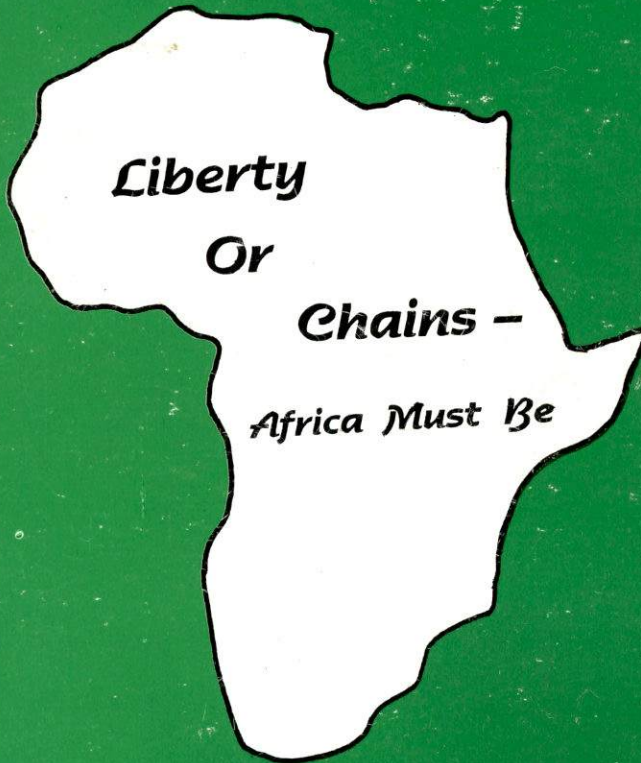


**Understanding Nwafor Orizu:
Selected Reviews
and Commentaries**

ON



The Autobiography of
Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince A. A. Nwafor Orizu

Understanding Nwafor Orizu:
SELECTED REVIEWS AND COMMENTARIES

ON

LIBERTY OR CHAINS --
AFRICA MUST BE

*(The Autobiography of
Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince A. A. Nwafor Orizu)*

Issued by Horizontal Publications

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INTRODUCTION

For long has Nigeria and the world awaited most impatiently for a comprehensive work on the life of Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince Akweke Abyssinia Nwafor Orizu in form of an autobiography, a biography or a compendium of any sort. Before now, no single work aimed at telling us everything about him had been published. What you have scattered in different books and research works at national and international levels are references to his books and some of his educational and political contributions to the development of Nigeria and Africa. Most of these references are very brief, superficial and tend to satisfy only the narrow purposes of the authors and researchers.

Most works on the first coup d'état and the Nigerian Civil War, for instance, do mention or comment on Orizu's historic role as the Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in handing over the leadership of the country to the military, but never in detail.

J. Ayo Langley's *Ideologies of Liberation in Black Africa 1856-1970* (Rex Collings: London, 1979) in No 2 of its Section IV, Youth and Politics or Zikism: The Politics of Youth, touched on the impact of Orizu's first book *Without Bitterness* (Creative Age Press, New York, 1944) on intellectualising post-war Nigerian nationalism. Another book in the African Reader series - *Independent Africa* edited by Wilfred Cartey* and Martin Kilson (Vintage Books New York, 1970) in its Part II: Movement For Independence, extolled Orizu's rôle "between the end of World War II and the late 1950s and early 1960s when the quest for independence intensifies and becomes continental in scope". It classed Orizu as one of the first three promoters of African freedom fighting in Nigeria who opened the vocal and aggressive chapter of the battle, "imbued

*Wilfred Cartey, Professor of comparative literature holds a master's degree and a Ph.D. from Columbia University, while Martin Kilson holds a master's degree and a Ph.D. from Harvard University, where he was a Professor of Government.

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with a fervour born of determination speak out against colonialism and reject its stultifying effect on their people, call for a unified mobilization that will ultimately ensure self-rule and would wrest the land and the people's rights from the surrogate tenancy of the colonial rulers".

These references were among the most elaborate. Though they are big in aspect, they are very limited when one views the vast estate of Orizu's achievements and life's exploits.

Nwafor Orizu has been a household name in Nigeria across sixty years now. He means so many good things to so many people. Even unknown to Orizu, he has been a mentor and a model to many a growing youth aspiring to greater heights in life from subsequent generations. He has political fans and following across the continent, besides the multitude of his direct and indirect beneficiaries. Then you have the intellectuals, historians and media who by their profession and practice "must know". These classes of people and more have been longing for a complete work on the man Nwafor Orizu.

The earliest groundwork on Orizu's life was the first set of manuscripts of this his autobiography then entitled "Before I Die", which was started in 1953. This title alone depicts Orizu's state of mind when circumstances forced him to document something about himself along with his prison memories when he was serving British political sentence. Perhaps, if there was anything one may ever consider good about that British incarceration, it was this. After these years of confinement, Orizu kept away the manuscript and continued with his national works.

Many concerned and good spirited intellectuals had severally indicated their interests in writing Orizu's biography and some big publishing houses made such offers right from Orizu's days in America in early 1940s, including John Day Publishing House of Miss Pearl Buck - a nobel prize winner. Orizu was lukewarmly disposed to such proposals.

These account for the way Orizu's autobiography "*Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be*," was being heralded by all since it was published in 1995. The response of the Federal and State governments

and the people of Nigeria on the occasion of the launching of the book on April 24, 1997 as planned by Horizontal Publishers in association with the Launching Committee was most impressive. We remain grateful.

A collection of reviews and commentaries on the book and the authors has been filtered along the line. Peculiarly, these reviews are out of the way of the stereotyped classroom book review techniques. They are generally incisive and tend to interpret and analyse deeper the personality and works of the author. The publishers consider it injustice to withhold any longer this resumé from the public.

Nothing more need be said, for according to the chairman of the launching ceremony, His Excellency Alhaji Shehu Shagari (former Executive President of Nigeria), in the address with which he declared the occasion open, "to attempt to either describe the book or the author will tantamount to writing another book". Coincidentally, it is with this Chairman's opening address that the publishers decided to open this collection.

*From the Publishers Desk.
October, 1998.*

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APPRECIATION

The Launching Committee of the book – *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* extends its profound gratitude to all the people whose collective effort brought the launching of the book to a success.

Our appreciation goes to the Federal Government of Nigeria which was ably represented by a high-powered delegation led by Maj. Gen. Edward Ushie Unimna and accompanied by some federal ministers and presidential advisers. We also remember the role of the chairman of the occasion on April 24, 1997, His Excellency Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari (Turakin Sokoto), the former president and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Also to the Anambra State government represented by the former military administrator His Excellency Group Captain Rufai D. Garba who was also the chief host of the occasion with generous donation. Our gratitude goes to the military administrators and state governments of Imo, Abia, Enugu and Ondo who were variously represented by the secretaries of their state governments each with generous contribution; to the Nnewi North local government which helped in the prelaunching and launching preparations, we say thank you.

We commend and appreciate the highly intellectualised expose of the dedicated reviewers, whose works form the bulk of this collection. They really played a great part in the pre-launching, launching and post-launching success of the book nationally and internationally.

Our thanks go to friends and admirers who responded to us and made generous donations. We specially mention the chief launcher Prince Engr. Arthur Eze (Ezen'ukpo), Mr. C. M. Ibeto, Chief (Sir) Chika A. Okafor, Chief Dr. Alex Ekwueme, Chief Ngozi V. Mbadiwe, Dr. Laz. Unogu, Maj. Gen. Sam Momah, Chief Emma Bishop Okonkwo, H.R.H. Obi Ofulue of Ubulukwu.

Others are Chief Richard Okechukwu, former Chairman Nnewi South Local Government, H.R.H. Igwe P. C. Ezenwa, (Ezeokpoko I of Oba), the Ezeogune Royal Family, Chief Christian Atuegwu, Chief Innocent S. N. Okafor, Chief Innocent Chukwuma, His Excellency Brigadier (Dr.) Mobolaji O. Johnson (Rtd), former Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Nasir Obajji (Lebanese), Engr. Ajulu Uzodike, Mr. A. I. Elochukwu, Chief Eugene N. Ojukwu, Barr. Enumah, Chief Mike Ilodibe, Chief J. Onyejebu, Dr. J. C. Muogbo, Chief L. C. Amazu and many others whose names are published in the register.

The Committee is specially grateful to His Excellency, Dr. P. C. Ezeife – first Executive Governor of Anambra State, His Excellency, Dr. Ogbonnaya C. Onu, first Executive Governor of Abia State whose presence graced the occasion.

We also thank our royal fathers: His Royal Highness Igwe K. O. N. Orizu – the Igwe of Nnewi, His Highness Obi Nnamdi Obi – Obi of Uruagu, His Highness Chief Z. B. C. Okafor – Obi of Umudim, and His Highness Chief J. H. O. Onyekaba – Obi of Nnewichi: Others are His Royal Highness Igwe Silas Ezenwa of Awkaetiti, Igwe P. N. Anugwu of Mbaikwu, Igwe Austin Ezenwa of Abagana, Igwe F. F. B. C. Nwankwo of Nawfia.

We thank the entire people from all walks of life in the country whose presence and support made the 24th day of April 1997 an unforgettable day of success in presenting such a valuable autobiography which traced in some details the story of struggles, failures and successes of the founding fathers of this nation.

Signed:

Mr. C. M. Ibeto

Chairman, Launching Committee

Other Launching Committee members include: Dr. B. U. C. Aghazu, Sir Goddy Agbasi, Mr. Chude Akus, Ms Obianuju E. Nwafor-Orizu, Hon. John Nnia Nwodo (Jnr), Chief P. C. Chigbo (late), Ms Jaanna Udunna Nwafor-Orizu, Ms Esomeju Nwafor-Orizu.

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OPENING ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, HIS EXCELLENCY ALHAJI SHEHU SHAGARI AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE BOOK *LIBERTY OR CHAINS – AFRICA MUST BE* BY RT. HON. DR. PRINCE A. A. NWAFOR ORIZU ON THURSDAY APRIL 24, 1997

Your Excellency, representative of the Head of State
Your Excellency, the Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince A. A. Nwafor Orizu
Your Excellency, Dr. Alex Ekwueme, former Vice President
Your Excellency, our host, Group Captain Rufa'i D. Garba, the Military Administrator of Anambra State.
Honourable Commissioners
Our lords spiritual and temporal
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here in Nnewi once again after so many years. It is my pleasure to honour a very very distinguished Nigerian who had played great part in the annals of Nigerian history. He is no doubt the most politically talented Nigerian nationlist of their time alive today.

After the demise of great Zik of Africa last year, there is no other Nigerian who can proudly hold his head so high to satisfactorily occupy the eminent position of a pioneer Nigerian nationalist, educationist and politician. We must recognise his role of leadership in our demand for freedom and knowledge.

The legendary Dr. The Rt. Hon. Prince Nwafor Orizu has spoken eloquently of how his works and dreams for the freedom of Africa and Nigeria in particular came through, some of which are elucidated in his work which we are about to launch today.

As Chairman of this occasion, I need not elaborate on the book. For me to attempt to either describe the book or the author will tantamount to writing another book. **This task is by no means easy**

for anyone. For that, I grant it is the job of the reviewers and commentators who have taken up the job of immortalising the works and lives of famous men and women.

This famous old man, Nwafor Orizu, born to this famous old continent Africa, married to this famous young maiden Nigeria is what the book *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* is all about.

I declare the launching of this great book *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* by Rt. Hon. Prince Akweke Abysinia Nwafor Orizu formally open.

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**REVIEW BY HIS EXCELLENCY
CHIEF DR. ALEX IFEANYICHUKWU EKWUEME,
FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

"History of men is made by God. We have no history except that which destiny has contrived. Fools, when they appear successful tend to arrogate their success unto their own power and genius. No man is self-made".

Orizu: *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be*, pp. 511, 512.

Notwithstanding the above statement, the story of Akweke Abyssinia Nwafor Orizu is, in the main, the story of a self-made man.

That no man's land between western civilization and traditional culture; that transition period from animism to christianity with neither claiming clear supremacy; that was the period into which Nwafor Orizu was born in 1920 officially; but from all other accounts somewhat earlier than that. He was born into the Orizu royal family – a hybrid between the traditional rulership of Nnewi and the colonial warrant chief system of artificially imposed indirect rule in Eastern Nigeria. There was then no uniform system for selection of warrant chiefs in Eastern Nigeria. In some cases, precocious hooligans and rascals who came forward on the arrival of the colonial administrators were appointed; in some other cases acknowledged spokesmen of the people irrespective of their family origin were selected; in yet

other cases selection was made from the "head family" of the communities based on perceived competence of the appointee. However, in the case of Nnewi, unusual for Igboland, the principle of primogeniture prevailed with the traditional rulership and the warrant chieftaincy cohering in one person and passing down on his demise to his eldest male issue.

It was into such a family, mightily polygamous with eighty wives but, surprisingly, without a commensurate number of children, that Nwafor was born. Into a society that was steeped in superstition, his birth was foretold so that "people would know of you and your name would be on the lips of everybody".

Starting his education at the "palace" with private tutors after the manner of European royalty, Orizu saw his world collapse on him with the death of his father in 1924, whereupon his eldest brother, an inexperienced first-year secondary school student ascended the throne. Thereafter it was "to your tents O Isreal" as life became "a struggle for existence, of hard life, insecurity and courageous affront on life ... Some mothers left the palace with their sons a year or two after father died."

Within six years, that is by 1930, "there was not a single woman who has a male child for my father that was left in the compound. Each woman and her male child had been forced out of the palace" because of the conduct of a "graceless and ungrateful brother who was not content with enjoying the wealth of my father which he did not accumulate but was bent on destroying all the good symbols and sign posts of adoration and glory cherished and left by a great traditional ruler." Such are the uses of polygamy; such are the ills of primogeniture.

From private tutorials at the palace, Orizu went to the Kindergaten School at St. Thomas' Akwudo Otolu Nnewi; to the CMS Central School at Nkwo Nnewi; then to the CMS Central School, Onitsha; and back to the Central School Nnewi; then again back to Central School Onitsha for one year; and finally back to the Central School Nnewi in 1931 for the final year of his elementary education. Such endeavour in the quest for education, including two years' "exile" from his own father's compound while living in Nnewi and attending

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the Nnewi Central School, must have served to focus the indispensability of education in the preparation of any great life.

