culminated in a 'passing out' ceremony."³⁷

Banjo discusses the purpose, content and method of Nigerian education. He argues:

³⁶A. Babs Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 16.

³⁷Ibid., p. 16.

Before the advent of Christianity in this country there were no schools, but this does not mean that there was no education of the young. The home was the school and the parents and the older members of the family formed the school staff. The method of teaching was informal, gradual, and practical. The child was given the education that enabled him to take his place in the society as a child. As he grew older, by the same process he was taught to take his place as a boy or girl, as an adolescent and as a man. The education was gradual and evolutionary. There was no preparing the child for the future as such.

Through imitation he learnt to walk and to talk; his vocabulary expanded. Through experience he learnt the nature of things around him, he received no formal lectures, but by handling and experimenting he learnt a lot about nature; By the process of imitation, and of trial and error he came to distinguish through domestic discipline between desirable and undesirable habits of conduct and of health. Through play and manual work he performed physical exercises, and walked longer and longer distances which increased his strength and promoted his health. He was a spectator at worship and gradually came to participate in the worship of the gods of the family. Sent on errands within his village, and travelling with his parents or relatives for social or trading purposes he learnt the geography of his neighbourhood. By helping his parents in pursuit of their occupation like farming, trading, black-smithing, drumming, he learnt a trade.³⁸

Banjo showed very clearly that purpose, content and methods of traditional education are intricately intertwined. He disagreed with those who claim that traditional education is a preparation for the future life or adulthood. According to him, the child is taught to live in his society or how to adapt to his environment at the different developmental stages.

Reinforcement and punishment are two important means by which the traditional society molds children and makes them conscious of the expectations of the group. The children are made to meet these expectations. Their adjustment to these expectations forms the basis for further growth in politics, religion, economics and social relationships which are

³⁸ Adeniji Adaralegbe, ed., A Philosophy for Nigerian Education (London: Cox and Wyman Ltd., 1972), p. 18.

invariably interwoven in traditional society. A child who fails to meet the demands of his group is categorized as an untrained child. A Nigerian family will feel highly insulted if their child is accused of lacking home training. It means that the parent and other members of the family failed in their duty towards the child. It equally means that the child has brought dishonor to his family. Every Nigerian family detests this. Nigerians marry primarily because they want to raise children. The greatest misfortune that can befall a couple is a childless marriage. In spite of the great love for children, Nigerians prefer not to have children than have children that will bring disgrace and shame to the family. Traditional education is universal. Every child is integrated into his community through education.

The father or mother fulfills the primary functions of a teacher. It is the duty of the parents to train and guide the child when he makes his first contact with his environment, carefully watching over his social interactions with others. He is scolded, corrected and advised when he goes wrong, consoled when depressed and rewarded for good behaviors.

The child acquires all his knowledge from the family and through social contacts. He is totally exposed to the life of the community. He observes and imitates adult behavior and work. He takes part in different games with different groups and learns from his peer groups, at times from older siblings and older members of the community at large. In the moonlight the children play games and tell stories, legends, riddles and proverbs. They also seize every opportunity to listen to the conversations of the older people. In this way the child learns of the material and spiritual values of his culture, the fundamentals of social life, customs, traditions and the meaning of life in general.

It is interesting to observe the atmosphere in which the stories are told. Generally, it is a cool evening and everybody feels relaxed. It is far removed from a classroom situation. The words "teacher and pupil" or "teaching and learning" are not used and yet a lot of teaching and learning take place. The method is informal but a practical approach to education. It is an approach that makes it possible for children to learn with great interest in an atmosphere completely free of coercion.

It will not be out of place to observe here that the Nigerian peoples were deeply religious, God-fearing and law-abiding in pre-colonial days. Before the exposing powers of the press, radio and television, Nigerian societies had a powerful system of laws and taboos which made every citizen behave. Not many flaunted existing laws with impunity. The strong belief in the powers of ancestral spirits and gods of the society made everybody careful and law-abiding.

In brief, this chapter has examined the political history and cultural setting that set the stage for traditional education. The philosophical thought, the content, purpose and the method of approach of traditional education were also examined. The major finding is that the traditional education is community-centered and reinforces ethnic consciousness.

Muslim Education in Nigeria

The two religious influences that invaded the traditional way of life of the Nigerian peoples are Islam and Christianity. The first came from the savannah region of West Africa, brought by Arabs; the second came through the sea and was introduced by Europeans. They both paved the way for two kinds of colonialism--Islamic and British. British

imperialism defeated Islamic imperialism in 1902. After the victory, Lord Lugard said:

The old treaties are dead, you have killed them. Now these are the words which I, High Commissioner, have to say for the future. The Fulani in old times under Dan Fodio conquered this country. They took the right to rule over it, to levy taxes, to depose kings and to create kings. They in turn have by defeat lost their rule which has come into the hands of the British. All these things which I have said the Fulani by conquest took the right to do now pass to the British. Every Sultan and Emir and the principal officers of state will be appointed by the High Commissioner throughout all this country.³⁹

Although British colonialism was also defeated by Nigerian nationalism in 1960, the impact of these two imperial powers will remain with Nigeria for many years to come. Nigeria continues to suffer from both Islamic and British Neo-colonialism. According to Col. A. Ali, the introduction of Islam to Borno (Northern Nigeria) in the 11th Century A.D. marked the beginning of Islamic education and the establishment of Islamiyya schools, first in the Northern part of the country and later in the Southern areas. Records indicate that by 1914, there were as many as 24,747 Islamiyya schools in Nigeria enrolling 218,615 pupils under the supervision of 1,500 mualims or mallams.⁴⁰

The Koran forms the sole curriculum for Islamic education. In fact, Islamic schools are sometimes referred to as Koranic schools. The purpose of Islamic education is to be able to read and interpret the Koran. "One of the Islamic traditions states that the best man among you is one who learns the Koran and then cares to teach it. Islamic learning began on this prophetic advice, with the result that teaching

³⁹Annual Report for Northern Nigeria 1902, quoted in Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (Faber and Faber Limited, 1966), p. 226.

⁴⁰Col. A. Ali, "New Nigerian Policy on Education," Federal Nigeria, July-September 1977, p. 10.

religion to others was considered a duty for which a person should expect no reward."⁴¹

Since Arabic is the language of the Koran, it is of necessity that the student of Koran should learn Arabic. Consequently, in Koranic schools both Islam and Arabic are taught simultaneously. When Islamic education started in Nigeria, it was not institutionalized. All that was required was a mallam who was ready to teach and pupils who were ready to learn. Since the hallmark of excellence in Islamic religion is to learn the Koran and teach it, teachers abound everywhere and pupils were not difficult to find. Classes were held wherever it was convenient for the teacher. They could be held in the Mosques, private homes, verandah or even under the shade of a tree. The self-appointed teachers were not paid. They lived on sadagah (charity) of others. They, therefore, occupied a very low economic status in the society.

Some Muslim children start their Koranic education as early as age three. The children are made to memorize verses of the Koran without understanding. The Koran is divided into sixty esus (parts) and each part contains a number of chapters. The children are made to learn one or two of these sixty esus by rote.

The second step is to teach the children the alphabet of the Arabic language. They learn the consonants first and later learn to form syllables with vowels. When these skills are mastered, the children will go back to apply their new reading skills to read the part of the Koran they learned by rote. The aim at this stage is to help the children to acquire the ability to read any text written in Arabic language.

⁴¹A. Babs Fafunwa, op., cit., p. 55.

At the third stage, children learn to write Arabic characters. This of course, depends on the teacher because this could be done earlier. At this stage, the Muslim child has committed to memory the first two parts of the Koran. He is able to read and write in Arabic. This is usually considered as the end of the primary level.

The secondary level starts with learning to understand the meaning of the verses of the Koran committed to memory. Until this time the pupil does not know the meaning of the verses he learnt by rote. Now he learns the correct interpretation and how to translate the verses correctly. At the post-secondary level the pupil learns grammar and other Islamic studies. As a result of Muslim education, many of the Northern States adopted Muslim laws and system of administration.

With the coming of Western education to Nigeria, Islamic graduates discovered that they were only useful in the performance of Islamic religious rituals. In the job market, they were completely rejected because they did not have the required skills. On the other hand, those who received Western formal education obtained jobs easily under the government and private sectors. For fear of Christian proselytization and mingling with the British colonial infidels, Emirs in control of Muslim areas resisted both British colonial administration and Christian missionaries. In 1902, the Sultan of Sokoto wrote to Lord Lugard, warning him to keep out of Muslim controlled areas. He says:

From us to you. I do not consent that any one from you should ever dwell with us. I will never agree with you. Between us and you there are no dwellings except as between Mussulmans and Unbelievers,--War as God Almighty has enjoined on us. There is no power or

strength save in God on high.⁴²

The restriction of missionary activities in Muslim areas of the North and Lord Lugard's non-interference policy had negative implications on the development of Western education in Northern Nigeria. The next Chapter discusses the missionary education.

⁴²A Letter from Sultan of Sokoto, quoted in Michael Crowder, the Story of Nigeria (Faber and Faber Limited, 1966), p. 224.

CHAPTER III

THE MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

This chapter discusses the reasons underlying the coming of the missionaries to Nigeria and their use of education as the greatest weapon in an attempt to achieve their goals. The chapter then examines the purpose, content, and method of missionary education in Nigeria.

The First Missionary Educational Enterprise, 1491-1730

The discussion of missionary activities in Nigeria is incomplete if nothing is said about an early but still-born missionary endeavor. A group of Portuguese priests served as chaplains to the Portuguese merchants, who traded with Benin in the latter part of the fifteenth century. They settled on the island of Sao Tome. From there, they visited Benin, Warri and Brass. These Portuguese priests saw their visit to West Africa as a golden opportunity for them to convert the Oba (king) of Benin and Olu (king) of Warri to Christianity and to introduce the Oba and Olu as well as their respective chiefs to Western education.

Although neither the Oba of Benin nor the Olu of Warri were actually interested in the white man's religion, they both needed Portuguese help. The Oba of Benin needed arms to defend and extend his kingdom while the Olu of Warri needed help to gain his freedom from the Oba of Benin. While the Portuguese merchants traded with Benin, it was easy for the Oba to buy arms from them. Early in the sixteenth century, the trade between Portugal and Benin declined. The Oba wanted the missionaries to supply

him with ammunition and the missionaries refused on the grounds that the Pope had forbidden the sale of arms and supplies to infidels. This clash of interest brought about the complete failure of the first missionary endeavor in Benin.

The Olu of Warri did not accept Christianity himself. However, he allowed his first son and heir to be baptized by an Augustinian priest, Father Francisco who was sent from Sao Tome by Bishop Gaspar Cao. At baptism he was named Sebastian and when Sebastian became the Olu of Warri, he sent his first son Domingos to Portugal to study for the priesthood. Domingos studied in Lisbon and returned to Nigeria with a Portuguese wife. When Portuguese support was no longer needed, the ruling family (which was the center of Warri Christianity) turned against both Christianity and the Portuguese. This opposition brought the Warri mission to a close. The missionary attempt to introduce Western education to the people of both Benin and Warri also failed. Between the period of 1730 to 1843 when the second missionary educational enterprise started, European countries were preoccupied with the Atlantic Slave Trade. In fact, one of the principal aims of the second missionary endeavor in Nigeria was to stop the slave trade.

The Second Missionary Educational Enterprise, 1843-1900

The Atlantic Slave Trade greatly contributed to the second coming of the missionaries to Nigeria. According to Abernethy, "Christians had always felt it their duty to convert the heathen, and Africa had long offered a particular challenge because its peoples were believed degraded and primitive, and because the slave trade was seen as inflicting enormous evils on the indigenous society."¹

¹David B. Abernethy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 27.

The British anti-slavery movement was originated partly as a result of humanitarian feelings for the suffering of the slaves. It was also in the British economic interest to abolish slave trade. The new age of industrialization saw more of a need for a source of raw materials, rather than cheap labor. One of the aims of this movement was to improve the conditions of slaves. John Wesley developing his evangelical doctrine of sin and redemption, went beyond humanitarian ideas. Wesley contended that "the noble savage was a 'sinner and degenerate idolater' who must be converted; slavery was not just a cruel and inhuman practice that should be improved but a sin that must be abolished."²

With this new insight, the main body of evangelicals felt that they were duty-bound to stop slavery and slave trade. They saw the anti-slavery movement as an effective instrument with which to awaken the conscience of Christians who were slave dealers to the enormity of the "sin" involved in slavery and the slave trade.

Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, an influential layman and one of the leading members of the anti-slavery movement in London, wrote a book entitled The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy. In his book, he argued that neither the reawakening of Christian conscience, nor British diplomatic negotiations in Europe, nor naval patrol on the Atlantic had reduced the number of slaves who were still surreptitiously carried to the New World. He claimed that the only remedy was to attack the slave trade at its source of supply. He suggested that African slave dealers should be shown that there was another alternative to human products as a means of exchange.

²Thoughts on Slavery in the Works of Rev. John Wesley, vol. XI, quoted in J.F.A. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891 The Making of New Elite (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p.9.

Buxton's concept was popularly referred to as "the Bible and the plough." He advocated that missionaries, while spreading the Gospel in Africa, should at the same time encourage the cultivation of crops which would form the basis of a new commercial exchange. The new commerce would eventually turn the minds of the African slave dealers away from slavery to agriculture. The crops would then be bought and shipped to Europe and returned to Africa as finished products for marketing. This new legitimate trade would completely displace slave trade and bring about civilization in Africa.

Buxton's idea that a mixture of evangelism and business could bring about the transformation of Africa was readily accepted by both the British government and the missionaries. This was how "the evangelical missionaries in Africa found themselves champions not only of Christianity, but also of European commerce and civilization."³

It was Buxton's concept of "the Bible and the plough" that inspired the Niger expedition of 1841. Fafunwa described the expedition as:

One mighty effort on the part of the British government to penetrate the hinterlands of Nigeria. It consisted of three steamships, well equipped with all kinds of gadgets for making observations on plants, animals, soil, weather, etc. There were specialists among the group to study these phenomena as well as the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of the people. There were also missionaries who were to explore the possibilities of missionary work; and agricultural experts and British government officials who were empowered to sign treaties and establish diplomatic relations on behalf of the British government.⁴

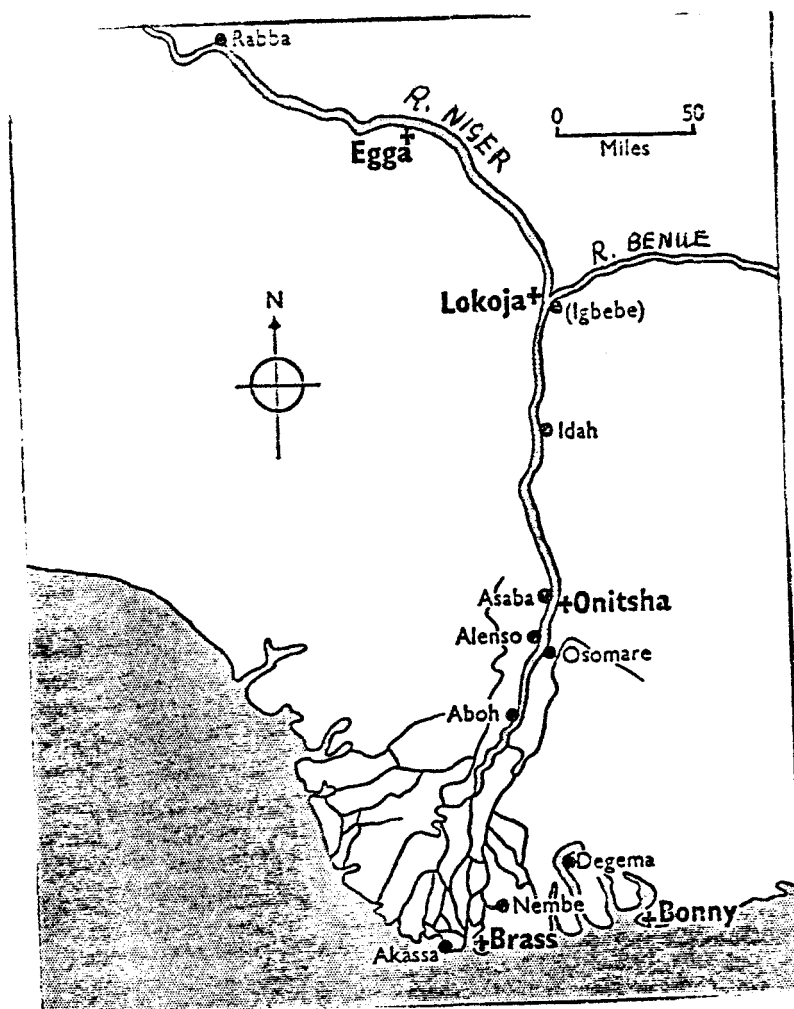
The expedition sailed as far as Lokoja (see Figure 3) where a model farm was established. Treaties were signed with the Attah of Idah and Obi of Aboh. As a result of the 45 Europeans who died of malaria out of

³J. F. A. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 10.

⁴A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974; sixth impression, 1977), p. 78.

FIGURE 3

Map showing the Route of the Niger Expedition of 1841



Source: J. F. A. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 205.

the 150 Europeans on board, "the model farm was wound up, and the treaties were not ratified..."⁵ The writer shares the opinion of many modern historians who claims that the expedition was not a total failure. Ajayi argues that "the Niger Expedition of 1841 marks the beginning of the new missionary enterprise in Nigeria."⁶ After the expedition, it became clear that the "early missionaries in West Africa had a dual purpose: to promote legitimate trade between African and European, and to convert Africans to their own religion."⁷

The reasons behind the second coming of the missionaries to Nigeria can be summed up as follows: 1) To propagate Christianity; 2) To wipe out slavery and the slave trade through the promotion of legitimate trade; and 3) To have a new Western European Christian civilization as the offspring of the marriage between Christianity and Commerce.

Other great lessons were learnt from the expedition. Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther,⁸ the only African who took part in the expedition survived. Rev. J. F. Schon was the second missionary on board. On the basis of his experience, he advised that "since Europeans could not easily survive the climate, Nigeria must be evangelized by Africans themselves."⁹

⁵J. F. A. Ajayi Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891 The Making of a New Elite (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 10.

⁶Ibid., p. 13.

⁷Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 141.

⁸Ajayi was born in a small village in Oshogun between 1800 and 1810. He was captured during the Fulani-Yoruba wars and sold to the Portuguese in Lagos. He was rescued at sea in 1822 by a British warship and taken to Sierra Leone. He attended C.M.S. and in 1825 he was baptized Samuel. He became a Bishop in 1864. He was destined by providence to be the first to bring the Gospel in Igboland.

⁹Crowder, op. cit., p. 142.

It was Rev. J. F. Schon's advice that Henry Venn utilized to improve on Buxton's concept of "the Bible and the plough." Venn advised the missionaries to encourage the making of an African middle class "thoroughly Christianized and made financially self-reliant by the production and export of cash crops. This middle class could then civilize Africa from within and do so far more effectively than European missionaries..."¹⁰

Providentially, there was a "ready made" African middle class ready and willing to "civilize Africa from within" and to bring about the social reform the missionaries wished to see carried out. In 1787, Britain established the colony of Sierra Leone as a place of refuge for freed slaves. In succeeding years slaves that were rescued by the British warships were sent to Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone ex-slaves received Western education and Christian training from the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) an evangelical group that formed itself into a philanthropic organization to help the new arrivals. It happened that many of the rescued slaves sent to Sierra Leone were from Yorubaland. In the 1830's, many of them who had received some religious, academic and technical training were eager to return to Nigeria.

By 1842, many ex-slaves had actually returned to Nigeria and settled in Badagry, Lagos, and Abeokuta respectively. It was in response to the appeals of these emigrants that two sets of missionaries, Methodist and Anglican came to Badagry in 1842. Ajayi contends that "It was the emigrants who introduced the missionaries into the country, and they were an essential and integral part of the missionary movement."¹¹

¹⁰Abernethy op. cit., p. 28.

