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TWENTY YEARS OF NIGERIAN TELEVISION: 1959-1979

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By

Mbuk J. Inwang, B.F.A.

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This study reviews the evolution of Nigerian broadcasting from 1935 to 1979, with emphasis on the development of Nigerian television broadcasting. The problem was to discern how Nigeria's social and political structures have affected its radio and television system.

The study concludes that both the heterogeneity of Nigerian society and the country's continued political unrest pose a threat to either private or government ownership of television stations. Today, approximately 1.5 million television sets serve over 80 million Nigerians, and this imbalance should be corrected before Nigerian television can be considered a mass medium. Nigeria's present administration maintains that its control of the country's television is necessary; critics feel, however, that federal control restrains television from developing its potential, especially in promoting national unity.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the questions increasingly debated in developing countries is the role of the mass media in their development. According to K. B. Brown (2, p. 8), general manager of the Ghana News Agency,

. . . the important thing emerging out of that debate is that the darling of mass media--television--holds the greatest possibilities in helping push national development. With the probable exception of South Africa and Egypt, no African country has a news media developed well enough for them to maintain, without help, their own network of correspondents abroad; in many cases, they are not even capable of adequate coverage of their own nations, however small. Now that the African countries are attempting to shape the image of this vast continent, it is vital for the media to protect our traditions and values from the assault mounted by outside interests.

Although little has been published about African mass communications, not much has been done by the African nations to encourage research in this field, least of all in broadcasting. In the largest of these African countries--Nigeria--broadcasting is complex because of the country's varied ethnic, linguistic, and cultural characteristics. These differences, the result of the more than 250 tribes that comprise Nigeria, often create the threat of political disintegration; they also limit the use of electronic media, especially television, in fostering national development and unity.

Broadcasting in Nigeria was established during its colonial era in 1935, when Great Britain directed the Nigerian Posts and Telegraphs Department to develop a wired-wireless system for the country (5). The British had many reasons for colonizing Nigeria, and to avoid public suspicion of her motives, she developed broadcasting in Nigeria as a means to help civilize the nation. Lord Chamberlain, British statesman and parliamentarian, said "that communication could be the means of unlocking rich African regions that could benefit humanity as a whole." It was, however, "misused by the backward African natives" (7).

The Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) was established in 1951 by the colonial administration; it was modeled after the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Criticism of the colonial administration's control of NBS prompted its reorganization as the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). The NBC provided on-the-job training opportunities for Nigerians, some of whom received management training by the BBC in Great Britain. Also, a few indigenous Nigerian programs were broadcast so that Nigerians would not think that the British-controlled government was too heavily involved in the country's broadcasting activities. Still, Nigerians were not satisfied with these changes for fear of government censorship, and they continued to insist on regional autonomy. The result was the establishment of three regional networks, one for each region, in addition to the federal NBS, with each representing its own

interests, and a power struggle began between the regional stations and the NBS as the date for British withdrawal drew near. These regional power struggles led, first, to individual ownership of the broadcast and print media, and, finally, to a 90 per cent federal acquisition of Nigeria's mass media, as at present (5).

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria became an independent nation. Although the British withdrew from all administrative involvement in the country, they left a very important legacy--a system of broadcasting, fully staffed by natives--which Nigeria restructured. Without the influence of its colonial ruler, Nigeria would have been a latecomer to radio broadcasting, which, in turn, would have further delayed the introduction of television broadcasting to the country.

Noting the great potential of television, many Nigerians contend that television should play a vital role in the country's political, social, and economic development. According to Michael Egbon (4, p. 3), "Television is often very strongly conditioned by the environment of which it is but a part. It is also very heavily influenced by past experiences and present dispositions of the viewer." Udemgba Ilozue (8, p. 28), president of the Nigerian Guild of Television Producers and Directors, writes,

In recent past, television had played a timid role in the public affairs of this nation. It almost became an extension of the faces and voices of the members of government of the federation. It should now try to be "independent and impartial" in the true sense of the phrase.

The Problem

From the very beginning of broadcasting in Nigeria, the country's political structure proved to be a devastating handicap. From 1935 to 1959, the British-controlled government was blamed for monopolizing broadcasting in Nigeria. As an end to colonial rule became imminent, the political scene began to shift from a nationalistic struggle to a struggle for power between the federal government and the regions or tribes. This development resulted in the granting of considerable legislative power to the regional governments, in addition to the powers that the federal government reserved for itself. Broadcasting was not included in the federal government's list of exclusive rights, and because of political activities on the eve of Nigeria's political independence, the first television station to be established in the country was a regional station.

This study will focus on the development of colonial and post-colonial broadcasting in Nigeria, 1935 to 1979. Particular attention will be paid to government involvement in broadcasting and to the Nigerian social and political structure that strongly affected the ultimate framework of Nigeria's broadcast system.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the history of Nigerian broadcasting with emphasis on the origin and development

of Nigerian television. This study will seek to answer the following questions. How did radio, which preceded television, influence the development and structure of Nigerian television? Why was the regional partition of television broadcasting a failure in Nigeria? How does the present mode of federal government control assist in creating a sense of national unity? Finally, this study will seek to answer the question that became the subject at a symposium marking the second decade of television in Africa. After twenty years, "Whither Nigerian television?" (3, p. 5).

Scope and Limitations of the Study

Because of the indirect and long-term effects of radio, this study will begin with the inception of Nigerian broadcasting in 1935, and it will conclude with the twentieth anniversary of Nigerian television in 1979. The study will not attempt a detailed discussion of the management, programming, facilities, finances, coverage, audience, or technical problems facing the Nigerian television industry. These problems, however, will be covered briefly in an attempt to put facts into perspective.

There are several constraints on this study; one of these is the dearth of related literature. Although television broadcasting in Nigeria is now very widespread, most studies about Nigerian television are based primarily on radio broadcasting. Another possible constraint is the necessity

of using a large proportion of information from government-controlled sources, with the inherent possibility of its being slanted toward the government's interests. An effort will be made to avoid any such distortion. This study, therefore, will rely heavily on records and reports of persons directly involved in the operation of the system.

Procedure

This study will take the form of historical research, relying heavily on primary source material from the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), the former Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). Secondary sources such as textbooks, learned journals, and Nigerian newspapers will also be used.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they relate to this study.

Broadcasting is the process of sending information to the general public by electromagnetic energy;

The Colonial Broadcasting Period covers the years from 1935 to 1960 of British broadcasting activities in Nigeria;

The Colonial Period is the period from 1900 to 1960 during which the British ruled Nigeria;

Natives are those Nigerians who have no other ethnic parental background;

The Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) is the successor to NBS; presently it is titled the Federal Radio

Corporation of Nigeria, and it is in charge of all Nigerian radio transmissions;

The Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) is the broadcasting system that began operations in 1951 by relaying British Broadcasting Corporation programs;

The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) is the statutory body charged with the responsibility of conducting and coordinating all television broadcasts in Nigeria;

Oral history is the dissemination of information about past events by the older generation to the young without any written records;

The Post-Colonial Period began on October 1, 1960, when Nigeria became an independent nation;

Tribes are the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, about 250 in number, all of which speak a different language;

Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) is the first television station in Africa; it began transmissions in Nigeria during October, 1959;

Wired-wireless Radio is the transmission, emission, or reception of signals, writing, and sounds both by and without wire; it was the first system of radio broadcasting that the British introduced in Nigeria.

Recent and Related Research

Some material about radio broadcasting in Nigeria is beginning to emerge. Information about television, however, is still sparse.

Jonathan A. Adejunmobi (1) provided the first comprehensive, documented history of radio in Nigeria. His study explores the history of Nigerian telecommunications, with particular attention to the history of broadcasting. Adejunmobi also describes the structure and nature of Nigerian radio broadcasting, delineating the social, political, and economic aspects that contributed to its present structure.

Michael I. Egbon (5) observed in 1975 that radio broadcasting in Nigeria, as well as in other parts of the world, was heavily beset by problems of personnel, transmitter power failure, and, above all, finance. These adverse forces militated against the medium in its attempts to satisfy its stated objectives. Egbon maintains that Nigerian radio was self-sufficient through its program use of local talent and materials, but that television depended heavily on programs produced in Europe and America.

Graettinger's 1977 study (6) discusses the problems affecting broadcasting in Nigeria, most of which are attributed to the heterogenous nature of the society, the political structure, finance, and lack of technical know-how. Graettinger sees the future development of the Nigerian broadcasting system as dependent on the country's political climate, national goals, and cultural needs.

Egbon's 1977 study (4) of the development of television in Nigeria considers whether or not its television has satisfied the conditions and presumptions of mass media development in non-industrialized nations. Western Nigeria Television

(WNTV) is used as a model to assess the extent of the medium's influence on the political life of Nigerians. The study seeks to provide an insight into the relationship of the theoretical designs of mass media in national development to the actual functioning of the first television service in black Africa.

This study will differ from Egbon's because Egbon traced the evolution of Nigeria's post-colonial television service only from 1959 to 1977, and this study will review both the colonial and post-colonial broadcasting period from 1935 to 1979. Egbon's study deals with the development of only one station--WNTV. This study, on the other hand, will examine the events that led to the development of the other major regional stations in Nigeria, in addition to WNTV.

Four other reports are also significant to the proposed study. In 1963, Ian K. MacKay (10, pp. 15-20), the last foreign director-general of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, summarized the functions of the NBC in the Nigerian community. The article focuses on the origin, pattern, trend, and future ambition of the NBC. Adekunle Salu's 1967 study (12, p. 63) praises radio broadcasting as the greatest mass medium in Nigeria, tracing it from the wired-wireless radio to its development into the NBC. Salu also examines the effects of the system on the people of Nigeria.

In 1977, Christopher Kolade (9), former director-general of NBC, discussed the two major challenges that face the

country's broadcasting system. One is the inability of the stations to reach the entire country with an acceptable broadcast signal; another challenge is to develop programming that will satisfy the needs and desires of the diverse ethnic groups. Kolade discusses how the first experimental radio-receiving station developed into NBC, and he also examines Nigerian politics vis-à-vis Nigerian television.

Onyero Mgbejume (11, p. 6), a training officer for the Nigerian Television Authority, wrote in 1979 about the new mass media policies, the objectives of the Nigerian Television Authority, and the problems of Nigeria's film industry. Mgbejume calls the Nigerian Television Authority a "purely administrative Organization" that needs to improve the technical quality of its programs and the stations' engineering services.

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CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF NIGERIAN BROADCASTING:

THE COLONIAL PERIOD, 1935 to 1959

Nigeria, the largest country in former British West Africa, has one of the most complex broadcasting systems in the world. The nature of television broadcasting, in particular, in this country has been determined by the differences in its political environment, geographical distances, and the linguistic and cultural differences between the various tribal groups. In addition, British involvement during Nigeria's colonial days was so intense that Nigeria's system of broadcasting must be considered in context with the influence of its former colonial rulers. Thus, a brief look at the history of the country and its broadcasting activities during the colonial period is necessary for a full understanding of the development of television broadcasting in Nigeria.

