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Editor: 'KUNLE AKINSEMOYIN

Asst. Editor: A. K. METTEDEN

Business Editor: L. ALLAGOA

Offices: Exhibition Centre, Marina, Lagos.

Telephones: 23134, 26592, 20643

Telegrams: Ednigmag, Lagos.

COVER: *Nigeria's States and Cultures*

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TWO NIGERIAN ARTISTS

by

Jean Kennedy

[illegible] new idioms and fresh in- [illegible] stock in trade for two vol- [illegible] artists in their recent exhibition [illegible] Cultural Institute. They can no [illegible] to as African artists in the [illegible] sense for they compete in the [illegible] is not to suggest that they are [illegible] The ingredients they use [illegible] their work with some of the [illegible] are marks of aesthetic authen- [illegible] traditional origin. This is [illegible] their new imagery draws on the [illegible] sources, but it is a new con- [illegible] given them lively contemporary [illegible]

[illegible] and Ibrahim Buraimoh can [illegible] to engage in they are allied in [illegible] the Artist as one who is defined by Pre- [illegible] Leopold Senghor* as one who 'taken [illegible] is drawing the world through image [illegible] as distinct from the European who [illegible] a conquering the world through [illegible] of the object. Thus their kinship [illegible] is not by way of subject matter, but is, [illegible] the realm of methodology. Their [illegible] demands that they create images [illegible] Relevance to physical reality is of secondary importance.

An exhibition of the work of both artists is long overdue. Asiru, the older of the two and the pioneer MBARI MBAYO [illegible] a prolific [illegible] with a large following and [illegible] Asiru [illegible] his recourse [illegible] collections [illegible] comprehensive [illegible]

[illegible] began seven [illegible] MBARI MBA-

[illegible] Négritude et [illegible] Poésie

YO publication by Ulli Beier.* His talent was discovered and thereafter encouraged by Suzanne Wenger and MBARI MBAYO. Illness prevented Asiru from following the career into which he was born, that of blacksmith, and later a successful career as a drummer ended when his father became a Moslem, a religion which did not approve of the profession.

This exhibition reveals the kind of evolutionary change that is perhaps inevitable in an artist of his talent and dedication. The pieces of ordinary aluminum which he transforms into textured panels with the sheen of beaten silver now display even greater finesse than before. His compositions which were always balanced now reveal an almost classical arrangement of space with delicate improvisations that constantly coax the eye to explore. The complexity of shape and detail is so ordered that his work has been compared to Assyrian wall decorations and Roman columns by *New York Times* art critic, Charles Spencer. Compared with his earlier work, the large silky shapes of animals and people, even the slender appendages of arms and legs are all much more a part of the larger pattern. Nothing is left to chance. In the detail of pegs cavorting playfully around the trunk of a tree (Page 10), the animals are an integral part of the composition because their tails, simply an extension of their bodies, relate them to the tree which has limbs of similar shape.

Asiru knows instinctively that the artist must accept the limitations of his material. He turns these limitations to his advantage enhancing the silvery character of the aluminum by raising and faceting it to catch and reflect the light from a variety of angles. Like a musician with a delicately tuned instrument, he plays with light and shadow, wrenching from them every possible shade and intonation.

* Beier, Ulli; *Asiru*

OGUN *Festival by Asiru Olatunde*

My God and My Nation by Jimoh Burai

Desperate Man by Jimoh Buraimoh

Father of All Animal by Jimoh Buraimoh

His panels do have stories: the palm-wine tapper, life on a farm, the history of Oshogbo, for example, but they are never just anecdotal. As Ulli Beier has emphasized, 'his sense of decoration is more powerful than his sense of reality' so he arranges the component parts in sizes convenient to the design in order to stress meaning, texture and pattern rather than reality. Though the work is gentle and charming, it is never sweet. But rather as Beier says, 'A sense of sadness pervades. . . . The people who move through his copper and aluminium panels are lonely. The masqueraders seem overawed by their own sacred role; friends greet each other, but do not seem to reach; the rich woman stands alone and forsaken in her splendid new house.'