¹¹Ajayi, op. cit., p. 52.

The Arrival of The Missionaries

Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, the head of the Methodist Mission in Ghana arrived in Badagry on September 24, 1842, to open a mission station. He was accompanied by a Ghanaian, William de Graft, his assistant missionary. Freeman immediately built a mission house and a bamboo chapel where he conducted prayer-meetings on Sundays for the emigrants. In December he visited Abeokuta where he was accorded a warm welcome by the Oba Sodeke and his chiefs, as well as the emigrants including refugees from the slave-raiders. When he returned from Abeokuta, he travelled to Ghana, leaving William de Graft behind to man the Methodist Mission at Badagry.

Mr. and Mrs. de Graft are credited with the establishment of the first school in Nigeria. In 1843, they opened a day school at Badagry and called it the "Nursery of the Infant Church". The school had a population of about fifty children, who were mostly children of the emigrants.

In December 1841, Henry Townsend, a lay minister of the Church Missionary Society visited Badagry and Abeokuta on a fact-finding mission and immediately returned to Sierra Leone. Three years later Townsend returned to Badagry with a band of missionaries. He built a mission house and established two schools at Badagry. He left two missionaries at Badagry, Edward Philips and William Marsh to take charge of the mission and the two schools. He then left for Abeokuta with the rest of the missionaries. At Abeokuta, Townsend stayed at Ake, built a mission station and a school while Samuel Ajayi Crowther settled at Igbein and also built a mission and a school. The Methodist Mission also opened a mission station at Ogbe in Abeokuta. "By 1848 the C.M.S.

Yoruba Mission had established four main stations at Badagry, Lagos, Abeokuta and Ibadan."¹²

In 1846, the Church of Scotland Mission under the leadership of Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell arrived at Calabar. Waddell established a mission and a school at Duke Town the first year of his arrival. He also opened another mission station and a school at Creek Town. In 1850, Thomas Jefferson Bowen, who led the American Baptist Mission into Nigeria started his work among the Yorubas. He built a mission station in Ijaye in 1853 and established another mission at Ogbomosho in 1855.

The Church Missionary Society, while consolidating its missions in Yorubaland, extended its work to Igboland in 1857. Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, who later became the Bishop of the Niger Mission, established a mission at Onitsha and also founded a school for girls. From Onitsha the mission gradually expanded to several stations on the Niger and in the Delta States.

Many of the ex-slave emigrants who settled in Lagos were from Brazil. They were Portuguese-speaking Roman Catholics. By 1853, there were over 200 Brazilian emigrants in Lagos. In succeeding years, the number of the Brazilian Catholic emigrants greatly increased. They organized themselves and bought a piece of land to build a church in Lagos. They also wrote to the Portuguese priests in Brazil asking for missionaries to meet their spiritual needs and establish schools for their children.

In 1868, a congregation of missionary priests, known as the Society of African Missions, (S.M.A.) sent Father Bouche from their headquarters in Lyons, France to take charge of the church in Lagos. Churches were built, schools were established and gradually the Catholic mission in Lagos

¹²L. J. Lewis, Society, Schools and Progress in Nigeria (London: Pergamon Press, 1965), p. 24.

extended to other towns. It is worth noting that the activities of missionary societies of varying denominations were confined to certain areas in Southern Nigeria. There are many reasons for this restriction.

1. Certain areas were more accessible to missionaries than others.

2. The local chiefs of certain places in Southern Nigeria totally rejected the missionaries and their schools. For example, Chief Jaja did not allow any missionary to step into Opobo during his reign. No missionary was allowed to establish a station at Ijebu-Ode until British occupation of that town in 1892. These traditional rulers and many other chiefs in the South vehemently resisted the missionary interference with their customs, beliefs and their way of dispensing justice.

3. The Muslim opposition to Christianity as well as Western education made it impossible for the missionaries to gain a foothold in Northern Nigeria at this period. In colonial days, the government even prohibited missionary interference in Muslim areas of the North. This limitation resulted in an uneven distribution of educational facilities in Nigeria. The effects of this uneven distribution of educational facilities in Nigeria is discussed in Chapter V of this study.

Early Missionary Schools

The first problem the missionaries faced was how to gain the approval of traditional chiefs and other influential members of the society. It was not easy to convince them that the school would bring benefits to their community. For many reasons parents did not want to send their children to school. They were suspicious of missionary activities. Some local chiefs saw education as a threat to their own traditional way of life. They knew that school would destroy the age-grade associations

upon which the village government was erected. It would be impossible to get children in schools to carry out their duties in the community, such as clearing of bush paths, sweeping the village streets and other communal labor.

Parents who agreed to send their children to school had their own definite reasons. According to Ajayi, "what they expected from the European was not a substitute but a supplement, a system of apprenticeship by which the children acquired additional arts and skills, the art of reading and writing, gauging palm-oil or manufacturing gunpowder or sugar or building boats."¹³ Some of the parents argued that if they were going to be deprived of the services of their children on the farms, they should be paid for it. Mann, at Ijaye asked the C.M.S. for funds for such a purpose on the grounds that his colleague of the rival Baptist Mission was paying his pupils.¹⁴

On the other hand, many children, especially the boys, did not like going to school. It was one thing to get the parents to send their children to school and it was quite another to have a regular attendance. Since the missionaries were fully aware of the importance of education in relation to their work, they devised different techniques to entice both the children and their parents. There were no school fees. School children were given clothes, slates, pencils and copy-books. "At the annual public examinations, when the school was dressed up and shown off to the public, prizes were liberal. Each Christmas they had feasts, and on suitable occasions they had parades to show other children what fun they were missing."¹⁵

¹³Ajayi, op. cit., p. 133.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 135.

To ensure regular attendance at school, the missionaries boarded their students. They persuaded the parents to allow their children to live with them and they paid the parents a small stipend. The initial opposition to missionary education died a natural death when both parents and children started to appreciate the financial advantages of literacy. It must be remarked that opposition to missionary activities was not universal. Some traditional rulers, like the Sodeke of Abeokuta, King Eyo of Calabar and many others warmly welcomed the missionaries and gave them land for churches and schools. The mission house was the focus of educational activity. Classes were held in churches, under shady trees or on the verandah of the mission house.

The Purpose of Missionary Education

The missionaries emphasized the importance of education in their work from the very beginning. The first missionary school that was established by the Wesleyan Methodist Mission at Badagry in 1843 was called the "Nursery of the Infant Church." The missionaries saw the school as a breeding ground for converting young Africans.

It is clear from the brief discussion of the arrival of the missionaries that wherever they went one of the first things they did was to establish a school. Within a week of Rev. J. C. Taylor's arrival at Onitsha a dozen children were brought to him to be educated. "I looked upon them" wrote Taylor, "as the commencement of our missionary work. We lost no time but began to teach them the A.B.C."¹⁶
(sic)

¹⁶J. C. Taylor, quoted in K. Onwuka Dike, Origins of the Niger Mission, 1841-1891 (Ibadan; Ibadan University Press, 1962, p. 13.

Abernethy claims that:

This early emphasis on African literacy, which was sustained in the following years, was directly related to the evangelic aims of the missionaries. Christianity is a religion of book, particularly in its Protestant forms, which emphasize the unique role of the Bible in revealing the Word of God...the missionaries knew that the spread of literacy within a pagan community, coupled with the provision of Bibles, prayer books, and catechisms for literates to absorb, would quicken and deepen the process of conversion.¹⁷

All the missionaries realized that it was difficult to convert adults whom they felt were "too much wedded to the ideas of their fathers."¹⁸ From experience many missionaries discovered that "preaching to adults, particularly the scoffing, sceptical trading communities on the coast, was like sowing by the wayside or on the rock."¹⁹ The school was Crowther's chief method of missionization.

The missionaries without exception concentrated mostly on the children. The American Baptist Mission claims:

The only means committed to us for the conversion of men is preaching of the Gospel with simple reliance on the power of the Holy Ghost; the Gospel is addressed to men and women as of old, and not merely to children, for God is able to convert the parent as well as the child...²⁰

After some practical experience as a missionary, R. H. Stone said "I am fast coming to the conviction that schools for the rising generation must be the basis of all missions among barbarous and savage heathen..."²¹

¹⁷Abernethy, op. cit., p. 31

¹⁸Ajayi, op. cit., p. 134

¹⁹Crowther, Journal for July 1847, quoted in Ajayi, op. cit., p. 134

²⁰Official Baptist view at home in America, quoted in footnote no. 4 in Ajayi, op. cit., p. 134

²¹R. H. Stone to Culpepper, quoted in Ajayi, op. cit., p. 134

It is said that the first boy the Alafin (king) of Oyo sent to the mission school, came on the condition that he be taught to make snuffs, guns, and powder. But the missionaries were ready to "let the children come to school for any purpose whatever and it would be the fault of the missionary if he could not take advantage of the opportunity and make christian converts of the children."²² According to Fafunwa, "the primary objective of the early christian missionaries was to convert the 'heathen' or the benighted African to christianity via education."²³ Lewis summed up the philosophical assumption underlying missionary education in the following statement:

The approach to education pursued by the missionaries was based upon the certainty of the christian message, but it was also based upon the assumption of the superiority of Western civilization and the evil character of Paganism. African customs, beliefs and practices, family life and even the institution of Chieftdom were, with few exceptions, regarded as repugnant. Christianity was confused with Western civilization. The Nigerian was to be remade in the image that the missionaries brought with them.²⁴

The Curriculum of Missionary Education

With the effective method of boarding, "the missionaries gradually built up a pattern of primary education at practically every mission station. There was, of course, no system in the pattern that emerged, no common syllabus, no general inspectorate."²⁵ The major textbook of all the missionaries was the Bible. The curriculum consisted of the four R's: Religion, Reading, Arithmetic and Writing. Scripture passages

²² Ajayi, op. cit., p. 134

²³ Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 81

²⁴ Lewis, op. cit., p. 30

²⁵ Ajayi, op. cit., p. 138

and Catechism were taught in vernacular to make sure the children understood what they were learning. Grammar and Geography were later added. The Time-Table below was sent out by Rev. Thomas Freeman in 1848 to the head teachers of all the schools under his management.

TIME TABLE

9.0 a.m.: Singing, Rehearsals of Scripture Passages, Reading one chapter of Scripture, Prayers.

9.15 - 12 noon: Grammar, Reading, Spelling, Writing, Geography, Tables [except Wednesday, when there was Catechism in place of Grammar],

2.0 - 4.0 p.m.: Ciphering [i.e. Arithmetic]. Reading, Spelling, Meaning of Words.

4.0 p.m.: Closing Prayers.²⁶

At first the language of instruction among the Catholic Brazilian emigrants in Lagos was either Portuguese or Spanish. Since most of the missionaries came from English speaking countries and the Nigerian parents wanted their children to learn English, which they regarded as "the language of commerce, civilization and Christianity," English soon became the universal language of instruction in all the missionary schools. Between 1859 to 1930, the missionaries established twenty-three post-primary schools in Southern Nigeria and the Government founded three. (See table 3). The curriculum was modelled on the nineteenth century English grammar school. All but one of the twenty-six post-primary schools pursued purely literary education. At Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar, practical subjects were taught in addition to English, literature, mathematics and history. The curriculum in both of

²⁶Ajayi, op. cit., p. 139

TABLE 3

Secondary and Teacher Training Institutions Founded in Southern Nigeria, 1859-1930.

SCHOOLS	LOCATION	DATE	AGENCY
C.M.S. Grammar School	Lagos	1859	C. M. S.
St. Gregory's College	Lagos	1876	R. C. M.
Methodist Boys' High School	Lagos	1878	Methodist
Methodist Girls' High School	Lagos	1879	Methodist
Baptist Boys' High School	Lagos	1885	Baptist
Hope Waddell Training Inst.	Calabar, E. R.	1895	C. S. M.
St. Andrew's College	Oyo, W.R.	1896	C. M. S.
Baptist Training College	Ogbomosho, W.R.	1897	Baptist
St. Paul's Training College	Awka, E. R.	1904	C. M. S.
Oron Training Institute	Oron, E. R.	1905	Prim. Meth.
Wesleyan Training Institute	Ibadan, W.R.	1905	Methodist
Abeokuta Grammar School	Abeokuta, W.R.	1908	C. M. S.
King's College	Lagos	1909	Government
Eko Boys' High School	Lagos	1913	Private
Ibadan Grammar School	Ibadan, W.R.	1913	C. M. S.
Ijebu Ode Grammar School	Ijebu Ode, W.R.	1913	C. M. S.
Duke Town Secondary School	Calabar, E.R.	1919	C. S. M.
Ondo Boy's High School	Ondo, W. R.	1919	C. M. S.
Ibo Boys' Institute	Uzuakoli, E. R.	1923	Prim. Meth.
Baptist Boys' High School	Abeokuta, W.R.	1923	Baptist
Dennis Memorial Grammar School	Onitsha, E. R.	1928	C. M. S.
United Missionary College	Ibadan, W. R.	1928	C.M.S. Meth.
St. Thomas's College	Asaba, W. R.	1928	R. C. M.
St. Charles' Training College	Onitsha, E. R.	1929	R. C. M.
Government College	Umuahia, E. R.	1929	Government
Government College	Ibadan, W. R.	1929	Government

ABBREVIATIONS. - C. M. S.: Church Missionary Society (Anglican).
 C. S. M.: Church of Scotland Mission (Presbyterian). E. R.: Eastern
 Region, Prim. Meth.: Primitive Methodists. R. C. M.: Roman Catholic
 Mission. W. R.: Western Region

SOURCE: David B. Abernethy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education:
 An African Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969),
 P. 36.

the elementary schools as well as post-primary schools followed closely the curriculum of the schools in Europe.

The Missionary Method of Approach to Education

Early missionary education relied on rote memorization as a technique of learning. Fafunwa describes a classroom scene in early missionary schools.

The classroom setting in the early school consisted of a bespectacled missionary, sometimes white, sometimes black, often a priest, with rod in hand and a row or two of children and sometimes a mixture of children, young and old adults, all repeating in unison either the catechism or the alphabet. Rote learning predominated.²⁷

The students were made to memorize things that were totally foreign to their past experience and irrelevant to the life in their community. For example, Nigerian children were taught to compare white objects with snow when they had no idea of what snow looked like. There was no intrinsic motivation to digest subject matter. The immediate incentive was to pass examinations and the remote motivation was to obtain clerical employment. Education was purely limited to instruction in books. Western education that was mainly confined to Southern Nigeria during this period, spread throughout the country during the time of colonial active participation in Nigerian education. The next Chapter examines the British colonial education and Nigerian post-independence educational efforts.

²⁷ Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 88.

CHAPTER IV

COLONIAL EDUCATION AND NIGERIAN POST-INDEPENDENCE EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS, 1900-1979

This chapter examines the indirect and direct role of British Colonial Government in Nigerian education. The chapter also discusses, briefly, the combination of factors that brought about the evolution of Nigerian educational policies before the Nigerian independence in 1960. Finally, the chapter concludes with the discussion of Nigerian post-independence educational efforts that led to the formulation of the Nigerian National Policy on Education on September 28, 1976.

The development of Western education in Nigeria is fairly complicated. The period of 1843-1881 was marked by missionary activities and educational expansion in Southern Nigeria. With the exception of two towns, Lokoja and Gbede, Northern Nigeria remained untouched by Western education during this period. The participation of the colonial government in Nigerian education started in Southern Nigeria in 1882. The British colonial government used indirect and direct methods of participation in Nigerian education.

In 1900, all of Nigeria was declared a British Protectorate, although north and south were still separated politically and administratively. These political developments set the pace for the extension of Western education to Northern Nigeria. Educational policy as well as practice was an expression of British colonial administrative policy and practice.

The existence of two different kinds of colonial administrative instruments in the different Protectorates (north and south) also gave birth to the maintenance of two different educational policies in the two Protectorates. Fafunwa contends that:

It is significant to note that as Lugard believed in dual control in political administration, for example 'indirect rule through the native chiefs; he applied the same policy in the educational sphere by encouraging dual control of education--that is, indirect administration of education through the Christian missions.¹

The British educational policy in Nigeria was greatly influenced by the British philosophy and educational practice as well as the total policy of colonial administration. It is often said that "no one gives what he has not got." This was true of Britain. To appreciate the British colonial government's attitude towards Nigerian education and their underlying philosophical assumption, it is necessary to understand the forces that influenced the development of a national system of education in Britain itself.

In the first place, at the time Britain was colonizing Africa, she did not see education as a national or governmental responsibility. In the 19th century, English elementary education was predominantly a product of the voluntary agencies. This general attitude was based on both Anglican tradition and the principles of laissez-faire economic liberalism. The Forster Act of 1870 established local school boards with government and district patronage, and also stimulated considerable rivalry between the board and voluntary schools. The Technical Instruction Act of 1889 allowed school boards to establish scholarships for capable students to attend either higher or technical

¹A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974), p. 115.

schools. In the nineteenth century, English secondary schools generally served the needs of middle and upper classes. In the last analysis, the Education Act of 1902 resulted in a "dual-track system" in which the elementary and the secondary schools served two different social classes. In spite of the code of 1902, the development of English secondary education was gradual. Butler's Act of 1944 succeeded in setting up a National Board of Education and was reorganized as the Ministry of Education, headed by a Cabinet Minister. This Ministry controlled the nation's educational policy, planning, finance, and execution.² The British colonial government's dual control of education in Nigeria was a demonstration of the laissez-faire policy of the home government in Britain.

Nigerian education was also influenced by the theory of imperialism which proposed that colonies exist primarily for the benefit of the mother country; hence the colonial educational policy became an instrument of national policy of the ruling power.³ The British colonial government worked under the mistaken assumption that it would take many years before Nigerians were able to rule themselves. Since education could accelerate the time for such self-rule, "the British did not want to rush education. They built schools with reluctance. They didn't build a university until they had to use it as a bribe. And they did everything underhand, to discourage private students."⁴

²G. L. Gutek, A History of the Western Educational Experience. (New York: Random House, Inc., 1972), p. 284ff.

³Okechukwu Ikejiani, ed., Nigerian Education (Ikeja: Longman of Nigeria limited, 1964), p. 11.

⁴Peter Enahoro, Nigerian Daily Times, 5 March 1963, p. 3.

The Indirect and Direct Participation of British
Colonial Government in Nigerian Education

The promulgation of the Education Ordinance of 1882 marked the first major colonial government intervention in Nigerian education. This education Ordinance authorized the application of the West African Education Ordinance to the Colony of Lagos. The Ordinance ordered the establishment of a Board of Education consisting of the Governor, the members of Executive Council and four nominated members. This Ordinance marked the beginning of indirect participation of colonial government in Nigerian education. An educational policy was evolved whereby grants were given to voluntary agency schools "for good organization and discipline together with special grants based in part, on the number of pupils enrolled; and, in part, on the results of examinations."⁵

In 1887, the first purely Nigerian Education Ordinance was enacted by separating the Lagos Colony and Protectorate from the Gold Coast Colony. This Ordinance made room for members of the legislative council to replace members of the executive council on the Board of Education but the Board was still headed by the Governor. The conditions under which grants were to be made to voluntary agency schools were further defined. In 1892 Henry Carr⁶ was appointed the first Nigerian Inspector of Schools for the

⁵L. J. Lewis, Society, Schools and Progress in Nigeria (London: Pergamon Press, 1965), pp.27-28.

⁶Henry Carr was born in Lagos on August 15, 1863. His father, Amuwo Carr was a Sierra Leone immigrant of Egba Extraction (Egba is a sub-ethnic group in Yorubaland). Henry received his education in Lagos and Sierra Leone. After his graduation from Fourah Bay College in 1882, he returned to Lagos and became a teacher in C. M. S. Grammar School, Lagos. In 1889 he joined the Civil Service as Chief Clerk and Sub-Inspector of Schools. In 1892, he became the first Nigerian Inspector of Schools for the Colony of Lagos.