At this early age, as Chairman of the School Government Committee, Captain of the School 1st Eleven Football team and Staff Paymaster of the School, visible signs of leadership potentialities had already emerged. He completed his elementary education in December 1931. It is an irony of fate that it is the selfsame leadership qualities which he exhibited at that early age which robbed him of the opportunity of having a regular secondary school education at Uzuakoli Methodist College to which he has been admitted. His headmaster needed his continued assistance in the administration of Central School Nnewi, and with his mother's support arranged for him to start school as a Pupil Teacher under him in June 1932 with the promise that he would be helped to proceed to Awka (Teachers') College after three years of teaching. Such are the "strings and arrows of outrageous fortune".

In 1935, with the promise of Awka College still unfulfilled, Orizu found himself transferred to far away Central School Ubulu-Ukwu across the Niger. He then decided to prepare privately for the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, supplementing his private studies with private tutorials from L. M. Uzodike, later Bishop on the Niger (now retired) and the legendary Mbonu Ojike, better known later as the "Boycott King" but then a tutor at the Dennis Memorial Grammar School Onitsha, about thirty kilometres away. From Ubulu-Ukwu to Ihiala and then to Onitsha, his career as a pupil teacher continued side by side with his private studies culminating in his sitting for and passing the Cambridge Senior School Certificate examinations in December 1936. His transfer to Central School Onitsha in 1937 provided him the opportunity to meet Zik; something that might not have happened had he been a student at Awka College or Methodist College Uzuakoli. The attendance at a Zik public lecture and the meeting with Zik, then only 32 and just back to Nigeria from the Gold Coast (Ghana) after a successful educational sojourn in America, was a great inspiration to the young Orizu. He told Zik: "Yes Sir, I listened to your lecture the other day. I want to be like you".

To be like Zik, Orizu made up his mind to go to America for further studies. After several false starts and disappointments, he travelled in early 1939 as the last of "THE EIGHT ARGONAUTS" going to America to win the "GOLDEN FLEECE" (others were: Mbonu Ojike, Etuka Okala, Nnodu Okongwu, Nwankwo Chukwuemeka, Okechukwu Ikejiani, George Mbadiwe and Kingsley Mbadiwe). He enrolled at Lincoln University where he reunited with some of the other "Argonauts" and met Kwame Nkrumah. But Lincoln was too limited for the young Orizu and he quickly moved over to Ohio State University in the Midwest, the first African to do so, and from where he obtained his first degree, a BA in Political Science, in August 1942.

At Ohio State, in the thick of the Second World War, and as the first African student to enrol there, he had the opportunity, in addition to his studies, to be an itinerant lecturer on Africa and, in doing so, America was mightily influenced by him and he in turn was mightily influenced by America. According to him:

"To reach and stimulate the human mind in Africa through education: to make it believe in the vision of progress became one of the ideas which possessed and used me".

He came under the influence of the Marcus Garvey movement, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which he translated to "African Irredentism".

"From henceforth the idea of 'Africa for the Africans' in the sense that our continent should be controlled, developed and governed by Africans became crystalized in my mind. And I could not think of any other way to accomplish this except through education".

To bring Africans to study became for Orizu at once a consuming passion and an obsession. From Columbus, Ohio, Orizu moved in 1942 to Columbia University New York to give him greater opportunity for the wider contacts provided by the international milieu that existed around Columbia. To further the educational programme for Africa, Orizu established the American Council on African

Education (ACAE) which attracted scholarships for African students in American universities starting with Columbia. He also published, in 1944, his special work "*Without Bitterness*" which has been described as "The African Bible," aimed at educating America about Africa. There in New York the African Students Association of United States and Canada came into full bloom, with its magazine the "*African Interpreter*", moulding in the minds of the young student members, the dream of an independent and glorious African continent.

In between studies at Columbia, Orizu traversed the length and breadth of America, at his own expense, in search of scholarships for ACAE. He was largely successful and after obtaining an MA from Columbia University, he decided to return to Nigeria, arriving Lagos on 20 November, 1945 after a little over six years' absence from the country.

Returning to Nigeria at a crucial period in the incipient struggle against colonialism, with the relatively successful Nigerian general strike and the end of the Second World War, Orizu immediately got immersed in the political education of Nigerians on the twin planks of Horizontal Education and African Irredentism. Horizontal Education imported a broad-based (horizontal) approach to education in contradistinction to the narrow specialist (perpendicular) approach. The synchrony in pronunciation between the ORIZO of hORIZOntal education and ORIZU the name of the apostle and proponent of the philosophy was not lost on Nigerians. It was not mere coincidence but a divine accident!

The promotion of this philosophy involved travelling around Nigeria and giving public lectures. The first lecture which took place on 26 November, 1945, only six days after Orizu's return to Nigeria, was on the subject "Horizontal Education and African Irredentism". This lecture immediately earned Orizu the sobriquet "Horizontal". Incidentally it was at this time that I first had the pleasure of meeting Orizu. Two of our teachers at King's College in 1945 were Nnewi sons – Messrs Robert Onyejepu and Clement Odunukwe. It was they who brought Orizu to look around King's College. We were then at our temporary site at Onikan since the Armed Forces were

occupying our permanent college site at Race Course (now Tafawa Balewa Square) for the duration of the war – in fact until 1947.

After touring Nigeria – East, West and North – for over six months, the ACAE was formally established in Nigeria, with headquarters in Port Harcourt, on 26 July, 1946. Branches were established in some other major cities in Nigeria including Lagos, Aba, Calabar, Onitsha, Enugu, Kano, Jos, Gusau, Zaria, Minna and Ijebu Ode. In February 1947, barely six months after, the first batch of 10 ACAE scholars were on their way. In my key note address to the annual convention of the World Igbo Congress held in Los Angeles on 7 October, 1995, I had stated as follows:

“One of the principal catalysts that helped to translate the desire for American higher education into reality for many young Igbo people was Dr. Nwafor Orizu who, through his American Council on African Education (ACAE) provided initial sponsorship for many young Nigerians to pursue higher education in the United States. From about 1948 onwards, what used to be a trickle became almost a deluge....”

Although there does not appear to be any accurate record of the exact number of ACAE scholarships that were actually utilized, it is recorded that the scholarships, initially 150 in number, were increased to 431 after Orizu’s further two years sojourn in America between 1947 and 1949 during which he re-established and consolidated the ACAE in America and purchased a hostel in New York for the students. There was no doubt then that the foundation for horizontal education had been truly and firmly laid.

Returning to Nigeria for the second time in 1949, Orizu went out full blast into the colonial struggle, suffering a 21-day house arrest because of his speech to Enugu coal miners. An attempt by the British colonial commissioner to woo him with an offer of appointment as a nominated member of the colonial Legislative Council was rebuffed.

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In 1951 he was elected First Member for Onitsha Division in the newly constituted Eastern House of Assembly under the prevailing electoral college system.

He was instrumental in organising the motley crowd of independently elected candidates into party members of the NCNC controlled colonial government. Declining a ministerial position as Regional Minister of Local Government, Orizu opted for a position as Chief Whip in the Eastern House with concurrent membership of the (Central) House of Representatives which was then constituted from members of the Regional Houses of Assembly.

Within two years, that is in 1953, a crisis erupted in the Eastern House of Assembly. There was no doubt that Orizu, because of the insensitivity of the Eastern Regional Government to the problems of higher education in terms of reasonable budgetary allocation, was one of the engineers of this crisis. Besides, he was in support of Zik who had been manoeuvred out of Leadership of Government Business in the Western House of Assembly of which Lagos, his constituency, was then a part, returning to Eastern Nigeria to take up leadership. Orizu's espousal of these ideas, his successful dethronement of the "sit-tight" ministers and his embarrassing and uncompromising confrontation with the colonial governor, Sir Clement Pleas, marked him out and made it imperative that he should be incarcerated and put out of circulation for a while, especially as he had been nominated to take over the strategic and sensitive position of Minister of Local Government.

But Orizu returned to the scene in September 1957 and was thereafter granted a free pardon. He immediately plunged himself headlong into his enduring love – education. His Nigeria Secondary School Nnewi was opened in January 1959, barely a year after his release.

The federal elections of December 1959 once more proved to be a diversion for Orizu from his immersion in the task of educational development. The results of that election and the non-emergence of a nationally accepted leader like Nehru in India or Nkrumah in neighbouring Ghana was a big disappointment to Orizu. He supported the NPC/NCNC coalition as against an NCNC/AG coalition. He was

first appointed a "First Class Chief" for Onitsha Province with a Seat in the Eastern House of Chiefs, a position which he had not taken up before he was appointed a Senator with Zik as the President of the Senate. He served on Nigeria's first delegation to the United Nations after independence. When Zik became Governor-General on 16 November, 1960, Osadebay took over from him as President of the Senate and when Osadebay in turn moved to the newly created Midwestern Region as Administrator/Premier in 1963, Orizu became President of the Senate.

It was from this position that Orizu was sworn in as Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 16 October, 1965 when Zik travelled overseas on a health trip. He served in this capacity for three months, that is, until the first military coup d'état of 15 January, 1966 when, just before midnight, he formally handed over "the administration of the country to the armed forces of the Republic of Nigeria with immediate effect."

What lessons can we learn from this account of forty six, perhaps fifty years of the life of Orizu; a life packed with action, with its ups and downs, its mountains and valleys, its lights and its shadows, its joys and its sorrows? First, that our founding fathers, especially those of them exposed to American education, thought mostly in continental terms. They saw themselves largely as representatives of Africa rather than of Nigeria or of their regions. Secondly, they were not miserly in preaching the gospel of African freedom through the printed word – Zik's *"Liberia in World Politics"* and later *"Renascent Africa"*; Orizu's *"Without Bitterness"*, Ojike's *"I Have Two Countries"*; Mbadiwe's *"Axis Aims in Africa"* etc. – all these books were published in their early youth, sometimes while still at university as undergraduates or shortly after obtaining their degrees. And thirdly, the continental canvas within which they dreamed and saw visions contrasted sharply with the national, regional and ethnic undergirding and the problems on the ground. This contrast generated a dilemma of sorts.

In the particular case of Orizu, this dilemma appears to have remained largely unresolved thereby evoking a visionary, almost

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unrealistic approach to the problems which have confronted and which currently still confront Nigeria.

Orizu's support for Zik's relocation to the East in 1953 remains controversial. How different would the history of Nigeria have been if Eyo Ita had been allowed to soldier on in Enugu after Zik was sidelined in the West, especially in relation to Eastern Nigerian solidarity?

Another controversial posture was the support Orizu gave after the 1959 elections to an NPC/NCNC coalition as opposed to an NCNC/AG coalition. How would the history of Nigeria have evolved if Zik had been Prime Minister of Nigeria after the 1959 elections with the NPC in opposition? Would there still have been a Nigeria today?

But perhaps by far the most controversial of Orizu's decisions was his handling of the January 15, 1966 coup d'etat culminating in the handing over of the administration of the country to the Armed Forces. Should he have gone ahead to appoint another NPC Prime Minister (as he was empowered by the 1963 Republican Constitution to do) and accept the proffered assistance of the two foreign powers to keep the then relatively small Nigerian Armed Forces in check? Should the feeling of nationalism and touted respect for Nigeria's sovereignty have prevailed over the need to sustain democracy? And having decided to hand over to the Armed Forces, should they have been given a *carte blanche* or should they not have been constrained by specific guidelines and within an agreed time-frame during which to restore order and hand back government to elected civilians whose tenure would be deemed to have been *suspended* for the duration of the military interregnum?

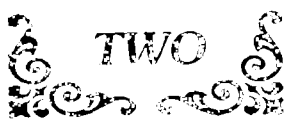
These are very engaging questions for consideration. It is of course, now quite easy to consider these matters *ex post facto* and with the benefit of hindsight to pontificate on their pros and cons. But a fair assessment would obviously have to be based on a consideration of the various scenarios as the occasion demanded at the time and on the basis of information and analysis then available. It should also be borne in mind that for some of the situations calling for decisions, there had been no precedents from which to draw.

Over thirty years have now passed since 1966 when this biographical narrative ended. We have been promised a second volume of the autobiography covering this period – perhaps to October 1, 1998. We expect to hear about the Civil War and Biafra; the long period of military rule which has dominated our post-colonial history and which started with the short handing over address before midnight on January 15, 1966. We expect to hear about Orizu's role in installing the elected civilian interregnum of 4 years and 3 months which constituted the Second Republic and his position on the other short 82-day civilian interregnum that was the Interim National Government, and which followed the annulment of the June 12, 1993 elections; and so on.

"Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be" should be compulsory reading for all Nigerians, indeed all Africans, who wish to draw inspiration from a life of selfless altruistic service to one's motherland.

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**COMMENTS BY MR. D. S. MIRANI
(PRESIDENT, INDIAN COMMUNITY IN
NIGERIA)**

The *'Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be'* an autobiography is great reading. I am very incompetent to hold any reviews on this great book.

I shall synthesise the book into ^{to} following sections for comprehensive understanding.

1. His early life and departure to USA
 2. His USA epilogue
 3. Post USA act at Nigerian stage.
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1. Orizu's early life in several chapters is a great eulogy to African culture, family, kinship, likes, dislikes, obligations and responsibilities of every one in the society. All the chapters are unique and they explain in details the social structure and cultural codes existing in African societies from time immemorial. I cannot believe his excellent art and command of language whereby he described the entire social structure of the society while telling us his early life. Great!
 2. Orizu's entire stay at USA was perpetual struggle for one or other African cause and core of his success lies in his total honesty and complete devotion towards the purpose. All of his

achievements, against all odds, were commendable but each time he paid the price by way of personal sacrifice which shows his personal dedication to African cause and there will be very few people to match him when it comes to sacrifice. My hats off to him.

I wish that Nigeria as a Nation should acknowledge Orizu's honesty and sacrifices in the field of education and struggle for independence and engrave his name with golden words in archives of history.