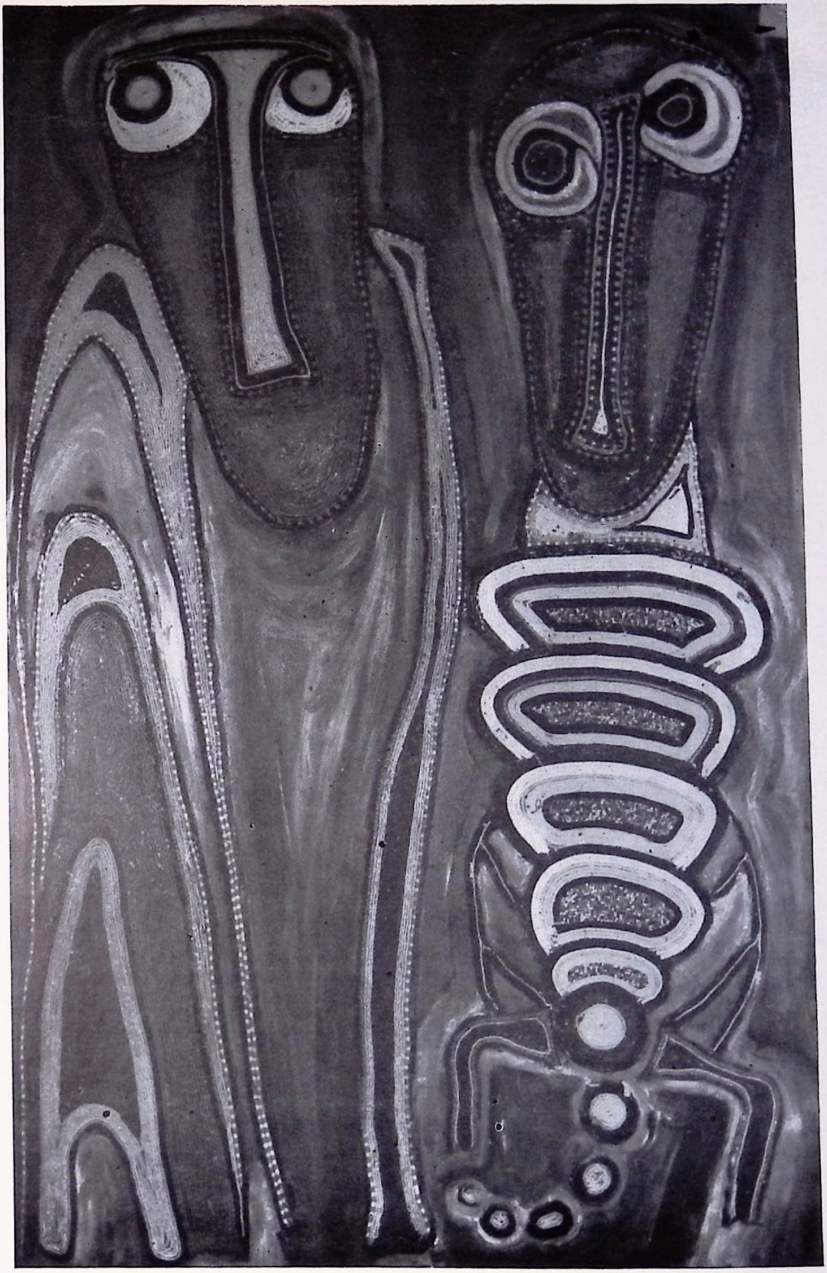
Asiru has established a whole repertoire of conventions for his purpose. His highly stylized figures take classic stances: the Chief or Oba or sometimes God is represented as a bulky, commanding seated figure. The tree which reappears in many works takes on the symbolism of a 'tree of life'. The oil lamps of the Ifa oracle, the creation story are all symbols which help form a rich tapestry. For above all his work is a sensitive appraisal of life, sometimes tender, sometimes poignant or wistful, but always filled with a sense of wonder.