Colony of Lagos. In 1903, a separate Department of Education was opened for the Southern Provinces. After three years, this new office was merged with that of Lagos when Colony and Protectorate were politically joined in 1906.

In 1901 the colonial government took the first step to affect Nigerian education directly when the first government school was established in Lagos for Muslim children. By 1908 there were over fifty government primary schools in Southern Nigeria. These government schools were opened mostly in Muslim towns where the missionaries were not allowed to operate. In 1909 the first government secondary school, King's College, was founded in Lagos.

After 1908 it became clear that the colonial government preferred the indirect rule policy of giving grant-in-aid to voluntary agency schools instead of establishing schools. Abernethy argues that:

After 1908 the number of government schools actually declined, since British officials preferred to encourage education by giving financial assistance to voluntary agency schools that met certain academic standards...By 1912 every mission school that attained certain standards was assisted on the basis of examination results, the unit of average attendance, and 'organization and efficiency'.⁷

By 1913 there were only forty schools directly administered by the government as compared to eighty mission schools benefiting from grants-in-aid and about 400 unassisted schools. The British colonial government's recourse to grants-in-aid policy in Southern Nigeria has been aptly described as "an abdication of policy-making responsibility."⁸ After the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914, the two

⁷David B. Abernethy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 79.

⁸Ibid., p. 81.

sectors remained separated in administrative practices as well as in educational practices. There were many reasons for this separation.

In Southern Nigeria, there was a popular response to education. This response was due to the missionary zeal as well as the enthusiasm of the people for education after realizing the financial benefit of literacy. This popular response to education became a constant source of irritation to the colonial administrators. The education codes of 1916 and 1926 aimed at reducing the number of unassisted schools that were increasing at an alarming rate in Southern Nigeria. Lord Lugard and his successor, Sir Clifford, thought that the only way they could stop the missionaries from indiscriminate expansion of schools was to make a demand for high quality education. They claimed that the high enrollments in unassisted schools had lowered the academic standards. To meet the required high academic standards, the missions were made to accept new regulations and were

...provided with additional grants for the purpose of employing education supervisors to oversee more closely the work of unassisted mission schools...greater coordination of effort and more constant communication between the government and voluntary agencies were to be ensured through an enlarged Board of Education, with at least ten members representing the voluntary agencies.⁹

In addition, because Lugard believed that "low academic standards seemed to produce men of poor character and this moral weakness would in turn threaten political stability,"¹⁰ he instructed that moral instruction should form a separate subject in the curriculum. Before the Lugards' education code, grants were based on examination results.

⁹Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 85.

Under the new laws, grants were based on general efficiency of each school and it was the duty of the inspector of schools to carry out the assessment. The fact that British colonial administrators were asking for superior education, could give the wrong impression that they were really interested in high quality education for the Nigerians. Fafunwa claims that:

Lugard's support for [quality] education was not necessarily due to altruistic motives. He wanted an effective central administration manned by expatriates and Africans loyal to the colonial government. He realized that a country as big as Nigeria could not, and perhaps should not, be run entirely by Europeans. He therefore needed African subordinates to serve the central government, the native councils and the commercial houses. He wanted to control the quality and the quantity of education which Nigerians earmarked for these posts should have.¹¹

What Lord Lugard wanted was a limited number of educated Nigerians, barely qualified enough to participate in colonial administration.

Abernethy maintains that Lugard's aim was that:

The school would have to educate the right number of persons with the skills and attitude needed for employment in each bureaucracy. Specifically, this meant that the graduates of the schools should not be so poorly trained that they could not meet educational standards set for employment in either the modern British or the 'traditional' African bureaucracy, nor should they be so highly trained that they threatened to take over the responsibilities of British officials or native authorities. Educational output should be neither too small nor too large for the manpower demands of the government and the major European firms...The government, Lugard believed, should intervene in the educational system to see that the voluntary agencies met these requirements. Lugard viewed education, in short, as an instrument to be used explicitly for political ends.¹²

The British colonial powers did not succeed in their plans to stop the expansion of education in Southern Nigeria for the following reasons:

1. The basic objective of colonial educational policies was to

¹¹Fafunwa, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

¹²Abernethy, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

train only Nigerians who could participate in the colonial economy and administration. This philosophy of limiting the number of educated Nigerians to manpower needs, ran counter to the missionary philosophy of trying to extend education to as many people as possible so that they could read the Bible. Consequently, the voluntary agencies were unwilling to limit school enrollments.

2. According to Abernethy:

if the voluntary agencies had themselves wished to limit primary school enrollments, they would have been hard pressed to do so because of the intense enthusiasm of the people for education. Popular enthusiasm was undoubtedly the most important factor in defeating the objectives of the two educational codes.¹³

British Colonial Education Policy in

Northern Nigeria

In Northern Nigeria the story was quite different. The Islamization of the Habe City states which was consummated by the Fulani Holy War in 1804 as well as Muslim education, has been discussed in chapter II. The major problem in Northern Nigeria was the Islamic religion. Areas controlled by the Emirs or Sultans have always resisted both Christian missionaries and British colonial administration. The Muslims were not prepared to mingle with both Christian missionaries and British colonial administrators whom they regarded as infidels.

Although all of Nigeria was declared a British Protectorate in 1900, the occupation of the Northern emirates by the colonial government was made possible only through the force of arms in 1902. Lugard realized

¹³Ibid., p. 87.

that the only way to avoid the continuation of the wars of "pacification" would be to refrain from tampering seriously with the Hausa Fulani Muslim culture and religion. Consequently, Lugard "sought to preserve Northern socio-political structures as he found them with minimal British intervention."¹⁴ This policy of non-interference led to indirect rule: Abernethy argues that:

The existence of an already sophisticated administrative apparatus among the Muslim emirates of Northern Nigeria, combined with a severe shortage there of British officials, led the North's first governor, Sir Frederick Lugard, to inaugurate a policy of indirect rule whereby many governmental functions were performed through traditional, or native authority.¹⁵

Since the British colonial government also believed in indirect administration of education through the Christian missionaries, Lugard found himself in a dilemma. To ask the missionaries to establish schools and not to teach religion would defeat the very purpose of missionary education, which was conversion. On the other hand, to allow the missionaries to establish schools in Muslim areas and teach Christian religion would be a direct violation of Lugard's promise of non-interference with the Muslim religion.

In 1902 Lugard excluded the Christian missionaries from the great Muslim emirates and ordered them to direct their missionary activities to non-Muslim areas of the North. Perham states that Lugard aimed:

...to bring North and South closer in one education system, that he encouraged the establishment of mission schools in non-Moslem areas of the North and was ready to permit the entry of missionaries into Moslem provinces where the Emirs agreed, that he advocated the teaching of English as a universal medium, and that

¹⁴N.K. Onuoha Chukunta, "Education and National Integration in Africa: A Case Study of Nigeria" The African Studies Review no.2, vol. XXI. (September 1978): 69.

¹⁵Abernethy, op. cit., p. 76.

he planned to train Northern Nigerians as clerical staff and as technicians.¹⁶

Three years later Lugard designed the following policy for the education of the Northerners:

1. Mallams should be taught the Roman character for writing Hausa, colloquial English, arithmetic and geography.
2. A school or college for the sons of chiefs should be established, where pupils would be boarders and would receive a primary education, and be so trained in the virtues of patriotism, honesty, loyalty, etc., that they would become enlightened rulers. They were not to imbibe such Western ideas as would cause them to lose the respect of their subjects, nor should they necessarily forgo their religion.
3. Secular general primary schools should be established throughout the Protectorate.
4. Cantonment schools for the education of children of clerks and other government officials should be set up, that coastal clerks need no longer send their children away for education--a practice which deterred clerks from applying for work in the Northern Protectorate.¹⁷

Some missionaries received permission from Lugard to penetrate into the Muslim emirates of the north. Walter Miller, a medical doctor, who turned missionary educator, tried to educate the Mallams and the chief's sons at Zaria. He failed for the following reasons:

1. For fear of Christian proselytization, Emirs outside Zaria refused to send their children to Miller's school at Zaria.
2. The pupils did not like Western schooling, consequently attendance soon dropped from the original fifteen pupils to six.

¹⁶ Margery Perham, Lugard: The Years of Authority, 1898-1945, quoted in Sonia F. Graham, Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria 1900-1919 (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1966), pp. 136-137.

¹⁷ Report on Northern Nigeria for 1905-1906, quoted in A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974), p. 104.

3. Dr. Miller was bent on Christian education which was against the educational policy of Northern Nigeria.

It was obvious that there was a clash of interest between the colonial administrators and the missionaries. The colonial government wanted a purely secular education for the production of clerks and officials for colonial venture in the north while the missionaries wanted religious education for the conversion of the Muslims to Christianity. The Muslims came to identify Western education with evangelization. This identification of Western education with missionization inhibited the development of Western education in Northern Nigeria.

The Search For An Alternative

It became clear to colonial administrators that they could not get the Muslims to accept Western education for two good reasons:

1. Islam was basically antithetical to Western education and culture.
2. The Muslims had come to identify Western education with missionization and had made up their minds not to send their children to mission schools for fear of proselytization.

In order to get the Muslims to accept Western education, the colonial government had to search for an alternative. In 1908 Hanns Vischer¹⁸ was asked to organize a system of education for the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. The first thing Vischer did was to go on six months' leave to study the different educational systems in other colonies. He visited

¹⁸Hanns Vischer was born at Basle, Switzerland on September 14, 1876. He received his education in Switzerland, Germany and England. He adopted British nationality and became a C.M.S. missionary worker. He resigned from C.M.S. in 1902 and joined the Northern Nigeria Political Service in 1903 as an Assistant Resident.

Egypt, Sudan, Gold Coast and Lagos. Although he was impressed with certain programs in some of the places he visited, nevertheless, he doubted whether the Egyptian educational experience would have the same effect in Northern Nigeria. Finally, Vischer, came up with his philosophy of education for Northern Nigeria. The principles underlying Vischer's educational aim are contained in his educational views:

1. to develop the national and racial characteristics of the natives on such lines that will enable them to use their own moral and physical forces to the best advantage;
2. to widen their mental horizon without destroying their respect for race and parentage;
3. to supply men for employment under Government;
4. to produce men that will be able to carry on the Native Administration in the spirit of the Government.
5. to import sufficient knowledge of Western ideas to enable the native to meet the influx of traders, etc., from the coast with advent of the railway, on equal terms;
6. to avoid creating a Babu class; [meaning a class of misfit].
7. to avoid encouraging the idea, readily formed by Africans, that it is more honourable to sit in an office than to earn a living by manual labor by introducing at the earliest opportunity technical instruction side by side with purely clerical teaching.¹⁹

Although some of Vischer's educational views are debatable, it goes without saying that his educational system was formulated on the principle of adaptation. For Vischer adaptation means using education not to deracinate but to fit a child into his environment. Graham claimed that Vischer "wished Africa to gain from Europe without losing the enrichment of its own multiple identities...A grafting of the best in European to the best in an African civilization was the high ideal..."²⁰

The second step taken by Vischer was to train his own local teachers for his educational system. The elementary school curriculum consisted of

¹⁹Sonia F. Graham, Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria 1900-1919 (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1966), pp. 76-77.

²⁰Ibid., p. 77

the 3 Rs, and hygiene, geography, history and gardening. Hausa was the medium of instruction in both elementary and primary levels of education. Elementary education was meant to fit the child into village life. Vischer's plan was that "brighter pupils would pass to the primary school where they might learn English and fit themselves for clerkships or employment on the railway whilst practical boys would learn to improve their native crafts in the industrial workshop..."²¹ Even in primary schools very little English was taught because Vischer believed that "its introduction as a subject should be postponed until pupils had had a sound educational grounding in Hausa."²²

Lugard was highly disappointed in Hanns Vischer's educational philosophy because it thwarted the British colonial philosophy of education which aimed at training some 'intelligent natives' for clerkship in government and other offices. Consequently, "as late as 1918 Lugard had to confess that out of a total population of some nine million, the Northern province does not...supply a single clerk or artisan for the government service from its intelligent population."²³

It is worth noting that Hanns Vischer's educational system to a certain extent contributed to Lord Lugard's failure:

1. to bridge the educational gap between Northern and Southern Nigeria;
2. to make English a universal medium of communication and instruction in Northern schools; and

²¹Ibid., p. 76.

²²Ibid., p. 76.

²³Kirk-Greene, Introduction to Graham op. cit., p. IX.

3. to train intelligent natives for clerkship in government and other offices.

The Combination of Factors That Brought About An
Evolution in Nigerian Educational Policies

A. Phelps-Stokes Report of 1922

The Education Commission that produced a report entitled Education in Africa in 1922 was sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund of America. In the United States, "the fund had been provided for in the will of Miss Caroline Phelps-Stokes and was incorporated under the laws of New York State on May 10, 1911."²⁴ This fund was used in aiding negro schools and colleges and in promoting interracial cooperation throughout the United States. Early 1920's many "missionary-educators and government education officers were expressing a growing dissatisfaction with the state of education in Africa."²⁵

Shortly after the end of the World War 1, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America suggested that the Phelps-Stokes Fund be used to sponsor a study of the educational needs and resources of Africa. The administrative officers of the fund agreed to the use of the fund on the condition that the commission which would undertake the study include Americans, Africans and Europeans.

This condition was accepted and the Chairman of the commission was Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, an American sociologist at the famous American

²⁴David G. Scanlon, Traditions of African Education (New York: Bureau of Publications Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), pp.51-52.

²⁵Ibid., p. 51.

negro college, Hampton Institute. Other members of the commission included Dr. James E. K. Aggrey, a noted educator from Ghana, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Wilkie, representatives of the Conference of Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland, Dr. C. T. Loran, of the Native Affairs Commission of South Africa, Mr. Emory Rose, of the American Disciples Mission of the Belgian Congo. This Commission pointed out that the missionary and colonial education in Africa fell far short of expectations in terms of tailoring educational facilities to meet local conditions. The commission made recommendations on how to improve African education. The criticism and recommendations of this commission compelled Britain to establish an Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa Dependencies in 1923. The Advisory Committee was responsible for the first Education Policy in British Tropical Africa in 1925. The Committee in its Memorandum articulated certain principles which were to form the basis of future educational development in the colonies.

The following are extracts from, and summaries of, the recommendations and principles set out in the 1925 Memorandum:

1. Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various people; care must be taken to avoid creating a hiatus between the educated class and the rest of the community;
2. Government welcomes and will encourage all voluntary educational efforts which conform to the general policy;
3. Co-operation between Government and other educational agencies should be promoted by the setting up of Advisory Boards of Education which should be representative of all groups who are concerned with education in the Dependency;
4. The greatest importance must be attached to religious teaching and moral instruction, so that it may find expression in habits of self-discipline and loyalty to the community.
5. The study of the vernaculars in schools is of primary importance;

6. The native teaching staff should be adequate in numbers, in qualifications, and in character, and should include women;
7. A thorough system of supervision and inspection is indispensable for the vitality and efficiency of the educational system;
8. Technical industrial training can best be given in Government workshops, provided a proper instructor is available;
9. So far as local conditions allow, women's and girls' education must be attempted wherever possible; care must be taken, however, to see that such an education does not have an unsettling effect upon the people of the country.²⁶

These educational principles led to greater governmental involvement in educational planning in Nigeria. The 1926 code which was meant to curb unassisted mushroom schools in Southern Nigeria was a follow-up on these educational principles. These principles were further elaborated in the 1935 policy statement entitled Memorandum on the Education of African Communities. According to Nduka, "the 1923 Advisory Committee was subsequently reorganized and its basis broadened, and in 1929 it became the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies."²⁷

B. The Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Education Department 1929

In July, 1929, fifteen years after the political amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates by Lord Lugard, the education departments of Northern and Southern Provinces were merged under a new Director of Education, Mr. E. R. J. Hussey. Hussey as a Director of Education contributed immensely towards the development of education in Nigeria.

Hussey envisaged the establishment of an educational system

²⁶Otonti Nduka, Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background (1964; reprint ed., Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 43-44.

²⁷Ibid., p. 44.

providing six years of basic education at primary level for the majority of the people of Nigeria who might not be able to continue with formal education; five years of secondary education, after which the student would be qualified for employment in government and private sectors, and four years or more of vocational training "to provide well qualified assistants in medical, engineering and other vocations and teachers to higher middle schools."²⁸

It was in an attempt to meet the need for higher education as envisaged by Mr. Hussey that Yaba Higher College was founded in February, 1932. "In founding the Higher College, Yaba, the Government aimed at producing a class of Nigerians who would hold more responsible positions in the Government service than the ordinary run of Secondary-school leavers."²⁹

This Higher College provided courses in medicine, engineering, agriculture, and teacher-training. In spite of the unusual length of time spent at Yaba Higher College, courses did not lead to the award of University degrees. In addition, Yaba Higher College was calculated to frustrate brilliant young Nigerians. Nduka contends:

Of all the waste of the colonial regime in Nigeria, probably none was more pathetic than the spectacle of the erstwhile brilliant pupil, discarded after four or five years of gruelling toil at the Higher College, Yaba. Four or five years' work had gone down the drain, and a personality virtually wrecked: Some committed suicide. That was part of the glory that was Yaba, the colonial institution par excellence.³⁰

It was clear that Britain had no intention of training Nigerians for their future responsibilities. The courses at the Higher College, Yaba

²⁸Lewis, op. cit., p. 40.

²⁹Nduka, op. cit., p. 53.

³⁰Ibid., p. 55.

were necessitated by a shortage of European staff. The graduates of Yaba Higher College were meant to serve as assistant officers to their European superior officers. The limited curriculum of Yaba Higher College was deliberate. Consequently, "its graduates were rated inferior, in terms of salary and status, to graduates of British Universities...The Yaba Higher College was attacked by Nigerian nationalists on many grounds and was never regarded by them as an adequate answer to their higher educational aspirations."³¹

C. Asquith and Elliot Commissions

In 1943, two commissions were set up. The Asquith Commission was set up "to consider the principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the Colonies; and to explore means whereby universities and other appropriate bodies in the United Kingdom may be able to co-operate with institutions in the Colonies in order to give effect to these principles."³² The Elliot Commission was appointed to look into the need of Higher education in West Africa.

The report of the Elliot Commission was responsible for the transferring of Yaba Higher College to Ibadan in 1948 to form the nucleus of the new University College. The Asquith Commission recommended establishing an Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies. The council was made up of representatives of all the British Universities.

³¹K.O.Dike, Development of Modern Education in Africa, quoted in Lewis, op., cit., pp. 42-43.

³²Report of the Commission on High Education in the Colonies, quoted in Lewis, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

Its function was to help in the "recruitment of the teaching staff, advise the Secretary of State on the academic aspect of any programme for which financial assistance was sought and, when requested, advise the institutions on academic policy..."³³ As a result, Ibadan University was controlled by a Council based in London. Fafunwa claims that:

In 1948 the British pattern of higher education with all of its strengths and weaknesses and with London and Cambridge Universities serving as models was imported to West Africa. To ensure that the British academic 'gold standard' was not debased, the Inter-University Council kept a fatherly eye on the curriculum, recruitment of staff and the question of the recognition of local diplomas and certificates."³⁴

Ibadan University became autonomous in December 1962.

In 1947, the educational gap between Northern and Southern Nigeria was still very wide. Lewis argues that:

By 1947 there were still only three secondary schools and just over 1100 primary schools in Northern Nigeria as compared with forty-three secondary schools and nearly 5,000 primary schools in the Southern Provinces. Not until 1950 did the responsible leaders of the North come to realize that it was necessary to build a sound and a widespread educational system to ensure that the North should attain a position in the rapidly developing Nigeria comparable with its size and population.³⁵

Nduka added that "It was not until the early fifties that the 16 million people of the Northern region could boast of having one person with a university degree, and he was trained by one of the missionary pioneers."³⁶

The introduction of the Universal Primary Education in the then

³³Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 146.

³⁴Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 148

³⁵Lewis, op. cit., p. 44.