The name "Nigeria" did not exist in history prior to 1900. Nigeria was christened by a newspaper columnist in London, Flora Shaw, who was also the wife of Lord Lugard, the first British Governor of Nigeria. An article on Shaw in the January 8, 1897, issue of The Times (11, p. xii) states,

So many titles for the area, including Niger-Empire, the Niger Sudan, the Central Sudan, and the Hausa Territories, had been used to describe the territory, that people were confused. Although the Royal Niger Company administered the area, [Shaw] argued that this too was a

cumbersome and awkward title that did not translate well for the name of a country. Therefore, she suggested . . . the name "Nigeria" . . . be accepted as coextensive with the territories over which the Royal Niger has extended British influence.

Some historians contend that Nigeria would not have existed without European involvement in Africa (21). Attracted inland for humanitarian reasons, the early British explorers created the nation of Nigeria, and it remained under the British government's rule for more than a half century (1900 to 1960). Great Britain encouraged the divisions that existed among the varied native ethnic groups; she feared that a homogeneous social structure would strengthen unity among the Nigerian people--hence the British policy of divide-and-rule. Colonial policies were not designed to foster national awareness among colonial subjects, and the foreign rulers protected their own interests by encouraging these internal divisions. Tribal jealousies and class distinctions (between chiefs and commoners, and between those who were European educated and those who were illiterate) hindered the development of any national resistance to colonial rule (9).

One scholar points out that "intense ethnic rivalry has been the feature of Nigerian politics since Lord Lugard made the now-proven 'mistake of 1914'--unifying the Northern, Southern, and the Oil Rivers Protectorates, which his wife christened 'Nigeria'" (2, p. 3). In addition to the ethnic rivalries, colonialism left Nigeria with the equally urgent problems of economic and social development; a developed

broadcasting system is essential to the solution of these problems.

The creation of the nation of Nigeria did not end the problems that faced the warring tribes, but it did aid in the country's development. Among other improvements, the British laid the foundation for one of Nigeria's most important institutions, its system of broadcasting. British interests in Nigeria were many, and to avoid public suspicion of her motives, she developed a broadcasting system as a means to help civilize the nation. In 1932, the British directed the Nigerian Posts and Telegraph Department to develop the wired-wireless (wired radio) system that was the predecessor of the country's radio broadcasting. On December 2, 1935, Nigeria inaugurated its wired-wireless Radio Distribution Service (RDS or rediffusion), and 400 Lagos subscribers listened to the Governor on their loudspeakers (5, p. 72). The experimental station was handicapped by staff shortages, but despite its problems the experimental period provided the BBC and the colonial government with much technical information about suitable wave-lengths and equipment design (17, pp. 156-157). During this period, "Nigeria entered the broadcasting era" when the BBC Overseas Service established a receiving station in Lagos; it also contributed valuable information on the broadcasting problems of tropical Africa (1; 5, p. 16).

By 1939, there were three RDS stations in Nigeria that were operated and maintained by the Nigerian Posts and

Telegraphs Department. Although no longer in use in Nigeria, RDS existed side-by-side with Nigerian broadcasting for a number of years. The operation and regulation of broadcast facilities by Nigeria's colonial post office set the pattern for electronic regulation in the country. The colonial government established a licensing system for the sale of radios, which people bought even though good reception was a problem.

The Plymouth Committee's 1937 study on broadcasting in Nigeria recommended to the colonial government that (1) broadcasting should be used as an instrument for advanced administration by the British, (2) it should be used as a source of enlightenment, and (3) it should be used to educate the Nigerians (18). Plans to establish more stations in the British colonies of West Africa had to be abandoned with the advent of World War II, however, because of war priority needs for radio equipment and parts. Items such as wires and insulators were materials required for the war. Therefore, those parts required for domestic use were on a three-year backorder (19). Most Nigerians felt that radio facilities were essential during this period to keep the "brothers and sisters in the Provinces always in the know" (23). But despite strong criticisms, the colonial government approved extensions only where it was deemed necessary for the war effort.

When the war ended, construction began on new rediffusion stations in urban areas. The indigenous listeners were no

longer satisfied with "the novelty of hearing voices and music from across the Atlantic" (20). In 1947, the Lagos-based Radio Control Committee was established to study programming and to help the rediffusion system avoid the "blare of BBC programmes" (7). One critic (21, p. 2) stated, "When in the past we criticized our radio programmes as being too British and meagerly Nigerian, we knew what we were talking about. We knew that reasonable Britons now on spot would harken unto our demands for change."

The Nigerians' demands for indigenous programmes point up the importance of this aspect of sovereignty over broadcast material. The system, however, did not entirely eliminate BBC relays. Programmes were supplemented by "local programmes consisting chiefly of talks in English and the vernacular . . . gramophone records of African songs and music, and performances by African bands and concert parties" (6, p. 75). Criticism persisted because although programme content suited the European listeners, it lacked interest for the Nigerian audience. In other words, the composition of the early RDS audience ranged narrowly from the small community of Nigerian British residents to the few native elites. The few hours of daily local programmes were of a very low standard, and Nigerians began to insist on the establishment of an indigenous station. Although rediffusion continued to spread into the major cities of Nigeria, Nigerians did not give up their demands; finally, the colonial government replaced the

separate, uncoordinated wired broadcasting stations with a proper broadcasting system.

By 1948, there was a new era of broadcasting in Nigeria. The BBC, at Nigeria's request, sent out a survey team to "determine broadcasting needs, report on methods of development and determine whether the existing facilities should be incorporated in any proposed new scheme" (14, p. 6). Four BBC employees (including T. W. Chalmers, first director of the NBS, and F. A. W. Byron, a crown agent for the colonies) were brought to Nigeria for the primary purpose of formulating a broadcasting plan acceptable to the government (4). The team released the Turner-Byron report, which states,

. . . future coverage in West Africa should be by both wired-wireless and actual transmission, that the former was economically limited to the densely populated areas and actual transmissions would be necessary for the thinly populated areas (14, p. 6).

The report also recommended to the colonial government that receivers should be made available to everyone, and that broadcasting should be operated by the government as a public service. The Secretary of State for the British Colonies endorsed the committee's recommendations, and Nigeria became the only colony to utilize the technical and engineering recommendations of the Turner-Byron report. In 1951, the NBS was born. NBS differed from the committee's recommendations because of the "imminent introduction of the constitution with its emphasis on regional consciousness, development, and responsibility; and the rise in prices of radio apparatus due

to the rearmament programme" (4, p. 282). The rearmament referred to was for the Korean conflict.

Since the early days of Nigerian broadcasting, the policy was to train Nigerians to fill all of the different positions in the field. With the advent of NBS, Nigeria requested both financial and professional training assistance from BBC to aid in its development. Approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Nigeria received in 1951 a total grant of ₦270,000 (\$540,000) under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, a post-war aid program for the colonies. Experienced BBC staff members also conducted workshops and training sessions in Nigeria, and selected candidates trained with the BBC in Great Britain. British financial and professional assistance enabled Nigeria's broadcast system to develop "first as a department of government, but with the ultimate object of turning it into a corporation staffed by Nigerians" (7, p. 85).

The Nigerian political structure strongly affected the basic framework of its broadcast system. In an attempt to create a government that would reflect national interests, a constitutional provision guaranteed that

Each region was granted general power to make certain laws for its own region, while the Federal Government retained a list, called the Exclusive Legislative List, of subjects upon which it alone could make laws. Broadcasting/television was omitted from this exclusive list and thus became a concurrent subject which enabled governments of the regions to operate regional broadcasting/television stations in addition to the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (15, pp. 17-18).

In order to preserve regional characteristics (the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences that exist among the Nigerian tribes), broadcasting in Nigeria was organized on a regional basis with a national headquarters in Lagos. Each region had the freedom to pursue its objectives and to develop its system in its own way, while contributing to and relaying from the national station in Lagos. The NBS began its transmissions at a very critical moment, when all attention and priorities were focused on bringing the constitution into effect. The BBC staff members who arrived in Nigeria in 1951 were aware of the emphasis placed on regional consciousness, development, and responsibility, and that "the proposed NBS would have to satisfy these aspirations without losing sight of the main purpose envisaged in the basic idea of 'One Nigeria'" (14, p. 13). Tom Chalmers, director of Nigerian Broadcasting and former controller of BBC Light Programmes, saw the move as an effort to develop a broadcasting system that would cater to the diverse ethnic interests of the country (4).

The first operational NBS national transmitter was a secondhand one that often broke down causing the station to go off the air. "It almost literally had to be held together 'with a piece of wire' at times" (10, p. 13). Right from its inception, NBS, or "Radio Nigeria" as the service was called, faced numerous setbacks including insufficient funds and untrained indigenous staff.

The most serious problem was posed by the climate.

Milton says,

The tropical conditions in which radio equipment operates in Nigeria are inevitably the cause of many component failures, humidity and heat can play havoc with insulation, with condensation as an ever-present threat, and West Africa is generally accepted to be the severest testing ground for electronic equipment in the world. . . . It might be added that the tropical climatic conditions which cause the trouble also sap the energy of the technician who has to remedy the fault (16, p. 16).

In spite of all the difficulties, the Nigerian Broadcast System was completed within three and a half years; this dream of Nigerians--of a broadcast system that represented the ideas, opinions, and cultures of all the regions--finally came true. The broadcast system directed its attention to the cultural, historical, and religious needs of more than 250 tribal groups in Nigeria. NBS probably succeeded in serving the diverse groups because it could draw on the "rich and varied cultural heritage, and feature the traditional music and arts of different regions, tribes and groups of people" (14, p. 33). Both the federal and regional stations worked in close association to develop a program schedule to serve the nearly 35,000 subscribers.

Originally, NBS was a department of the government, and the general public criticized it strongly for being an organ for the government. It was difficult for NBS to convince these critics that programs were not government controlled because the system was solely government supported. Government support was necessary because the revenue generated from

NBS licensing fees was insufficient to pay expenses. The critics proposed that NBS should be incorporated, modeled after BBC, "with a national and regional organization, and that so far as the regional organization was concerned, there should be a large measure of regional autonomy in deciding programmes" (12, p. 819). Some advocates of NBS made it clear that the system, even with corporate status, would still be financed by the government. The government's 1954 response to all the arguments was a White Paper which outlined the necessary steps to create a system comparable to BBC. The proposal called for an independent system, which would be subsidized by license revenues, and which would allow regional control of program content. The regions (the West, North, and East) had long desired regionally controlled broadcasting stations, and this final NBC proposal received their approval.

On August 8, 1956, the Federal House of Representatives passed a law that incorporated NBS as the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC); on April 1, 1957, it officially signed on the air. NBC began as an independent and impartial broadcasting organization to serve the needs of the Nigerian people. As its guiding principle, NBC used the motto "Unity in Diversity, Diversity in Unity" (14, p. 47). Despite its corporate status, NBC still was not totally free of government influence. A section of its articles of incorporation carefully outlined its responsibilities to government.