3. On the pages of his autobiography, there is mention to so many people who had left their marks on his personality but I would single out few who stand as main contributors towards Orizu's philosophy and reasoning.
- (a) *Hon. Zik*: His impact is total and profound on Nwafor Orizu's personality and I find him as Zik's most loyal, devoted and trusted associate. The insight he has given to readers to most of the events including behind the scene during pre and post independence period, will stay as a part of Nigerian History and Orizu's name will shine, as ever, along with other compatriots.
 - (b) *Gandhi and Nehru*: I proudly find their indirect influence on Orizu's very many activities and utterances. The experience of Indians for their independence from British masters enabled Nigerian leaders to evade the trap of game of divide and rule played by Britishers.
 - (c) *Kwame Nkrumah*: Orizu considered him as founder of African nationalism in the twentieth century and in Orizu's views, Hon. Zik and Nkrumah were the true stalwarts of black race. Orizu was able to identify the problems of black race which paradoxically were psychological and his life history reveals in details the efforts he took to break this 'inferiority complex' – complex. The history of this nation would have been quite different, had Orizu not been totally devoted to Hon. Zik despite various personal

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disadvantages and temptations. Orizu was honest and pure as crystal and this particular aspect dominates his entire life and struggle for black race. I wish Nigeria had many more Orizus!

I was deeply moved with the prologue – My fountain of happiness. It is the best lesson for all human beings in this material world. If Orizu's life is a symbol of this philosophy, he is indeed, an African Gandhi.



**REVIEW BY DR. MICHAEL S. O. OLISA
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA NSUKKA**

This is a long-awaited book: an autobiography of Rt. Hon. Dr. Akweke Abyssinia Nwafor Grizu, one of the leading founding fathers of the Nigerian nation and also one of the frontline pan-African nationalists whose ideas and activism traversed American and African continents in the days when the black race faced heavy barriers and humiliations of racism everywhere. *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* comes out fifty years (1944-1994) after the publication of *Without Bitterness*, Orizu's second but biggest book expounding African irredentism and the destined proud role of the black man in the world. The mystery of why Orizu's autobiography or even biography has waited as long as fifty years to come out needs not divert attention now, but we must take immediate cognisance of the significance of the man in Nigeria and Africa.

The author returned to Nigeria in 1945 after about six years study in United States of America the period in which he met almost all other prominent Africans and Nigerians who were later to be pioneer nationalists, pan-Africanists and founding statesmen of their individual countries. These experiences are recorded in some detail in several of the twenty eight chapters of this monumental work.

The fifty years which passed before the coming of Orizu's autobiography were not years of leisure or without events. On the contrary they were years fully packed with events of numerous

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categories and dimensions, years of consistent and crowded writing, politics, administration, organisation of trans-continental non-profit humanitarian educational programmes which many contemporary governments cannot cope with. It is the contents of these panoramic half century that have indeed become the contents of this nearly six-hundred-page volume of far-reaching importance. This point is further buttressed by the author's seven other books and monographs which came out during this crowded productive period; they are *Without Bitterness* itself (1944); *Give me a Black Man* (1981); *Education and Moral Excellence* (1983); *Insight into Nigeria* (1983); *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (1986); *Africa Speaks* (1990); and *The Leadership We Want* (1993). Before them there was *Horizontal Education* (1943).

For Nwafor Orizu and many other pioneer pan-Africanists, nationalists and founders of today's African States, whether his contemporaries (like Nkrumah, Senghor, Nyerere, Sekou Toure, Azikiwe, Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Balewa to name a few) or his mentors (like Marcus Garvey, William Du Bois, Edward Blyden etc.) the dreams which they shared about political and economic development of Africa, recorded in their untiring writing and numerous personal publications, will forever remain the proudest, most colourful and most inspiring vistas of the history of the continent.

Unfortunately for these patriotic pioneers their dreams and visions have not metamorphosed into politically-virile and economically-prosperous African nations epitomising the African personality, the negritude, the irredentism, the resurgimento, and the black power that featured their dreams and visions.

Those pioneers who have died since the 1960s have been saved the agony of being witnesses to the present appalling states of virtually all African states; those like Nwafor Orizu who are still alive suffer alone the double agony of one, living with collapse of their dreams and visions in almost all African states and two, bearing the agony alone because few of us present generation can to any meaningful degree understand what the pioneers went through and are going through.

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Their present despair has come through three stages – dreamers, achievers and disillusioned patriots. Their dreams and visions structured the great (renascent) Africa of the future; they thought that they had triumphed with African political independence in which they became rulers and statesmen and in several instances laboured to concretise their visions: they nose-dived into agonising despair when African states relapsed into their present deplorable conditions of mass poverty resulting from inflation and debt-ridden economies, political turbulence and international marginalisation. Orizu summed up the pioneers' despair on page 532 of *Liberty or Chains*:

“As we were moving towards the East, I was troubled in my mind about the fate of our great men who worked very hard in founding this nation – who were undeservedly gunned down I was most unhappy man looking at Mother Nigeria in agony in the hands of those whom we liberated from the bondage of imperialism.”

He was heading for his home town Nnewi after handing over, as Acting President, the government of Nigeria to the military. From that moment, Nigeria drifted continuously from bad to worse till this day.

Coming to the main features of this book, the first to note is that three chapters: “Ideas that used me” (Chapter 14), “The Nigeria that I Met” (Chapter 18), “The Nigeria That We Must Change” (Chapter 21) constitute three pillars on which the intellectual strength and message of the book were constructed. The Nigeria that Orizu met when he returned with his golden fleece of University degrees in 1945 was summed up on page 332:

There were slums in abundance and people took it for granted.... There were underpaid African civil servants who were trained to believe that “senior service” post was special right of a European employee while to an African a privilege..... Political parties were yet incoherent. Tribalism was in ascendancy.”

To a dreamer of African irredentism who had come home to face his self-appointed mission, what he met was a plethora of problems

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monumental enough to daunt even the most dauntless spirit. Like his nationalist contemporaries he plunged into the stream of Nigerian public life, tackling all the problems simultaneously with the magic wand of nationalism and politics. In this superhuman venture Orizu continued to draw strength from the ideas that used him, mainly the visionary ideas and programmes of the Maverick, Marcus Garvey and described at length in the chapter, "Ideas that used me" (pages 238-241) and Azikiwe message to him: "Do not lose hope, Africa needs you" (page 113). According to Orizu, "It was this sentence (Azikiwe's) that wrought the miracle in my life" (page 113).

The third pillar of this book, "The Nigeria We Must Change" is where the author obviously found a most slippery enterprise. He recorded in the late 1940s that food was plenty and cheap and Government's lack of productive agricultural policy was not a disaster for the masses. Unfortunately he is still alive today when the price of the cheapest staple food is beyond the reach of the poor. He regretted (page 397) in the same 1940s that:

Personal sacrifice and spiritual mysticism were not essential features of Nigerian Nationalism. Actual identification of the leaders with the poor and the dejected is carefully avoided in practice by Nigerian leaders.

Orizu now shares with his countrymen the tragedy of a richly-endowed nation massively corrupted and impoverished by successions of its political leaders since its independence in 1960. The political class he denounced in the 1940s would be saints when placed side by side with the political class still bleeding the country to complete immobility.

If Orizu has not even now turned his face away from the degenerate Nigerian polity (as one of the ancient philosophers did to his own depraved polity) it is because of a common attitude of mind shared by almost all the pioneer Africanists and nationalist founders of the present African states. This attitude is their philosophical (indeed spiritual) ever-optimistic and universalistic man-based interpretations, projections and prescriptions about African political and economic development. This phenomenon explains

Orizu's unwavering belief in his "African irredentism", a reawakening of the African man through education, and his upliftment and enrichment, materially and spiritually, through the liberation of his intellect. It is no wonder that in all the turbulence and calm of his political activities in Nigeria he gave a lot of energy and attention to his baby, the American Council on African Education which in spite of cynicism, misunderstandings and operational problems, produced for Nigeria an array of top flight graduates from USA who excelled in their various vocations in Nigeria and thereby contributed enormously to Nigerian development. Both the ACAE and its fruits in Nigeria are described in detail in chapter 17 of this book.

This book is more than an autobiography of a great statesman and scholar. It is an epitome of life-long visions, commitment and optimism of a pan-Africanist and national patriot whose faith in natural endowments and capacities of his fellow Africans never faulted in spite of monumental failures in African political leadership and development. His optimism is not dimmed (see the Prologue and Epilogue of this book) hence the book's acute title *Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be*: his tremendous intellectual endowments are ever active and productive, hence his untiring writing ability.

For the present generation of educated Nigerians, millions of who shared or are knowledgeable of the author's experiences and thoughts, *Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be* Should be a refreshing reminder of what they have done, what they have not done and what they should do. For other Africans and non-Africans with general and research interests in Africa it should be a source of valuable materials and interpretations of the African dilemma.

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COMMENTS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. OSOGONNAYA ONU
FORMER EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR, ABIA STATE

This is the story of the fifth son of an Igbo Monarch, who was the tenth Nigerian to study in the United States of America. He later became Nigeria's first citizen, at a critical moment, in the history of the nation. He showed courage and wisdom at a time that they mattered most.

He is a man of destiny, who knows what he wants and how to go about it. He shows the limitless capacity of the human mind. He dreamt dreams and through self discipline, hard work and determination, was able to overcome many obstacles and realise his ambition.

He starts from the periphery and at critical moments, works himself to the centre of activity, where he offers service above self. A loyal follower, a good leader, who loves his people and wants the best for them.

This is a story of the triumph of hope over despair, initiative, dynamism and resourcefulness over complacency.

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COMMENTS BY
NDUBA CHUKWUMA ECHEZONA
POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA NSUKKA

This book unmasks some of those hidden attributes of Dr. Akwaeke Abyssinia Nwafor-Orizu which might be why he has so far been unsung, in the manner in which those who might have seen themselves in the same stature as him, were. He was not just a politician which in the Nigerian framework receives those dismissive attributes of the wave of the hand, an indication that they are not a lot that can be taken seriously. In fact, he is more of an intellectual than a politician and in a country in which those who beat their tom tom as a good number of Nigerian politicians are, an intellectual-cum-politician is likely to be relegated to the back burner because he would not ordinarily allow his heart to rule his head.

"Liberty or Chains – Africa must be" is a book which students of politics, sociology, anthropology and the humanities as a whole should read. Each chapter, weaves all these in a way that leaves the reader always on his toes – his upbringing in his father's palace in Nnewi (Anaedo clan), the incredibly large polygamous family, his father's early death and his confrontation with the harsh realities of life albeit under a very hard working mother whom he adores. After his father's death, our hero was undaunted as he sought to capture the essence of western civilization through knowledge. In him, we are likely to see images of our own struggles too. The

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high point in these struggles is his meeting Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He later departed for the United States, got enamoured with American education and thus steeled his determination to ensure that other Nigerians did so too.

What marks out this autobiography as the work of an exegesis is the style and language. They satisfy the requirements of academic literature and at the same time those of an average reader who could be amused by Zik's fall while dancing at a reception honouring Orizu's return from the United States or even the menu at the reception which included "anu tolotolo eyeeye na mmanu opapa".

It is very good that Dr. Orizu brought out this book at this time which I believe, gives us just a peep into his multifarious achievements. It is likely to sensitise a knowledgeable Nigerian public into a discourse as to why such an illustrious son, such a super nationalist, such a disciplined mind has not been elevated into a place in history reserved for people such as he.

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**REVIEW BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. C. P. EZEIFE (OKWADIKE)
FORMER EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR
ANAMBRA STATE**

This book, *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be*, confirms the place of the Right Honourable Dr. Nwafor Orizu. He belongs to that group – the group of the very few. You know them by the elegance of their physique, their amazonian intellect, prodigious memory, childlike humility, occasional childlike behaviour and the rare longevity to which they carry all these and other special qualities. These are the sons of God, who appear to be made one by one, while the rest of us humans, are mass-produced, or, as Orizu wrote about Mgbugo, one of the eighty wives of his potentate father, they are “those few human beings coined by the master artist among gods and not by the apprentices”. To these qualities, we must add Orizu’s princely birth and royal upbringing.

Thus, God prepared Orizu from the cradle for the mission He set for him: to be Africa’s Ambassador plenipotentiary and extraordinary – illuminating the Dark Continent for the American peoples, their Government and the World, firing the minds of young Africans with American comprehensive education, zestful self-expression and mind-over-matter conquering spirit, thus launching Africa on “the high way to freedom”.

Orizu accomplished his mission in class and style: the style of total commitment; of craving for, and focus on a consuming goal;

of totally unusual self abnegation; of seeing, loving, appreciating and taking the best in everybody he meets; of breaking all barriers with effective communication and personal charm and determination; the style of dare-devil audacity and steel-strong faith in God, re-charged with constant prayers; of overcoming difficulties and taking failures in his strides, accepting no "nos"; the style of suffering so that others may enjoy; of accepting the actions of friends and foes alike as in accord with God's grand design; the style of harbouring no bitternesses; and of great initiative and all-conquering zeal!

"Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be" must be read by all persons who aspire to re-inforce in themselves, or cultivate these styles and methods of sound and correct principles of personality which constitute, in my view, the Natural Law of Success. In addition to the lessons in these success methods and sound principles of life, the book is also a mine of precious knowledge - knowledge of Africa's past, present and potentials; of methods of Igbo-child upbringing which guaranteed the stoutness of heart and mind and irresistible achievement orientation; of early American attitude to other peoples, especially to Africans, and Americans' continuing insular thinking; of the true basis for discrimination against African-Americans; of the American society itself and how to approach the Americans; of the spirit and method of British colonialism; the fight for African irredentism; of how to inspire people to greater achievements; of man's callousness to man, etc., etc. No person should finish university education in Nigeria without reading this book. And because the principles and knowledge embedded in the book are truly universal, the book should be a required reading for those who want to consider themselves educated!

This is an unusual book, written by an unusual person, about unusual events in an unusual life. Need there be any apologies if this review is necessarily unusual?