³⁶Nduka, op. cit., p. 50.

Western Region in 1955 and a modified version of the same programme in Eastern Region in 1957 also helped to widen the educational gap between the North and South since "The Northern Region was unable to enter the race principally for financial reasons compounded by the enormity of the number of children of school age resident in the region...³⁷ The disintegrative effects of educational disparity between Northern and Southern Nigeria, on Nigerian society is discussed in Chapter V of this dissertation.

D. The Ashby Commission

In April 1959, the Federal Government of Nigeria appointed a Commission to conduct an investigation into Nigeria's need in the field of Post-School Certificate and Higher Education over the next twenty years, that is, 1960-1980. The Commission started its work on May 3, 1959. It examined Nigerian national education in relation to the nation's rapid economic progress. The Commission noted that Nigeria had made enormous progress during the last ten years (1950-1960) It pointed out that there were over two and a half million children at some 17,000 schools in the country; over 25,000 young people were enrolled at teacher-training colleges and over 1,000 students were enrolled in Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, and in the University College of Ibadan. There were at least 1,000 students studying in universities and colleges overseas.

On the other hand, the Commission reported that there was a lack of balance in the Nigerian educational system. There was an imbalance,

³⁷Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 174.

both in its structure and its geographical distribution. There was no balance between primary, secondary and post-secondary education. The Commission claimed that Southern Nigeria had an educational pyramid that was very broad at the base but narrow at the apex. In Northern Nigeria, the educational pyramid was slender at all levels. The Commission regretted the educational hiatus between the north and south and suggested a number of measures to bridge the gap. It stressed the importance of improving the standard of English in all the schools.

The Commission also pointed out that the Nigerian educational structure was erected on a weak foundation because most of the 82,000 teachers in primary schools were not well trained for their work. In the secondary schools, the deficiencies were equally conspicuous. The report revealed that out of 4,378 teachers in service in 1958, 3,470 were not graduates and 1,082 were neither graduates nor certificated teachers.

Another aspect of the problem was that only a very few out of the Nigerian children who started the educational race at primary levels were finally qualified for university admission. Even then, there were no universities to accommodate the few that were ready for university courses. It was strongly recommended that if Nigeria were to meet her manpower need, school intake should increase from 12,000 in 1958 to over 30,000 by 1970 with the hope that by 1970 about 3,500 should be qualified for six-form work. In short, expansion of education at all levels was recommended.

Post-Independence Educational Efforts

Sir Eric Ashby with his team of Nigerians and Americans submitted his findings and recommendations on Nigerian education to the Federal

Ministry of Education on September 1, 1960. The Report of the Ashby Commission on Post-School Certificate and Higher Education has been described as "a very illuminating document which some people called an educational bible for Nigeria."³⁸

After the Regional Ministers of Education and other interested bodies studied the Ashby Report they jointly proposed various amendments. The Federal Government then issued a policy paper accepting the Report of the Commission "in principle as sound analysis of the present position, and that their recommendations, with some amendment, should constitute the basis for development of Post-School Certificate and Higher Education in Nigeria for the next ten years."³⁹ According to Ogunshye, "The Government proclaimed its determination to pursue a vigorous policy of manpower development to promote the economic development of the nation."⁴⁰

The implementation of the recommendations of the Ashby Report and the Federal Government Policy Paper of 1961 claimed the attention of Nigerian government immediately after the independence. It was recommended that children of school age should be "massively" educated in spite of the nation's limited resources. Primary, secondary and higher teacher-training institutions were increased. Four more universities in addition to Ibadan were recommended. The University of Nigeria, Nsukka was opened on October 7, 1960. The other three Universities...Ahmadu Bello, Lagos, and Ife were

³⁸Ikejiani, op. cit., p. 14.

³⁹Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1961 (Lagos: Federal Government Printers, 1961), p. 4.

⁴⁰A.A. Ayida, ed., Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 662.

concurrently opened in October 1962.⁴¹

Ogunsheye summing up the educational development in Nigeria between 1960-1966 had this to say:

By 1966 9,150 students of whom 7,252 were pursuing degree courses, were enrolled in all the Nigerian Universities. But for the national crisis which led to the civil war in 1967 there is no doubt that the target set for 1970 would have been surpassed. In the field of secondary education, the primary objective was to achieve an annual intake of not less than 45,000 in 1970. The intake in 1966 was a little over 40,000. In respect of sixth form work, which is a controlling factor in the number of students proceeding to university institutions, the goal was to bring the number of students preparing for the Higher School Certificate or the General Certificate of Education to over 10,000. In 1966 6,000 students were in sixth form classes leading to the Higher School Certificate alone. As far as teacher training was concerned, the intention was to produce annually 5,000 teachers with a diploma. The output in 1965 was 4,234.⁴²

Ogunsheye went further to state that by 1966 Nigeria was unable to produce the number of technicians as was anticipated in the recommendation. Nigeria also fell below expectations in the expansion of primary education in the North. On the whole the figures given above clearly show that the country achieved tremendous things within six years after independence.

National Aspirations

Nigerians realized that in spite of the efforts made to develop Nigerian manpower as recommended by the Ashby Report and supported by the Federal Government white paper, the nation was tending towards disintegration. The civil war came as a measure to arrest this disintegration. It was not difficult to see that Ashby's recommendations were inadequate to

⁴¹In 1971, the University of Benin was established and the total student population in the then six Nigerian Universities was approximately 17,000. In October 1977, seven new universities--Kano, Maiduguri, Sokoto, Ilorin, Calabar, Port-Harcourt and Jos were established. In that year (1977) the total enrollment of the 13 Nigerian Universities stood at 40,000. See Nigerian Herald, 24 October 1977, p. 6.

⁴²Ayida, op. cit., p. 663.

cover the total national aspirations. As Ogunsheye pointed out, "No attempt was made to formulate the aims of Nigerian education and no provision was made for adult education."⁴³

Nigerians learnt from the war experience that manpower was only a necessary but not sufficient condition for national growth and political stability. The Federal Government of Nigeria came to the realization that:

A fundamental conception for economic planning is motivated in its economic activity by a common social purpose. The war-time experience of Nigeria has demonstrated the necessity for a sustained social will harnessed to a common social goal as basis for national survival and greatness. For planning purposes, therefore, a set of national objectives must deal simultaneously with the community's standard as well as quality of life...The Second National Development Plan [became] the first in the series of plans and programmes of action for the overall development of Nigeria. The five principal national objectives are to establish Nigeria firmly as:

1. a united, strong, and self-reliant nation;
2. a great and dynamic economy;
3. a free and democratic society;
4. a just and egalitarian society; and
5. a land of bright and full opportunities for citizens.⁴⁴

In order to achieve the above national objectives, education was made an instrument of national policy. It was evident that Nigeria needed a new policy on education. A new policy on education "sufficiently comprehensive to build an entirely new Nigerian nation that can rightly and boldly take her place in the community of nations. A new policy on education that will meet [Nigerian] national aspirations."⁴⁵

The work on the new Nigerian policy on education was completed in

⁴³Ibid., p. 662.

⁴⁴Building The New Nigeria: National Development Plan 1970-1974 (Apapa: Nigerian National Press, 1970), pp. 3-4.

⁴⁵Col. A.A.Ali, Federal Nigeria no 1, Vol 4, (July-September 1977):11

September 1976. In this policy the new philosophy on Nigerian education was outlined. The analysis and criticism of the new philosophy of Nigerian education will be handled in Chapter VI. The next Chapter takes up the analysis and criticism of the older educational systems in Nigeria.

CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM OF THE OLDER
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN NIGERIA

In the last three chapters, the author discussed the older educational systems of Nigeria--traditional, Muslim, missionary and colonial. This chapter assesses the different educational systems discussed in the last three chapters. This appraisal is neither an indictment nor an attempt to discredit any educational system but to point out their fundamental commonalities, merits, demerits and the dynamics of social change that resulted from these various educational systems. This appraisal will reveal to what extent each of these educational systems has contributed either to Nigerian national unity or disunity.

Fundamental Commonalities

Shermis maintains that "underlying every educational judgment, attitude, practice is a philosophical assumption, and that stemming from each judgment are broad intellectual and practical implications."¹ It must be added that education and philosophy are inextricably interwoven in every society because education is essentially a socio-philosophic enterprise which also takes place in a particular cultural context.

As a philosophic enterprise, education is rooted in the epistemological assumption that it is possible to have knowledge; that is, it is

¹S. Samuel Shermis, Philosophic Foundations of Education (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967), p. v.

possible to learn and to know. According to Israel Scheffler, "the development and transmission of knowledge are fundamental tasks of education, while analysis of its nature and warrant falls to that branch of philosophy known as epistemology, or theory of knowledge."² Education is equally rooted in the axiological assumption that it is better to know than to be ignorant. Value judgments are made in selecting goals or policies on education and it is a value-laden process. Education is a social enterprise because all societies, however technically or economically undeveloped or advanced deliberately attempt to transmit knowledge, norms, beliefs, skills, values, attitudes to succeeding generations in the hope of achieving cultural endurance. Like every educational system, the older educational systems in Nigeria have these socio-philosophic elements in common. On the other hand, they differ in contents, ends and method of approach.

The Demerits and Merits of Traditional Education

Education has conservative and progressive functions. Education performs its conservative function when it transmits the cultural heritage of a given society to its succeeding generations. On the other hand, education must endeavor to produce creative, innovative and critical individuals who are able to invent and discover as well as introduce change into the society. This is the progressive aspect of education.

One of the criticisms that is always directed against traditional education is that it concentrates solely on the transmission of accumulated bodies of knowledge or wisdom. Since the traditional community

²Israel Scheffler, Conditions of Knowledge: An Introduction to Epistemology and Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965, Phoenix Edition, 1978), p. 1.

associates wisdom with age, the elders have, as it were "a pot of knowledge" from which they pass on wisdom without modification to the younger generation just the same way they received it.

Another obvious critique of traditional education is based on the fact that it is limited in scope. It advocates a limited cultural view to the exclusion of others. Traditional education is universal in that every child is given the necessary knowledge to enable him to fit into the status quo of his community. This emphasis on absolute conformity makes it impossible for traditional educators to accept change as an essential element to personal and collective growth.

It might be of interest to question if the different Nigerian traditional cultures were static since traditional education was geared towards conformity to more or less fixed social norms. Since culture is never static, traditional education may have brought about some changes but the changes were so insignificant that the children would grow to adulthood to be like their parents. Merriam claims that:

Culture is stable, but it is never static: it is, on the contrary, dynamic and ever-changing. It is this that accounts for the fact that enculturation persists throughout life, since each elder generation must adjust, as best it can, to the changes introduced by the younger generation. It is this fact also that accounts for the reaction of the OLDER GENERATION ALL OVER THE WORLD (capitals mine) that 'the good old days are gone,' and that 'the younger generation is going to the dogs.' Thus it is through education, enculturation, cultural learning, that culture gains its stability and is perpetuated, but it is through the same process of cultural learning that change takes place and culture derives its dynamic quality.³

In chapter II of this dissertation, it was clearly demonstrated that traditional education is neither subject nor child-centered but

³Alan P. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 162-163.

community-centered. The purpose of traditional education is the survival and continuity of the group or community. It imbues in the child "a social sensitivity" which makes the child 'lose' himself in the community. It instills in the child the spirit of cooperation, sharing and service. Every member of the community puts the interest of his family and community-at-large, above personal interest. Traditional education instills in the child a strong sense of community so that the child grows up to be a community-oriented individual.

Whatever a member of an extended family has, he shares with the other members of the family. The writer refers to this African concept of sharing as the African Traditional Communalism. It is different from what Marx describes as primitive communism. In primitive communism, "there is...no conception of private ownership of the means of production."⁴ In African Traditional Communalism, there is a conception of private ownership of the means of production as well as private ownership of property. The concept means that the 'haves' freely share what they own with others in the spirit of brotherhood and on the real basis of actual kinship.

One might think that the African Traditional Communalism would encourage laziness since whoever has, shares with his brothers and sisters. On the contrary, traditional education fosters hard work in the child. The parents of a lazy child do not have the sympathy of their neighbors. Instead the parents are blamed for having indulged their child and making a "drone" of him.

Traditional education is integrative. It integrates the child into

⁴G. Max Wingo, Philosophies of Education: An Introduction (Lexington: D. C. Heath and Company, 1974), p. 285.

the life of his community or makes him an active member of his ethnic group or community. In the traditional education system, there is no room for failure. Slow learners are always forced by the use of the cane to learn. Compared to the problem that exists in formal education, traditional educators do not allow drop-outs. They firmly believe that everybody can learn and must be made to learn.

As Aladejana pointed out, "the Yoruba society is a highly cohesive society, and the ethnical values of the society concentrate on strengthening the closeness of the bonds of a society based on kinship."⁵ Like the Yoruba ethnic group, every other ethnic group in Nigeria is a highly cohesive society. A society that is tight-knit and highly cohesive cannot be highly disunited at the same time. The traditional societies in Nigeria owe their cohesiveness to traditional education.

The Demerits and Merits of Muslim Education

Muslim education is a social, religious and conventional system that is meant to get the people to conform to Koranic teaching in Islamic societies. Muslim education, therefore is not a purposeful system designed to bring about an intellectual revolution or radical change in the pattern of life of the people. The educational system lacks incentive for both teachers and pupil, as there are no job opportunities that could motivate people to greater achievement. The only motivation is religion. The Muslim education imbues a segregative attitude in the Muslims. This segregative attitude makes it impossible for Muslims to mix freely with people of other religions, whom they regard as infidels. In this way the Muslim education contributes a

⁵Tony Idowu Aladejana, "An Axiological Analysis of Yoruba Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 1978), pp. 87-88.

disintegrative factor in the Nigerian society.

On the other hand, Nigeria and indeed West Africa is greatly indebted to the Muslim educational system, for without it, it would have been impossible to have a written history of West Africa before the advent of Europeans. It was Muslim Scholars who recorded in Arabic the history of pre-colonial West Africa.

The Demerits and Merits of Missionary Education

In chapter III of this dissertation, it was pointed out that the missionaries brought with them an image in which the Nigerians were to be remade. The missionaries came to Nigeria with the assumption that:

1. they (the missionaries) possessed the absolute true moral principles based on the certainty of Christian message. The Nigerian culture and indigenous religion were regarded as primitive, barbaric and repugnant; and
2. Western civilization was superior to anything else in the world. According to Imokhai, the missionaries "saw Western civilization as the model of Christian civilization for all societies."⁶

The missionary approach to education was based on these assumptions and each of these assumptions carried some implications for education. Since the Christian missionaries claimed the possession of absolute true religion, the knowledge and values transmitted by missionary education were those of that true religion. The Bible became the master textbook. As was already pointed out, the primary objective of the early Christian missionaries was to convert the "heathen" or the benighted African to

⁶Charles Anwame Imokhai, "The Missionization of Uzairue: A Study of Missionary Impact on Traditional Marriage" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1979), p. 5.

Christianity via education.

The missionaries have been heavily criticized for their failure to adapt their educational practices to the cultural traditions of the Nigerian peoples or tailor the curriculum to the Nigerian environment. This criticism may be justified on the ground that "being a form of social action, education...is rooted in some actual culture and expresses the philosophy and recognized needs of that culture."⁷ But looking at things from the missionaries' viewpoint, they did not come to Nigeria to preserve the indigenous cultures. They deliberately set out to destroy and replace them with an alien culture. The point of emphasis is not the introduction of Western culture but the deliberate destruction of indigenous cultures.

By destroying the traditional cultures and promoting the learning of Western culture in a child who is not a Westerner, the missionaries merely loaded the Nigerian child with a set of values that he (the child) could not reconcile with his identity. In this case the child was deracinated and alienated from his indigenous cultural way of life. And what is worse, he was not given the opportunity to know who he was before an alien culture was imposed on him. Consequently, the missionary education introduced conflict within the Nigerian educated elite. The majority suffering from identity crises ended up aping Western culture.

The missionary education was purely academic. Imokhai adequately summed up this point:

The missionary schools founded by the Irish SMA endowed some of the indigenous people with managerial skills, which helped the commercialization of labor. These mission schools stifled

⁷American Historical Association, Commission on the Social Studies, Conclusions and Recommendations of Commission (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 31.

the growth of technicians in many parts of Africa by pursuing the education of managers without any knowledge of technology in an age of technology...This drawback made Africa a perpetual importer of Western technology, and the African a perpetual laborer.⁸

Although this criticism is factual and unbiased, it is necessary to weigh the outcome of the missionary educational endeavor against its original intention. Did the missionaries come to Africa or Nigeria to establish a technological society? The answer is no. They came to set up a Christian society. Literary education was only a means to an end. It was introduced to enable converts to read the Bible. Fafunwa tells us that "the school was incidental, if Christianity could have been implanted in Nigeria without the use of the school, most missionary groups would have tried to do so."⁹

On the other hand, the author finds it difficult to contribute to the argument that financial difficulties were responsible for the missionaries' failure to consider the technical needs of the Nigerian society. If technical education was necessary for the propagation of Christian faith in Africa, as literary education was, the missionaries would probably have gone out of their way to provide it.

Nigerians were not to be converted only to a new religion, but also to a completely new way of life. Mission schools became the agents of both conversions. Conversion to Christianity was neatly bound up with conversion to Western culture. This notion of double conversion created problems for the early missionaries, that the gospel message had to be wrapped up in a particular culture. It made Christianity an instrument of enforcing ethnocentric social reforms. The acceptance of

⁸Imokhai, op. cit., p. 5.

⁹A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria (London: George Allen and Enwin, 1974), p. 91.

an alien culture became a condition for accepting the central Christian message of LOVE.

Without studying the Nigerian cultures and religion, missionaries jumped to the conclusion that everything in them was bad. Nigerian traditional religion was described as idolatry, fetish and juju. The wholesale condemnation of Nigerian traditional religion has helped the missionaries to create many superficial and unfaithful Christians who openly practiced Christianity but secretly and strongly retained their traditional religious beliefs. For example, many practicing Christians, when in trouble or in need of favors go secretly to the priest of traditional religion to consult Ifa (the oracle) and then offer sacrifice to ancestral spirits. Others join sects that blend Christians with traditional practices.

Missionary education has its merits as well as its demerits. The missionaries carried out many praise-worthy educational activities which many objective Nigerians admit. Lewis argues that "despite the deficiencies of the education which was provided by the missionaries, from it did emerge an excellent body of men without whose services neither church, nor state, nor trade would have made progress."¹⁰ Ajayi's claim that missionary education was responsible for Nigerian nationalism seems adequately justified:

The Christian missionaries introduced into Nigeria the ideas of nation building of contemporary Europe. They also trained a group of Nigerians who accepted those ideas and hoped to see them carried out, and later began to use those ideas as a standard by which to judge the actions of the British administration. In doing this, the Christian movement sowed the seeds

¹⁰L. J. Lewis, Society, Schools and Progress in Nigeria (London: Pergamon Press, 1965), p. 30.

of Nigerian nationalism.¹¹

The major contributions of missionary education in Nigeria can be summed up as follows: (a) missionary education was responsible for "the making of the new elite" that fought for Nigerian independence; (b) it equipped the Nigerian elite with the knowledge of politics which enabled them to compete favorably with other nations of the world in international politics; (c) it introduced Western culture, Western democracy and Western system of government; (d) it provided a common language for the diverse heterogeneous peoples of Nigeria and has thus made them a homogeneous political entity--tending to bring about unity in diversity; and (e) the greatest benefit of missionary education is literacy which now makes it possible for literate Nigerians to share the experience of all humanity.

The Demerits and Merits of Colonial Education

In chapter IV of this study, it was pointed out that British policy on education in Nigeria was influenced by two major factors:

1. the British philosophy and practice on education in Britain itself; and
2. the British theory of imperialism which proposed that colonies existed primarily for the benefit of the mother country.