The Corporation shall whenever so requested by an authorized officer in the Service of the Federation or an authorized police officer, send in a Federal programme, at the Corporation's own expense, any announcement . . . which the officer may request the Corporation to broadcast (18, p. 58).

Although the name had changed, NBC's problems remained, and with an insufficiently powered network, inadequate land-line facilities, and the shortage of trained staff, NBC could not meet the demands imposed as a result of the various characteristics within each of the regions. Despite repeated attempts to solve some of the problems, NBC's critics still accused it of "a tendency for management to centralize activity and decisions in Lagos" (14, p. 59).

NBC was also criticized for maintaining a number of expatriates in key administrative positions despite NBC's efforts to promote management by Nigerians. Politically partisan federal interest was another major problem. One major political party, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), tried to influence NBC's news content, and the NCNC also insisted that "appointments to senior segments of the Corporation should be based on tribe and politics" (8). NBC tried to conciliate all its critics by releasing a three-year development plan that proposed to increase locally originated programmes and standards of performance, and to "Nigerianize" the entire corporation. The regional critics remained unsatisfied, and they continued to insist on a regionally owned system (14).

As Nigerian political activity escalated, serious internal problems and conflicts erupted between the Federal and regional governments. NBC could not carry out its goal of "One Nigeria" in such a political atmosphere, and this failure contributed to the three-way division (West, North, and East) of the country.

The next chapter will discuss the political activities that led to the establishment of the first Nigerian television station. The development of television broadcasting in Nigeria will also be investigated.

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CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN NIGERIA: THE MAJOR REGIONAL STATIONS

Although television is an expensive enterprise, its power to aid and encourage national development in developing nations should not be overlooked. Nigeria, with its low per capita income and its need to pool resources, nevertheless developed four separate television stations almost simultaneously. Television became a focus for federal and regional attention and competition. Michael Egbon says,

In order to completely understand the course and causes of the Nigerian television system and the innovational transformations currently being put through in a continuing attempt to forge a workable national mass communication policy for Nigeria, a prior necessity is a brief description of the Nigerian social and political arena (4, p. 74).

The ordinance of incorporation for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) created a national organization with regional branches. As a result, NBC advocates believed that regional ownership of independent stations would be eliminated. The Nigerian Constitution of 1956, however, gave the regions the legal right to develop independent broadcast systems; even though the federal government retained its power to grant licenses for the construction of new stations, it had no other authority over the ownership or operation of the regional governments' broadcasting stations. Christopher Kolade says,

The political development in the country evolved in such a manner that the three regions originally making up the federation became progressively stronger and more autonomous. Indeed, all the regions achieved a large measure of internal self-government--the West and the East in 1957, the North in 1959--before the Federation itself became independent, in October, 1960 (5, p. 88).

The primary Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation ordinance was formulated with the evolution of regionalization in the country's constitutional development. Given this political atmosphere, plus the fact that broadcasting was not under exclusive federal constitutional control, the regions soon became impatient with the NBC, which (despite its three-tiered system of broadcasting) operated in accordance with federal policy (5, p. 88). The regions, dissatisfied with this policy, insisted on regional-government owned and operated broadcasting stations. The spirit of national consciousness, which had created a strong united front against the colonialists, diminished as Nigeria approached its independence. Domestic politics began a swing from nationalistic fervor to ethnic and factional rivalries. Thus, it may be said that what the country most needed was to unify the diverse and disparate units of sectional interests, whose leaders avariciously exploited ethnic divisions and antagonisms (8, p. 21). These needs still exist.

As an example, Chief Awolowo, head of the Action Group Government of Western Nigeria and one of the nation's political leaders, was denied permission in 1958 to air his views on the national radio services. Awolowo declared the

MacPherson Constitution of 1951 null and void, and together with his party men staged a protest walkout in the House of Assembly. Mr. Benson, Chief Secretary of the House, saw the protest as damaging since Nigeria was approaching its independence, and he requested the Governor in Council to publicly condemn the Action Group. In agreement, Governor Sir John Stuart MacPherson, denounced the walkout of Chief Awolowo and his supporters on Nigerian radio (4).

Chief Awolowo requested air time from the Director-General of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service to respond to the Governor-General's accusations, which he termed a "misrepresentation of the Action Group's stand" (4, p. 57). With the Chief Secretary's approval, the Director-General of NBS denied permission for Awolowo's response on the grounds that the NBS was supervised and controlled by the federal government's Ministry of Information. Awolowo was very aggrieved and disappointed by this denial of an access to express his party's motives. He considered himself and his party gagged by the federal government (6, p. 58). From that time, Chief Awolowo and his followers were convinced that the only solution to such a future dilemma was to have regionally controlled mass media. This idea was nursed until the Western Region of Nigeria set up its own broadcasting service in 1959 (4; 6).

The Major Regional Stations

The introduction of television in Nigeria in the early 1960s coincided with the beginning of a remarkable period of change in the country's history. In many ways television was a particularly appropriate mechanical symbol, in the midst of ethnic rivalries, "to grapple with the combination of uncertainties, the newly won independence, and the political upheavals which bedeviled the post-Colonial era" (4, p. 100). Despite a concerted national effort to utilize this powerful medium to awaken the spirit of Nigerian national unity, the prevailing political rivalries destroyed all such hope for true unification.

The fate of the early radio industry in Nigeria has been equaled in the television industry since 1960. NBC could not serve the distinct needs of the people because of the federal government's centralized policy. Therefore, instead of one powerful all-Nigerian television service, there arose between 1959 and 1962 four separate systems that reflected the ethnic political structure of the country. There was WNTV of the Western Region, ENTV of the Eastern Region, RKTU of the Northern Region, and NBC-TV of the Federal Government (4).

Not everyone approved of the regional governments' decisions to invest in this expensive medium, and others were suspicious of their intent.

Some people did not approve of the project for fear that the government of the day would use the station to promote its own political interests. Some people saw the

new but most powerful weapon of mass communication as a luxury, a mere prestige project which the regions could not afford. Others still saw the decision as a mere propaganda weapon, designed to curry the favour of the electorate coming at a time when the fateful Federal elections were less than ninety days away (1).

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria became an independent nation. The basic political forces and problems that confronted the country in its colonial period continued into the post-colonial period. The latent ethnic hostilities reached a climax as the major political parties displayed their distrust of each other. The northern block, the Hausas and the Fulanis, suspected that the southern block, the Yorubas and Ibos, intended to dominate the country. This political party struggle culminated in a coup that eventually led to the collapse of parliamentary rule in Nigeria and the end of Nigeria's First Republic in 1966.

Within its population of over 80 million people, Nigeria is made up of about 250 ethnic groups, which are dominated by the Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba tribes. This diversity complicates any attempt to discuss Nigeria's overall television development. It is hoped, therefore, that a brief discussion of the historical sequence of the four regional pioneer stations will help to clarify television development in Nigeria.

Western Nigeria Television Service (WNTV)

Western Nigeria Television Service [presently Nigerian Television Ibadan (NTV Ibadan)] began on October 31, 1959. The motion that gave birth to WNTV was made by Chief Anthony

Enahoro, then Regional Minister for Information and Home Affairs. The bill was passed in a two-day session of the Western Nigeria House of Assembly in 1959 (9, p. 7). A year later, in 1960, Western Nigeria also established its own radio station [Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service (WNBS), which is now Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria Ibadan (FRCN Ibadan)]. WNTV started as a joint venture between Oversease Rediffusion, Limited, and the Western Nigeria government; it was called Western Nigeria Radiovision Service, Limited.

From its inception, the foreign partners stressed programming designed to attract audiences for advertisers in order to recover their investment. The Western Nigeria government could not reconcile its philosophy of social responsibility and public service with that of its overseas partners; after a few years, the foreign partners withdrew when it became apparent that market growth (sales of sets and transmission networks) would be a slow process. The government of Western Nigeria became the sole owner of WNTV-WNBS (Western Nigeria Television and Broadcasting Services).

WNTV used the slogan "First in Africa" from its inception because it was the first television station to operate on the continent. There was much speculation about Western Region's motive for establishing a costly television station instead of a less-expensive radio station. In fact, the Western Region wanted a channel of expression that would be independent

from the federal government. Considering the very limited number of television receivers in existence in Nigeria at that time, however, one wonders what television was expected to accomplish for the Westerners. Opponents termed the decision to invest in television as one for regional pride and prestige (1). In the midst of the struggles against colonialism and for regionalism, it appears that the Western Region's government established WNTV in an attempt to enhance its political image and strategy.

The contretemps with Western leader Chief Awolowo contributed to the Western Region's break with the federal government, and ultimately to its establishment of a prestigious status symbol, a television station. In contemporary parlance, this is called oneupsmanship. Mass media critics in developing countries believe that most African nations establish television stations for political purposes (4, p. 60).

In addition to having a channel of expression, the regions insisted on autonomy so that they could finance broadcasting through advertising rather than depend on the federal government for funds. In May, 1960, WNTV scored another "first" by going commercial, but its sales of commercial air time did not generate adequate funds. Therefore, the regional government had to subsidize WNTV so that it could meet its expenditures.

When WNTV began broadcasting in 1959, it had two transmitters, one at Ibadan and the other at its headquarters at Abafon. Its objective was to cover the entire Western Region with a broadcast signal. WNTV continued to expand its facilities until, by 1975, it was able to cover nearly 60 per cent of the Western State (4).

WNTV claimed to be the most popular station in Nigeria; its popularity depended not only on its being first in the country, but also on its programmes. As the "first comer," it presented a large number of Nigerian artists; until 1977, WNTV was also acclaimed for its high percentage of educational programming for Nigeria as well as the whole of Africa (4). According to the programme planners, "Showing irrelevant foreign films will be at variance with national objectives and aspirations" (9, p. 7). Prior to the takeover of television stations by the federal government in 1977, a large percentage of the station's programmes were produced or translated into the Yoruba language. This lessened the difficulties of comprehension due to the language since Yoruba is the vernacular of the entire region.

Eastern Nigeria Television Service (ENTV)

Eastern Nigeria Television Service was established on October 1, 1960, a year later than WNTV and on the exact day that Nigeria achieved its independence. ENTV, whose slogan was "Second to None," was a joint venture of the government

of the Eastern Region and an overseas company. Like WNTV, the Enugu station was heavily oriented toward commercial operations, but in order to meet the cost of its operation, the regional government made annual subventions to the station (5). ENTV finally bought out its foreign partners because of their demands to stress commercial programming; the station wanted to emphasize local programming in order to serve the region's needs.