Jimoh Buraimoh, the younger artist in the exhibition has had a remarkable rise since 1964 when he first attended the MBARI MBAYO workshop in Oshogbo. At that time he was an actor and a stage manager in Duro Ladipo's Theatre Group, a profession he still follows. His progress is due of course to talent, but also to his own driving sense of purpose. He reveals something about his work and this purpose when he says, 'An artist must not try to interpret another man's mind.' In this exhibition he shows a number of works including a collection of prints and a group of mosaic tables. Through efforts to find a style that is uniquely his own, he developed the icon-like bead paintings which are his most outstanding contributions to the recent show.

The first impact of the work is of striking originality. There is dramatic line and bold colour in the technique he has devised provided by ropes of beads fixed to the surface of the paintings in winding and unwinding wheels and swooping arcs of colour. The closest association that can be drawn is to Yoruba beaded cloaks and crowns, but his work is essentially his own contemporary style.

Jimoh Buraimoh was first known for mosaic tables. His earlier tables used beads almost entirely—those featured here contain pieces of glass, tiles and cowrie shells—and were rather compact, tightly organized compositions. The new beaded paintings show a much further development. Now he is reaching across larger areas. His designs are opening up to include and enclose space as well. While many of his first works were beautiful, his new works are much more impressive. The inclusion of the free uncluttered spaces offers contrast and the unusual whirling circles, ovals and triangular forms increase the feeling of intensity. Using these forms he creates unexpected space relationships. This interesting handling of space occurs in *My God and My Nation* where a variety of circular forms are played off against spindly linear ones (Page 3). If his forms are unusual, so is his colour. There is no holding back. He uses colour in intense combinations. Colour is a part of his involvement, for each painting is an exploration. One senses his involvement, can almost hear him exclaim over his findings.

A sophisticated arrangement of colour reinforces his image of the *Desperate Man:* purple, bright blue, rust orange and dark red-orange against darker, more subtle tones, but there is an overwhelming effect of introspective desperation projected by the eyes (Page 4). In all of the paintings containing figures the eyes are a source of energy and have the same kind of magnetic urgency associated with Yoruba wood-carving and metal sculpture. Like the eyes of the Ogboni cult figures they refuse to let the viewer go. They have a mysteriously contemplative, spiritual intensity. One of the most successfully resolved compositions, *Father of All Animal*, is a St. Francis-like image with penetrating eyes that also suggests compassion (Page 5). Through eyes that express beneficence and evil the artist also represents the duality of Yoruba belief in his *Obatala and the Devil*. He strengthens his concept



OBATALA *and The Devil by Jimoh Buraimoh*

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden by Jimoh Buraimoh

Flute Player by Jimoh Buraimoh

Before the Creation by Jimoh Buraimoh

Pigs coverting around a tree by Asiru Olatunde

by means of the long flowing lines of *Obatala*, the God of Creation and the scorpion symbolism of the devil (Page 7). The *Flute Player* is probably the most obvious example of dominating eyes. Here rich brocade-like patterns and magnificent hat combine to create a Byzantine texture and brilliance, but the eyes project a feeling of loneliness (Page 8). In *Before the Creation*, a composition that does not have eyes to support the overall effect, he works instead to emphasize other elements: an eery atmosphere, flower-stemmed heads, buds and a leafless tree form existing in the half-night before dawn (Page 9).

Even though Buraimoh interprets such themes as creation, devotion, patriotism and desperation, never do these subjects emerge as pompous, sentimental or prosaic. Rather they express his own responses and feelings. In all of his works the images with their self-contained intensity radiate a quality not unlike the wonder of Asiru, but almost fearful and nearer perhaps to awe.

If as Ulli Beier has said, Asiru's work does not impose itself on the viewer, the opposite must be said for that of Buraimoh: it insists on being seen. Both artists trust their instincts. They follow the lead of the material, letting its character guide them. They have a background which has always used symbols and images both in language and the arts and they draw on this background freely. Yet they are not ruled by it. They are competing on the world scene and at the same time forging new artistic traditions at home.