These considerations had an adverse effect on Nigerian education as well as on Nigerian people. In imitation of the home government in Britain, the colonial government in Nigeria abdicated its policy-making responsibilities and adopted indirect administration of education, through the use of Christian missionaries. This educational policy of

¹¹Ajayi, "Nineteenth Century Origins" quoted in David B. Abernethy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 51.

indirect control was responsible for the disparity in education between Southern and Northern Nigeria.

Lord Lugard had good intentions and good policies for the education of Northern Nigeria. But good policies remained merely abstract as long as they were not translated into practice. If it had been the policy of the British colonial government to establish schools in Nigeria, it is possible that Lord Lugard could have accomplished his aim of bringing North and South closer under one educational system. What the Muslims were against was not secular but Christian education. But since Lord Lugard believed in an indirect administration of education through the Christian Missions, the people of the North were left without Western education. By so doing, the seed of disunity was sown between the people of the North and the Southern people who readily accepted both Christianity and Western education.

The same policy of indirect rule in education was responsible for the uneven distribution of educational facilities throughout Nigeria. If the colonial government was interested in establishing schools, the government would have seen to it that educational facilities were equally distributed among the different ethnic groups.

The uneven distribution of educational facilities among the different ethnic groups in Nigeria "has resulted in unequal access to better jobs in the modern sector of the economy. This inequality has exacerbated tribal tensions and is generally considered to have been a contributing factor to the outbreak of civil war in 1967."¹²

The British theory of imperialism also influenced the colonial

¹²Lee C. Deighton, ed., The Encyclopedia of Education Bk. 6 (New York: The MacMillan Company and Free Press, 1971), p. 580.

government's attitude towards Nigerian education. Since the colonial masters operated on the assumption that the colonies existed primarily for the benefit of the mother country, the colonized were seen not as human beings but as mere objects to be used to benefit Britain. Consequently the aim of colonial education was to make the Nigerian or African child responsive to the needs of the colonizers, at the expense of the child's identity, needs and human dignity.

The conversion of the natives was the goal of the European missionaries in the early stage of colonialism and schools were established to aid the work of conversion. The colonizers used the same schools as an effective means of maintaining social control and producing a bureaucratic elite who served as intermediary between the colonizers and the colonized. This point is cogently outlined by Moumouni:

First of all, colonial education effectively succeeded in supplying the colonial administration with the various types of subordinate officials it needed: interpreters, clerks, teachers, hospital workers, doctors, etc. The fact that the number of these was limited was in perfect conformity with general policy and the colonial doctrine of imperialism, of which education was only a tool...It must be admitted that colonial education not only covered the needs of colonial administration quantitatively, but also supplied efficient and zealous civil servants. What is more, they were generally satisfied with their lot, as their living conditions and social status were those of a privileged class in relation to the immense majority of Africans. These petty officials were as submissive as they were zealous, generally conducting themselves with as much base servility and obsequiousness towards "Whites" as they displayed arrogance, scorn and cupidity towards their fellow Africans.¹³

Colonial Education was planned to depersonalize Africans and make them look down on themselves, Moumouni argues that:

The curricula and texts of the period show that everything was

¹³Abdou Moumouni, Education in Africa (Washington: Frederick N. Praeger, 1968), pp. 48-49.

directed at convincing the young African of the 'congenital' inferiority of the Blacks, the barbarity of his ancestors, and the goodness and generosity of the colonizing nation which, putting an end to the tyranny of the Black Chiefs, brought with it peace, education, health measures and so forth..By trying to effect a veritable 'depersonalization' of Africans, using every possible means to imbue students with an inferiority complex and the idea of the congenital incapacity of the Black, colonial education sowed a seed pregnant with consequences. It corrupted the thinking and sensibilities of the African and filled him with abnormal complexes.¹⁴

It is clear that the colonial education was designed to rob the African of his human dignity, make him reject himself and his ego identity, look down on his culture and his fellow Africans. Colonial education was also designed to regard everything African as primitive. From the arguments presented above, it is also obvious that the colonial policy on Nigerian education greatly contributed to Nigerian national disunity.

It would be quite unfair and untrue to look only at the negative aspect of colonial education. It succeeded no doubt in its efforts to destroy national awareness and pride in many civil servants, but at the same time created in some of them a thirst for more knowledge; knowledge that helped open their eyes to their true conditions. This brought about the awakening of political consciousness and the development of the nationalist movement that later developed into a political party in Nigeria. Colonial education has given Nigerians a chance to see things from different angles.

Dynamics of Social Change

In an attempt to explain that Western education was a powerful factor in social and cultural change in Nigeria, many views have been

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 45-54.

advanced. The following views are relevant to our argument. Hussey argues that "almost everywhere in West Africa, as a result of European contacts, tribal sanctions have been weakened and there has been a steady growth of individualism which in many ways has made the exercise of authority by tribal leaders somewhat difficult."¹⁵ On the other hand, Crowder sharing the same view with C. K. Meek, claims that:

In those areas which were touched intimately by Europe--whether through the presence of a school, a trading post or administrative centre, what is surprising is not that traditional society fell apart, but that it held together so effectively; that traditional moral obligations to one's family triumphed over Western individualism, that traditional religious beliefs survived alongside and permeated Christianity and Islam; that Chiefs, seeing that the new social system demanded both achieved status as well as ascribed status, particularly from the financial point of view, entered the money economy and sent their children to school. The educated elite itself, though often opposed to the chiefs, nevertheless had feet in both traditional and Western-oriented society.¹⁶

The two arguments stated above manifest an apparent contradiction. While Hussey believed that the breakdown in traditional society is a result of cultural contact between Europe and West Africa, Crowder and Meek claim that in spite of the socio-cultural confrontation of Europe and West Africa, the traditional society holds together effectively. Although the arguments appear to stand in dialectical relation to each other, they both imply that in West Africa or in Africa, there were stable and harmonious societies before the intrusion of Western Culture.

The breakdown in traditional society and steady growth of individualism as claimed by Hussey imply that Western culture was dominant

¹⁵E.R.J. Hussey, Europe and West Africa quoted in Michael Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 387-388.

¹⁶Michael Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 388.

while the indigenous cultures were passive in contact situations. Imokhai contends that there is "an essential element of struggle in the socio-cultural confrontation of two human societies."¹⁷ The author agrees with Imokhai that there is an element of struggle in a culture contact situation. The Nigerian societies were not as passive or adaptable to change as to give up their values, customs, beliefs and traditions without struggle as some writers would have us believe.

In spite of the fact that the missionaries aimed for total destruction of Nigerian indigenous culture and religion, they did not entirely succeed because they were resisted. Crowder contends that:

The fact that many Nigerians today still largely retain their traditional religious world view even when they are practising Christians is in part due to the fact that the missionaries were never able fully to carry out their policy of effacing not only traditional religion, but the entire culture with which it was so intimately bound up.¹⁸

Before both missionization and colonization of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, European societies enjoyed industrialization, money economy, the spirit of competition and individualism, literacy and wage labor. On the other hand, Nigerian societies enjoyed subsistence economy, the spirit of cooperation and service, corporative responsibility, and above all these societies were in isolation and highly cohesive. It has already been established that the aim of traditional education was to make people value and protect their community against other antagonistic ethnic groups. Lewis commenting on the isolation of each group says, "for most part the different groups

¹⁷Imokhai, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁸Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 149.

were self-contained and had little intercourse of any kind with their neighbours."¹⁹ Each of these self-contained ethnic groups had its own skills, attitudes, knowledge, values, customs and beliefs which were transmitted and used to serve the need of the community or group.

At the intrusion of the European traders and missionaries, these isolated communities were forced to interact with strangers--mostly Europeans. The purely agrarian societies were gradually entering the money economy through trading. In the formal schools established by the missionaries, new skills were offered, reading, writing, arithmetic and English language. New values were also gradually introduced through the schools. The introduction of new values brought about social change in the traditional life pattern.

Children from various homes were brought into a new surrounding, a new environment, a new home which we call a classroom and given a chance to compete with one another. In school settings, competition was stressed, whereas cooperation was stressed in traditional settings.

Commercialization of labor was emphasized. In commerce the important thing was profit. School brought the awareness that if you want to make profits, you have to make others work for you. School then prepared people to value wage labor as superior to individual subsistent manual labor. The hope of getting a white collar job at the completion of schooling became an incentive. Imokhai maintains that:

Mission schools institutionalized the recruitment of wage-labor from the ranks of the educated, thus encouraging the breakdown of traditional labor patterns. The institutionalization of wage-labor brought about a leap from subsistence to monetary economy, thus taking pressure off the land. This fostered an accelerative

¹⁹L. J. Lewis, Society, Schools and Progress in Nigeria (London: Pergamon Press, 1965), p. 19.

geographical and social mobility, leading to a breakdown of clan boundaries and massive urban migration.²⁰

Polygamous marriage, which was very rewarding in subsistence economy, became less attractive in the new money economy. In the subsistence economy marrying many wives would bring about having many children. Having many wives and children meant having many hands to work on the farm. In the new money economy, having many wives and children became a financial liability since everybody had to depend on the salary of one person. In addition, there was the obligation of supporting parents in their old age or taking care of an extended family.

In the traditional societies where personal achievement²¹ was valued, the sense of individual achievement was reinforced by formal schooling. On the other hand, those societies based on the principle of seniority began to admit the advantages of personal achievement.

One of the syntheses achieved was that individual achievement (which is a drive in modern times) now became an accepted practice in Nigerian societies. It was seen as a purposive and useful tool for building a harmonious traditional society. It was used to strengthen corporate responsibility. Very often, you hear people of a particular community boasting--"Our son is a commissioner of police at Ibadan" or "our son is a doctor at Benin Teaching Hospital," or "our son is a 'big

²⁰Imokhai, op. cit., p. 2.

²¹In Nigeria, traditional societies are either organized purely around the principle of seniority or around both achieved status as well as ascribed status. In some traditional societies, personal achievement takes precedence over age. For example, those who believe in "title-taking", the titled man ranks first in any public occasion irrespective of his age. But in a case where two people received titles the same year or at the same time, age will be used as a criterion to determine who should rank first.

man' in Lagos."

Such people who have achieved either in the academic field or in business are expected to visit their villages occasionally to give gifts and to share their acquired wealth with the people of their community. The achievement of the individual is shared corporatively. Those who have achieved use their own discretion to give what they are willing to give. They are neither expected to give out what they cannot afford nor are they expected to keep everything to themselves. They are also expected to send their poorer relations to college and bear the cost of training. Those who refuse to help others are despised, called names, and ridiculed. In serious cases they are even ostracized.

Another community burden that rests on the shoulders of those with achieved status who live abroad is that they are expected to give jobs to their brothers and sisters who complete their primary or secondary education. In this case the word "brother" or "sister" has a very wide connotation. Anybody from your village or your town whether there is blood relationship or not will be regarded as your brother or sister. If you are an employer, your people expect you to give jobs to your brothers and sisters first before you consider others. If you are not an employer, they expect you to use your influence as a "big man" to get them employed.

It is a common practice in Southern Nigeria that a father struggles hard to educate his first son to either secondary or university level. Once the first son is well educated, the burden of educating his younger brothers and sisters falls on him. When he is able to educate one of his brothers or sisters, that one will join him in sharing the family

responsibility. This family responsibility is corporatively shared until the last born has been educated. It is a general belief that the last born has no responsibility. While he has many brothers and sisters to turn to for help, he has nobody to turn to him for help. With these kinds of pressure on those with achieved status, the growth of individualism was minimized. Crowder made an accurate assessment when he claimed that traditional moral obligations to one's family triumphed over Western individualism.

At the intrusion of European merchants and missionaries, Nigerian societies were politically independent. The chiefs (Obas, Obis, Emirs, etc.) were in control of power. The chiefs who did not want the merchants and missionaries in their territories were able to keep them out without much trouble. In other words, they reserved the right to interact with outsiders or not. But when all of Nigeria was declared a British Protectorate in 1900, Nigerian societies lost their political independence.

About 380 self-contained and antagonistic communities or ethnic groups could no longer be isolated because they were thrown together within artificially created colonial boundaries, all in the name of one nation. Formal schooling provided a means of communication (the English language) between the diverse groups. Under colonial rule urban cities developed as a result of geographical mobility. Graduates from mission schools were forced to leave their villages for urban centers in search of white collar jobs which were not available in their villages. This is how economic forces helped to breakdown community boundaries and brought about geographical mobility.

As communities moved away from isolation to integration, from

community orientation to inter-community orientation, from traditional to modern society, then the people began to build heavily on impersonal skills of dealing with situations. In other words, from the very moment Nigerians were forced to interact with one another as one nation, they did not see themselves as one people but different peoples. Consequently, a discriminatory attitude was developed. The way people of the same ethnic group dealt and interacted with themselves was different from the way they dealt and interacted with people from other ethnic groups. Each ethnic group reserved personal dealing or special treatment for the members of its own group and treated the members of other ethnic groups impersonally.

The forces that helped the various ethnic groups in Nigeria to develop ethnic consciousness were enumerated in chapter II. As a result of this ethnic consciousness, the members of each ethnic group developed a sense of mutual protection, mutual struggle for survival and at the same time viewed the members of other ethnic groups with suspicion and hostility. When these different ethnic groups were accidentally thrown together as one nation and forced by circumstances to interact, it is not surprising that the same mutual protection, mutual struggle for survival and mutual hostility toward other ethnic groups featured prominently in their relationship. Every member of a particular ethnic group genuinely felt a moral obligation towards his kinsmen, and lack of sensitivity in dealing with members of other ethnic groups.

This impersonal interaction is what Graf describes as members of the same ethnic group "promoting policies and practices that are discriminatory toward other groups in the country. For instance, a Hausa head of statutory corporation may employ only Hausas to the exclusion of

others."²² The above example is not exclusive to Hausa men. If an Igbo or a Yoruba man finds himself in the same position, he will do the same thing.

One may argue that those who promote policies and practices that are discriminatory toward other Nigerian ethnic groups have no sense of justice. The crux of the problem is that many Nigerians see justice not as giving equal opportunities to every Nigerian, but as promoting their own ethnic solidarity. The point of emphasis is that while the members of different ethnic groups agree to interact with other communities, they still remain community-conscious. This strong sense of community has become a disruptive force. It has blinded many Nigerians to the benefits of national consciousness which would promote national unity. As a result of personal and impersonal dealings or display of partiality, the problems of injustice, disunity, factionalism, nepotism, bribery and corruption emerged in the Nigerian society. It must be noted that these problems were generated as a result of the clash between traditional and Western cultures. Traditional practices that were valid and acceptable on an ethnic group level, suddenly became invalid and unacceptable on a national level or in modern society. Professor Paul S. Breidenbach--one of the committee members of this dissertation made an interesting written remark on this point that is worth quoting. He remarked that in "traditional [society] giving of favors and gifts promote solidarity and was seen as appropriate. This same act in a society based on contract rather than kinship becomes bribery and corruption." These national problems are further discussed in Chapter VI which focuses on the analysis and criticism of the new philosophy of Nigerian education.

²²William D. Graf, Elections, 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publication, 1979), p. 47.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM OF THE NEW PHILOSOPHY OF NIGERIAN EDUCATION, 1976

This chapter provides an analysis and criticism of the new philosophy of Nigerian education as embodied in the current Nigerian National Policy on Education. Nigeria framed her policy on education with reference to the five main national objectives as stated in the Second National Development Plan, and endorsed as the necessary foundation for the national policy on education. In other words, Nigeria plans to achieve these five national objectives through the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme.

The five national objectives are:

- (a) a free and democratic society;
- (b) a just and egalitarian society;
- (c) a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- (d) a great and dynamic economy; and
- (e) a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

The policy on education states:

The desire that Nigeria should be a free, just and democratic society, a land full of opportunities for all its citizens, able to generate a great and dynamic economy, and growing into a united, strong and self-reliant nation cannot be overemphasized. In order to realize fully the potentials of the contributions of education, all other agencies will operate in concert with education to that end.¹

¹ National Policy on Education (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information Printing Division, 1977), p. 5.

This analysis and criticism is focused on the five national objectives which the Nigerian new educational policy aims at achieving. John Wilson's method of language analysis is used to examine the five national objectives. This critical analysis is necessary in order to further illuminate the national problems and the reasons why the Nigerian government wants to use education as a tool to build a strong and united nation. Finally, the chapter concludes with an assessment of the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme launched in September, 1976.

1. A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

There must be a number of underlying causes of anxiety that move the people of Nigeria to desire "a free and democratic society." Is Nigeria not a free and democratic society? Is Nigeria not politically independent? Are the people of Nigeria oppressed or constrained? Is Nigeria threatened with communism, capitalism or totalitarianism? Are some people lording it over others in Nigeria? Does a social condition of equality and respect exist for the individual in Nigeria? Do the civilians have no say in the Government? Does the government promote the interest of its people? Is the Nigerian Press gagged by the government or others? Are Nigerians affected by any given condition or circumstance? Are they free from need, fear, avarice/greed and corruption? Is Nigeria facing problems in unemployment, minimum wage laws, health insurance, and old-age pensions? Is selection of personnel unbiased?

In 1979, Nigeria changed from the British-type of parliamentary democracy to the American-type of presidential system. The new

constitution guaranteed the right of every individual to freedom of expression, including the right to own any form of communication media other than radio or television.

Values for respecting the rights of others, for having a commitment to the entire welfare of the nation were dislodged and steadily engulfed by self-interest, family and kin loyalty. Ethnic consciousness, sectionalism, nepotism, bribery and corruption are the practical order of the day. Corruption rules the political and social system of Nigeria. It is public knowledge that the First Republic collapsed as a result of corruption, sectionalism, nepotism and disunity which resulted from ethnic consciousness.

It is true that no nation under the sun is completely free from corruption. President Richard M. Nixon and the Watergate scandal is an American example. The Americans have an effective way of exposing corruption and allowing the law to have its way. But in Nigeria, corruption seems to exist at every level of the society. "We identify the problem of bribery and corruption in almost every segment of our society...It is becoming a malignant cancer which calls for major operation."²

Sometimes, scholarships and driving licenses are obtained through bribery. Contractors know as a matter of mutual agreement that they have to give 10% of the total amount to those who award contracts. Even the office boy claims it as a right to ask for "Kola" (bribe) before searching for a file in the office. In other words, he has to be bribed to do the very work for which he is officially paid. There are a lot of techniques of asking for and giving bribes. "The methods of giving and

²H.O. Davies, Daily Times, 7 March 1979, p. 7.

receiving bribes have been perfected to such a high standard of sophistication that detection of the crime is extremely difficult if not almost impossible."³

Many people place wealth and power before integrity. In fact, the corrupt man is the successful man in Nigeria, because he can commit all kinds of crimes, and bribe his way through. "The masses learn from the mis-leaders that wealth in our culture is POWER and that it can get for you anything you want. It can cover-up the most heinous of crimes and unfortunately it is really doing so, very often in Nigeria."⁴

Many people acquired or "amassed wealth through spurious deals, dubious secret commissions and other illegitimate means. These new-rich --the Nigerian millionaires display their wealth by extravagant and ostentatious living...They exhibit their new-found wealth in a manner that makes Hollywood look like a holiday fishing village."⁵ In the same society, the masses live in great poverty. There is a big gap between the rich and the poor. There is no just distribution of wealth. Consequently, there are now armed robbers in Nigeria; a new desperate and frustrated class who also want a share of the Nigerian oil money by fair means or foul.

This account should not give a false picture that everybody in Nigeria is dishonest and corrupt. There are many honest people in Nigeria. The problem is that, when leaders are corrupt, the honest people can do little or nothing to correct things. For example, out of eleven military governors and one administrator of Gowon's regime,

³J. A. Adegbite, Nigerian Observer, 1 June 1976, p. 5.

⁴Ibid., p.5.

⁵H.O. Davies, Daily Times, 7 March 1979, p. 7.

ten were found guilty of corruption.

"The ex-governors and the Administrator of East-Central State with the exception of two were found to have grossly abused their office and were guilty of several irregular practices."⁶

Out of 12 leaders there were at least two just and honest men. What is more, General Murtala Muhammed who displaced Gowon will always be remembered in the history of Nigeria for the great fight he staged against bribery and corruption.