The book has 28 chapters grouped into seven sections, with important messages in the Epilogue and the Appendices. Indeed Appendix 2 should be the final word on Traditional Rulership in Nigeria.

We may re-arrange the sections into three for the purposes of our comments. These are: (a) Orizu: the Unusually Mature Youth From Birth to 1939; (b) Orizu, Africa's Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary; and (c) Orizu in Nigerian Political Storms. To these sections we shall add a small summary section on Orizu's Message to Today's Nigeria.

The truth is that we cannot, here give more than the barest indications of the compelling reasons why this book must be a necessary reading for the many in Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world who have pretensions to being well read.

Orizu: The Unusually Mature Youth: From Birth to 1939 (Chapters 1 – 9)

Orizu's princely birth, his royal upbringing, the shock of the premature death of his potentate father, the trauma of unaccustomed poverty, almost destitution, a demanding social position, his other childhood challenges from the "university of the Palace", of eighty wives, their children, servants, sages, state functionaries and all, the bigotry and hypocrisy of misguided early Nigerian Christian converts at Nnewi, and many more factors, prepared and toughened Orizu for what was to come. And what did come included virtual slavery to a woman at Onitsha (Flora), in spite of Orizu's many child-imposed, but repudiated, wives and his male and female servants at Nnewi; the rough experience of burying, virtually unassisted, and in defiance of a callous elder brother, "his dead daughter" and later his two brothers; the chaos and heartaches of the ugly sides of a failed polygamy after the death of his father, these and more difficulties were in Orizu's fate as a youth.

Through all these testing difficulties, Orizu emerged as a young man of destiny who grabbed his fate with his two hands – refusing to surrender to any agents of failure and negativism.

"The egg that will become a cock can be identified, even in the incubator". So an Igbo adage says, so it was with Nwafor Orizu. In the primary school at Nnewi, he held the following positions: General Monitor, School Time-Keeper, Chairman, School Government

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Committee, Chairman, School Detective Committee (initiated by him to instil morals in pupils), Centre Forward and Captain, School Soccer Team and, even, Staff Paymaster – a pupil paying teachers. Of his leadership ability in this tender age the following example may suffice: there was this issue of going to Awka to collect panax to plant at Nnewi. To motivate his fellow pupils who had refused to undertake the long journey to Awka, Orizu, the General Monitor, not only offered to join in the trip, he also refused to use the bicycle offered to him by the Headmaster, and trekked with the other students!

Read this and the many sign-posts of leadership in Chapters 5 and 6. Therein are many acts of initiative, selflessness and a craving for positive achievements. He initiated and presided over the School Detective Committee. He founded the first Brass-band in Nnewi in Anambra State and Ubulukwu, in Delta State. He organised for, and donated, anonymously, a Shield for Choirs to unite the four major villages of Nnewi. You will read the iron-clad determination of a youngman who achieved self-education by riding bicycles every week end, over very great distances in search of private tutorials; he eventually earned the London Matriculation at home, and was admitted to Achimota College. Read about the strong will of a youngman who "broke into" the home of the presumed inaccessible "Oracle at Onitsha", Zik of Africa, the later subject of Orizu's Zikism, and told Zik to his face: "... Sir, I listened to your lecture the other day. *I want to be like you*" (emphasis mine) (page 112). In later life, he would tell Zik: thank you for your suggestions on how to deal with the evil machinations of the British Colonial officers, tribalists, "The Daily Service" and other derogators and discreditors of "Orizuntal Educational Revolution", but Sir, I want to bear my cross. I shall do it my own way.

Two times Nwafor Orizu went to Lagos to travel to the U.S.A. along with other persons sponsored by Zik, two times he ended up being in the send-off party of his colleagues, while his own dreams crashed on the rock of inscrutable prevarications by his Nnewi brothers. "Why doesn't he better go back to Nnewi and stop bothering people", said a relation (page 148). In 1939, he did travel to the U.S.A. by the grace of Mr. Green Mbadiwe, who paid for the ticket,

and because the never-say-die Orizu, the unusual youth of Africa, dared to go into the unknown virtually empty handed. Read these and other sections written with robust logic and in living language.

Before dealing with the next section, I feel the urge to bring up one aspect of parental responsibilities in Igbo-child up-bringing, which is threatened today by the "mummy-daddy" culture. The Igbo boy is brought up from the earliest beginnings to be a man, independent, resourceful and never flapping. "... the world is an open battlefield where every man must, at least, forge his own shield" (page 42). It is the role of Igbo fathers to prepare the boys for this battle. "Isn't there something between your legs?", is a constant challenging reminder. As Orizu confessed, "As I think of him (his father) now, I have not been able to remember any single moment in our domestic life when I thoroughly enjoyed his tender care without being conscious that I was in the presence of a monarch or a demi-god who must be treated with reverence and awe" (page 5). The fact is that, in any properly functioning Igbo family, the father *is* a "monarch or a demi-god". And every properly brought up Igbo man should have Orizu's experience. Fathers are to be fierce and inscrutable, showing love only very subtly, especially to sons. Drones among sons were even sold off to slavery in the days past. The mother should be all love and protection, for boys as for girls but they should be harder on the girls on domestic chores. We lose this culture, we lose Igboness.

One issue which appears not to have been adequately explained in the book is the respect for age in traditional societies. In the oral-tradition-preliterate society, knowledge comes with age because virtually all knowledge comes from experiencing. This is the basis of the saying that the traveller may be wiser than the grey-haired. That is not to say that there are no old fools. Reverence for the aged also comes from that original and inalienable factor of the irreversibility of the march of time. The issue is to give age its due, and give knowledge and brilliance their proper due!

Orizu: Africa's Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary to America and the World (Chapters 10 - 17, and 23)

A caution is necessary to any good and honest persons who must read and re-read this section. Such persons should guard against a feeling of unworthiness or inferiority complex. Orizu made stunning personal sacrifices: passing meals; enduring cold in railway stations; being thrown out into the wide world for trying to do good to friends; making avoidable confessions of innocent mistakes; Orizu gave up the opportunity to go to Yale on scholarship and stayed in New York where he could more effectively work for Africa. He was audacious in his initiatives: broadcasting through radio and television to all America, giving chains of lectures, attending many lecture dinners from many of which he went home coarse from talking on Africa and hungry in the stomach; he had a column "Africa Speaks" in Pittsburgh Courier, a major newspaper. Orizu founded and ran many institutions for the promotion of mother Africa. These include the Association of African Students in the Americas, the "African Interpreter" - a magazine devoted to African interest, American Council On African Education, through whose chain events unknowably many Africans got and are still getting American education and inspiration. Struggling with all these great initiatives and with the intense pressure of material deprivations and the simple pressure, of time, wrote the monumental book, *Without Bitterness*. This book attracted positive reviews from every American newspaper worth mentioning - conservative and liberal alike. His incredible faith in God and belief in self saw him through many trying times - including his going to register at Ohio State University without any previous correspondence not to mention an admission. With positive mental attitude, he overcame the veiled reprimand that a "student does not admit himself into the college". *He got admitted!* As he would say, "All I had with me was hope, faith and hardwork. I wilfully deafened my ears to the voice that urged me not to make the leap" (page 171).

Africa called: who shall I send, and who will go for me. Orizu answered, "Africa needs me?" Here am I, send me, come hail come

brimstone". Hail and brimstone did come. Orizu persevered. Propelled by "Ideas which Used Me", displaying uncommon reactions to stringent conditions and consumed by the flame of African irredentism, he trudged on to his missionary journeys. Orizu had rejected the admonitions of his peers not to leave Lincoln University to Howard, the Howard venture failed on account of inadequate funds, Orizu went back to Lincoln, absorbed peer scorn and ended up taking the leap to Ohio State University – the first African to do so. Some Americans saw aspects of Christopher Columbus in Orizu. They liked him and still do. Orizu's movement in the wide New World was news-worthy and serious newspapers heralded his arrival in various cities.

In the course of promoting Africa, Orizu totally forgot self and socialising. The following incident shows how unusual Orizu was as an African student in the U.S.A. Orizu was invited to a dance party, he persuaded a white American man to excuse his girl friend from an arranged date so that she would attend the party with Orizu. The American man yielded. The girl agreed. Orizu took her to the party and could not dance! He did not know how to dance after years in the United States of America. The usual African student would have, in a few weeks, mastered the handling of girls, music and dancing. Indeed Orizu's attendance of the event was even for the advancement of his African cause.

The book is not just knowledge and principles. It also has language! For example, of New York Orizu wrote: "I had time to look at this city of wonder and radiance: to listen to people talk about the war: to watch the free Americans go about their business: to see their lives flow like a stream over a pebbled bed of society – with turmoil, half-romantic, half-serious, always: propelling, jumping fast and steady as if stubborn and yet gay and fascinating" (page 192). And, of Lincoln University premises he wrote: "... It was as indifferent as knowledge, as confident as adjacent hills, as detached as science, and as interpretative of nature as philosophy" (page 158). Orizu went asking for scholarships for Africans. Why should Americans oblige? Here is Orizu's salesmanship: Give us education, we fight for our independence, you Americans know what

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it means, you were once a colony. Remember, "uneducated masses make neither good producers nor good consumers". African students would return to Africa to sell America – their "products and business". So, America gains investing in the education of Africans.

Orizu in Nigerian Political Storms: Irredentist Evangelism leads to Prison and from Prison to Presidency of Nigeria (Chapters 18 – 22, 24 – 28)

Orizu did a hard sale of American mass education system with its spirit of violent "expression of self, broadmindedness, mutual respect and tolerance" to Colonial Nigeria (page 269). In chapters 18 and 19, Orizu describes his first return to Nigeria. It is instructive that his evangelism for educating Nigerians started in Kano and covered the major centres in the North – focusing on Northerners, before coming down to the South. This is indicative of the pan-Nigerian feeling reigning in the minds of the early nationalists in Nigeria. It is also indicative that while the British colonial officers and some narrow-minded tribalists hounded Orizu, his best defence ammunition surfaced in Yoruba land, at Ijebu Ode, where he was shown a copy of the British Hansard which confirmed the genuineness of the American Council on African Education and its scholarships.

Orizu's description of the poverty in the North remains true today: "A poor man in the North was really poor – poor in health, poor in education, poor in wealth, poor in social prestige, poor in opportunity to develop, poor in freedom to initiate" (page 357). This was vintage late 1940s. After decades of the control of political power in Nigeria by "the few" from the North, the story is the same, and may even be worse! In the same way, today's Nigeria is no better than Orizu's "The Nigeria We Must Change" of late 1940s. (Chapter 21). The chapter reads like a part of the manifesto of any group which may today wish to revive Nigeria. Perhaps Military Dictatorship and Colonialism have very much in common!

Of the late 1940s Orizu wrote: "A few living babies sucked nipples of underfed and overworked mothers". Today, in 1995, it is clearly worse, there are no genuine drugs, no food, no roads,

no education, no anything, and what is worst of all, no hope, which makes people die like flies, even when they escape desperate armed gangs roaming the streets as if to say "babu-Government".

The successes of the ACAE is indicated in "The Exodus", Chapter 22. Obviously, the multiplier or chain-event effect of one student attracting many other students, makes the total impact of ACAE and Orizu's educational evangelism unknowable. But nobody, not even an adversary, can doubt the great successes of "Orizuntal" Educational Revolution. A friend who watched in admiration wrote to Orizu: "Congrats! You have done your duty" (page 411). We do not know, but Mrs. Macaulay would have added: "To the Great God, who revealed Orizu's mission to me, I say Hallelujah, and to Orizu, I say Congrats son, the great one, your mission is accomplished!"

I leave the reader without any suggestions on the rest of the book from the Call to Political Action to the end of the book – chapters 24 to 28. Anybody who has even the faintest interest in Nigerian politics should take these chapters as required reading. Only two comments seem appropriate. A mind resolutely fixed on a good goal forgets the benefit/cost calculus. Indeed, Orizu was so prepared that he took imprisonment as a necessary concomitant of his commitment to African freedom. He expected it and almost felt accomplished and fulfilled when it came. The other comment is on "Orizuntal Verdict" which shows Orizu's progressive attitude to politics: "Imperialism is anti-Christ. It has no spirit, no morality. It does not respect other peoples rights".

Of course, imperialism is an element of mercantile politics. What Orizu is saying therefore is that politics should be defined, not as the act of the possible, but as the art of making possible what is right. Filth, dirt, the dog-eat-dog methods and the like should have no place in politics – an area of interest which all-pervadingly affects the affairs of man – the highest of God's Creation!

Before going to the next section, I need only quote two sentences on page 507 for the benefit of serious Nigerian politicians and statesmen: "... in any group, large or small, wherever there is no internal discipline, control comes from outside. It is unfortunate that

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Nigerians have not realized that military men cannot rule Nigeria if civilians are disciplined”.

The reader should recall that Nwafor Orizu, as the Acting (ceremonial) President, signed Nigeria's temporary “death-warrant” really as a constitutional obligation (the Ministers having so directed) and virtually at gun point. A fair reader who has read up this point should be able to predict what would have been Orizu's personal preferences if the “gun point” had been the issue! This point is made to emphasize the need to study the political storms in which Orizu found himself in Nigeria. What preceded the final act of “handing power to the Armed Forces?” What roles did Orizu play in the N.C.N.C.? Who made Zik to change his mind and accept the ceremonial position he did? What did Orizu see as the major problems of Nigeria? How did he fit into the politics of Nigeria, post-independence? There are very many revelations. The book lays bare some of the behind the scene events in Nigerian politics.

Orizu's Message to Today's Nigeria

The whole book is filled with social, economic and political desiderata for developing Nigeria. What we pick up here are only a few principles embedded between the lines of *Liberty or Chains*.

1. *Patriotism*

It cannot be doubted that Orizu owes nothing to Nigeria for his education and most of his achievements. He got educated in spite of Colonial Nigeria, his educational revolution succeeded in Africa and Nigeria in spite of Colonial Nigeria, which placed obstacles all the way, determined not only to frustrate his plans but also to crush him. Fired by patriotism Orizu and the early nationalists dared the devil and suffered untold hardships to place Africa and Nigeria on the positive map of the world. They developed tremendous goodwill for Africa and Africans, they earned respect for black Africans and they launched Nigeria and Africa “on the highway to liberty” – political, social and economic.