THE *JU* FESTIVAL

By

Dr E. J. Alagoa

The *Ju* festival is performed at the death of a chief among the Apoi-Ijo of Okitipupa Division, in the Western State. The one described briefly here was performed on 21st December, 1966, at Igbobini in honour of Chief Biji Akitoye, an elder of the Peti Quarter of the town who had been buried some weeks previously. Aspects of this ritual should enlarge on some ideas already mentioned in the article on the burial of a king at Nembe in the Eastern Delta. Other aspects would throw new light on Ijo ideas concerning the dead.

The Apoi occupy a special position in Ijo studies for two reasons. First, they are the most westerly group separated from the main body of Ijo in the Mid-West and Rivers States, except for the Arogbo group (who have retained their Ijo dialect) also in Okitipupa Division bordering them on the south. Second, the Apoi have adopted the language and manners of their Yoruba neighbours. The interest in this and other Apoi rituals arises mainly from the pure form in which all essential Ijo elements have been preserved by a people who are in most other ways Yoruba in culture. But it is possible to overdraw the picture of Apoi immersion in Yoruba culture from their speech and the Yoruba-type mud houses in which they live.

The Apoi proudly tell traditions of their Ijo origin from the Kolokuma region of the central delta. The route of migration and other matters related in these traditions have a wide area of agreement with traditions told in the central delta. But the most convincing evidence of their Ijo origin must be their faithful rendition of Ijo ritual in words and gestures, the exact meaning of which they no longer remember. There are, in addition to *Ju*, a number of yearly festivals they perform in the Ijo manner. The *Ju* festival for Akitoye was to be followed by a public display of a typical Ijo masquerade, Iguberiberi—complete

Rows to Igbobini

e of tin roof and bamboo walls

The High Priest of OBOROWE. *He was one of the first called to the place of ritual by the* IKPATAGHA

The IKPATAGHA (EBEBEGE—*in Nembe*) *with its four bearers, and the ironwood pole on which it strikes to answer questions*

with Ijo songs, drums and dance. Even the Yoruba dialect of Apoi has not yet been studied to see how much Ijo has been retained. The public gathering place at Igbobini, for example, is known by its Ijo name, *Ogula*. In other ways too, some Apoi make a deliberate effort to stress their Ijo connection. The most prestigious craftsman in Igbobini, Omagbemi, spent a period of apprenticeship in the Ijo delta. And although he normally lives in a Yoruba-type mud house in town, practises his trade in an Ijo-type bamboo hut at the water-front.

PROCEDURES

First on the arena was the drummer, a young man, whose father had been chief drummer of Igbobini before him. He was called to perform on the town's distinctive talking drum, *Gudu Gede*, consisting of one medium-sized drum and a smaller drum tied to its side. The drum announces the commencement of the *Ju* festival and invites the people to the square.

Meanwhile a bamboo divining frame was being carried round the town by four men, calling the priests and elders to the square. The frame (Apoi-*Ikpatagha*, *Igbagala*) moves the men carrying it to each house and leads the elder or priest concerned to the ritual ground.

On the ground itself the elders and priests sat under a canopy of palm branches on one side, and opposite them the chief drummer and a small orchestra. To the right of the drummer sat three priests to carry out the ritual. They had faces blackened with charcoal, and wore white loin cloth, a small band of white cloth round the crown, and an eagle's feather (*ugo*) stuck over the left ear. A boy sat next to them to serve palm-wine from a pot and gin from a bottle.

Proceedings started with a divining ceremony. The presiding priest made statements to which the divining frame returned negative or affirmative answers. For 'yes' the frame moved forward to strike an ironwood pole. For 'no' it moved its bearers backwards. The priest addressed the frame by the name of the dead elder—Akitoye. It acknowledged the greeting. He declared that Akitoye had performed the *Ju* festival for *Oborowe*, the tutelary god of all Apoi, before his death. Affirmative. It was for that reason that *Ju* had to be performed at his death, according to the custom of the Ijo. Affirmative. The divining frame duly acknowledged the time ripe for *Ju*, and the festival started—after a few preliminary matters.