If the First Republic failed as a result of the accumulated problems of corruption and other social vices, and the Gowon military regime was described as "corruption personified,"⁷ it is not surprising that Nigeria looks forward to building a free and democratic society, using education as a tool.

As expressed by the U. S. Declaration of Independence, democracy is believed to mean that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."⁸

Free could mean not under another's control, not held back from acting or thinking as one pleases, saying what one thinks. It could also refer to liberation, emancipation, disengagement, disentanglement, independence, release, discharge, autonomy, non-intervention, non-interference, freedom of speech or freedom of the press.

In a free and democratic society, the community governs through

⁶Daily Times, 4 February 1976, p. 3.

⁷Nigerian Observer, 29 July 1976, p. 7.

⁸Harry W. Kirwin, ed., The Search for Democracy (New York: Doubleday and Company., 1959), p. 48.

its own representatives for its own benefit. Each individual treats other people as his equal. Each one treats the other unassumingly, non-snobbishly, as he/she would want to be treated.

In an unfree and undemocratic society, people are constrained, confined, restrained, checked, hindered, obstructed, bound, controlled, restricted, curbed, muzzled, limited, conditioned, forced, compelled, partial and biased circumstances abound everywhere. People, especially the weak are subjected to the worst conditions. The masses become victims of slavery, oppression and suppression. The press is censored. The ruling class makes the laws to promote its own interests and satisfies its own needs and ambitions. The police use the laws to favor the rich, exploit the poor and keep the masses in constant fear and subjection to the laws.

An ideal and democratic society permits the individuals to have a voice in the government. Everyone is encouraged to be both a consumer and a producer. The views of the rich and poor, the weak and strong, the ruler and the ruled are heard and considered objectively. Every member of the society is informed of how the government is run and is permitted to criticize any uncalled for attitude, behavior, law and negligence made by representatives of the ruling government.

A free and democratic society recognizes that each individual is unique; that individuals differ in ability, capacity, attitude, behavior, need, interest and belief. Each individual is free to develop at his/her own pace and not at the expense of others. Progress is measured in terms of both the individual and national efforts to build the nation.

The ideal free and democratic society should offer day care centers or pre-primary schools for the benefit of all. They should not be

places of convenience where the children of the rich or the educated elite can go. Pre-primary schools should be a national enterprise; neither should they be crushed to avoid government's commitment to such an enterprise.

Primary education should be free and qualitative. Secondary education should not be free because a greater attention should be paid to the provision of educational facilities rather than making education free at secondary and university levels at this stage of Nigerian educational development. There is nothing wrong in making education free at secondary level. For example, secondary education is free in the United States but the development was gradual. The government should award scholarships to children whose parents cannot afford school fees. Technical schools should promote skills that are needed by various individuals as well as the society. Universities should offer courses that will meet the needs of individuals and the manpower needs of the society. Those who fail should not be left to waste and pine away. Their residual knowledge should be redirected to useful and meaningful channels for self and national productivity.

In an ideal free and democratic society, adult education should get huge financial support. The press should not be censored but must furnish the masses with objective news and information. Loyalty to family members, kin and ethnic group members should be encouraged and promoted but not at the expense of national obligations and national unity.

Bribery and corruption should be exposed and denounced. It should not be allowed to be a way of life. Those in power should have the interests of the masses at heart and live up to their public responsibi-

lities. Each individual who passes successfully through primary education should have the opportunity to go on to secondary and post-secondary education. If not qualified, he should be given a chance to improve according to his/her ability or obtain a job where his acquired knowledge is utilized.

2. A JUST AND EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

The word just means fair, right, impartial, non-partisan, lawful, legal, exact, accurate, precise, equable, unbiased and proper. In the Nigerian context, just could also mean that the Nigerian peoples, irrespective of their family background and status in the society are bound by the same laws of the country, and are given fair trial and treatment. Each individual has a right to a living, entitled to use public services to improve on self and promote national growth. An individual who is honorable and fair in his/her dealings and actions is considered just. Another who is upright before God is just.

Egalitarian implies an advocate of the doctrine of equal political, economic, and legal rights for all citizens. There can be a number of underlying causes of anxiety that make the Nigerian government demand for "a just and egalitarian society." There is educational imbalance in Nigeria. Inequalities exist in the rate of development in the 19 different states, inequalities in home environment, governmental services and school systems. The way society reflects or reinforces inequalities, the strain on the egalitarian spirit of traditional African society reflected by southern Nigerians in modern times, the farreaching economic and political changes introduced during colonialism which have created powerful forces leading away from egalitarianism, are all causes for anxiety.

Evidence of stratification along income, educational, and status lines; mismanagement of public funds by those in positions of authority, decline in quality of primary education, decline in the employment value of a primary education; existence of a totally private school system--offering high quality education to the children of the rich and the educated elite; the method of awarding scholarships that enables the rich to be richer and the poor to be poorer are all underlying anxieties for requiring "a just and egalitarian society."

Nigeria is making persistent efforts to ensure that every Nigerian is governed by laws that apply with the same force to all. The income gap between rich and poor is reduced by progressive taxation.

The extended family system that still operates in almost every part of Nigeria, serves as a machinery for equalizing resources. Members of a family still share the payment of the school fees for a promising student. A wealthy member of most families in the south still contributes to the education of several relatives, near and distant, whose parents' means are limited. Wealthy members in any community are called upon by their local progressive unions to provide scholarships for the bright younger generation. Such members are responsible for the erection of secondary schools in their communitites which are later taken over by the government.

Education is basically considered an egalitarian end in itself. The Nigerian government, therefore, sees education as a means to the realization of equality. By widespread schooling, large numbers of people are qualified for participation in politics.

The introduction of Universal Primary Education is an attempt to attain equality by making primary education available to all. Education

is also extended to all rural areas--every village has a school. Many disadvantaged students who leave secondary school having failed their school certificate examination are offered opportunities to be trained as teachers, and offered jobs after graduation.

Admission into post-primary institutions is limited and follows both a corruptive and selective process. There are not enough secondary schools for all those who want to go. For instance, in 1978 the Bendel State commissioner for education said, "90,000 candidates sat for the last entrance examination for admission to secondary schools in the state. Out of about 66,000 who obtained pass marks,...more than 20,000 could not secure places."⁹ Out of the 66,000 who obtained pass marks about 68% gained admission. What happened to the remaining 32%? To carry the analysis a little further, all the 90,000 who sat for the entrance examination wanted to go to secondary school. It may not be a valid argument to claim that anyone who failed the test would not have benefited from secondary school education. It is possible that all they needed was remedial courses. In the last analysis it is valid to conclude that out of 90,000 candidates who wanted to go to secondary school, only 50% could secure places. This clearly demonstrates the acute shortage of educational facilities in Nigeria.

Since the educational facilities are few, the rich and the educated elite use either their influence or offer bribes in "cash" or "kind" to get their children admitted. The only remedy to this corruptive practice is to build more secondary schools.

Certain secondary schools like King's College, Lagos, are marked out by tradition for the children of the educated elite. Children from

⁹Daily Times, 27 November 1978, p. 2.

such schools often win a disproportionate share of available scholarships. These same schools are used as the measuring standards for the West African Examination grading system, leaving room for minimum varying standards as the papers of other schools are marked. The children in such schools are exposed to the best qualified teachers in the state. Such children enjoy participation in various expensive recreational activities.

Thus, the post-primary educational system aids and abets class formation, favors the emergence of an affluent elite as an inevitable part of modernization, and promotes an increasing inequality of opportunity.

3. A UNITED, STRONG, AND SELF-RELIANT NATION

Unity connotes solidarity and union. It means the combination or arrangement of parts into a whole. It implies a fundamental agreement of interdependent and usually varied components, which in turn produces harmony, as of thought and purpose.

In this analysis, there are terms that are used primarily to describe individual human beings but by analogy, they are applicable to nations. Unity can mean many things--compatibility, adaptation, accommodation, adjustment, reconciliation, assimilation, cooperation, negotiation, diplomacy, compromising, coming to an understanding, conformity, concord between two or more persons or groups.

Strong connotes being stout, sturdy, tough, stalwart, hale, tenacious. It means having great physical strength, being in sound health, being economically or financially sound or thriving, having force of character, will, morality, or intelligence, manifesting ability

or achievement in a specified field, capable of enduring or of being defended, capable of exerting authority effectively, having force of conviction or feeling.

Strong could mean many things--vigorous, powerful, blustering, solid, established, responsible, convincing, energetic, competent, effective, hearty, zealous, ardent, having much force or power because of its wealth and members not easily influenced or changed.

Self-reliant connotes self-trust, self-belief, self-confidence and autonomy. It could mean, self-dependance, faith, credence, responsibility. It means also that the nation depends on its own acts, abilities, judgment, resources, moral independence to promote both economic and educational growth and enhance political and social unity. The nation depends on the efforts of its own members to promote national unity and build a strong nation. It has confidence in its members to perform the tasks of building one nation and supporting one another to attain political, social, economic, and educational gratification in this process.

A nation that is not united conveys the picture of disagreement, discordance, dissonance, dissidence, discrepancy, conflict, opposition, intrusion, interference, disproportion, disparity, mismatch, misjoining, inconsistency, irrelation, hostility, incompatibility, divergence. Citizens of such a nation will be at variance with one another, their activities will be out of tune, out of keeping, out of character with the established laws, holding the national laws and rules in defiance or contempt; quarrelling, failure to correspond and communicate will be part of their way of life.

A nation that is politically weak will indulge in the following

activities: (a) making feeble and flimsy decisions; (b) operating on unsubstantial ideas; (c) promoting unhealthy rivalries among its members; (d) its economy will be loose and uncertain; (e) its political system will be violent and invalid; (f) its citizens will be unsupported, helpless, sickly, defenseless; and (g) the potential and the talents of the individuals will be wasted and crippled.

A nation that is not self-reliant is dependent mostly on other nations for its political, social, and economic support. It relies on other nations to meet its manpower needs. Such a nation engages in or trades with dubiousness, skepticism, irreligion, jealousy, suspicion, anxiety, and reinforces uncertainty, irresolution, and indecision in the activities of its citizens.

There are various cultural and linguistic diversity in Nigeria. In spite of the obvious differences in languages, cultures, customs, attitudes, beliefs, and religion, Nigerians aim at building one nation that is strong and self-reliant. This desire is reflected in the new Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The new Constitution states that "The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity,..."¹⁰ The Draft Constitution defines "the federal character of Nigeria" to mean:

¹⁰The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979 (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, Printing Division, 1979), p. 8.

The distinctive desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish and harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.¹¹

The differences in Nigerian society tend to override the possibilities of building one nation. But the strength of building one nation lies in the view that unity can exist in spite of diversity. The rates of economic development are different within the present 19 states. There is large scale evidence of religious tensions, personality conflicts among leaders; the dominance of one ethnic group over the others, the use of the concept of ethnicity as an ideology within the political arena in order to win votes; lack of respect of one group for another, lack of understanding the ways of life of groups other than one's own.

Ethnic consciousness overshadows national consciousness. For instance, Nigeria still uses the census results of 1963. No one knows how many Nigerians there are. H. O. Davies gives us the reason:

Although we all shout from the rooftops that we are one united people, yet every time there has been a census count, the monsters of ethnic and tribal rivalry have always been quick to rear their ugly heads and thereby frustrate our efforts. It is a notorious and undeniable fact that each ethnic group organized rigging of the count, in an effort to inflate their relative numerical strength.¹²

Indeed, few past experiences have affected all Nigerians equally. The political parties, that were formed before Nigerian independence, were formed on ethnic bases. The missionary patterns of advance gave the

¹¹ Draft Constitution, quoted in Graf, Elections 1979 (Lagos: Daily Times Publication, 1979), p. 32.

¹² H. O. Davies, Daily Times, 7 March 1979, p. 7.

Southerners an educational head start over the Northerners.

A lot goes into building the ideal, united, strong, and self-reliant nation. For such a nation to be integrated, it has to "transcend domestic conflict, limit conflict to a certain level of intensity while providing channels for its expression, and its cleavages should cut across rather than reinforce each other."¹³ Such a nation is therefore not a utopia, where political conflict has been eliminated.

An Igbo or a Yoruba understands and recognizes the fact that the Hausa is a human being, a brother and a friend and vice versa. The Hausa need not overlook his Hausa brothers to deal with the Igbo or Yoruba. He embraces all as part and parcel of his life and living. Each recognizes their differences and learns to respect and accept them.

Nigerian school children should be made aware of the existence of the diverse cultures of the Nigerian peoples. These cultures should be taught in school from primary level to university. Abernethy maintains that:

A school can, however, provide more than academic knowledge about a country. Through its recruitment policies it can bring together members of many different groups, and the school can become a miniature nation by instilling cooperative habits among a diverse student body.¹⁴

This function of the school in fostering the concept of cultural unity in the children is fundamental to nation building. Nigeria should, therefore, use the things they possess in common as resources in laying a firm foundation for nation building.

¹³David B. Abernethy, Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), p. 253.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 257.

A nation built on a solid foundation is a strong nation. It implants in its citizens the ability to endure hardships, discomforts, inconveniences both physically and morally, that might bring about strong leadership, economic prosperity, and harmonious relationships among its members. It teaches its members to resist anything that might bring about disunity. It develops national pride in its members as a counterpart to already existing ethnic pride in each cultural group. Each member is firm in promoting national consciousness and national unity. Each ethnic group strives to display acts of courage, unwavering determination, loyalty not only within its own ranks but also to every other Nigerian.

The members of a nation built on a solid foundation also enjoy robust health, economic security, political stability, educational progress and social well-being. The citizens always endeavor to hold fast to common goals, or objectives. Such a nation produces its own resources and prepares the members both efficiently and responsibly to meet their needs and the manpower demands.

A united, strong, and self-reliant nation stabilizes its own political system, settles its own inner conflicts, and brings about economic progress and technological development. It also relies on both formal and informal education to bring about the fulfillment of its national objectives. Such a nation manages its own production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.

A united, strong, and self-reliant nation, therefore, has all its different ethnic groups joined together by basic values and beliefs they share in common and consider important. Each ethnic group identifies with the other on the basis of interests, objectives, and responsibilities

that enable them to think and act as one people while at the same time retaining individual distinct values.

4. A GREAT AND DYNAMIC ECONOMY.

Economy implies thriftiness, frugality, thrift, care, husbandry, good management of resources, good administration, savings, reserves, parsimony, provision for a rainy day, feathering one's nest, development of one's resources, avoiding waste in the use of anything.

Great connotes state of immensity, enormity, infinity, strength, power, fullness, importance, significance, prominence, grandeur, distinction, repute, excellence, fame, increase, and superiority.

Dynamic conveys the meaning of being forceful, vigorous, impelling propulsive, and productive.

The building of a great and dynamic economy involves making the most of what the country has. It means a creation of abundance and sufficiency, and an establishment of an ongoing productivity.

A nation that does not build a great and dynamic economy reflects either lack of natural resources or wastage, loss, extravagance, wastefulness, prodigality, misuse, and deterioration. Its members are thriftless, mere consumers, impoverished. Such citizens burn the candle at both ends, squander their income, labor in vain, throw all their efforts to the wind, and in the long run they are overtaxed. Most of them expend thoughtlessly or carelessly, grow incompetent, helpless, impotent, insufficient, ineffective, and develop lack of self-restraint. The long term gratification of the people is crippled. The political, social, and economic standing of such a country is paralyzed, The morale of the people is also very low.

Nigeria is potentially a great nation--it is rich in natural resources. The people of Nigeria practice mixed economy. In mixed economy the government participates in business enterprise. Individual citizens are equally allowed to set up their own private business enterprise. But there are some areas completely reserved for the government. For example, no private individual or corporate body other than the government is free to own a television or radio station in Nigeria.

The future of the Nigerian economy is uncertain. It has become an oil-based economy. Nigeria possesses overwhelming oil and other resources. Nigeria is the second largest supplier of oil to the United States. An American newspaper, Chicago Tribune of June 1, 1980, describes Nigeria as "An oil-rich country that is 'dirt poor.'" The Nigerian economy cannot be described as great and dynamic for so many reasons.

Agriculture used to be the mainstay of Nigerian economy before the "oil boom." "Today Nigeria imports 35 percent of its food. The import bill exceeded \$1 billion last year, of which \$200 million worth came from the U.S."¹⁵

On April 12, 1976, the Federal Military Government launched a program known as "Operation Feed the Nation." (O.F.N.) The objective of this program according to the former Head of State, General Obasanjo, was to "enable Nigerians, be they students, academicians, or members of the Armed Forces to grow enough food crops and vegetables both for their consumption and for sale to others."¹⁶ The program of O.F.N. has

¹⁵Chicago Tribune, 1 June 1980, Section 1, p. 14.

¹⁶Nigerian Observer, 1 June 1976, p. 7.

helped to a certain extent, but the problem of Nigeria being able to feed its people is yet to be solved.

Oil, which is the greatest source of revenue at the moment, will be exhausted with time. Instead of investing much of the oil money in mechanized agriculture, many of the people in power embezzle the oil money and cripple the nation's economy. A good example, is the missing oil money--N2,800,000,000 or [about \$4.2 billion]. This huge amount, N2.8 billion is said to have been inadvertently diverted to a private account from the oil revenues between 1976 and 1979. Ogunsanwo contends that "for anybody to suggest that the money (N2.8 billion) was paid into a private account 'in error' shows that the person either does not understand the English language or he is being sadistically mischievous."¹⁷

Embezzled money is being thrown around lavishly at social gatherings. Girlfriends of embezzlers are extravagantly provided for--furnished flats, and chauffeured vehicles.

Corruption has gone a long way to destroying the Nigerian economy. It has created an army of lazy drones; men, who know that they can offer bribes to get what they do not deserve, will not be prepared to work hard. The corruption in Nigeria takes different forms--"from blatant bribery, misuse of power, to practice of officials deliberately neglecting their official duties to devote themselves and the offices, telephones, and cars provided for their official functions, to running their own businesses."¹⁸

¹⁷Gbolabo Ogunsanwo, "The Great Oil Robbery", The New Nation, vol. 3 no. 12 (April 1980): 16.

¹⁸Daily Times, 31 January 1979, p. 8.

The results of the probe of the governors of the Gowon regime are very revealing:

The governors of the discredited regime were probed and the nation was surprised to discover that between them, they robbed the country of a staggering amount of N10 Million [\$15 million] in what has been described as 'operation rob the nation'...Probes have also been instituted in various states...and reports daily revealed are unpleasant confirmation of the rottenness of the greatest democracy in Africa.¹⁹

Another way the Nigerian national economy is crippled is through

• colossal waste:

Every government ministry, every company in Nigeria has a junkyard. In this junkyard you will find brand new vehicles and other property that have been discarded. And if you inquire further, you will discover that this vehicle has a broken clutch cable, that truck has a faulty carburetor, that an air conditioner was too large for the space cut out for it in some offices. In almost every instance, you will find that the reason why the junkyard is filled with brand new property is because it has a minor fault.²⁰

Another aspect of this waste is that:

Millions of dollars worth of imported technology, ranging from telecommunications equipment to airplanes, has gone to rust. Nigeria, in its rush to capitalize on its oil wealth, bought much of this kind of equipment without at the same time buying spare parts needed to keep it operating or having people trained to maintain it.²¹

Every well meaning Nigerian cannot but lament Nigeria's problems of corruption at every level of society, colossal waste, and mismanagement.

H. O. Davies says:

A country reputed internationally as being blessed with multifarious natural resources including oil, and richest in Africa below the Sahara, now has to borrow money from international banks, clamp down rigidly on foreign exchange disbursements, and yet finds itself in difficulty in meeting its local internal obligations.²²

¹⁹Nigerian Observer, 29 July 1976, p. 7.

²⁰Daily Times, 29 January 1979, p. 3.