Today all these are gone. The Armed Forces of Africa have squandered all those positives and reduced the prestige of the black man around the world – making Africa look like the house of evil. The Congo, now Zaire, is in ruins, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, etc., are in tatters. Rwanda and Burundi are tales of disaster, and Nigeria, the supposed flagship of Africa, has been wrecked by military dictatorship.

The Armed Forces have shown no feeling or respect for the peoples and countries of Africa. They are on top of the rulership of the countries and instead of thanking God and serving the people, they behave like armies of occupation in hostile territories and they wreck the polity, the economy and the social values in the countries.

Those who plan to take over from the military must cleanse themselves of the culture of crass materialism, and the accompanying negative values and practices promoted by the military. They must read *Liberty or Chains* ... for regeneration. If there is no patriotism at the top, who should expect the populace to be disciplined? Even the politicians can be blamed only up to a point. The buck stops with the military dictatorship.

2. *The Black Yoke*

The message is clear, even if it is between the lines, that colour is not the issue when it comes to the matter of prestige of peoples. The issue is *economic power*. Whenever American bigots attacked African students in the U.S.A., they (the Americans) apologised when they realized that the students were from Africa – the colour did not change! To get respect and prestige, the black man must achieve economic power. He must prove economic capability. The responsibility for this lies squarely on Nigeria, as the largest concentration of black peoples on the face of the earth. As goes black Nigeria so go blacks all over the face of the earth!

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3. *The Rate Limiting Step*

For Nigeria to develop and grow effectively to achieve actual economic greatness, the poorest sections of the country must be pulled up, without pulling down or retarding the growth and development of other sections. This calls for a special plan; and a systematic plan for such is possible. It is a crucial necessity.

4. *Hope, Faith and Prayers*

Here, again, the message is clear. There should be no place for the hopelessness, despondency, and frustrations which pervade Nigeria today. Our hope should be glued on God. The problem is not Nigeria's alone. It appears to be that chaos follows the end of colonialism or the achievement of independence in Africa. It must also be that out of the chaos and conflagration will re-emerge the giant of Africa to illuminate and pull up the great continent which mothered the rest of the world and gave it civilization before being plunged into darkness. After thunder comes the rain but after the rain, the sun, and greater tomorrow! We must not give up hope. We only need to actively surrender to God and pray that He makes haste to deliver us. The experience of the Right Honourable Dr. A. A. Nwafor Orizu, teaches us that success is possible to those who do *not just want* it, but who, instead, *crave* for it, pursuing it with those ingredients of the natural Law of Success which we read in every page of *Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be*.

SEVEN

REVIEW BY
HON. NNIA JOHN NWODO JNR

Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be is a book about the life and times of one of Africa's most illustrious sons. It is a book about the 14th West African Student, the 10th Nigerian and the 8th Igboman to be educated in the United States of America. It is about an Nnewi man born of the great Ezeugbo Onyamba, Ezeamaluaso Ogbukagha Igwe Orizu I, brought up in the hallowed traditions of a native African society, exposed to western civilisation as a teacher and student, imbued with a desire to change his country through education of the mind, persecuted and imprisoned for his own convictions but exonerated by God and elevated to the most important position in his country. This book is about Akwaeke Abysinnia Nwafor Orizu, written by the man himself.

Title

The title of this book – *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* -- is a vivid testimony of the author's firm and unshakable belief in the concept of freedom for Africa. It is a statement of the inevitable choice which faces any champion of this freedom: the choice of a perpetual bondage for Africa or the choice of freedom no matter the price. Everywhere in this book Orizu's altruism and indisputable desire to make whatever sacrifice necessary to bring about positive change in Africa is evident. As a primary school pupil, he would volunteer to trek the long distance from Nnewi to Awka and back.

to procure panax stems for his school gardens and paths. As a teacher, he along with his best friends, known as the "Five Jolly Boys" collected through voluntary donations, made possible by a great deal of self denial, the huge sum of five pounds in 1932 which they used in buying a silver shield for singing competition in Nnewi primary schools.

Orizu in patriotic and unwavering commitment to the principle that Nnewi must not have a third-class headmaster, jettisoned his friendship and loyalty to his boss and mentor, Mr. Uboma, to fight for Nnewi. As a student in America he devoted himself to the formation and growth of the African Students Association even at the cost of using his accommodation as a secretariat. Having graduated, he fought through his American Council On African Education to see more Africans educated. Back to Nigeria he faced colonial intimidation with indefatigable courage. He took imprisonment stoically with total resignation to God. He championed the fight for independence and self government with missionary zeal.

In 1949, in spite of guns faced at him, he condemned the shooting of the Coal Miners at Udi Siding Enugu and told the striking Miners to continue to stay out of work until a board of enquiry is set up on the shooting incident. In 1966, he sat courageously in the pool of blood of his fallen colleagues and negotiated a hand-over to the military that ensured stability for our country. In all challenges that Orizu faced in life he was confronted with a choice between personal comfort and sacrifice. With catholic resolve and equanimity he chose the path of sacrifice on each occasion.

The title of this book is therefore, a challenge to the younger generation, to first of all recognise that the alternative to our economic, social and political emancipation is perpetual servitude. Secondly, it is a challenge for our new generation of leaders to come to terms with the inevitability of sacrifice in the pursuit of our natural goals.

Orizu's emphasis on Africa in the title of the book is **not only** reminiscent of the political dispositions of the argonauts **who** left for America early this century in search of the golden fleece but

emphasises his trans-national personality and his abundant potentialities in international diplomacy.

The Scope of the Book

Having written eight other books and several articles, Orizu's ability to put together at his age, 550 pages of a vital part of his life is not surprising. What is perhaps surprising is why Dr. Orizu chose to stop this account of his life in 1966. Clearly Dr. Orizu has lived for thirty years since 1966 and thirty years is a very significant part of his life. Events of very serious and fundamental bearing on the life of our nation have taken place in those 30 years and yet Dr. Orizu decides to remain quiet about his role in those events. Could this be part of the much talked about disgust of his generation for the new leaders of Nigeria? Is Orizu avoiding a categorical statement on military leadership which has dominated Nigeria since 1966? Obviously this will be out of character with the Orizu we know. May be Dr. Orizu would like his life from 1966 to be the subject of a biography rather than an autobiography. May be he is publishing his autobiography in two volumes – but whatever it is, this autobiography abridged, as it is, is a clear testimony of what leadership was in colonial Nigeria and the period immediately after independence.

It is a reference work which every aspiring leader in our country should read, if we have to recapture the altruism, the courage and the unwavering commitment of our fathers to the building of our nation. While we acknowledge this work as a call to follow ideas rather than persons, we yearn for the next volume of Dr. Orizu's autobiography which will tell his unfinished story and pass judgment on the new generation.

Organisation of the Work

As I attempt a review of the autobiography of Dr. Orizu, let me first of all confess my inadequacy to assess the writings of a great African scholar of his magnitude and my trepidation and despair in commenting on the book of a man I have taken to be a father to

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me. Nevertheless, I am emboldened by the fact that he has asked me to carry on. As the Igbo adage goes (Oku Agunyelu Nwata Na Aka Ada Eleya) THE FLAME THAT IS PUT ON A CHILD'S PALM DOES NOT CONSUME HIM.

Organisation of the Book

Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be is laid out in seven sections. Sections I and II deal with Orizu's background; the influence of his family on his local environment, his early education, his father's tragic death and its effect on his life, his times as a teacher, his meeting with Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the critical role of Chief Green Mbadiwe in his life and his departure to USA for further studies.

Sections III and IV deal with his times in America, as Student, Broadcaster, Columnist, Students Activist, Footballer, pioneer of African Students Union, founder of American Council on African Education and Ambassador extraordinary for Africa.

Section V deals with his return to Nigeria in 1945, the recruitment of beneficiaries for the scholarships he obtained in America, his clashes with the colonial government who resisted his introduction of America education and his return to America to pursue the welfare of Students he sent there.

In section VI, Orizu recounts his active engagement in the battle for Nigeria's independence, his election into the Eastern Nigeria government, his prosecution, undefended trial and subsequent imprisonment.

In Section VII, Orizu tells the story of the rise and fall of the first republic of Nigeria and his roles as President of Senate and at a critical period, as Acting President and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

We will now deal with the individual sections:

SECTION I – Background and Early Education

One would have expected an autobiography of this type to start with the usual date of birth, the naming ceremony and growth of the

child and so on. A typical rebel to orthodoxy and conventional approach to issues (in spite of his establishment origins), Dr. Orizu opens the story of his life with the description of the period and milieu into which he was born and its impact on his personality. Describing the effects of the first world war, the American and French revolutions, the emergence of Russia, the rise of Japan and the emancipation of Asia of his generation, Orizu had this to say:

“We combined two stages of life in one evolutionary process in Africa. One life was ancient, the other was modern. We saw the very symbols of ancient power and affluence as our old society reached their heights and started to decline and crumble...

“... Having grown from boyhood to manhood in such a transitional society, my life was beset with a perpetual attempt to grasp the new while admiring the old, to utilize the present while preserving the past. I was a victim of a dislocated society, and therefore suffered as a psychologically dislocated youth whose effort to create was often frustrated either by the instability and inertia of the old institutions or by callousness, conspiracy or deliberate restriction by the purveyors of the new civilisation.”

This statement best describes the picture that anyone who reads this autobiography would inevitably paint of Orizu. In this section, Orizu describes his father's aristocratic comportment, his outstanding polygamous life with eighty wives, his love for mysticism and clairvoyance and the mystery surrounding the birth of Nwafor himself, with undisguised pride and admiration yet he stops short of extolling them as worthy paths for emulation.

For instance, while discussing his father's polygamous life and the organisation which reduced some of the wives to at best chattels or domestic servants, he eulogizes what he calls in these relationships, “attachment unto death, subtle inner emotional bond which could sublimate undue egotism.” When pushed into a choice between monogamy and polygamy he had this to say: “The tendency to follow the crowd is always most convenient for those who refuse to think.

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Serious social instability and public immorality as I have seen in monogamous societies of Europe and America, prevent me from falling to the poetic rhymes of those who sing for the glory of monogamy. Some unfortunate consequences of polygamy in Africa as I have seen it, made it impossible for me to decide in its favour. Anyone who tries to speak with decisive attitude for either, must have deliberately or unconsciously permitted himself to err on the side of his own cultural background, religious fanaticism or selfishness. I leave the conclusion to be drawn by sociologists and perhaps the anthropologists."

Orizu's intellectual acrobatism is par excellence. His capacity for mental combat is unassailable, his logic is impeccable and his profound intellectual honesty is so vivid. Yet in all this, his avarice for the new while living in nostalgia for the old is all too manifest.

After narrating the predictions of the soothsayer, Okafor Onyeamunemenjo, regarding his own birth and the reputation of his father's palace as an "undeclared Mecca" for all famous Igbo and some none Igbo native doctors, he still held that his father's Obi was "a fertile ground for true and false prophets and magicians." In spite of this declaration, one cannot avoid a conclusion that a bit of his father's clairvoyance and metaphysical preoccupations rubbed off on him, for he states categorically and with reputed intellectual honesty that "I personally had one strange feeling since I was born. I do not know how that feeling came about, but anytime I saw my father, I felt I was his double, whenever I saw him, I felt I was beholding myself. I never thought we two could occupy the space of existence on this earth at the same time. But it was all subconscious".

After reading Orizu, I confess I felt the same of myself in relation to my own father.

It was only in respect of child marriage (a cultural practice in Nnewi by which young, immature and sometimes unborn children, were married away to men who had no physical attachment to them), that Orizu was unrestrained and unequivocal in his condemnation of the old customs of Nnewi. He considered it "degrading in all its aspects because it brings to its victims the tragedy of marital abnormalities ... children born under it were always innocent victims

of inferiority complex, leading a life of redeemed bastards, acceptable to their "father" under customary obligation". Uncomfortable with his vehement condemnation of custom, he had a few apologies to make immediately when he said, "I am not an iconoclast. I love the past and its glory and tranquillity. Perhaps the things the ancients did were the best at their time. Perhaps child marriage was an excellent method of demonstration of assurance".

Paradoxically, it was for child marriage that the Church Committee of St. Thomas Church, Otolu - Nnewi, refused to baptize Nwafor Orizu in 1929, when they held that because he had so many wives in his mothers home, married for him, he was not qualified to be baptized even though he had no physical association with them.

Young Nwafor came to admire Reverend H. O. Nweje, who repudiated that Committee's decision in 1930 and baptized him at Onitsha. Dr. Orizu has since renounced his baptismal name of Christopher. Perhaps he will now tell us why.

Whereas life for young Nwafor Orizu while his father lived was sheltered, secure and happy, his father's death unleashed for him an encounter with the real world characterized by extreme deprivation, filial calumny, and a traumatic transformation of status that only the humble at heart could endure. From 1924, when his father died until he finished his primary education, Nwafor, the prince, became houseboy and cook, changing masters as the threshold of his endurance of pain and torture was threatened. In all his tribulations however he remained resolutely committed to succeeding in his uncompromising pursuit for knowledge.

In April 1932 he passed the government standard six examination and he stood at a vital junction in his quest for education. One road led to Uzuakoli Institute, a secondary school, the other led to appointment as a pupil teacher with the potential for further studies at Awka Normal College in three years time. He chose the later road most reluctantly but in retrospect had this to say: "The fact that I did not attend a secondary school at that age and that I was disciplined as a missionary had a decisive role in the formation of my character."

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SECTION II – Teacher Meets Zik And Prepares for America

Dr. Orizu's teaching experience in the colonial primary school system started in 1932 and ended about 1937. During this period, he taught at the CMS Central School, Nkwo – Nnewi, at Ubulukwu, Ihiala and finally Onitsha.

His entire teaching career was characterized by three dominant preoccupations, namely:

- (i) His unwavering devotion to his duty as a teacher and his consequential popularity among his headmasters and pupils.
- (ii) His unalloyed patriotism and love for his home town, Nnewi.
- (iii) His painstaking commitment to improve his educational qualifications through private studies as a necessary and inevitable step to higher education.