First, the divining frame brought out a blacksmith who had chosen to continue to work on the

day of *Ju*. A fine was agreed for this offence. Second, the election of a successor to a chieftaincy in the Barate Quarter was deferred by the divining frame because the Head Chief of the Barate lineage was not present. The frame would otherwise have pointed out the successor on the spot. During all this time the drum master interjected praises of the chief, elders, and the town, to which the assembled crowd answered with cheers.

The *Ju* itself consisted of two main ritual dance sequences performed four times by each of the three priests. In the first act the performing priest carries a sword in his left hand and faces east (the direction of the river?). He makes loud and prolonged calls answered each time by the *gudu gede* playing martial music of the type known as *peri* in the Eastern Delta. At the end of four calls, each priest dances a sword brandishing flourish round the square. The performing priest stops occasionally to exchange ritual greeting with the crowd. He faces one way and says: *Ahn*. . . The crowd answers, *Inyoo* . . . He finally stops at the drum stand and makes three exchanges with the talking drum; each saying; *Ada kumo kon* (May *Ada* take a man). The long calls also refer to *Ada:*

Beri o— o—
Beri Ada.
Hear oh, oh!
Ada hear!

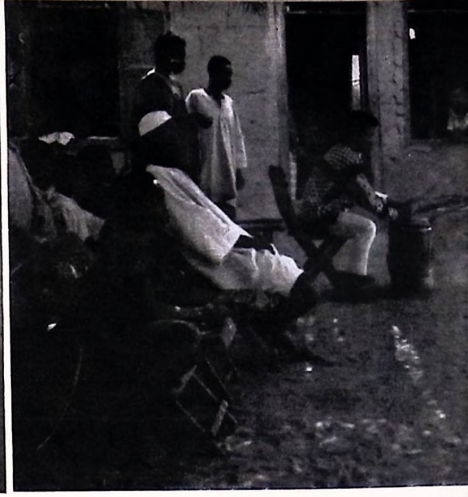
In the second sequence the three priests discard their swords and each does a dignified dance round the square four times. The drum rhythm changes, and the priests dance with their arms spread out and make flapping movements. In the final lap, all three priests join, followed by the four bearers of the divining frame. Akitoye, accordingly brought the ritual to a close, in the rear of the final dance sequence.

COMMENTS

First, concerning objects used in the ritual. The name *ikpatagha* applied to the divining frame recalls Nembe *Ikpataka* featuring in the Nembe

The three priests performing the JU, *dressed in white loin cloth and head-tie, eagle feather,—faces blackened with charcoal*

The three priests dancing the final 'bird dance' followed by the IKPATAGHA



The master drummer calling the people to the JU *Festival on* GUDU GEDE *drum*

burial rites. They are, obviously the same word; but applied to two different things. The Nembe *ikpataha* applies to the coffin of mangrove branches in which the corpse was buried; the divining frame of bamboo fronds being termed *ebebege*. Thus the Apoi carry out a typically Ijo divining ritual, but have apparently mixed up their terms.

Second, the swords borne by the three priests during their first ritual sequence were symbolic of the high status of the person for whom the ceremony was being performed. *Ada*, the word that is spoken several times during the festival, is used in many parts of the Southern States of Nigeria for a sword of office—usually for kings. In this case it is symbolic of a warrior, one who has performed a feat of arms.

The eagle feathers worn by the three priests also reinforce the high status of the person and the importance of the festival. And the closing dance of the ritual too is obviously in imitation of a flying eagle, a bird of prey.

It may be noted too that there were three priests, performing each ritual act four times. The numbers three, four, and seven recur in Ijo ritual. In other contexts the number three is considered symbolic of the male, and four of the female; and accordingly, seven represents the union of the male and female elements.

The dance steps, drumming, and essence of the *Ju* festival recall the *peri* among the eastern and central delta Ijo. In Nembe, for example, *peri* is performed for high priests of the national god, and for persons who had sacrificed a man they had taken captive in war. It could also be performed for successors in a chieftaincy, if the founder of the lineage had carried out the operation. In the Apoi *Ju* reference is made to a connection with *Oborowe*, their national god, but there is also the underlying relation to war and the sacrifice of a man in the ritual acts themselves.