²¹Chicago Tribune, 1 June 1980, Section 1, p. 14.

²²H. O. Davies, Daily Times, 8 March 1979, p. 7.

All in all, the lack of public responsibility and commitment to one's nation makes it impossible to build a nation with a great and dynamic economy.

5. A LAND OF BRIGHT AND FULL OPPORTUNITIES

FOR ALL CITIZENS

Opportunity connotes occasion, opening, occurrence, chance, all of which refer to a favorable time or circumstance. It can also mean space, scope, place, leisure. It implies opportunity for job career, social mobility, and educational progress. It involves creating many avenues or channels for the citizens to realize their potentialities, meet their needs, cater to their interests, and live a satisfying life.

Bright means brilliant, radiant, lustrous, lambent, luminous, incandescent, effulgent. The opportunities that are to be made available to the citizens are meant to be very outstanding, pleasing, promising, exciting, and within the knowledge of the citizens.

Full refers to being complete--meaning that citizens will have the maximal or highest degree of personal development and social integration. It implies that no stone will be left unturned in the provision of opportunities to the citizens. Areas of their social, cultural, political, economic, emotional, and moral life will be meaningfully strengthened, developed, and balanced. Full also means filled, satiated, glutted, whole, entire, sufficient, unlimited, ample, and plentiful.

Opportunity also could refer to bias when taken to mean a privilege, limited offers of jobs, or competing positions for few.

The contrary concept of bright opportunities refers to ignorance, illiteracy, blindness, incomprehension, inexperience, unawareness on the part of citizens. Such a view also reflects unexplored ground, and

superficiality.

When opportunities are not full, self-realization becomes crippled. In which case incompetence, deficiency, imperfection, shortcoming, emptiness, bankruptcy, and poverty become the badge of such a nation. Citizens without bright and full opportunities cannot function efficiently. Frustrations eat the hearts of such citizens. By and large, they are denied of their dignity as individuals, denied the chance of sharing responsibility for the common good of society, and will never be allowed to respect the dignity of labor, nor get their emotional, physical, and psychological health promoted.

The Universal Free Primary Education Scheme provides educational opportunity for all children of school age. Leaving the realm of this opportunity, life for these children is shaky and their future is very bleak. The government is not sure of what is going to happen to all the products of U.P.E.. No provision is made for each of them at the junior high school level. Many may end up not realizing their potential and some may fail to fit into their environment. Others may manage to get some laborer jobs while very few may continue their studies further. Given the British legacy, such students view manual labor as below their dignity and prefer to roam the big cities in search of jobs that are not available.

Many secondary school graduates end up taking clerical jobs in many offices and some take to teaching. Others end up in higher institutions, while very few gain admission into the universities.

As regards undergraduates, many take to teaching in the absence of getting a job in their area of specialization. In the universities, there are no counselors to plan courses for the students, Failure in

one field could mean failure in life or repeated attempts at different fields--energy, resources, and time are wasted. In the public service, chances of promotion are limited but bright when one's relative is in power or one has a godfather to push him to the top. Building a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens is worthwhile. But it involves placing maximal premium on the maximal development of each citizen as a total being in order to promote his/her entire growth and make the nation prosper in all dimensions.

In the first instance, the government has to provide these opportunities and citizens have to be made adequately aware of such opportunities. The opportunities have to be beneficial and relevant to the needs and interests of each citizen and each citizen has to make use of the opportunities to the fullest.

Given the analysis of the national objectives through the analysis recommended by Wilson, one can clearly see why Nigerians are burning with a great desire to build a new nation that is just, democratic, strong, united, self-reliant, full of opportunities for all its citizens and with a great and dynamic economy. And above all, there is a need to create a national consciousness in the people of Nigeria and to bring about unity in diversity, using education.

ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIVERSAL FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION (U.P.E.) SCHEME LAUNCHED IN 1976

After the critical analysis of the five national objectives, it seems appropriate to assess the U.P.E. Scheme--the means of achieving these government-stated objectives. It must be admitted that the idea of building a new nation through mass education is good in its own right. But lack of adequate planning and foresight on the part of the government very

often ruins a good project. This assessment shall address itself to the following problems:

1. Nigeria's failure to learn from its past experience;
2. the meaning of equality of opportunity in education; and
3. the creation of national consciousness and bringing about unity in diversity through education.

Nigeria Failed To Learn From Its Past Experience

It is often said that "Experience is the best teacher." It appears this statement is only valid in the case of those who are prepared to learn from experience. The Universal Free Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme launched by the Federal Military Government (F.M.G.) by decree in September 1976 is not a new experience in Nigeria. Through the Universal Primary Education the F.M.G. took over the responsibility of education at the primary level, all over the country.

The first U.P.E. was introduced by the then Western regional government in January 1955 under the auspices of the Action Group Party led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo. At least, plans and ground work were carried out for two years--1952-1954. There was expansion of primary schools, massive training of teachers, expansion of teacher training facilities and secondary schools.

The U.P.E. introduced by the Western region had its advantages:

1. It offered opportunity of education to all children of school age in the then Western region.
2. Development was accelerated as a result of the building of new schools in all the villages.
3. It offered employment opportunities--new teachers, super-

visors and laborers were employed.

4. Western region of Nigeria prepared to raise enlightened citizens in the future.

It was also faced with many problems:

1. The number that was actually registered for 1955 out-stripped the projected number. While 492,000 children were estimated for registration, more than 800,000 turned up for registration. As a result, the Scheme was faced with the problems of insufficient teachers, classrooms, and equipment.

2. The Scheme was faced with the problem of insufficient funds and fees had to be introduced under different headings, for instance, "development fund."

3. Many untrained teachers were employed and consequently the quality of education was badly affected.

4. The school population saddled teachers with unwieldy number of children and with so many children in a class, teachers were robbed of effective performance.

5. The position of agriculture was threatened since the "half-baked" children refused to go back to the land. In other words, one of the major problems of the Western region was what to do with the products of the U.P.E. They were not skilled in any trade nor literate enough to be employed as clerks. They refused to take to farming in their villages but preferred to migrate to urban cities in search of jobs which they could not get. The end result was that many of them became social and economic liabilities to their parents as well as to the society at large.

In 1961, that is, six years later, the Western regional government set up the Banjo Commission to review the Scheme. The Commission reported among other things that:

The failing standards in primary school work were due largely to a preponderance of untrained teachers; a lack of continuity in staffing; an emphasis on teachers' private studies at the expense of the children; too large classes; the presence of under-age children; an unsatisfactory syllabus; cessation or restriction of corporal punishment; lack of cooperation by parents and guardians; and inadequate supervision of schools, either by the inspectorate or the voluntary agency supervisors.²³

According to Lewis, the Commission

found it necessary to be extremely critical of the results achieved. In the forefront of their criticisms of the primary schools were the familiar themes that primary education alienates the child from its environment, and that rural primary school leavers migrate to the towns in search of pen-pushing jobs for which they are not trained.²⁴

The Universal Free Primary Education Scheme was also introduced in the Eastern region in February, 1957. There was no time for planning and preparation before launching the Scheme. It was faced with the problems of insufficient funds, shortages of teachers, lack of accommodations and school equipment. The Scheme collapsed the following year, 1958. In the same year, a Commission was set up headed by Dr. K. Dike to review the Scheme. The Commission criticized the government for its political maneuvering and enthusiasm in launching a Universal Free Primary Education Scheme without first of all weighing the government's economic standing.

One would have thought that the experience of the Western and

²³Report of the Commission Appointed to Review the Education System of Western Nigeria (Ibadan: Government Printer, 1961), p. 14.

²⁴Lewis, op. cit., p. 78.

Eastern regional governments, in terms of launching U.P.E. would serve as a lesson for future planning and execution of similar schemes.

Since the Federal Military Government launched the U.P.E. Scheme on September 6, 1976, a lot has been said and written about the Scheme. Many good things have been said about it. On the other hand, many people have expressed their fears either about its success or made positive suggestions on how to ensure its success.

The government, no doubt, has many good reasons for launching the Scheme:

1. The U.P.E. Scheme is an attempt to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance and to improve and increase efficiency and industry in Nigerian society.

2. It is an attempt to eradicate neo-colonialism and allow Nigerians to assert their own standards and world views.

3. It meets the educational needs of all geographical locations, social status and religious beliefs of the peoples of Nigeria.

4. It is a deliberate attempt to correct the educational imbalance in Nigeria. That is, to bridge the educational disparity between Northern and Southern Nigeria.

5. The new policy on Nigerian education states the major objectives of primary education as "the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy, and the ability to communicate effectively..."²⁵

Almost every Nigerian, if not all, agrees that the U.P.E. Scheme is good and necessary. Ekefre claims that "when in September, 1976, the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme was launched, it was heralded with so much fanfare by the mass media and jubilation by the

²⁵Nigerian National Policy on Education (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information Printing Division, 1977), p. 7.

general public because it was regarded as the greatest bold crusade to wipe out illiteracy from the society."²⁶ Another Nigerian--

Durotoye argues:

The launching of the Universal Primary Education in Nigeria on September 6, 1976, was a landmark in the history of Nigerian education. The U.P.E. results from the awareness of the importance of education in the life of the Nation. It is no doubt an attempt to bring mass literacy to a country bedevilled by mass illiteracy. It is therefore an attempt to have enlightened citizens who will hopefully be better producers and consumers of goods.²⁷

Unfortunately, Universal Primary Education launched by the Federal Government for the whole country in 1976 is facing exactly the same problems that crippled the Universal Primary Education launched in 1955 and 1957, respectively.

The number of children that turned up for registration outnumbered the projected figure. While 2,297,900 were expected for registration, the actual number of children registered for 1976/77 stood at 2,992,100. The difference between actual and projected numbers was 694,200. (see table 4) This mistake was blamed on lack of accurate statistical data as the estimate was based on 1963 census results. Consequently, there were shortages of teachers, classrooms and school materials when the Scheme actually started in 1976.

Nigerian daily newspapers are not silent about this deplorable situation that resulted from lack of adequate planning. A year after the Scheme had started, it was reported that: Over 3,000 pupils in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Council area of Anambra State sit on the bare floor in the classrooms. "In some cases, the pupils used bamboo

²⁶N.U. Ekefre, Daily Times, 1 March 1979, p. 7.

²⁷Bayo Durotoye Daily Sketch, 1 October 1976, p. 26.

TABLE 4

ENROLMENT IN PRIMARY GRADE I (projected & actual figures) IN 1976-77

	Projected Enrolment*	Actual Enrolment	Actual as % of Projected	Difference between Actual & Projected (,000)
	(,000)	(,000)		(,000)
Anambra	148.1	292.8	198	+ 144.7
Bauchi	100.1	102.9	103	+ 2.9
Bendel	101.3	174.4	172	+ 73.1
Benue	99.9	276.2	276	+ 176.3
Borno	123.4	88.2	71	- 35.2
Cross River.. .. .	143.2	233.9	163	+ 90.7
Gongola	107.3	112.7	105	+ 5.4
Imo	151.2	260.9	173	+ 109.7
Kaduna	168.8	281.1	167	+ 112.3
Kano	237.8	193.1	81	- 44.7
Kwara	70.6	87.3	124	+ 16.7
Lagos	65.2	84.6	130	+ 19.4
Niger	49.2	72.3	147	+ 23.1
Ogun	63.9	75.6	118	+ 11.7
Ondo	112.4	112.6	100	+ 0.2
Oyo	214.4	198.9	93	- 15.4
Plateau	83.4	171.3	205	+ 87.9
Rivers	70.8	94.6	136	+ 23.8
Sokoto	186.9	78.7	42	- 108.2
NIGERIA	2,297.9	2,992.1	131	+ 694.4

*Assumed to correspond to the estimated 6 year old population (source of population estimates FOS).

Sources: Projections FME: actual enrolment State MOEs.

SOURCE: Blueprint 1978-79 (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1978), p. 54.

sticks in making improvised seats." Mr. Mwachi reported that at the Egbugwu Aku Primary School, four out of 20 classes had their lessons outside the classrooms. He claims that "out of the 18 teachers in the school, 12 teachers had no tables or chairs...On the whole, two classes in the school had no teachers for the current academic year."²⁸ Nigerian Herald reported that:

In many schools of the U.P.E. in villages there were no sufficient classrooms for the pupils...The commonest and the worst complaint is lack of school material. The pupils have no textbooks and the teachers have no teacher aids. In some schools there were no school materials for months after the school had opened. In this case, pupils could not learn much before they were promoted to the next higher class to give room for others.²⁹

The Implementation Committee for the National Policy on Education complains that "the launching of Universal Primary Education has meant the bringing into service of vast numbers of unqualified and underqualified teachers, especially (but by no means entirely) in rural schools." It recommended that "existing programmes by individual states be supplemented by the nationwide inter-state programme for the training of teachers on the job."³⁰

One of the major complaints against the U.P.E. introduced by the Western region was that the educational standards were lowered. There is no doubt that the problems discussed above will affect the quality of education now in operation.

It is already stated above that the U.P.E. of the old Western Region was faced with financial difficulties with the result that

²⁸Daily Times, 6 August 1977, p. 2.

²⁹Nigerian Herald, 3 November 1977, p. 2.

³⁰Blueprint 1978-79 (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1978), p. 9.

educational levies were imposed in different names. The national U.P.E. now in operation, is already facing the same financial problems. In Benue State, there is evidence that the implementation of the U.P.E. Scheme is being crippled by financial problems. "A move by the Benue State Government to support the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) Scheme through a compulsory deduction from salaries of public officers has sparked off a row in the State's Civil Service."³¹

The Implementation Committee gives many reasons for what it describes as "Recent Factors affecting Ability to Finance Education."³² The present U.P.E. is seriously faced with financial problems.

It must be realized that the greatest problem that the U.P.E. of the Western Region faced was "the dilemma of how to utilize the products of the Scheme."³³ The National U.P.E. is also facing the same problem. The Implementation Committee warns that:

Unless a DRASTIC RESTRUCTURING (capitals mine) of the primary school curriculum is achieved, which would make the primary school leavers not 'socially dissatisfied with the rural districts where they were brought up,' the whole country is in for serious trouble, because, even with 40 percent of them proceeding to the Junior Secondary School, 1.3 million of them would still be waiting to be catered for.³⁴

The Blueprint points to the fact that there is a serious need to weigh the available resources before putting ideas on paper.

The National Policy on Education indicates that every child who has completed Primary Education should be given the opportunity to continue into a Post-Primary institution, be it academic and/or vocational in character. The Committee

³¹The Independent Newspaper, 31 January 1979, p. 1.

³²Blueprint 1978-79, op. cit., p. 7.

³³Ibid., p. 47.

³⁴Blueprint 1978-79, op. cit., p. 50.

agrees fully with this, but realises at the same time that it will take years, perhaps decades, before our educational system can be expanded to a level where this high objective can be met.³⁵

From the arguments presented above, it is clear that Nigeria has not learned from past experiences. It is unfortunate that after twenty years of Nigerian independence, the Nigerian child is still faced with alienation from his environment. If the Implementation Committee's warning that "unless a drastic restructuring of primary school curriculum is achieved...the whole country is in for serious trouble..." is not taken seriously and something done about it, Nigeria heads for social disruption and untold human sufferings.

The Meaning of Equality of Opportunity In Education

Equality means the condition of being equal; exact likeness in amount, size, number, value or rank. It could mean sameness in number. Equality of opportunity in education seems to imply making education the same for all children of school age. Operationally, this concept is capable of different interpretations because according to Wilson, "words do not have meaning in their own right at all, but only in so far as people use them in different ways."³⁶

In the Nigerian context, the Federal Government seems to define equality of opportunity in education in terms of providing the same kind of schools, the same curriculum, equipment, teaching methods and the same quality of teachers, so that children from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds may have equal chance of benefiting

³⁵Ibid., p. 21.

³⁶John Wilson, Thinking with Concepts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 10.

from learning experiences. For the Nigerian government, inequality means lack of uniformity in the provision of physical educational facilities in every part of the country.

On the other hand, the government expects equal outcomes or equal achievement from the products of the Universal Primary Education Scheme as a result of the equal educational facilities provided. In this case the government expects the U.P.E. products to benefit equally in terms of achievement in knowledge, norms, attitudes, skills, and values which may in turn lead to equal social mobility. This point is clearly seen from the fact that the National Policy on Education indicates that every child who has completed primary education should be given the opportunity to continue into post-primary institutions. The policy also states that "the government will do everything possible to discourage the incidence of drop-outs at the primary level of education."³⁷ Since drop-outs were not expected, no special provisions were made for drop-outs in the U.P.E. Scheme.

All the children of school age who start school are expected to achieve equally. No room is made for slow learners who might need to repeat any class and no provision is made to teach those skills they failed to master before they were given automatic promotions. The Nigerian Herald reported cases of children who could not learn much because educational facilities were not available and yet they had to be "promoted to the next higher class to give room for others."³⁸

The U.P.E. Scheme is therefore operating under the assumption

³⁷ National Policy on Education (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1977), p. 9.

³⁸ Nigerian Herald, 3 November 1977, p. 2.

that equal provision of educational facilities for all Nigerian children of school age will result in equal outcomes or equal results. This assumption ignores the reality of the existence of individual differences.

According to Father Krolikowski, S.J., equality of opportunity can refer to three different things:

1. The same processes are open equally to all and, as a consequence, outcomes are unequal.
2. If different and, therefore, unequal processes are used, outcomes may be equal.
3. Suppose that each one's interests are promoted. Since everyone has different interests, each one would then be uniquely and, therefore, equally treated.³⁹

A careful examination of the Nigerian definition of equality of opportunity in education shows that it does not fall within Father Krolikowski's three shades of meaning of that concept.

1. Nigerian government believes that the same processes that are equally open to all will result in equal outcomes.

2. Nigerian government or our education policy makers do not believe in the use of unequal processes so that equal outcomes may be expected.

3. Nigerian government does not believe in equal treatment in terms of promoting the interests of each child.

Equal opportunity in education does not consist of providing equal educational facilities and treating all the children alike in order to get equal outcomes. Every child is unique. No two children

³⁹Walter P. Krolikowski, "Americans Have A Right to Equality of Educational Opportunity" An Alphabetical Companion to Educational Foundations 420, Philosophy of Education (Chicago: Loyola University, 1974).

are the same. So, different methods should be used in order to promote equal opportunity in education. Equal opportunity in education for all is not possible if it is taken to mean the provision of equal educational facilities and giving the same treatment to different children, or if it means stopping the progress of the average or gifted child so that the slow learner can meet him, or promoting a slow learner in order to make room for others.

Equality in education is possible when we realize that there are individual differences and that the use of different or unequal processes will help each child to get the best out of the learning situation or out of school. In order to promote equality of opportunity in education, the ideal thing is that education should focus on each child:

1. Education should recognize individual differences; that each child differs in ability, capability, interest, habit, attitude, need, behavior, belief and activity.

2. Education should take note of the fact that the socio-economic status of parents and environmental conditions in general affect the learning ability of each child.

3. Education should see the child as a whole, or in totality. Both his/her intellectual and affective domains should be developed. Educational programs should be attuned to both the individual histories of students and their futures.

4. Education should begin where the child is. The level of the child should be taken into consideration.

5. Relevant materials should be used to educate the child.

6. The resources of the individual and his environment should be used to promote his maximal growth, and should also be used to overcome obstacles that can scotch such growth.

7. Education should make it possible for educators, parents and community to work together and create a sensitivity to the emerging individuality of each child.

8. Education should increase the self-awareness of each individual in relation to education and vocational options that will be available to them in the future.

9. Education should make all the children, the adults, and the community-at-large, both consumers and producers.

10. Education should make provision for the needs of the child and those of the society. The result should be complementary.

Equality of opportunity in education is promoted if unequal means are used in order to expect equal outcomes. The Nigerian government should aim at giving every Nigerian child an educational opportunity that will aid the child to get the best possible education to develop his/her talents and abilities.