At its beginning, ENTV was limited to the Enugu district. As time went on, however, the facilities were improved, and coverage was extended to the urban center of Aba and the industrial center of Port Harcourt. The ability of ENTV to provide service to the most prosperous section of Eastern Nigeria made it popular. In its first four years of operation, ENTV made tremendous progress; its market area gradually extended because its signal could spill over regional borders. Planning for further expansion, ENTV ordered two powerful one-million watt transmitters from Continental Electronics of America; these were to be elevated to a height of 840 feet, the highest in West Africa, and it would have been possible for ENTV to reach all parts of Nigeria plus the neighboring countries of Ghana, Congo, Cameroon, and Fernando Po. Unfortunately, the Eastern Region became the battlefield for the Nigerian Civil War that broke out in 1966, and ENTV was critically damaged by mortar shells. It did not resume transmissions until 1970; it presently functions under the call letters NTV Enugu (Nigerian Television Enugu) (10, p. 65).

Radio and Television Kaduna (RKTv)

Radio and Television Kaduna [now Nigerian Television Kaduna (NTV Kaduna)] was run by the Broadcasting Corporation of Northern Nigeria (BCNN). The government of Northern Nigeria negotiated a contract with two British firms (the Granada Group, Ltd., and Electrical and Musical Industries, Ltd.) to serve the regional interests of the northerners. They were to jointly "provide television to the three main centres: Kano, the Commercial Centre of the North; Kaduna, the Capital of Northern Nigeria; and Zaria, the academic Centre of the North" (3, p. 27).

RKTv began transmissions on March 15, 1962, from a temporary studio at the Independence Hall of Government College, Kaduna, in an effort by the Northern Region to beat the deadline for its self-government. In February, 1963, RKTv moved to a permanent site at No. 7 Hospital Road, Kaduna, where it was transmitting three hours of programmes daily, six days a week. Its programmes were carried in both English and Hausa, the dominant language in Northern Nigeria. About one-third of the station's programmes, which included news, educational programmes, documentaries, and light entertainment, originated locally. RKTv was very progressive because it was the best equipped station in Nigeria within its first few years of operation. It also covered the largest market area in Nigeria; the Northern Region's population exceeded 30 million at that time. RKTv was also the only regional Nigerian

television station "where the relationship between the government and the overseas partners seemed to have bloomed and blossomed without a break in contract" (3, p. 27; 5).

Nigerian Television Service (NTS)

The emergence of the Nigerian Television Service [now Nigerian Television Lagos (NTV Lagos)] on April 1, 1962, brought the number of television stations in Nigeria to four. Like its regional counterparts, the federal government-owned NTS signed a "five-year management and training contract" with National Broadcasting International (NBCI). Staff members were drawn from local candidates as a result of an advertisement that drew over ten thousand applications, including "one from a young man who hoped they would teach him how to be a tripod" (2, p. 106).

In 1963, the federal government mandated the NBC (which had controlled the country's sound broadcast system) to take charge of the former NTS basic programming policies. This continued until 1967 when NBC International's contract expired. Thus, NTS was grafted onto the nation's mainstream of electronic communications, and the call signal was changed from NTS to NBC-TV Channel 10 Lagos.

NTS had had its problems from the very beginning; its studio was small (18 by 36 feet), and it lacked adequate equipment (the station was on for only one hour daily). Its programmes consisted of local live shows, foreign films,

newsreels, and educational programmes for in-school viewing. In February, 1963, NBC-TV moved to a permanent site on Victoria Island. Despite its limited transmissions, which were received only by Lagos residents, the station's commercial activities were rewarding. Like the regional stations, NBC-TV expanded its services until its signal covered the entire Western Region (8).

Summary

WNTV not only pioneered the television field of mass communication, it was the prototype for the other stations in Nigeria. Thus, a common trend is apparent in the origin (and organizational and structural design) of each of the government-owned broadcasting and television stations. All stations began as a joint venture, with each regional government negotiating and forming a partnership with a foreign firm, which provided a share of the capital and initial operating cost. All of the regional stations were autonomous except for the Federal Ministry of Communications' power to grant frequencies, power, and location (4, p. 102).

In 1977, the federal government placed all Nigerian television stations under federal control, and the stations no longer have the freedom to programme in their own way. In 1980, a lecturer on mass communications commented,

Today, our radio and television programmes are rather rigid. Apart from news and current affairs, programme contents are planned on a quarterly basis. The producers are expected to accomplish such items as already proposed

and accepted. This does not augur for spontaneity nor flexibility. Usually, when . . . television programme contents become rigid . . . programmes must have already been produced, edited, previewed and accepted for that period (7, p. 17).

As a result of federal control, one wonders whether state stations will be able to produce a fair share of local programming for their audiences. One may speculate that the present nationally oriented televised programmes will not have the same local and social significance to the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria. The local communities, with their unique cultures and dialects, are affected the most by television's absorption into the national stream.

The federal government's control of all television stations in the country since 1977 has turned NBC-TV into the nucleus for Nigeria Television (NTV). Currently, nineteen states comprise Nigeria, and there are as many radio and television stations as there are Nigerian states. More will be said about the general functioning of the pioneer stations, in addition to the others, as the next chapter takes up the issue of television growth in Nigeria; the role of television in Nigerian unity will also be examined. By exploring these areas, one may be able to determine the effects on the medium of the federal government's control.

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CHAPTER IV

THE GROWTH OF TELEVISION IN NIGERIA: THE NINETEEN-STATE STRUCTURE

Nigeria's historical, political, and tribal-group instabilities have had their effect upon broadcasting in the country. The ethnic and political rivalries that bedeviled Nigeria in its colonial period continued into the country's post-colonial period. Competition among the three dominant tribes (Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba) became very tense as each struggled to control the federal government, and the newly introduced medium, television, became a victim of political propaganda. Thus, the growth of television in Nigeria cannot be fully examined without reference to the political activities that led to the creation of states in the country, and, eventually, to more television stations as well.

Nigeria's Political Development in the Post-Colonial Period: The 1960s and the 1970s

One of the conditions set by the British government to prepare Nigeria for its independence was the election of a new federal parliament. The election, held in December, 1959, was the last federal election under the British colonial administration. Three major political parties emerged, each representing one of the dominant tribes. The Northern Peoples'

Congress (NPC), headed by Sir Ahmadu Bello, represented the Hausas in the north; the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), headed by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, represented the Ibos in the east; the Action Group (AG), headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, represented the Yorubas in the west.

In the election, 150 seats were won by the NPC, 89 by the NCNC, 69 by the AG, and 11 by independent parties. Because no political party won a majority, the Governor-in-Council called upon the largest party, the NPC, to form the government. As a result, the NPC and the NCNC formed a coalition government; the AG, headed by Chief Awolowo, constituted the opposition party (8, p. 96). Despite a series of coalition governments among the major parties, an increasing distrust continued among the opponents. The north (the Hausas) of the NPC suspected and feared that the south (the eastern Ibos and the western Yorubas) was trying to dominate the country because there were more educated people in the south than in the highly populated north.

The NPC waited for an opportunity to break off its uneasy alliance with the NCNC, and it finally came when trouble erupted in Western Nigeria between Chief Awolowo, the AG leader, and his lieutenant and the Western Premier, Chief Akintola. The NPC took advantage of the situation and allied itself with the Akintola faction of the AG. Peace could not be achieved despite a series of coalition governments, and

internal dissensions swept over the regions of Nigeria and divided the tribes. Michael Egbon says,

The major force operative in Nigeria's internal dissensions could be seen as stemming from the unequal rate of development of the component ethnic groups, and between the different regions with regard to economic development, cultural values and, above all, western education. Due to these . . . some groups became prominent and dominated the various levels of the federal government (8, p. 98).

Naturally, the underprivileged groups did not take kindly to this situation, especially since it favored the three major ethnic groups, placing them in a better position to benefit from government resources and amenities such as jobs, schools, scholarships. Because of the unequal rate of development that existed in Nigeria in the early 1960s, the people began demanding separate status along ethnic or linguistic borders. This ethnic rivalry further bedeviled and fractured the unity of Nigeria during its first years of independence; competition escalated at the elite levels among the increasing numbers of qualified persons for the limited number of positions (23, pp. 17-21).

These political contests took place on the two distinct levels of the federal and the regional governments. On the federal level, tension grew among the dominant Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba groups of the regional governments; on the regional level, the struggle was between the dominant tribe and the many ethnic minorities. These interethnic tensions, which were caused by social, economic, geographic, cultural, and linguistic differences, resulted in the Civil War of 1967.

In addition to intertribal tensions, the 1963 census and the 1965 election also caused the Nigerian Civil War. The 1963 census, published in 1964, stated that the Northern Region had more people than the east and west regions combined. The Eastern and Western Regions believed that the 1963 census had been rigged by the NPC, the leading government party. According to the Nigerian Constitution, the population of a region determined the number of parliamentary seats to which the region was entitled. Had the census figures been nationally accepted, the Hausas of the NPC would have dominated the government (1).

In preparation for the 1965 election, Chief Akintola's faction of the AG, which had splintered from Chief Awolowo, formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP); then the NNDP merged with the NPC, forming the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). Chief Awolowo's faction of the AG merged with the NCNC, forming the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The 1965 election became a race between the two major coalition parties, the NNA and the UPGA, and "both resorted to the basest forms of campaigning, particularly in Southern Regions where NNA was not well known" (22, p. 180).

The election, held amidst internal dissension, was won by the NNA. Although the election was over, the southerners termed the result "dubious." Many Nigerians, particularly the citizens of the Western Region, were unwilling to be led by a party that had won the election by dubious means. The

NNA, in turn, carried out reprisals--mass arrests and killings--against those who resisted its rule (22, p. 183).

The Beginning of Military Rule

On January 15, 1966, Nigeria experienced its first bloody coup d'etat. The Ibo-led coup resulted in the death of some prominent politicians who had belonged to the NNA coalition party. Among those killed were Chief S. L. Akintola (Prime Minister of the Western Region), the Sarduana of Sokoto (the President of NPC), and several other ministers. During the rebellion, none of the corrupt political leaders of the Eastern Region were killed (the President was abroad on a "health cruise"), and no senior military personnel from the Eastern Region were killed. The leader of the mutiny was from the Eastern Region (1, p. 10).

Two days into the coup, on January 17, 1966, the Commander of the Nigerian Army, Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, "officially took command of the country, assumed all powers of the Nigerian government, and arrested the military mutineers" (3, p. 31). Ironsi's action restored some confidence to the citizens, particularly to the western and northern tribes, who were impatient for the trial and conviction of the mutineers. The situation, however, reversed itself. Instead of standing trial, the mutineers received full army pay and benefits. In addition, Ironsi promoted many army officers and diplomatic personnel from the Ibo tribe soon after he took over the Nigerian government (3).

Ironsi abolished Nigeria's Federation of Government and attempted to create a "unitary form of constitution" (4, p. 311). This led to fears by other Ibo-dominated tribal groups, and a counter-coup broke out in July, 1966. In this second coup, General Ironsi and many other military officers from the Ibo tribe were killed. The northerners, still grieving over the death of their leaders during the first coup, were taunted by Ibo tribesmen (eastern) who lived in the Northern Region. The northerners responded by killing a number of their resident Ibos; as a result, the Ibos began a mass exodus from all parts of Nigeria back into the Eastern Region (1, p. 10).