In the 30s, the efficiency of a teacher in a missionary school was judged by three standards namely, Ability to teach, Character and Church work. Orizu's confidential reports show that he always had an 'A' (meaning excellent) in ability to teach and character and a 'B' (meaning good) in church work.

Orizu's acceptance among his pupils was instantaneous. It had something to do with his personality. He still possesses till today an innate charisma, warmth, mystic and yet simplicity which makes him an immediate object of admiration. In fact his first day at Onitsha Central School was greeted with an instantaneous and unrestrained applause from the pupils in the full view of the headmaster and the teachers.

Wherever Orizu went, his headmasters took him like a son. Their families extended the same warmth to him, nursing him when he was sick and cooking for him so often that his bachelor status had no effect on the delicacy of his meals.

Even in his pursuit for higher education, he got the willing patronage of his headmaster Uboma, his headmaster of CMS Otolo – Nnewi promised to send him to Awka College until his controversial transfer out of Nnewi aborted this dream. At Ubulukwu, Mr. (later Bishop) Uzodike L. M. taught him English and History. At Nnewi,

Mr. C. N. Obioha taught him Geometry. Other teachers at DMGS Onitsha notably Mbonu Gjike, S. A. Anadu and C. Onwegbuzie volunteered to teach him Latin, Algebra and Geography respectively. These toils were not in vain for as a teacher, Dr. Orizu studied privately and sat examinations for the Cambridge School Certificate and passed in 1936. He also obtained admission to Achimota College in Ghana.

It is more in the development of his personality as a leader and the opportunity to show his love for his town, Nnewi, that Orizu's career as a teacher gave him tremendous opportunity. Wherever Orizu taught, he left his footprints indelibly in the sands of time. At CMS Central School, Nnewi, he founded a singing competition for all Nnewi Schools, he organised an annual concert for all Nnewi youths; he helped to arrange inter town football matches. He helped to fund the Nnewi Patriotic Association the first all Nnewi Development Association and defied the prohibition order from the Nnewi Teachers Association that its members should not join the Patriotic Union because of its high membership fees.

Wherever Orizu saw discrimination and nepotism he fought it. He disorganised a plot by Otolo and Umudim senior boys to segregate the All Nnewi Choir Practice.

Lamentably, this love for Nnewi was unreciprocated. When Orizu met Zik through whom he obtained a scholarship and admission to study at Lincoln University, three times Orizu was scheduled to travel to the United States of America, two times he failed because his people could not raise the funds for his transportation and school fees. Miraculously, he met Chief Green Mbadiwe of Arondizuogu at Kaduna Junction. Chief Mbadiwe could no longer bear the shame, degradation and despair which this prince of an otherwise affluent and notable dynasty was subjected to. Offering to help him and indeed advancing the sum of eighty pounds which paid for Orizu's fare to New York, Mbadiwe once more fulfilled the biblical prophesy that no prophet finds acceptance in his own land.

As I drive through Nnewi today with the highest number of private industries any community in Nigeria can boast of, the most renowned and affluent traders, owners of the best cars in Nigeria

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and yet the worst rural roads in black Africa, I wonder if Nnewi too does not need the miracle of Kaduna Junction.

What baffles me about Orizu is that in spite of this jolt, this disappointment, this seeming disownment, his love for Nnewi, his subsequent contribution to the development of Nnewi and his stabilizing influence on its politics remains unflappable.

Orizu's romance with the old and engaging communion in prayer with God and the Spirit world dominate his narration of his life in Section II. At Ubulukwu, he sustained a fracture on his right leg in the football pitch. In the absence of any hospital, he relied on the native dispensary. His leg got worse and he was threatened with amputation. A woman prophetess, Nwokorkor, came along claiming that she was sent from Udume Osume, by the spirits to come and look for their son and stop people from cutting his leg. God literally sent her to cure young Orizu. Using water from special leaves and bamboo splints, she cured him. Orizu believed she was sent by the spirits.

At Onitsha when Mrs. Macauley of Upper New Market Road – his aunt from the Nwakanwa section of Ezeoguine family – prayed for him claiming a vision that she was told that Orizu had been chosen to educate and give scholarships to those who passed standard six, Orizu listened in disbelief but in retrospect acknowledges the prophecy as true.

In Okesuna Lagos, Orizu's habit of solitary confinement in prayers made him lock out his host Alexander Onyeador several times until Onyeador broke through the window on one occasion when his patience yielded. Orizu had this to say: "I know I was wrong to lock a man out of his room but how could I apologize for prayer? So I kept silent"

As Orizu departed Nnewi for the last time while in search of money to travel to America, he communed with his forefathers by invoking their spirits. He took soil – that final substance we all turn into when we attain physical demise – holding it in his hands, he prayed to his fathers – "I need money to go to America. Help me find it." He threatened never to set foot on his native land until he found the money. This style of prayer, efficacious as it was in the

case of Orizu, presents a formidable challenge to the orthodox, monotonous and sometimes materialistic forms of praying that are now prevalent amongst several Christian sects. To this extent, Orizu represents a wholly indigenous, direct and non-materialistic form of prayer worthy of closer study.

SECTION III – Early Days in America

By 25th February 1939, young Nwafor was on board S. S. Samaria heading for New York City. Orizu, the incurable optimist left Nigeria with only ten dollars in his pocket, totally unmindful of the uncertain world out there.

In America, Orizu was confronted with the problem of adjustment to a new way of life. In the process, he experienced a few embarrassments. When Dr. Miller, the dean of his college at Lincoln University invited him to dinner, he did not eat any regular meal at the University Dinning Hall because he wanted to have a good appetite for the turkey dinner. To his dismay at dinner, Dr. Miller picked the cutting knife and fork and instead of cutting the bird into its natural parts of the legs, the breasts and so forth, he began to slice the flesh into thin blade pieces. These thin blade pieces and the vegetables were hardly enough for young Nwafor. He left the dinner a hungry man.

At some other time, Orizu went to see a cousin of his, Ndefo who had sojourned in America for over twenty years. Orizu mistook the cab meter for a clock and was nearly shot by the cab driver when he offered twenty five cents instead of the meter reading of seven dollars and sixty cents. His cousin bailed him out.

The American press also through its "Afro American" magazine embarrassed Orizu with its headline AFRICAN ROYALTY AND MILLIONAIRE AT LINCOLN. In spite of the fact that the origin of the story was the West African pilot published in Nigeria by Dr. Azikiwe, Zik was to chastise Orizu (who was depicted as the blue blood) and Mbadiwe (the millionaire) in a subsequent issue of the West African pilot.

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Section III takes us through Orizu's settlement in America. His registration at Lincoln University, his attempted change to Howard University, his most rewarding working arrangement with YMCA, his movement to The Ohio State University, his meeting with Mr. Marsh, Mr. & Mrs. Gaither, Mr. George Berry, Mr. James L. Joyner and Dr. & Mrs. Folkenberg. These men and women made it possible for Orizu to study in America. They fed him, organised jobs for him to pay his fees and out of pocket expenses. They provided accommodation for him. At Ohio, his major was political science. It was in Ohio that the seeds of his first book, *WITHOUT BITTERNESS* were first implanted in his mind.

In the closing chapter of this section III, Orizu takes his reader through the incubation of ideas that were soon to set the path and pace of his life. He talks about the concept of state financed institutions, where the individual state indigene becomes the state's collective responsibility. He celebrates the effect of this subsidy on the release of the individual's potentialities. He dwells on the rejuvenating effect of his visit to Patrick Henry's grave in Virginia. He resolved to fight for liberty without minding the cost because Patrick Henry chose death instead of slavery or chains. The late Patrick Henry was a devout champion of equality for all Americans. On the eve of American Independence ~~and~~ from a colonial status, he delivered his famous speech "Liberty or Death". This is perhaps the philosophical source of the title of Orizu's autobiography – "*LIBERTY OR CHAINS*". Orizu writes with excitement about his exposure to economic democracy in America and the concept of reformed capitalism. He states his resolve to reach and stimulate the human mind in Africa through education, to make it believe in the vision of progress.

SECTION IV

Whereas section III spoke volumes of Orizu's ideas, his frame of mind and his plans while in America, Section IV is an account of the practicalisation of those ideas, the implementation of those plans. In this section Orizu decides at great sacrifice to live in New York, from where he established an office for his American Council on

African Education as well as the African Students Association. While running both Secretariats, he obtained his masters degree from Columbia University. He went round America and obtained one hundred and fifty University scholarships from American Colleges and Universities for his American Council on African Education.

He wrote and published his first book – *WITHOUT BITTERNESS*. He obtained scholarships for two of his colleagues in America – H. A. B. Jones-Quartey of Ghana and Nnodu Okongwu of Nigeria – to pursue their post graduate degrees at Columbia University and New York University. He became an associate editor of a leading periodical, *Negro Digest*. At the same time Orizu was an editorial columnist of the *Pittsburgh Courier* with his famous column “Africa Speaks”. The *Pittsburgh Courier* had nearly 300,000 readers every week. Orizu travelled widely in United States, addressing several groups in leading Universities and exposing his philosophy of Horizontal Education and African Irredentism for Educational Emancipation and Political Revolution for the African Continent.

Section IV ends with Orizu’s departure to Nigeria after six years sojourn in America on November 20, 1945 just after the end of the 2nd World War.

SECTION V

In section V Orizu tells the story of his return to Nigeria in 1945; his establishment of the ACAE in Nigeria, his travel to America in 1947 amidst compelling and promising options of better status for him in Nigeria. He narrates also the engaging and malicious sabotage of his educational programme by the colonial government of Nigeria. This sabotage included false accusations of embezzlement, complete deriding of American education and an attempted assassination of Dr. Orizu. Orizu’s return to Nigeria in 1945 was a boost to his American Council on African Education. He toured Northern and Southern Nigeria, recruiting members as he went along.

He established his headquarters in Port Harcourt. As he travelled, he became acquainted with the gross underdevelopment of infrastructural facilities in Nigeria. The British educational policy

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intended to educate some Africans gradually and to completely discourage all forms of creative education. These realities fired his missionary zeal to carry on with his educational programme as a means of facilitating the achievement of Independence. In February, 1947 he sent to America, the first ten beneficiaries of the scholarships he obtained from American Universities. This feat dumbfounded his opponents, publicised his programme and created a compelling need for him to travel to America to help the students settle down. He left for America in 1947 having turned down an offer to be the first President of the Ibo State Union.

In America the colonial masters continued to hunt him. He had bought a house at 172 Mac Donough Street in New York which he used as a hostel for his students. The British government in Nigeria accused him of using money contributed by the students to buy a house for himself, of taking some boys to America without finding a school for them and of embezzling contributions from the students. The Colonial Office in London and the State Department instituted an investigation carried out by Sir Ivor Cummings and Dr. Ruth Sloan. Orizu emerged unscathed in the investigations.

With missionary zeal Orizu continued to ask for more scholarships from American Universities. By 1949, Orizu had over four hundred scholarships for his ACAE programme. He had also opened up a West ~~Coast~~ branch of ACAE. His students in America had mostly settled down. Many had survived the initial jolt and were pursuing post graduate programmes. The stage was set once more for him to return home and join the battle for Independence.

Section V therefore records the outstanding contributions of this great African in opening to more Nigerians and indeed Africans a wide vista of opportunities in the development of the human mind – an indispensable prerequisite for the battle of independence that was soon to ensue.

SECTION VI

In Section VI, Orizu tells the story of his return to Nigeria for the second time in 1949. His return was greeted with great pomp and

enthusiasm. He got Enitona High School and Enitona Printing Press for a mere five hundred pounds, from its previous proprietor, Bishop Johnson, in appreciation of his contributions towards the education of young Nigerians. With Enitona Printing Press, he started on November 21st, 1949 (barely two months after his return) his Newspaper called, *West African Examiner*. A Mr. Lombard, French national and Port Harcourt Manager of SCOA gave him generous credit facilities to purchase a Pankard luxury bus for commercial use. Thus established, Orizu threw his weight behind other nationals in the fight against imperialism. M. C. K. Ajuluchukwu joined him as editor of the Examiner. Orizu wrote a column in the newspaper called *Orizontal Current*.

Just as Orizu was settling down the Coal Miners strike broke out in Enugu. In the course of putting down the strike, the colonial government of Governor Pleas shot 21 Miners in Enugu. The Miners refused to go back to work. Orizu wrote profusely in his Examiner in condemnation of the shooting. He drove to Enugu to console the Miners. At Enugu, he was met by Louis Mbanefo and C. C. Mojekwu who pleaded that he should advise the Miners to go back to work. Orizu sought audience with the Regional Commissioner who made the same plea Mbanefo and Mojekwu had made earlier. When Orizu sought to know the details of the shooting incident, the Commissioner referred him to the Chief Secretary, Captain Johnson who threatened more shooting if the workers did not go back.

Enraged by his diffidence and lack of remorse, Orizu's political combativeness was aroused. He went to the miners and told them to continue their strike until an inquiry was set up in which their representatives and Nigerian nationals will be a part to unravel the circumstances in which 21 of their colleagues were killed. This statement earned Orizu a house arrest for 21 days.

Shortly after this encounter, the colonial government of Governor Clement Pleas, through its Onitsha district officer, Mr. G. L. Guise nominated Orizu to be a member of the then nominated Eastern Regional House of Assembly in Enugu.

Orizu rejected this offer, choosing instead to run for the reformed elected House of Assembly. Orizu became elected as the

first member for Onitsha, clearing 361 out of the 500 votes in the electoral college.

It was as a member of the Eastern House of Assembly that Orizu's vehemence in resisting colonial rule and championing its extermination came to the fore. He tore the budget proposals of the colonial government to shreds accusing the government of paying lip service to Education, of not giving Eastern Traditional Rulers a befitting place, of uneven development and of neglecting establishment of industries. He made friends with many members of the Eastern House of Assembly including my late father, Igwe John Nwodo, whom he described in eloquent terms.