National Consciousness and Unity in

Diversity Through Education

Through the discussion of the older systems of education in Nigeria, we discovered that each of these educational systems contributed in one way or another to the problems of Nigerian disunity. The traditional system of Nigerian education was responsible for the creation of a strong ethnic consciousness in the peoples of Nigeria. The problems of disunity in Nigeria mostly stemmed from ethnic consciousness.

Due to religious convictions, both missionary and Muslim systems of education were responsible for the educational disparity between the North and South, thus giving cause for potential conflict and disunity between those two areas.

The colonial policy of indirect rule in the educational sphere was also responsible for the educational disparity between North and South as well as the uneven distribution of educational facilities in Nigeria. In citation 12 of chapter V, we pointed out that the uneven distribution of educational facilities among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria resulted in unequal access to better jobs in the modern sector of the economy. This inequality gave birth to ethnic group tensions and it is considered to have been responsible for the outbreak of the civil war in 1967.

On the other hand, it is also clear from the treatment of the older educational systems that the missionary system of education contributed greatly to Nigerian unity. Apart from the artificial boundary created by the colonial government, all that Nigeria had in common or all those elements that united Nigeria were mostly derived from missionary education. The missionary education introduced the Nigerian peoples to Western culture. It also provided a common language (English) for the diverse heterogeneous peoples of Nigeria, and has thus made them a homogenous political entity--tending to bring about unity in diversity.

From the analysis of these various systems of education in Nigeria, it was pointed out that the educational systems have some commonalities. One of these commonalities is that they all deliber-

ately attempt to transmit culture. The fact that the traditional way of life survived and at the same time, a certain amount of synthesis has been attained between Western and traditional cultures, is evidence that the various educational systems in Nigeria succeeded in transmitting the different cultures. If the traditional way of life had not survived, then, ethnic consciousness would have been destroyed and there would not have been any problems of disunity among the Nigerian various ethnic groups. On the other hand, if some kind of synthesis had not been reached, Nigeria as a nation would not have been in existence. The major conclusion we draw from this is that both Western and Nigerian traditional cultures can be taught and learnt.

Therefore, Nigeria can use education to bring about national consciousness and national unity by careful selection and transmission of preferred norms, attitudes, knowledge, skills, values and beliefs to the learner within a school setting and making adequate provision for adult education. In the next Chapter, an attempt is made to recommend how Nigeria can best use the cultural and educational resources at its disposal to achieve national unity.

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation has sufficiently addressed itself to the problems of Nigerian education and national unity. It has also dealt sufficiently with the fact that Nigeria is predominantly a multi-ethnic society. The lack of national consciousness and unity among the various cultural and linguistic groups in Nigeria has also been discussed. In chapter I, it was pointed out that cultural pluralism was a problem in Nigeria because the various ethnic groups have not been taught to know, respect, and appreciate one another's culture.

This chapter makes additional recommendations¹ on how best Nigeria can use education to bring about national unity. But before education can be used to bring about national unity, that educational system must first of all be viable. Therefore, the recommendations in this chapter will fall under two categories:

- (a) how to make the Nigerian Educational System viable, and
- (b) how to use it to effect national unity.

Making The Nigerian National Education Viable

The major problem facing Nigerian national education today is lack of sufficient educational institutions. To promote mass education,

¹The Implementation Committee for the National Policy on Education made 436 recommendations to the government on how to implement the National Policy on Education. Out of the 436 recommendations, the government rejected 21.

enough educational institutions must be built.

Nigeria has adopted the American presidential system of government and has also adopted the American system of Education. A Nigerian child is now expected to have twelve years of schooling before entering a college.² In the United States, the education of the people is not a monopoly of the government. In Nigeria it is. In Nigeria, private agencies are not given the freedom to provide schools. The United States had about 2785 Institutions of Higher Education in 1976.³ The Federal Government runs only seven higher institutions, namely:

- (a) Air Force Institute of Technology,
- (b) Naval Postgraduate School,
- (c) U. S. Air Force Academy,
- (d) U. S. Coast Guard Academy,
- (e) U. S. Merchant Marine Academy,
- (f) U. S. Military Academy, and
- (g) U. S. Naval Academy.

In the U. S. the state governments run a considerable number of colleges and universities. But the majority of the Institutions of Higher Education in the U. S. are run by private agencies.⁴

In elementary and high school education, private efforts are also allowed. If the American government cannot provide all the education

²By a College, the author means a school beyond high school that gives degrees.

³Statistical Abstract of the United States 1978 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 161.

⁴For detailed information, the reader is referred to The World Book Encyclopedia (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, vol. 20, 1976), pp. 139-160.

that is needed, then, the Nigerian government should also expect to find it extremely difficult to satisfy all the educational needs of the Nigerian people. Some help from the private sector is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Government's monopoly of education should be reviewed forthwith.
2. Absence of moral and religious education breeds indiscipline, constitutes in students unfettered freedom, lack of love of God and neighbor and lack of obedience to a constituted authority. Therefore, religious bodies should be allowed to participate in Nigerian education by building their own schools.
3. All the private agencies which are willing and able to provide education should be encouraged to do so, provided they follow government regulations. Many people are ready to pay for the education of their children but the schools are not available.
4. Nigerian Federal Government should leave the running of schools to state and local governments. Federal Government should participate in education by funding--giving regular allocations to the state government on an agreed criterion. As of now there is a duplication of authority between federal and state governments in the running of schools.
5. There is a need to get qualified teachers in primary schools. Students cannot rise above the quality of their teachers. The Nigerian government should plan toward requiring university degrees in order to teach in primary and secondary

schools. As an interim step, rather than employing untrained and unqualified teachers in primary schools, certification as a Grade II teacher should be established as a minimum requirement.

6. Many crash programs have cost the country a lot of losses both in terms of finance and in manpower. Most personnel trained as teachers have taken to different fields rather than teaching. The government should therefore, create favorable conditions to retain trained teachers. Trained and qualified teachers should be treated as civil servants.
7. Mass media--television, radio, and the press provides a great coverage on what is going on in the society and offers a variety of role models upon which the children pattern their lifestyle, and with whom they at times identify. Mass media should be a medium of educational awareness. Classroom courses should be programmed and made use of in schools. Their contents should be well planned to provide the necessary materials for the child's socialization and education. Giving distorted or sensational pictures of life through mass media should be avoided. Children's programs, quiz programs, competition, debates and discussions should all be encouraged to promote the educational progress of the child and the educational awareness of the adult.
8. The role of the family is often neglected in the Nigerian educational system. Family can be regarded as a home. It is a sort of relationship involving a man, woman, and children. It is referred to as a primary group. It is important because

it provides the immediate security and contact for the child through provisions of adequate materials and environment for his well-being. Being the first social contact to the child, the family is regarded as the first educator of the child. It provides the necessary setting where the child is exposed to rules and experiences which are rudimentary to life. It also provides for the needs and emotional aspirations of the child, that is, affection, protection, establishment of self-confidence, learning by doing.

The importance of the family cannot be overemphasized. There is need to improve the economic standard of living of parents. This is necessary in order to avoid the impact of extreme poverty which can freeze the physical, emotional and intellectual development of the children. There is also need to promote adult education on a larger scale to help increase the level of aspiration of parents, which in turn influences the level of aspirations of the children.

9. For children to benefit from the educational input there is a dire need to have trained counselors to meet the strained emotional, moral, and intellectual needs of the child. The rate of dropout in schools is alarming, although not yet statistically analyzed. Cases of pregnancy are in the ascent. Provisions should be made for dropouts.

On a minimal scale, there are career masters in some of the secondary schools. They are unqualified and their efforts leave much to be desired. Speakers are invited to speak to senior boys and girls in their areas of specialization only.

This is not enough, students must have available to them alternatives in the form of occupational and career information. The state governments should give special attention to the training of counselors.

10. The Federal Government should hand over all the already founded universities to state governments. The Federal Government should also help those states that do not have universities to establish their universities. There should be at least one state university in each state. Nigeria needs more than seven new universities before 1988 when the present U.P.E. students will be ready for university studies. Table 5 shows that the thirteen Nigerian universities could only absorb 12,521 in 1977/78. By 1988, the yearly intake of Nigerian universities should double that figure. If each state is able to support a university, there will be a healthy competition. Apart from federal grants, each state will struggle to raise funds to maintain and expand its own university.
11. University education should not be free. Each university should organize financial aid programs to make it possible for students in financial difficulty to attend university. Students should pay for their education. At this stage of Nigerian development, greater attention should be paid to providing more educational facilities rather than making education free.

TABLE 5

TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRST DEGREE STUDENTS INTAKE BY UNIVERSITY AND STATE OF ORIGIN FOR 1977/78 SESSION

States																					
UNIVERSITIES	ANAMBRA	BAUCHI	BENDEL	BENUE	BORNO	CROSS RIVER	GONGOLA	IMO	KADUNA	KANO	KWARA	LAGOS	NIGER	OGUN	ONDO	OYO	PLATEAU	RIVER	SOKOTO	FOREIGNERS	GRAND TOTAL
A.B.U.	13	87	35	183	92	12	145	13	296	152	208	4	87	16	10	22	126	9	55	25	1590
BAYERO	4	29	12	23	20	3	25	2	81	131	51	5	30	3	7	9	5	2	22	5	469
BENIN	118	--	485	7	1	58	2	134	2	--	14	6	--	21	33	50	1	38	--	14	985
CALABAR	33	7	40	25	5	271	5	67	1	33	9	4	3	14	13	16	6	24	3	7	586
IBADAN	89	1	305	20	--	69	1	137	8	--	192	75	--	252	252	396	5	52	1	70	1970
IFE	167	--	211	3	--	41	--	233	2	2	76	44	1	252	366	608	1	30	--	24	2061
ILORIN	50	--	40	4	--	7	--	49	1	--	47	3	--	21	45	51	1	6	--	3	327
JOS	72	6	54	100	2	46	9	94	8	3	13	2	5	10	16	16	49	24	3	7	539
LAGOS	166	--	413	20	--	104	--	203	3	--	77	90	1	327	210	251	--	58	--	49	1972
MAIDU-GURI	1	2	6	4	7	3	18	5	2	2	3	--	1	1	1	1	1	1	--	3	62
U.N.N.	670	1	104	15	--	61	2	560	--	--	5	1	--	14	28	26	1	27	--	31	1545
PORT HARTCOURT	15	--	19	2	--	21	--	63	1	--	3	1	--	2	5	4	1	187	--	--	324
SOKOTO	3	--	7	3	1	2	--	2	1	10	9	--	4	1	5	3	--	3	36	1	91
GRAND TOTAL	1,104	133	1,731	409	128	698	207	1,562	406	333	707	235	132	940	991	1,453	197	461	120	239	12521

SOURCE: Joint Admissions & Matriculation Board: Annual Reports (Ibadan: The Caxton Press Limited, 1978), p. 43.

Using Education To Effect National Unity

1. Nigerian education should be erected on Nigerian ethnic cultural traditions. By that the author means that the different ethnic cultural heritages must necessarily form the larger context of Nigerian education. Nigeria must recognize the cultural traditions of the different ethnic groups. The peoples of Nigeria desire a pluralistic society. That is, Nigerians want the various ethnic groups in the country to retain their cultural identity and at the same time work together to forge a national unity based on mutual respect and mutual interchange of cultural values. It is self-evident that one cannot have a mutual interchange of cultural values that are not known. Knowledge comes before appreciation. Nigerian children should be exposed to Nigerian cultures. These cultural values must form the larger context of Nigerian education and must be taught in Nigerian schools. Proposals to include Nigerian cultural traditions in the curriculum automatically calls for the study and understanding of that cultural heritage. What does the Yoruba child know about the Igbo Alo title? Why should the Igbo child not know why the Yorubas place so much emphasis on respect for elders to the extent that the young men prostrate to greet elders?
2. Academic development of Nigerian cultural studies needs to be promoted. In every university in Nigeria, there should be a faculty for Nigerian cultural studies. The academic development of Nigerian cultural studies will not only foster national consciousness but will create an awareness of the richness,

uniqueness and beauty of the different cultures in Nigeria. It will also be a challenge to Nigerian academicians from the different ethnic groups to make a contribution of their cultural heritage to the enhancement and enrichment of Nigerian society. It will be a call for further research into the different Nigerian cultures. The Federal Government should be ready to fund such research projects.

3. Every literate Nigerian should be able to read and speak fluently at least two of the three major languages in Nigeria other than his own mother-tongue. The Nigerian Federal Government suggests that in the interest of national unity that "each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages other than his own mother-tongue. In this connection, the government considers the three major languages in Nigeria to be Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba."⁵

There are many Nigerians who speak three European Languages in addition to their own mother-tongue. As a result of the European Common Market, many European children are encouraged to learn two European languages other than their own mother-tongue. If Nigeria takes national unity seriously, one of the ways to develop national unity is to learn Nigerian languages. To make the study of Nigerian languages effective, the government should make the learning of at least two Nigerian languages mandatory. Being able to read, write and speak fluently any two of the Nigerian major languages should serve as a prerequisite for admission into any of the Nigerian universities.

If the learning of the Nigerian languages is not taken very

⁵National Policy on Education, op. cit., p. 5.

seriously, we are only paying lip service to Nigerian National Unity. If Nigerian languages are going to be used as a cohesive force for effective nation-building, then, Nigerians must be prepared to face the hard work it involves.

4. A part of the colonial legacy is that after independence, Nigeria continued to model its educational system after that of Britain. There should be a total curriculum reform so that the different major Nigerian cultural heritages will be included in the curriculum and taught in schools. The teaching of the Nigerian cultures will give the Nigerian child a chance to accept and practice the organic cultural integration. That is, the Nigerian child should be made to learn the various cultures in Nigeria and should be made to see these cultures as forming the different parts of Nigerian national culture. Nigerian culture will then be an organic whole made up of various cultures.
5. The Federal Government should as a matter of urgency establish a "Discriminatory Practices Investigation Bureau." It should be empowered to investigate reported cases involving discriminatory practices in employment and take adequate measures in cases reported and investigated. Otherwise, the provision in the Constitution that every Nigerian is guaranteed the freedom from any form of discrimination based on membership in a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political belief will only be on paper and not enforced in practice. Mass media should be used to inform non-literate Nigerian citizens of the existence of their civil rights. This should form a part of adult education.

6. Children should be taught in schools to see justice as giving equal opportunity to every Nigerian and not just as promoting their own ethnic solidarity.
7. Music, which dominates the hearts of Nigerian cultures and plays a central role in the traditional way of life, is given no attention in the Nigerian education system. Music dominates the scenes of our festivals, and those of birth, death and marriage ceremonies. The music of the various ethnic groups should be taught in our schools. The teaching of music is probably the easiest way of introducing children to another culture because both children and adults easily appreciate and relate to music. In Nigerian context, the use of music will help in introducing children to the different cultures in Nigeria.
8. The system of marriages among the different ethnic groups and the rituals surrounding them should be taught in schools. This will encourage interethnic marriages.
9. The injunction contained in the Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education that "every secondary school should function as a unity school by enrolling students belonging to other areas or states,"⁶ should be strictly observed by the state governments.

⁶Ibid., p. 12.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, it is conspicuously revealed that the major problems facing Nigerian national education today are rooted in its past educational systems. It is also sufficiently demonstrated that ethnicity as a concept of reality constitutes a major problem for Nigerian education and national unity. Ethnicity as a concept of reality is earlier defined to mean that Nigeria as a nation is made up of different ethnic groups. These groups have different cultural patterns and there is a strong solidarity or ethnic consciousness among the members of each ethnic group.

It is also one of the findings of this study that among the various educational systems in Nigeria, the traditional educational system has the greatest disintegrative effects in terms of national unity. Since traditional education is community-centered, it reinforces ethnic consciousness. Ethnic consciousness has been a force disruptive to Nigerian national unity.

At the same time, it must be realized that this ethnic consciousness (which has hitherto been the greatest enemy of Nigerian unity) can also be the foundation on which Nigerian unity will be erected, if education is wisely used. Ethnic consciousness is a positive good that must not be rejected if Nigerians are to remain Nigerians. The answer to Nigerian problems of national unity is not the rejection of ethnic consciousness, but the using of ethnic consciousness as a tool for further integration. One needs a sense of community in order to have a meaningful inter-community relationship. Nigerians need this community spirit to achieve the larger federated interethnic community. In addition, they must enter

into the federated league of nations with which Nigeria has to interact as a nation.

Ethnic consciousness is the major characteristic of "Nigerianness." Nigerians are people with a social sensitivity which makes one "lose" oneself in the group. To a certain extent this concept is a reality at the ethnic level. To make it a reality at the national level is the dream of Nigerians. Nigerians want a pluralistic society where organic cultural integration is accepted and practiced. Graf made an accurate observation of the situation when he wrote:

Hence the [new] Constitution attempts to account for both centripetal and centrifugal forces with the notion of unity in diversity; unity represents the ideal, long-term goal; diversity expresses current reality; the idea of unity in fact promotes a feeling of (future) oneness, while the guarantee of diversity makes popular acceptance of differences much more palatable.⁷

Hitherto some syntheses had been reached. In those traditional societies that believed in both achieved, as well as ascribed status, individual achievement was reinforced. Those traditional societies that were purely organized around the principle of seniority, gave individual achievement a chance,

Individualism was not accepted. Individual achievement was seen as equally purposive and a useful tool for strengthening corporative responsibility. The achievement of the individual was more or less shared corporatively. This pattern tended to isolate the traditional community. Traditional society was harmonious because it was protected and isolated from interaction with outside communities.

The movement from isolation to integration was with reservation. It built heavily on display of partiality or on impersonal skills in

⁷Graf, op. cit., p. 36.

dealing with situations, because the only thing that was of interest to the various people of Nigeria was their ethnic solidarity. There were no national interests and objectives that could serve as motivation for national unity and a meaningful integration. Consequently, Nigeria as a nation was heading for disintegration because Nigerian leaders did nothing to resolve the country's acute ethnic and cultural fragmentation. Ethnic consciousness resulted in the civil war (1967-70), and Nigerian leaders then realized that they had overlooked certain forces.

From the civil war Nigerian leaders learnt three great lessons:

(a) the leaders suddenly realized that in order to have a strong, united, and indivisible nation, they have to undercut their ethnic bigotry in order to forge a bond of unity between the different ethnic and religious groups within the country;

(b) they also realized that the nation had not recognized what its national interests really were and therefore could not be motivated by them. This realization brought about the formulation of the national objectives.

(c) they equally realized that unity could exist in spite of diversity and that Nigerian ethnic diversity would, in fact be a source of strength rather than weakness if education was wisely used, hence the new national policy on education.

Traditional education was community-oriented. It took care of community relationships and isolated the community to meet its own needs. Nigeria needs a new synthesis and a new system of education that will give Nigerian citizens the skills to overcome ethnocentrism,

nepotism, sectionalism, bribery and corruption. Nigeria needs new education to prepare a traditional citizen of Nigeria to face the modern citizenship of the world. New education is needed that will give Nigerians those skills to deal with the larger community of interethnic relationships, both at national and international levels of politics and economy.

Any Nigerian educator worthy of that name, should be developing in his students a consciousness. This consciousness should be "being an ethnic unit is not enough." Every literate Nigerian should be interethnic. To do this, one must be equipped with the knowledge of his/her fellow Nigerian citizens. Nigerians do not know one another sufficiently. That is, they do not know one another's culture. In order to have a meaningful cross-cultural communication, Nigerians must learn and know one another's culture. It is only when one knows his/her fellow Nigerians that one can try to eliminate barriers by:

- (a) minimizing perceived differences;
- (b) emphasizing mutual dependence; and
- (c) achieving shared definitions, that is, recognizing how others define themselves and accepting them for what they are.

In the Nigerian educational system, the Nigerian child has to be given the opportunity to accept and practice "the organic cultural integration, one which allows for mutual interchange of cultural goods on the basis of mutual respect for individual distinct values and in the conditions of free and harmonious cooperation."⁸

⁸See citation 5 Chapter I.

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