The Civil War of 1967

After the second coup, a thirty-one year old Lieutenant-Colonel, Yakubu Gowon, assumed the leadership of Nigeria; later, Gowon became the Supreme Commander of the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Head of State. He was a neutral choice because he was a Christian from a minority tribe in the North. Everyone, except the eastern Ibos, recognized Gowon as the head of the Nigerian National Military Government (11, p. 1). In the east, Lieutenant-Colonel Odemegwu Ojukwu, an Ibo native of the Eastern Region, refused to accept Gowon's leadership, and at this critical moment "it proved impossible to reconcile the views of the Ibo-controlled government of the Eastern Region with those of the other regions" (4, p. 312).

This lack of reconciliation led to the Nigerian Civil War of 1967.

Gowon made concerted, persuasive efforts to settle the differences that existed between the Eastern Region and the rest of Nigeria. When persuasion failed, Gowon appealed to Ghana's military leader, General Joseph Ankrah, to cooperate with the Nigerian military leaders in seeking a peaceful solution to the Nigerian problem. When all these efforts to effect a peaceful solution failed, "Gowon, in a reported effort to placate the rift between regional interests, created twelve states each run by its own leader" (12, p. 179).

The majority of Nigerians were satisfied with Gowon's division of the country into states; it was considered far better than colonial regionalism. The Ibos in the east, however, refused to accept the new states, regarding this move as an attempt by Gowon to reduce Ibo strength by dividing the east into three separate states. Ojukwu saw it as an attempt to strip "Port Harcourt, Nigeria's second largest port, the east's industrial hub, and the site of its all-important petroleum industry," out of the hands of the Ibos and into the dominion of the Rivers State (6, p. 45). Although the Port Harcourt area was run by the aggressive Ibos, it was located in the homeland of the Kalabaris, an eastern minority tribe.

In reaction to Gowon's move, Ojukwu declared on May 30, 1967, that "the former Eastern Region was henceforth to be the

independent sovereign Republic of Biafra" (6, p. 45). Gowon moved to protect the sovereignty of the Federation, and the result was the Civil War of 1967. Both sides, federal and Biafran, lost in the war, but because of Biafra's limited military supplies, it could not withstand the attacks by federal troops.

On January 10, 1970, federal troops captured Owerri, the last town in Biafran hands (9, p. 1). The Biafran leader, Ojukwu, fled from Biafra; he handed over the administration to Lieutenant-Colonel Phillip Effiong, an army officer from the minority eastern Ibibio tribe. Finally, on January 15, 1970, Colonel Effiong handed a signed declaration of surrender to General Gowon in Dodan Barracks, Lagos.

Nigerian Development after the Civil War

At the end of the war, Gowon began postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. He took this move quickly in an effort "to bind up the deep social wounds caused by the conflict" (6, p. 45). Gowon also promised a return to civilian rule in 1976.

In 1975, Gowon tested the political atmosphere in the country by asking Brigadier General T. Y. Danjuma, a pro-civil rule advocate, to "send up a trial balloon on the civilian rule issue" (12, p. 182). Danjuma appeared on television and announced that "public agitation for a return to civilian rule was merely a reminder to the military government

that it was overstaying its time in office" (18, p. 1). This independent movement by Gowon generated fear among high-ranking military personnel, and Gowon was advised of the situation. During Gowon's absence from the country to attend the Organization of African Unity (OAU) meetings in Kampala, Uganda, his closest friend, Brigadier Muritala Mohammed, assumed leadership in a bloodless coup as the new Head of State and Commander-in-Chief; he immediately turned to the media in an attempt to enlist the people's support for his cause and to explain why Gowon was removed. Mohammed claimed that Gowon's inaccessibility to the people, his disregard for regional interests, his insensitivity to the feelings of others, and his neglect of the armed forces led to his dismissal (19, p. 1). He replaced all the Governors of the twelve states. Subsequently, Mohammed created five more states, bringing the number of Nigerian states to nineteen.

Gowon joined his family in London in July, 1975, where he had moved them before his departure for the OAU meetings in Kampala; he has remained in exile since that time. Seven months after Mohammed took over from Gowon, in February, 1976, he was assassinated in an aborted coup led by Lieutenant-Colonel Dimka, under the London-based Gowon. [Dimka and several other members of the armed forces who participated in this coup were executed.] Mohammed was replaced as Head of State by his Chief of Staff, General Olusegun Obasanjo. From 1976, Obasanjo led the country through to civilian rule in

1979. Nigeria's post-colonial period was "marred by political crisis, civil war, authoritarian rule, massive corruption and waste" (21, p. 16).

All these forces directly affected the growth of television in Nigeria, which, instead of being used constructively, became a political weapon in the hands of the country's rulers. In addition to structuring Nigeria into its present nineteen states in 1976, the military also was concerned about reorganizing the country's broadcasting, particularly television, to achieve an all-Nigerian system.

Federal Military Intervention and the Control of Television

As discussed in Chapter III, the post-colonial period in Nigeria began with the introduction of regional government stations and the advent of both television and commercial service, which made broadcasting a nationwide system. But, instead of one nationwide system, Nigeria had one federal and several insolvent regional systems (20, p. xxii). When the military came to power in 1966, their motto was "One Nigeria," and in order to alleviate the fears of domination by a particular group, they restructured the country from four regions into twelve states, and then from twelve states into the current nineteen states.

The former regional owned and controlled television stations were another major area of concern to the military. The federal government moved quickly to protect what it

thought might in time lead to "wasteful competition and exploitation of sectional loyalties, and a potential cause of disunity" (8, p. 120). Therefore, in 1968, all the State Commissioners of Information met to discuss the feasibility of establishing a National Broadcasting Authority that would be run by the Federal Military Government (FMG). The committee recommended that the FMG "control all radio and television services in the federation under the superintendence of a National Board of Governors, and be charged to utilize these services in the interest of national solidarity" (2, p. 1).

The regions were not quite willing to give away their pride, their prestigious medium, and their concession to federal government control was delayed until 1976. The idea of a National Broadcasting Authority was reintroduced in 1975, and, "at that time, the federal government proposed to take over all radio and television networks throughout the country" (10, p. 6). Before the FMG could take the necessary steps, however, the regional governments questioned the issue of constitutionality in regard to the takeover. The necessary legal steps were taken by the FMG; an amendment was added to the constitution to legalize the takeover. The FMG, however, restated its position and acknowledged that instead of taking over both radio and television, only television would be "controlled centrally, in a national network" (5).

In addition, the government also proposed countrywide colour television. A press release, issued by the Federal

Military Government on December 10, 1975 (8, pp. 132-134), stated that the takeover was designed to achieve the following objectives.

- (A) To respond to and fulfil national views rather than partisan or sectional interests;
- (B) To reflect in its structure and activities, the size and varieties of the unity of the Nation;
- (C) To exploit the rich cultural materials available throughout the country and make its output mainly indigenous in character;
- (D) To assist in the general education, enlightenment and motivation of the Nation; and
- (E) To aim at producing cultural and topical programmes for export to other countries.

Structure: The proposed color television scheme will operate through six main stations sited in Lagos, Benin, Kaduna, Sokoto, Maiduguri and Jos. Each main station will have an autonomous management and originate its own independent programme output, obtaining its programme material basically from its own zone. The country will accordingly be zoned into six areas. For comprehensive programme gathering within each zone, the Main Station will be supported by Production Centres. There is therefore at least a Main Station or Production Centre within each state which makes use of the existing facilities in the states that now have television stations.

In addition, there will be a Television News Station, designed as an adjunct to the Main Station at the Federal Capital, to gather news and make it available to other Main Stations. It will also receive news from every main station.

Operations: Each Main Station will be capable of producing and transmitting television programmes in colour, including news shows covering its own zone, and transmit its output to television receivers in any part of the Federation. Thus six programmes will be receivable simultaneously all over the country. It will have stand-by transmitting facilities for coverage of its own area in case of failure in the country-wide communications system and will be equipped with facilities for gathering programme and news materials from remote areas of the zone.

Program Policy: The guiding principles will be independence on the six stations, decentralization of programme production, complementary services, and competition to promote excellence of output.

There will be a National Broadcasting Authority which will perform regulatory functions and will assure the establishment and maintenance of Standards. The revised estimated cost of the entire colour television programme as now decided is about ₦130,000,000.

The Federal Military Government will be responsible for all existing television stations with all their equipment and staff and the states affected will be paid adequate compensation based on proper assessment of the facilities taken over.

There is no intention for the moment of taking over the sound radio stations as such. These will continue as independent organizations where they can be separated as viable entities from existing television stations. There might be, however, an attempt to coordinate and possibly give additional federal support to the stations in order to make full use of the media in promoting overall interests of the nation.

This public statement by the government is a clear testament that the present Nigerian leadership's first objective is national unity, and, of course, the desirability to insure the creation of a nationwide, efficient broadcasting service to hold such unity intact (8, p. 134). Thus, in 1977, the federal government established a national broadcasting body, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), to handle all matters pertaining to television broadcasting in the country.

The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)

The last military regime had a different concept for the television industry; it wanted to bring this facility to the doorstep of all Nigerians (24, p. 11). In order to achieve this, it promulgated a decree in 1977 that established the

Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) as a cooperate body to coordinate, among other things, the activities of television stations in Nigeria. From its inception, NTA was given the power to control and reorganize the existing television stations and to establish new stations in each state capital in which there was no station. Only ten stations were in operation at the time of the takeover, but the Authority has since established nine new ones, bringing the number of stations to nineteen--one for each of the nineteen states of Nigeria.

All of the television stations, also called Production Centres, operate under NTA's supervision and bear the call signal NTV (Nigerian Television); the stations, however, are distinguished according to the location of the state capital (for example, WNTV-Ibadan became NTV-Ibadan). Instead of the independent regional-state stations, the country is divided into six zones, each headed by a chairman and a managing director to execute the policies of the Authority as directed by the Director General. The zonal division makes it possible to cover the whole country with a television signal, and for the first time Nigeria has national network programmes that are carried by all television stations in the nation.

This is an important development in the history of Nigerian television. Formerly, Nigerian television stations rarely exchanged programs; the main reason, however, was the linguistic and cultural differences among the many tribal groups. Today, not only is the exchange of programmes a

normal occurrence, but certain programmes are relayed simultaneously all over the nation (13, p. 14).

The success of the NTA in a nationwide television broadcasting service is based upon its program objectives, as follows (16, pp. 1-4).

NTA Programme Objectives and Programming

Each Zonal Managing Director will, from henceforth, satisfy himself that the programme plan for each station meets a set of NTA's objectives over a given period of time. The objectives attached hereto are as approved by the Board of the Authority. . . .