While Orizu served in the Eastern House of Assembly, the Western Regional House of Assembly "Carpet Crossing" crisis occurred in which Dr. Azikiwe was robbed of the Premiership of Western Nigeria. Orizu asked Zik to return to the East. He masterminded a move to unseat Eyo Ita's government partly for insubordination to NCNC directives on ministerial posts and the budget but mainly to create room for Dr. Azikiwe to assume the Premiership of Eastern Nigeria.

Shortly after the removal of Eyo Ita's government, on February 2nd, 1953, Orizu was arrested. The subject of Orizu's scholarship mission, the ACAE, which his trial was about, is according to Orizu "a story for another book by itself". This book does not tell us what charges were proffered against Dr. Orizu. It is only from the letter of one Mr. Roy Wilkins, Chairman of ACAE in the United States of America that mention is made of Orizu's "handling of funds in connection with the project known as the American Council on African Education". Orizu was tried. He was advised to make a plea of a no case submission. He did so. He was convicted without, so to speak, deposing to a statement of defence and leading evidence thereon. He and his brother went to jail. No mention is made of which brother and why his brother was also convicted. Perhaps this also will be the subject of another story.

While in prison, Orizu held sway even in his local constituency; for in the 1953 elections, he had to give personal approval for Ejike Chidolue to be elected in his place instead of L. P. Ojukwu or

C. C. Mojekwu. Chidolue won with a landslide, but remained ungrateful.

Emissaries from all political parties kept touch with Orizu in prison, sometimes enticing him to leave the NCNC. Like all martyrs, he was unfairly treated by those on whose behalf he fought.

The House of Representatives eventually moved a motion under the hand of HRH Hon. Osita Agwuna calling for the release of Orizu. The Hon. Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. J. M. Johnson announced to the happiness of all that the Governor-general of the Federation, Sir James Robertson, had ordered Nwafor Orizu's release. Orizu was released on September 10th, 1957.

On his release, Orizu returned to Nnewi and established a Secondary School with the motto: "To educate the mind is to liberate it". He subsequently returned to active politics and was elected a senator in 1960 and on March 14th 1964, he was elected President of the Nigerian Senate. In 1965, he was re-elected to the headship of the Nigerian Senate from where he served as Acting Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

In section VI as well as in other sections of this book, Orizu speaks of Dr. Azikiwe with such love, reverence and indebtedness even in situations where the justification for such affection is manifestly absent. His loyalty to Zik as his benefactor and leader is catholic. One cannot help wondering if we could have had the Saraki/Attah crisis or the Aminu Kano/Rimi situations if this book had been published earlier.

SECTION VII

The story of section VII is the rise of the beleaguered Nigerian from great trials and tribulations to the greatest office in the land, Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces. Destined to bear the cross of his country, Dr. Nwafor Orizu at this pinnacle of his career witnessed the first military coup that destroyed the democratic traditions he had so strenuously laboured to entrench in his country. In the process of this coup, Orizu lost his close friends

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and compatriots, came close to losing his own life too but with consummate tact, diplomacy and bravery (acquired from the nobility of his background) triumphed and in the process averted a catastrophic blood bath for his country.

One distinct quality of Dr. Orizu that is too obvious in section VII is his godliness. When he learnt of the kidnap of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Chief Okotie Eboh, he prayed for them and for Nigeria. When confronted by the visit of the service chiefs, all the wailing from his family and the panting of his close security aides in anxiety for his life, he stood up in his office as he stepped to meet the members of the armed forces and prayed – “God of Africa, take charge of thy servant this day”.

Orizu in section VII very effectively lends his voice to the view that the January 1966 coup was not an Igbo coup. Non Igbos do not believe him but none can from his narration in this book, doubt the sincerity of his claim.

He also comes out in this section loud and clear in his condemnation of the top echelon of the Nigerian Civil Service. Listen to vintage Orizu, “from the beginning, they have misled many Heads of State, Governors and Military leaders without their being seen or heard and when the blood of these soldiers and other citizens start to flow, they come to judgement as Solomon and return smoothly into their posts without being hurt or hindered”.

Orizu ends section VII by lamenting the cascade into which Nigeria fell as a result of the development of January, 1966. He called it the beginning of the end. He delegates the discussion of his life and experiences during and immediately after the war to another book.

CONCLUSION

This book, *Liberty Or Chains – Africa Must Be*, is written in a simple, readable and lucid style. The author’s antecedents as a teacher come out vividly in the style of writing as he explains to minute details all his basic assumptions.

One cannot but notice the need by the author in some sections of the book to justify certain key positions he has taken in life. He however is reluctant to hold any extreme viewpoint that will precipitate controversies. One is left with an unavoidable conclusion that here is a statesman bequeathing history and heritage to a younger generation.

The man Nwafor Orizu is seen in this book as painstaking, conservative but rebellious, ambitious, altruistic, patient, tenacious in conviction, God fearing and thoroughly original.

This book is a testamentary evidence of how far one can go in the patriotic zeal to uplift one's country. It is a clarion call to young men and women of Nigeria to dream big and aim high. It is a profound proof that no impediment no matter how great can obstruct or deter resolve for greatness. It is a celebration of a fulfilled life and God's abundant blessings for all who labour for Him in His vineyard.

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COMMENTS BY
PROFESSOR E. B. C. UFGODIKE
DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF JOS

"Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be" is a down to earth true story, spanning the period from about 1914 to 1966. It tells how a combination of royal birth and self determination coupled with hard work culminated in the vindication of the veracity of the inherent vivacity in the autobiographer, Dr. (Prince) Akwaeke Abyssinia Nwafor Orizu. It tells the story of the brewing of this sagacious blue-blooded man who played a vital role in the Horizontal Education of Nigerians, liberation of Nigeria from colonialism and in general, African irredentism. This motivating autobiography is like milk to the young, brandy to the youth and egg to the aged. It is highly recommended to all, worldwide to read and carefully digest.

I must say that this autobiography is down to earth and articulately written. It can spur any young man in this period of dwindling hope to greater heights. Orizu must be greatly endowed by God to write so beautifully and with such good memory at 80+.

NINE

REVIEW BY PROFESSOR G. E. K. OFOMATA GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA NSUKKA

Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince Akweke Abyssinia Nwafor Orizu is a Prince of the Royal House of Ezeugbonyamba, Orizu I of Nnewi. In spite of his royal birth and upbringing, he grew from the ranks, but in a manner peculiar to himself. He did not have a formal secondary education, but rose to become one of the foremost (if not the foremost of the) Ambassadors of Africa on education. He would have gone to the Methodist College, Uzuakoli, for his Secondary School Education, but other forces persuaded him to accept the post of a Pupil Teacher in 1932. By dint of hardwork and private initiative, he obtained his Cambridge Overseas School Certificate in 1936. Thereafter, and in spite of formidable odds, he went to the United States of America, where he obtained a B.A. degree in Political Science from The Ohio State University; an M.A. degree in International Law and Government from Columbia University, New York. While still a student in the USA, he set up the Organisation of the African Students Association with its magazine: "The African Interpreter"; succeeded in founding an International Organisation – the American Council on African Education (ACAE) for a scholarship scheme for African students; obtained over 150 university scholarships from American colleges and universities, wrote and published a book – "*Without Bitterness*" (1944), became an Associate Editor of the

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"Negro Digest", became an editorial columnist of the "Pittsburgh Courier" with his "Africa Speaks" column, and had developed and enunciated the philosophies of Horizontal Education and African Irredentism for the educational emancipation and political revolution of the African continent.

On his return to Nigeria, Rt. Hon. Dr. Nwafor Orizu became a Member of the Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly, a Senator in the First Republic, President of the Senate and, thereby, the Vice President ("De facto") of Nigeria. He was the Acting President of Nigeria at the time of the first military coup in the country and, in that capacity, discharged the national duty of handing over the government to the military.

"*Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be*" is the autobiography of this great son of Nigeria and of Africa, a distinguished statesman and frontline nationalist, a great pan-Africanist, author of "*Without Bitterness*" and 7 other books, the apostle of Horizontal Education and African Irredentism. And what a chronicle it is!

"*Liberty or Chains - Africa Must Be*" is a 562 page book, made up of 550 pages of text (including 16 pages of Appendices) and 12 pages of Index. It is organised in 7 sections and 28 chapters.

SECTION 1 (pp 1 - 79) is titled: "Nwafor Orizu's Background", and covers 5 chapters:

- 1. Palace Influence on Boyhood (pp 3 - 19);
- 2. Eighty Wives (pp 20 - 32);
- 3. Brothers and Sisters (pp 33 - 49);
- 4. Child Marriage and Holy Nweje (pp 50 - 61);
- 5. Early Education (pp 62 - 79).

This section deals with the birth of the Rt. Hon. Dr. Nwafor Orizu; the prophesied and controversial episode of his entrance into the world; the tumultuous polygamous arena; the co-mingling of African cultural mannerism and European modernisation; the iron discipline and moral dispensation of African aristocracy; the cruel but cultural connivance of suppression of widows and children; the influence of early Christian missionaries that ushered in the hard processes of

his educational career, and his initiation into the rudiments of leadership among equals and superiors. In many ways, these factors opened the way to early vision in Dr. Orizu's life.

Dr. Orizu could neither recommend nor condemn polygamy in Africa or anywhere else, nor could he enthrone monogamy in Asia, Europe or America. Some unfortunate consequences of polygamy in Africa as he saw it made it impossible for him to decide in its favour, and some serious social instability and public immorality as he saw it in monogamous societies of Europe and America could not allow him fall to the poetic rhymes of those who sing for the glory of monogamy. But he cherished his childhood days among his loving brothers and sisters, and his parents. He remembers those days with nostalgia and recalls the autobiography of Annie Bessant, "where she completely expressed my actual feeling for the present" when she wrote: "So guarded and shielded had been my childhood and youth from every touch of pain and anxiety that love could bear for me, that I never dreamed that life might be a heavy burden. ...; all the joys of those happy years I took, not ungratefully I hope, but certainly with as glad unconsciousness of anything rare in it as I took the sunlight It makes the ordinary roughness of life come with stunning shock, when one goes out into the world Yet it is a fair thing to have that joyous youth to look back upon, and at least it is a treasury of memory that no thief can steal in the struggles of later life."

SECTION II (pp 81 – 144) is titled: "Early Vision, Nwafor Orizu Met Zik", and covers 4 chapters;

6. A Teacher (pp 83 – 108);
7. I Met Zik (pp 109 – 124);
8. The Spirit of Anaedo (Great Agbaja Clan) – pp 125 – 131;
9. The Miracle of Kaduna Junction (pp 132 – 144).

In this section, Nwafor Orizu was "ejected" from the comfortable home and good care, into which he was born and nurtured, and thrown into the exacting teaching profession. As a sensitive youth, he was exposed to the indigence of missionary teaching life, and

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was compelled by the tide of inevitable social development to discover his destiny. His first meeting with Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1937 so fanned ablaze his ambition, sense of mission and commitment, that neither poverty nor other human factors could quench them. A devout Christian and with faith in the spirit of his ancestors and their gods, he gave defeating blow to poverty by departing from Nigeria to America empty handed.

While a Pupil Teacher at the Central School, Nnewi, he was able to organise funds with which a brass band was purchased for the School – thanks to his ingenuity and the benevolent attitude of Nnewi citizens in business outside Nnewi. During this period of his service as a teacher, he worked privately for the Cambridge Certificate, which he obtained in 1936 – a no mean feat in those days. His meeting with Zik in 1937 fired his zeal the more and heightened his quest for further education in America. The road to achieving this goal was very rough and discouraging. Zik secured him a scholarship to study at Lincoln University, but he could not travel to America on two occasions because there was no one to pay his fare. Then came the Grace of God through the “Miracle of Kaduna Junction”. Dr. Orizu met Mr. Green Mbadiwe at Kaduna Junction in 1938 and Mbadiwe, on his own volition, out of his transparent philanthropy, provided the money to cover Orizu’s fare to America. That was a big step in the arduous journey ahead. Mbadiwe’s action was a miracle indeed! It concretised the foundation laid through the scholarship secured for Orizu by Azikiwe, and made it possible for Orizu, the “argonaut”, to go to America in search of the “Golden Fleece”, The mighty works of God!

SECTION III (pp 145 – 242), is titled: “Early Days in America”, and comprises 5 chapters:

10. On a Highway to Liberty (pp 147 – 155);
11. Lincoln University (pp 156 – 171);
12. Transition (pp 172 – 192);
13. The Ohio State University (pp 193 – 220);
14. Ideas That Used Me (pp 221 – 242).

The early days of Nwafor Orizu in America were full of excitement, indecision and search for truth. The situation was compounded by absolute lack of funds to implement any of his decisions. His desire for the kind of education he needed made him run from one university to another in a very short period of time. He left Lincoln University for Ohio State University, Columbus, where the curriculum was wider in scope; and after his B.A. degree, he left Ohio for Columbia University in New York to avail himself of the many important libraries of New York and in order to keep faith with some of the ideas that "used" him, especially the burning desire for the educational emancipation of African youths from the stronghold of illiteracy. In the course of his itinerary, and in spite of the absolute lack of funds that faced him, Orizu rejected some offers of scholarships made to him – all in definite pursuit of the ideals he had set for himself.

He wanted to forget Africa for a time in order to understand America. He was forced to leave all his colleagues in the Eastern part of the United States and proceeded to the Midwest to be the first indigenous African ever to register with the Ohio State University. It was during this period that he was exposed to circumstances that brought out from him the extraordinary spirit of independence, creativity and self-confidence. He worked his way through college. At a point in time, he held more than three jobs: the first three "paid" for his breakfast, lunch and dinner respectively, while the rest provided funds for his other needs. And he was a full-time student!

The Second World War was on and he was challenged to present Africa to the American public. That is what brought about his famous radio broadcast in Cincinnati on Sunday, August 16, 1942 (See Appendix 1, pp 535 – 537 of the *autobiography*). Historically, that was the first broadcast of its type in America. He developed many ideas from every experience he got, and it was upon these ideas that he built all he did for Africa during his life in America.