- (2) If a year is chosen as the complement period, then all the four quarterly schedules must complement one another in achieving those objectives. Generally, all the fourteen programme types should be satisfied in the chosen period, i.e., one year, six months, one quarter, etc.
- (3) As many of the objectives under each programme type as are practicable should be covered over the aggregate time allocated that program type. Sometimes it is possible to cover all the listed objectives in each weekly slot of the specific programme, sometimes more than one slot a week is required on account of the need to cover so many objectives in a short time, but often no more than one or two main objectives are possible per slot.

Programme Planning

- (4) A programme-by-programme synopsis should be discussed and agreed by a Programme Planning Committee of each station some eight to ten weeks before a new quarter. The Programme Planning Committee shall be made up of all station officers on Controller grade and above, viz:
 - (a) General Manager as Chairman;
 - (b) Manager, Programmes, Controllers in Programmes;
 - (c) Manager, News and Current Affairs, Controllers in News and Current Affairs;

- (d) Controller Commercial Services, Officer-in-Charge Audience Research;
 - (e) Chief Engineer, Assistant Chief Engineers (or Controllers), Chief Technical Officers;
 - (f) Managers, Administration and Finance, Controllers of Administration and Finance;
 - (g) The Principal Producer or Principal Editor whose schedule is under discussion at a particular time of the planning meeting;
 - (h) The Producer or Editor whose programme is under discussion, as at (g).
- (5) The initial proposal placed before the Committee would be drawn up by the programmes division, based preferably on the collective expertise of the Division. The General Manager will naturally direct the Planning meeting, decisions will generally be by consensus or compromise, or ruling, but they must be guided by:
- (a) Television Objectives;
 - (b) Programme Objectives;
 - (c) Judicious Allocation of Time (to different programmes);
 - (d) Rational Scheduling for Target Audience (i.e., who is watching, at what time of day, or what day of week, etc.);
 - (e) Available Resources (space, staff, talent, equipment, funds, etc.).

The Programme Schedule

- (6) The write-up on each programme (and slot) will contain the Audience aimed at, the day(s) of the week as well as the date and time of broadcast. A synopsis on the slot will describe briefly the aims of the programme, the title, content, and emphasis of each "episode", the special features, and the artistes proposed. This will be done for all programmes, except Current Affairs ones which cannot be predicted in the time available.
- (7) A station's programme, as evolved in para (6) above, will be placed before the Managing Director so that

he can effectively coordinate the plans and results of the Production Centres in the Zone. A copy of the Plan will be sent on to the Director General (HQ) for information. It will be an offence for any station to effect any changes between any one quarter and another (or any other programme periods) if a copy of their Plan has not reached NTA Headquarters. The purpose of this ruling is to ensure that the broadcasts in any station carry the corporate commitment of the management body of that station, and that the exercise is a rational one, based on acceptable guidelines.

- (8) The roles of the Programmes Advisory Committee and the Zonal Board will evolve with time, but should they involve quarterly discussions and approval, then Programme Planning Committees will need to meet up to 12 weeks, at least, ahead of the date of effectuation.
- (9) A monitoring and control system will need to be devised at each Production Centre, Zonal Office, and NTA Headquarters to ensure that the plan is followed, or to correct flaws in the plan as required. In respect of Para (6) above, the plan submitted should also contain a breakdown of programme types by percentage of time and as between local and foreign programmes.

These objectives are reflected in the general functioning of all television stations in Nigeria. As a result, NTA has received a great deal of criticism from Nigerian broadcasters and the general public for being too involved in paperwork and bureaucracy. The public is disappointed because programme production has not increased or improved as expected. Onyero Mgbejume says,

. . . and unless NTA sees itself as both a vigorous production and administrative centre, it will not be able to oversee the television interest of the nation. Although . . . NTA could control all the other stations by producing and networking top quality programmes. This would be a more effective means . . . towards the unification and development of Nigeria than just sending

out instructions on paper from Lagos to State television stations without any follow up (15, p. 7).

Whatever the criticisms, NTA reorganized Nigerian television into six zones, thus easing the managerial problem created by nineteen states. These zonal divisions correspond to the broadcast channels available from the Nigerian Post and Telegraph Department's telecommunications aerostat system (15, p. 70). Aerostats, or aerodynamically stable tethered balloons, support electronic transmitting and receiving equipment at altitudes of ten to fifteen thousand feet (17). At this height, the aerostat provides the advantage of wide radio propagation at television transmitter frequencies. Presently, there are five aerostat stations designed to carry six programmes simultaneously (on six channels) to all parts of Nigeria. Thus, with the aerostat system, Nigerian television begins networking in its third decade of broadcasting (15).

In regard to NTA's effort to maintain an all-Nigerian television system, the following questions were addressed to Mbuk Mboho (14), who is a lecturer in Mass Communications at the College of Technology in Calabar, Nigeria. What facilities exist for training writers, directors, and producers within the country? How is the news handled at both the federal and state level? What are the guidelines for recruiting trained personnel? What part does television play in national development?

With regard to facilities for training, Mboho states that NTA runs a training program for all television stations in the country. These training courses are offered at various stations where facilities are available. Every year, the Training Department of NTA sends out a chart showing the periods (duration), training centers, and courses available. Every station benefits from this arrangement. There are also institutions of higher learning that offer courses in mass communication, theatre arts, and drama. These help to increase the number of professionals, as well as productivity, in this field. Mboho says that management staff may be deployed to work in any station in the country; this responsibility is accepted by management personnel, and expected by NTA, in the spirit and promotion of national unity and development. NTA's motto is "Live with the people, Work for the people, Identify with the people, and Share with the people" (14).

As to news programming, Mboho points out that every state capital has a television station known as a Production Centre, and these are primarily used for local programming, including news. These centres contribute news of local and national interest to the NTA network news department. In turn, every station is expected to join NTA network news at 9:00 p.m. daily for a thirty-minute program. Apart from news, stations are also expected to hook up with the network for all network current affairs programs (14).

According to Mboho (14), the guidelines for recruiting trained personnel in television are the same as for the Nigerian Public Civil Service. Applications are directed to NTA headquarters in Lagos for NTA appointments. [The headquarters will soon move from Lagos to Abuja, the proposed new capital of Nigeria.] For the local stations, applications are forwarded to either the zonal headquarters or to the particular station of choice.

NTA carries programmes contributed by different stations of the various states of Nigeria, Mboho (14) says, to encourage the spirit of national consciousness. These programmes portray the cultural, economic, social, and political developments within the states, and they help to further understanding among the different ethnic groups in Nigeria; the states share their successes and failures through the exchange of programmes among the stations.

The Structure of NTV Stations

All Nigerian television stations are managed through an organizational structure; each television station has a Board that is composed of a Chairman and six or more members who are appointed by the Governor of the state. Board members are chosen from state public officers, and from eminent personalities in politics, universities, churches, schools, and local government institutions. The Board handles all policy matters, top management appointments, and decisions regarding the station's economic, financial, and operational

goals. The General Manager is appointed by the Board; he is responsible for the general administration of the corporation, and he ensures that the Board's objectives and goals are realized. It is his duty to see that the financial and material resources of the corporation are harnessed to achieve the station's desired goals.

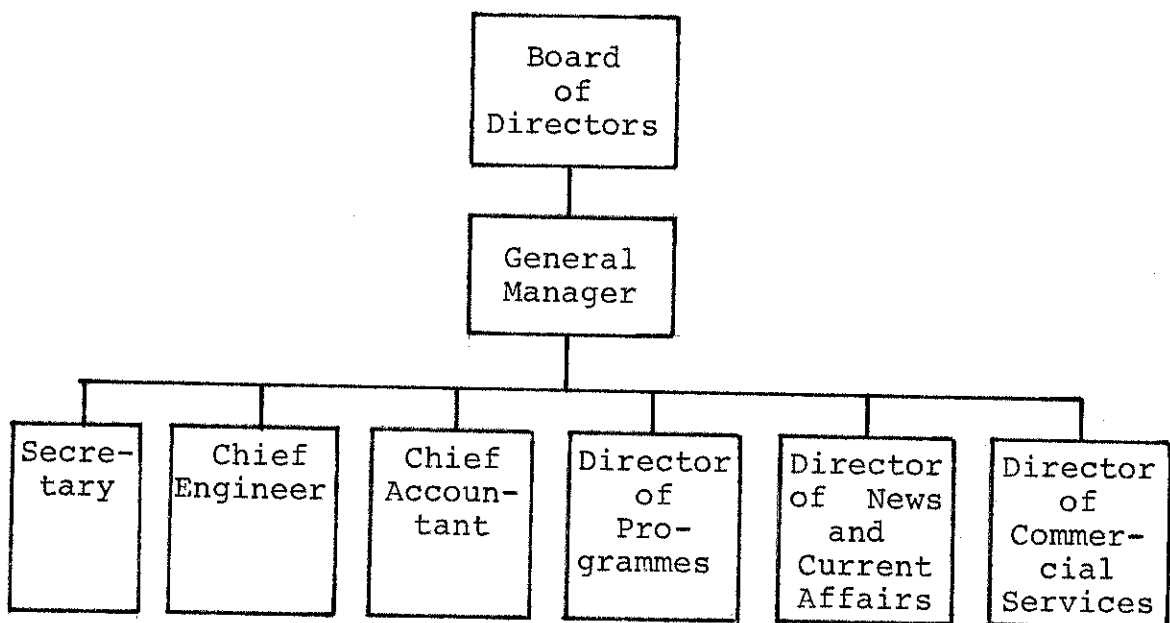


Fig. 1--Typical organization chart for a Nigerian television station (7, p. 312).

The General Manager is assisted in this task by the Management Committee, which consists of the heads of all departments as indicated on the organization chart (Figure 1). This management staff forms the "top of the list" of who's who in a radio or television establishment; they preside over the administration, engineering, accounts, programmes, news, and commercial departments (7, p. 312).