One of the ideas that "possessed and used" Orizu at this time was: "To reach and stimulate the human mind in Africa through education; to make it believe in the vision of progress" At the

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same time, the idea of the "New Africa" of Marcus Garvey and Nnamdi Azikiwe, "Africa for the Africans" – "In the sense that our continent should be controlled, developed and governed by Africans" – became crystalized in his mind. And the only way to accomplish this was through education.

SECTION IV (pp 243 to 321), is titled: "Fulfilment of Dreams – A Struggle Against An Empire", and comprises 3 chapters:

15. Columbia University (pp 245 – 270);
16. First Missionary Journey (pp 271 – 306);
17. African Education Programme Born in America (pp 307 – 321).

This section is an epitome of the concretization of Orizu's ideas and hopes, nurtured from his early experiences from home, through two American Universities, Lincoln and The Ohio State, where his ambition to fight the evils of imperialism was fertilized. With an unusual tenacity and incredible audacity, he wrote what many call "the African Bible" – *Without Bitterness* – whose impact upon American society in relation to Africa of that day was unparalleled. A random selection of the numerous reviews of that book by Americans is an eloquent testimony of its worth and rating. Sterlin North, writing in the "Chicago Sun" said: "... read this powerful book by a Nigerian and ask yourself, "what are the aims of our warlords". The book made the most conservative American magazine, "the New Yorker", write: "a sincere and interesting book about Africa, the state of its civilization, its past, its future ... by an intelligent young son of a Nigerian ruling house who must be the most literate prince alive today".

On the same book, Dorothy Canfield said: "never before have we been reached with such a powerful appeal to realise the potentialities of that enormous mass of humanity which lives in the dark continent". And Walter E. B. Dubois commented in the "New York Herald Tribune": "an unusual book written by an African for readers in America, and written with far more understanding of both African and world problems than such writers usually exhibit". The "Chicago Daily Law Bulletin" wrote: "*Without Bitterness* is one of

the few things published in America about modern Africa, and the best I have ever read ... Orizu has a mind brilliantly cut, a mind widely informed by the best in many cultures of the East and West He has a vigorously scintillating style, beautiful diction, wonderful command of ideas and sources".

These testimonies from American leading news media in the Spring of 1944 when *Without Bitterness* was first published explained the authority and influence Orizu wielded among American Colleges and Universities, Congress men and women, and upon the cultural aspects of Roosevelt's administration.

Earlier, with the co-operation of his colleagues, Orizu organised the African Students Association, and established a magazine, the "African Interpreter", both of which had their headquarters in his room at 411 International House, New York. Above all, he established and incorporated the American Council on African Education, with office at the prestigious 55 West 42nd Street, between Fifth Avenue and Broadway in Manhattan, New York City. With the co-operation of liberal Americans and organisations, important colleges and universities, the American Council on African Education sent Africans to study in America in a number never known before. This was the culmination of Orizu's desire to liberate Africa and its peoples from the shackles of ignorance. The scheme may have been "imperfectly done" and "incompletely accomplished", or it may have "disappointed many" and "annoyed some", but it was genuinely and ingeniously conceived, purposefully nurtured and selflessly prosecuted. And, in any case, which human effort is entirely perfect, especially in the face of formidable opposition which the scheme faced at the time of its initiation and during its operation? In spite of such spiteful opposition, the scheme made a number of significant contributions:

- (i) It practically challenged and banished the concept of perpendicular education in Africa;
- (ii) It removed the fear of poverty in acquiring university education; and
- (iii) It exposed, in a large scope, the hidden African youths to the possibilities and pragmatic romanticism of American education.

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SECTION V (pp 323 – 427), is titled: “Horizontal Education and African Irredentism Introduced Into Africa”, and comprises 6 chapters:

18. The Nigeria That I Met (pp 325 – 342);
19. Exploration North (pp 343 – 359);
20. Exploration South (pp 360 – 378);
21. The Nigeria We Must Change (pp 379 – 403);
22. Exodus (pp 404 – 414);
23. The Iron Sacrifice (pp 415 – 427).

With the historic accomplishments enumerated in the preceding sections, Orizu returned to Nigeria on November 20, 1945. He met a gloomy Nigeria, a Nigeria in political tension and in which the youths were restive. The colonial officers were getting more arrogant and insulting, while the youths, veterans and workers were ready for action in order to reclaim the culture and unity of the country.

Orizu came home with two novel messages – Horizontal Education and African Irredentism. He spread these two missions all over Nigeria under open attack by the colonial government in Nigeria. But with the patriotic response of liberal Nigerians, he emerged with a resounding victory, when Nigerian youths under his scholarship scheme marched westward to the United States. He soon joined these students back to America to ensure their welfare. He made this selfless journey back to America for the sake of the youths of Africa, depriving himself of the rare honour offered him by the Igbo Union to be the first president of the Igbo State Union at the time he was departing for the United States of America for the second time in 1947. It is clear from the account of his activities that personal gainful position and power had always been secondary in Orizu’s philosophy of service to his countrymen.

SECTION VI (pp 429 – 500), is entitled: “Into Active Political Battlefield For Nigerian Independence”, and comprises 3 chapters:

24. Call To Political Action (pp 431 – 436);
25. The Crisis (pp 464 – 480);
26. The Crucifixion (pp 481 – 500).

This section is the story of Orizu's strict political activities in the process that led to final independence of Nigeria. It is the story of the price he paid for his unusual, relentless, trenchant defence of parliamentary democracy, his exemplary protection of African leadership, and unflinching faith and disciplinary disposition which made him the mover unmoved in his philosophy of "no Cross no Crown".

Two incidents vividly demonstrated Orizu's frame of mind at the time and his fearless readiness to challenge the colonial authorities on their acts of inhumanity to man against Nigerians. The first was the shooting of 21 miners in Enugu in 1949. Orizu went to Enugu to comfort the miners. The government had demanded that the workers go back to work, but the workers refused to resume work unless an inquiry was instituted into the massacre of their colleagues – and that they must be fully represented. The government wanted Orizu to persuade the workers to go back to work. The Secretary to the government told Orizu that if the workers failed to go back to work, "they might invite more shooting of life out of them". Perhaps, the Secretary thought that the threat would work! Little did he know that it only succeeded in inflaming the nationalist instinct in Orizu, who only took it as "the apparent test of black man's courage". Orizu arrived at Udi Siding and addressed the workers in the following words: "My brothers and fellow Nigerians, I mourn with you that the blood of our heroic brothers was spilt on the soil of our fatherland. I sympathise with your resolution not to go back to work when the government has not considered either your right to exist or your sorrow for your dead comrades. I was very highly provoked when I learnt from the Secretary to the government that there are some people who have not learnt that not all Africans are afraid of death in pursuit of freedom. I was told that if you do not go back to work, you would be shot again. I am therefore agreeing with you that none of you will go back to work until a board of inquiry is set up in which your representative and Nigerian patriots will be a part". That was Orizu speaking in an arena surrounded by armed policemen and soldiers! He was trailed from there to his residence in Port Harcourt – and put under house arrest for 21 days.

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The next incident took place in the Eastern House of Assembly early in 1953. Orizu was Chief Whip of the N.C.N.C., the party in power. During one of the sessions, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was sitting in the gallery when the Governor, Mr. Clement Pleas, ordered the soldiers and policemen to clear the gallery – because some members of the House were shouting as they hailed Azikiwe's arrival. As the order was given, Zik slowly walked out of the gallery. Orizu saw the incident as Nigeria being humiliated by a foreign overlord. The blood in him boiled in rage and revolt and, oblivious of all the finesse of diplomacy and demeanour of an Assembly, Orizu stood up and addressed the Governor in the following words: "Mr. Clement Pleas, you are nonsense! Mr. Clement Pleas, you are nonsense! Today you will know that you have humiliated a man whose party has majority in this House. This House can hold no more until you rise and go to your chambers now and invite Zik and apologise to him for your inclemency". The House resumed only after Mr. Clement Pleas had gone to his chambers and apologised to Zik.

The colonial government did not take this affront lying down. It schemed for Orizu to be removed from the House and imprisoned by all means. Between Mr. Clement Pleas and Sir John Macpherson, then Governor-General in Lagos, the deed was sealed in "this task". Orizu was nominated by the entire NCNC party as the Minister of Local Government on 28 January 1953. On 29 January, and while on another duty at Ibadan, Inspector Oduko received a telegram to proceed and prepare summons for the arrest of Orizu. Oduko arrived Port Harcourt on 30 January and prepared the summons on 31 January. On 2 February, 1953, Orizu was arrested. There could hardly be any doubt that his arrest and prosecution were politically motivated. The colonial government in Nigeria was visibly afraid of Orizu and wanted to get him out of the way – by all means, and at all cost!

On 15 September 1953, Orizu was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment. That was the "crucifixion". His appeal failed at the West African Court of Appeal presided over by Foster Sutton. "The agent of the emperor had spoken, and justice was murdered in cold blood". Agents of imperialism thought that they had caged the lion.

But, had they? Hear Orizu's reactions when his appeal failed at the W.A.C.A.: "I knew that my real self must usher and carry the day. The intended mortal wound lost its effect. All unjust or mortal wounds in history which always ended in being nailed to the cross have always ended in unsuspected and unexpected brightest morning of resurrection. That I knew. That I hoped for. All engineers of crucifixion had never devised a means of arresting resurrection. To forget everything: dignity, honour and material possession for the sake of a great life which was engaged in a righteous war is the noblest of all noble ideals".

On 10 September 1957, Orizu was released from prison. Orizu's arrest took place "on the premises of the Eastern House of Assembly", and all honest men agree that it was a political arrest. His release started at the House of Representatives when Hon. Osita Agwuna (now His Royal Highness, Igwe Osita Agwuna) moved a motion for his release. Thereafter, the Hon. J. M. Johnson, the then Minister of Internal Affairs in reply to Hon. Osita Agwuna's motion, announced in the House of Representatives that the Governor General of the Federation, Sir James Robertson, had ordered his release. In the words of Rt. Hon. Dr. Nwafor Orizu: "The beginning and end of this episode are paradoxical. That representatives of all Nigeria - North, East and West resolved and demanded from the British government in Nigeria to release me for whatever reason, was the romance of crucifixion and resurrection. The cross from the House of Assembly was replaced with crown from the House of Representatives". The white man was indeed on his way out, and "the inevitability of black man's rule of Africa's most populous country was axiomatic".

SECTION VII (pp 501 - 533), is titled: "The Rise, Decline and Fall of the First Republic", and comprises 2 chapters:

27. Towards Complete Freedom (pp 503 - 510);
28. Acting Presidency And First Military Coup (pp 511 - 533).

Orizu became a Senator in 1960, having before then gone through the Eastern House of Assembly, The House of Chiefs, and the House

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of Representatives. On 14 March, 1964, he was elected President of the Senate and, in 1965, he was re-elected for a second term. He was sworn in as the Acting President of the Federal republic of Nigeria on 16 October 1965.

In this last section of his autobiography, Orizu discusses his experience and philosophy as the Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It was during this time that the remote and immediate causes of the decline and fall of the first Republic converged. The edifice of tribal and religious fanaticism staggered and yielded to the pressure of their own weights.

In the midst of confusion, assassinations and breakdown of all laws and all orders, the Nigerian Armed Forces found themselves in the arena. Then the first Nigerian Republic was turned into military dictatorship. The light of democracy quenched on 16 January, 1966. Here, Orizu narrates to the nation and the world his state of mind as a nationalist and his philosophy of action as a statesman, whose main pre-occupation was not to remain in power, but to preserve the unity and eternal existence of the nation to which he gave all his time and life as one of the founders. He handed over power to the military on the advice of the Council of Ministers, in the belief that it was the best thing to do at the time, and on the understanding that what was involved was merely a suspension of civilian rule and not an entrenchment of military dictatorship. What followed is now history for all and sundry. Orizu left Lagos on 18 January and arrived his country home in Nnewi on 19 January, 1966.

This is the autobiography of the Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince A. A. Nwafor Orizu – the story of his life up to 19 January 1966. It is an authentic story of great courage and extraordinary personal sacrifice. The man Nwafor Orizu is indeed a “lion heart”, a man of great foresight and unflinching will who never said to himself: “this is impossible”. He has great faith in God and believes in the great potentialities of the African to take his destiny in his hands – once he is free from the shackles of ignorance, which imperialism was determined to perpetuate. He writes lucidly and with great

elegance, in a scintillating style and with an absolute command of the English language.

“Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be” is a monumental work of great scholarship. It is an “edifice” of a book and will surely take its stand among the autobiographies of great thinkers of all time. The book should be read by all literate Africans and friends of Africa anywhere in the world – because, indeed, Africa must be! – despite the fact that some African leaders are substituting African imperialism for foreign imperialism. Africa is already a geographical imperative – and no mortal being can effect the extinction of Africa. Only God, the Creator, can do that. But in His infinite mercy, God has promised that never again would He destroy His creation by the waters of a flood. And He is so faithful, merciful and loving that He would not do it with fire either.

We salute the Rt. Hon. Dr. A. A. Nwafor Orizu for making this important work available – and await, with great eagerness, the successor to the current volume, which will bring the story of this great man upto date. This prophet called Nwafor Orizu has honour – even in his own country! We salute a great man of courage, a great son of Nigeria and of Africa, a distinguished statesman and frontline nationalist, author of *“Without Bitterness”*, the apostle of Horizontal Education and African Irredentism! His footsteps are already solidly printed on the sands of time!!

The book is published by Horizontal Publishers, Nnewi, and printed by Snaap Press Ltd., Enugu. The production is excellent – which makes for an easy reading.

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**COMMENTS BY P. O. ESEDEBE
POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA**

“NWAFOR ORIZU is one of the notable figures in twentieth century African nationalism. Yet, compared with Azikiwe and Nkrumah, not much is known about his exertions beyond casual references to him in the standard works as the author of *Without Bitterness* and former president of the Nigerian Senate. Orizu’s autobiography *Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be* is therefore a timely and significant addition to the growing literature on pan-Africanism. Detailed and well-written the book, among other things, sheds considerable light on American aspects of the pan-African movement.”