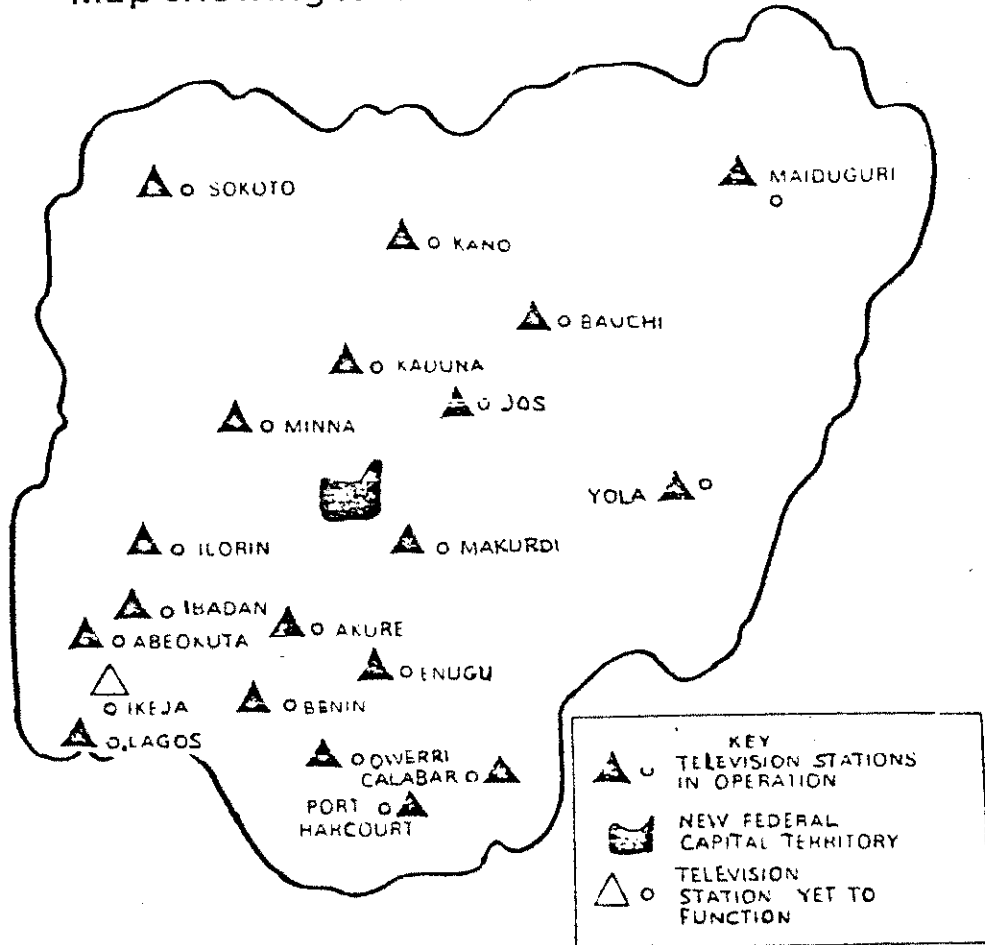
The Nineteen-State NTV Structure

Presently, Nigeria has a total of nineteen television stations. As previously mentioned, all the stations have the same station identification, differentiated only by the name of the capital city of the state in which it is located. Figure 2, a map of Nigeria, illustrates the location and zoning of Nigeria's nationwide television service. Following is a list of the television stations in Nigeria, with some pertinent information about each.

Nigerian Television Ibadan (NTV Ibadan)

NTV Ibadan, Oyo state, is the oldest television station in tropical Africa. It began as a regional station in 1959, using the call letters WNTV (Western Nigeria Television). NTV Ibadan was operated on a joint basis until April 1, 1976, when the Oyo, Ondo, and Ogun states were created out of the Western Region. NTV Ibadan has improved since the federal government's takeover. It now has five powerful transmitters, each of which is capable of transmitting colour pictures. The transmitters are located at Ibadan, Abafon, Idominasi, Iju, and Asileke; there are repeater stations at Ishara, Jobele, Ejigbo, and Effon-Alaye. With these facilities, NTV Ibadan is able to reach the entire states of Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, and Lagos, plus part of Kwara state and the neighboring Republic of Benin, or an approximate total population of fifteen million. NTV Ibadan operates eighty-five urban and community viewing centres (7; 8).

Map showing location of Television Stations



Location of Zones

The Authority has divided the country into six zones in conformity with the provision of the decree establishing it. Each zone is made up of three or four production centres as the stations are also called. These are

1. Zone "A", with its headquarters in Ibadan, made up of NTV Ibadan, Ikeja, and Abeokuta.
2. Zone "B", comprising NTV Benin, Owerri (Aba), Akure and Port Harcourt with Benin as its headquarters.
3. Zone "C", with Enugu as its headquarters, consists of NTV Enugu, Calabar, and Makurdi.
4. Zone "D", made up of NTV Kano, Jos, and Kaduna with Kaduna as its headquarters.
5. Zone "E", comprising NTV Bauchi, Maiduguri, and Yola, with headquarters in Maiduguri.
6. Zone "F", consisting of NTV Sokoto, Minna, and Ilorin, has Sokoto as its headquarters.

Fig. 2--Map indicating location and zoning of Nigeria's nationwide television service (24, p. 11).

Nigerian Television Enugu (NTV Enugu)

NTV Enugu, Anambra state, formerly Eastern Nigeria Television, was the second television station in Nigeria. It began its first transmissions in October, 1960. At the beginning, it was run on a regional basis. NTV Enugu was destroyed during the Civil War of 1967, and it was recommissioned officially in September, 1974. Its signal now covers the states of Anambra, Cross River, Rivers, and Imo (7).

Nigerian Television Kaduna (NTV Kaduna)

NTV Kaduna, Kaduna state, began its first transmissions on March 15, 1962. By August, 1962, this station had extended its signal to Zaria, and in February, 1963, to Kano. Presently, NTV Kaduna transmits all types of programmes including morning and afternoon educational broadcasts for schools, and a special weekly thirty-minute programme, "Focus on Kano State," for Kano viewers (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Lagos (NTV Lagos)

NTV Lagos, Lagos state, was the first station owned and operated by the federal government. It was the fourth pioneer station to be established in Nigeria; it began transmissions on April 1, 1962, on Channel 10. The station has installed a new transmitter at Tejuoso to improve reception conditions in the Lagos area. It also provides facilities for the national network programme broadcasts throughout

Nigeria. A total of 78 per cent of the station's production is local programming. NTV Lagos is able to reach the states of Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, and Kwara with its broadcast signal; it is also the national network station (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Aba/Owerri (NTV Aba/Owerri)

NTV Aba/Owerri, Imo state, is an off-shoot of the former Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Service. It was commissioned in July, 1964, but it was destroyed during the Nigerian Civil War. Reconstruction began before the end of the 1973-1974 financial year. Its signal covers the states of Anambra, Cross River, Rivers, and parts of Ondo and Kwara (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Benin (NTV Benin)

NTV Benin, Benin state, began transmissions in April, 1973. Its signal covers the states of Ondo, Kwara, Anambra, and Imo. NTV Benin is seriously involved in educational broadcasting to schools. It transmits about 70 per cent local programmes (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Jos (NTV Jos)

NTV Jos, Plateau state, began its first transmission in black and white on June 15, 1974. It was the first station to transmit in colour in 1975, and it was also the first to use animation in its programmes. It now has a colour processing, developing, and printing plant. Its signal covers Plateau state and some parts of Kaduna and Kano states (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Port Harcourt
(NTV Port Harcourt)

NTV Port Harcourt, Rivers state, covers the Rivers state and parts of Imo and Cross River states. It started transmissions on December 31, 1974. About 80 per cent of the station's production is local programming (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Sokoto (NTV Sokoto)

NTV Sokoto began transmissions on February 15, 1976, on Channel 3 at Jeredi, Channel 5 at Sokoto, and Channel 9 at Gnsau, thereby covering the entire state of Sokoto. It has the tallest mast (300 meters) in Nigeria. NTV Sokoto broadcasts 74.5 per cent local programmes (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Kano (NTV Kano)

NTV Kano, Kano state, commenced colour transmissions on October 17, 1976. It transmits on Channel 5 at Kano, on Channel 7 at Birnin Kudu, and Channel 8 at Arbus to cover the entire state of Kano and parts of Borno and Bauchi states. The Niger Republic, a neighboring country, also receives its signal (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Maiduguri (NTV Maiduguri)

NTV Maiduguri, Borno state, began transmissions at a temporary site on January 15, 1977. Its first local production test was on Channel 10 on October 14, 1977. Transmissions have increased from half-hour local programmes to seven news programmes. Its signal covers the state capital

and parts of seven local government areas of the state (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Bauchi (NTV Bauchi)

NTV Bauchi, Bauchi state, was established in February, 1977, by the Bauchi State Ministry of Home Affairs and Information to translate programmes from NTV Jos. The station's signal covers a radius of 35 kilometers (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Makurdi (NTV Makurdi)

NTV Makurdi, Benue state, started independent transmissions on Channel 10 on August 15, 1977. It uses the same channel to reach Oturkpo and Gboko (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Ilorin (NTV Ilorin)

NTV Ilorin, Kwara state, started test transmissions on August 23, 1977, from Lagos on Channel 9 through satellite before it went off the air. It recommenced transmissions on October 20 of the same year. It covers nearly five local government areas around the Kwara state capital and parts of neighbouring states. The station produces 76 per cent local programmes (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Yola (NTV Yola)

NTV Yola, Gongola state, is one of the newest stations established by NTA. It started test transmissions in June of 1978, and it operated on Channel 8. Its signal covers

the Jimeta and Yola areas. To a large degree, the station uses programmes from sister stations (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Minna (NTV Minna)

NTV Minna, Niger state, uses a temporary studio at the government secretariat in the Niger state capital. Its skeleton broadcast was on October 12, 1978; it links with the network through satellite, transmitting news and a few discussion programmes from its small studio. Its transmissions are received by a few areas of the Niger state (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Calabar (NTV Calabar)

NTV Calabar, Cross River state, is one of the newest stations established by the NTA. Operating on Channel 9, it began transmissions on November 19, 1978. The station is located at a temporary studio, which has a cubicle for news-casting, an instruments room, a rack room, and a large van for its control operations. The station has a ten-kilowatt transmitter, which is supported by a 100-watt standby transmitter; it also has a relay station. Its signal covers the states of Cross River, Port Harcourt, Aba, Owerri, and parts of Imo and Anambra states (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Abeokuta (NTV Abeokuta)

NTV Abeokuta, Ogun state, is one of the newest stations established by the NTA. It began test transmissions in October, 1979. It has a one-kilowatt transmitter that is

capable of radiating signals within a fifteen-kilometre radius of Abeokuta (7; 8).

Nigerian Television Akure (NTV Akure)

NTV Akure, Ondo state, is also one of the newest stations established by the NTA. It operated in colour on Channel 11, and its signals are received in most parts of Ondo state (7; 8).

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was initiated as an effort in a new direction to provide some historical evidence about the origin and development of television broadcasting in Nigeria. Like its counterpart, radio, television now plays a major role in national development and unity for Nigeria. Also like radio, television shares a common patrimony of political constraints that affect its development.

The history and the development of Nigeria's television, and radio before it, is interwoven with the country's politics. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to trace the evolution of Nigerian broadcasting and to appraise some of the effects of the political, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences on the origin and development of television broadcasting in the country.

It was beyond the scope of this study to undertake a comprehensive, systematic analysis of the Nigerian Television Service. Attempts were made, however, to provide a general background about the degree to which the sociocultural and political changes have shaped television in Nigeria.

Summary

Nigeria has a far more complex system of broadcasting than any other country in the world (4). Although broadcasting developed early in the country's history, it suffered a long and difficult period of development. The specific problems that hindered (and presently, hinder) the development of Nigerian broadcasting are inadequate funding, untrained personnel, and government dissension.

The Nigerian system of broadcasting followed a pattern of development along regional and state interests. Nigeria, unlike most African countries, had no strong national leader to foster national unity. Thus, the expectations that Nigerian radio and television would succeed while its government failed were both naive and unrealistic (4).

The presence of the British in Nigeria contributed to the developing status of the country; they introduced broadcasting to the country as a means to help civilize and educate the people. The early radio (RDS) systems were modeled on the BBC, and they relayed BBC programmes. As the system and national consciousness developed, Nigerians became dissatisfied with the BBC programmes, which they termed "too British" (2). The British introduced local programmes into the system, but the percentage of native programmes was very low, and the Nigerians demanded an indigenous station.

Since criticism persisted, in 1951 the British developed an indigenous broadcasting system in Nigeria. The Nigerian

Broadcasting Service (NBS), the new system, was an arm of the colonial government, and it received financial aid and professional training assistance from the BBC under a post-World War II aid program for the colonies (2).

Nigerian political activity strongly affected its broadcasting. The first Nigerian constitution in 1945 guaranteed regional autonomy, as did the succeeding 1952 and 1954 constitutions. By provision of the 1956 constitution, each of the three Nigerian regions was granted legislative power to make certain regional laws, but the federal government retained exclusive legislative rights over certain areas. Since the federal government did not retain control of broadcasting, the regions decided to establish their own broadcast systems since they felt that the federal system, NBS, was censored by the federal government. In an attempt to assuage the criticism, national broadcasting was incorporated by law in April, 1957, as the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). Unfortunately, neither was NBC totally free from federal government and partisan influence because its birth came at a critical point in Nigeria's political life. NBC could not meet the regions' needs in such a dissentient political atmosphere, and this contributed to the three-tiered (federal, regional, and provincial) broadcasting system in Nigeria (2).

The Western Region of Nigeria was the first to withdraw from the centralized policy of NBC; in 1959, it established its own television station. The decision to establish such

a complex and costly medium (instead of the less-expensive medium, radio) was the result of dissension between the leader of the Western Region, Chief Awolowo, and the federal government. Chief Awolowo and his followers had walked out of parliament in protest against a constitutional debate on the eve, 1959, of Nigeria's independence. The government condemned Awolowo's action over the radio, but they denied Awolowo the right to respond over the radio. The Western Region moved to establish a television station in an attempt to spite the federal government, although, in truth, this move was made more for regional pride or prestige than for a voice in the government (2).

Other regional governments followed the trail that the Western Region blazed with its WNTV station by establishing their own television stations; WNTV was the prototype. All regional stations began in partnership with an overseas company (which was ultimately abandoned), and all regional stations emphasized local programming.

In 1967, at the time of the initial creation of states out of the Nigerian regions, all existing radio and television stations automatically became state stations. The last military regime restructured Nigeria into its present nineteen states in an attempt to alleviate the fears of domination by any ethnic group, and presently there are as many television stations as there are states in Nigeria. Viewing state ownership and control of radio and television as a potential

threat to Nigerian unity, the military regime summoned all state Commissioners of Information in 1968 to discuss the feasibility of establishing a national body to control the electronic media; this national body would be administered by the Federal Military Government (FMG). In the interests of national unity, the Commissioners recommended that radio and television be controlled by the FMG under the supervision of a National Board of Governors. Despite the opposition of the state governments, who felt that they would be denied their only non-controlled voice in the government, the FMG legalized the takeover in 1977 of all radio and television stations. This takeover, however, was modified by the stipulation that only television would be controlled centrally by a national network.

A further effort was made by the FMG to insure the creation of a nationwide, efficient broadcasting service with the establishment of the federal Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) to handle all matters pertaining to television broadcasting in the country. The NTA is charged with the responsibility of providing impartial television broadcasting; it erects, maintains, and operates television transmitting and receiving stations; it plans and coordinates the activities of the entire network. The NTA also established six television zones in order to reflect the diversity of Nigeria's subcultures.

At the time of the takeover, only ten television stations were in operation in Nigeria; the NTA has created nine new stations so that each of the nineteen Nigerian states has its own station. All stations (also called production centres) bear the call signal NTV (Nigerian television) with the addition of the name of the state's capital. The oldest station, formerly WNTV, is now NTV Ibadan, for example.

NTA headquarters is located at Ikoyi in Lagos, from which it supervises the six television zones. Each zone covers three or four states, and each has a chairman and managing director who are responsible for the execution of NTA's policies. The NTA operates five aerostat balloon stations that support electronic transmitting and receiving equipment at altitudes of ten to fifteen thousand feet, providing the advantage of wide radio propagation at television transmitter frequencies. With the aerostat system and the zonal divisions, Nigerian viewers have a wide choice of selections from six channels in addition to the local station. This structure allows and encourages the exchange of programs, which was difficult in the past, and every station contributes news of local and national interest to the NTA network news department in Lagos. All Nigerian stations join the NTA network news at 9:00 p.m. daily for thirty minutes; network current affairs programs are also received by all stations.

As is the case with any young organization, NTA has its problems. One major problem is the lack of sufficiently

trained personnel in the field of information dissemination. As a result, NTA has had to act in an administrative capacity for all nineteen Nigerian television stations. NTA follows the guidelines stipulated by the Nigerian Civil Service in staff recruiting. All applications are forwarded to NTA headquarters in Lagos (soon Abuja) for NTA appointments. Applications for appointments at local levels are sent either to the zonal headquarters or to the station of choice. This process helps to further the understanding among the different ethnic groups; management staff may be asked also to work in any station in the country, and they accept such transfers in the spirit of national unity.

Critics argue that the addition of the television industry into civil service has caused a general relaxation among employees, and that, in the long run, it will result in a lack of creativity and poor programming. Radio and television are institutions whose outputs are creative, innovative, and motivative. If commensuration and promotion are based purely on the mechanics of public service, their operations are bound to reflect the ever existing tendency of non-productivity that characterizes the public service (3). Due to poor management in broadcasting as opposed to other sectors of the economy, staff members at all levels of the television industry are leaving broadcasting to accept employment at many times their civil service salaries.

Broadcasters also feel that their professional standards are being eroded due to rigid government control; this has generated a lot of fear among media executives. A veteran journalist in Nigeria, commenting about the future of journalism in the country, expressed the fear that

. . . journalists will soon become Civil Servants in a situation where 95% of the media houses are government owned. By provision of the new constitution, an employee of a government-owned company is a public servant and hence loyalty is expected of such employees. This results in loyalty to . . . those temporarily in power (6).

The current demands by private individuals, organizations, and state governments to set up and operate television stations in Nigeria is believed by some critics to threaten Nigeria's unity, which is still somewhat unstable. Other critics feel that the present nineteen-state structure of television stations has enabled the central authority, NTA, to influence broadcasting because the stations are financially dependent on the federal government (4). Tribal interests still disrupt the federal government's advancement of Nigerian unity. According to a Nigerian newspaper,

. . . because of our level of development and a yet to be sophisticated, less tribalistic and petty minded pattern of politics, it may be necessary to devise a system suitable for our condition as compared with the advanced nations (4).

The federal government intends to establish a solid foundation of national unity before turning over such a powerful medium as television into private or public hands. They have made this very clear.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn as a result of this study, which addresses itself to the following questions.

1. How did radio, which preceeded television, influence the development and structure of Nigerian television?

Because of the regional partition of Nigeria, the Nigerian Broadcasting System (NBC), which was modeled after the British Broadcasting System (BBC), was not able to develop into a national radio system that could unite and serve the diverse ethnic groups in the country. Even after the regions were granted autonomy, their stations depended completely on the colonial government for financial and staff-training assistance, and Nigerianization of NBC could not be accomplished because of this indirect British influence. As the time for Nigerian independence drew near, radio became a propaganda weapon for the regional governments in much the same way that it had been for the colonial government. The Nigerian radio system faced many problems of which inadequate funding, poor equipment, poor geographical and climatic conditions, insufficiently trained personnel, and the effects of political dissension are a few. These problems still existed at the time television broadcasting began in Nigeria. The regions plunged into television without regard for radio's problems, and without realizing that these problems would be more devastating for television because of its combined audio and visual capabilities. All of these problems, which affected the development

and structure of radio in Nigeria, are, in turn, reflected in the historical development and structure of Nigerian television.

2. Why was the regional partition of television broadcasting a failure in Nigeria?

The British system of government in Nigeria, divide-and-rule, was very similar to the area's historic tribal practices; the British encouraged these ethnic divisions by dividing the country into four regions and encouraging unity along regional lines. When Nigerian television had its premature birth in 1959, it was an attempt by the Western Region to spite federal authority and gain political advantage over other regional governments even though television was a costly toy for a relatively poor country. The other regional governments responded by establishing television stations, and by the 1960s, underdeveloped Nigeria had four virtually useless systems of television broadcasting. Countrywide, the number of television receivers in operation was, at best, minimal. The spirit of national consciousness diminished in the wake of tense regional political activities, and tribal jealousies resurfaced among the three major Nigerian tribes (Hausa, Yoruba, and Ibo). This limited the individual television stations' coverage because it destroyed their willingness and ability to cooperate through an exchange of programs. The political instability of Nigeria during that period is a primary factor in the failure of regional television.

3. How does the present mode of federal government control assist in creating a sense of national unity?

The federal government's decision to create an all-Nigerian television service by reorganizing Nigerian television into zones, as at present, is a step in the right direction. The zonal structure allows and encourages programme exchange among the stations; these programmes depict the diversity of the Nigerian subcultures and encourage mutual understanding. The creation of the Nigerian Television Authority, to oversee all television broadcasting in the country and to establish a countrywide network, allows for consistency in programming in the spirit of national unity.

Although there has been strong opposition from the press and the general public, the government maintains that it has every right to control the activities of the media--in this case, television. The media, however, contend that they have a duty to help shape the government, and that federal control does not allow television to develop its potential or to serve its objectives of creativity and the promotion of national unity. However, since Nigeria's return to civilian rule does not necessarily guarantee the country's political stability, the federal government's decision to control television, especially at this early stage, eases the fear of misuse by any ethnic or tribal group of this powerful medium.

4. After twenty years, "whither Nigerian television?"

Despite the significant progress that Nigerian television

has made over the years (especially in the area of local programming), the problems of availability and the high cost of television receiving sets is neglected by the government. This paucity of receiving sets restrains television from becoming a universal medium in the country. A recent television-set count estimates that only 1.5 million sets (6) are owned or available to a teeming Nigerian population of over 80 million. This amounts to approximately one set for every fifty-three Nigerians, not considering the concentration of sets in urban centers. Only when the majority of Nigerians have access to a television set will it be proper to say that the Nigerian television service is a mass medium.

Whatever the arguments, the future of Nigerian television depends on cooperative efforts at the national and state levels. If cooperation fails at these two levels, Nigerian television broadcasting may be in jeopardy, and this may lead eventually to a repetition of the country's past experiences--the threat of disintegration--which the federal government is fighting to avoid.

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