The music and dance were, in fact, very similar to *peri* music and dance steps recorded at Okpoma (Nembe). The first dance sequence of *Ju* was similar to the sword play (*ogidi peri*) of Okpoma, and the final sequence to the 'bird dance' (*ofoni segi*) done as part of *peri*.

It is, of course, only too obvious that the drums used by the Apoi during *Ju* were typical Ijo instruments as was the music produced. *Gudu gede* was played basically in the way the drum master during the *Kamo* festival at Nembe played his battery of drums. The Ijo names have also been retained for the drums—*Gudu gede* was accompanied by *oje*, and *ekere* (wooden gong drum).

The drum stand and the priests. Prior to the final dance sequence, the drum GUDU GEDE *is draped in white*

CONCLUSIONS

The basic idea is the same between *Ju* and a lot of the ritual performed in the burial of a king at Nembe. In each case the spirit of the dead is formally reunited with his ancestors, and the living are called to witness.

The obvious differences are due to the circumstances of the two peoples. Since Yoruba culture poses such a great threat to the remaining traits of Ijo ritual, the Apoi have come to regard these rituals very much as magic formulae, efficacious, though largely inexplicable. Any deviations from the Ijo original are, therefore, involuntary. At Nembe, on the contrary, the forces of change are still largely external, and changes are admitted on due consideration; but here the culture is still in its native habitat and undergoing change in response to natural processes.

View from across Kofo Abayomi Road. Erhabor Emokpae's sculpture is on the left and the lecture hall on the right of the four-storey main block

NEW BUILDINGS IN LAGOS

THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By

A. VAUGHAN-RICHARDS

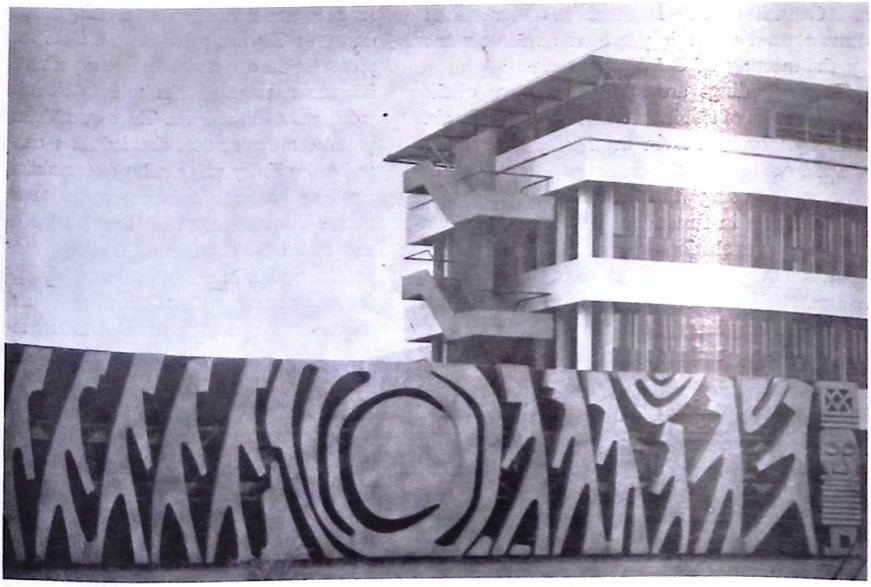
ON the 15th June last year the new Headquarters Buildings of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs on Victoria Island, Lagos were opened with due ceremony by His Excellency the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Major-General Yakubu Gowon. Only five months later the foresight of The Trustees and Council of the Institute was dramatically demonstrated when it provided an ideal venue for the meeting of O.A.U. leaders.

These buildings are appropriately one of the best examples of the international style in Nigeria. This style evolved from the Modern Movement which arose to meet the challenge of the twentieth century by using the exciting new machines and materials in functional buildings that reflect the social revolution. The new manufactured materials in particular large areas of glass, steel, and reinforced concrete, are generally produced in sheets or long lengths and together with present-day designing techniques and the influence of constructivist art led to the clean geometrical buildings with which we are now familiar. Many of the new materials are now made in whole or in part in Nigeria. Electrical and mechanical engineering advances have led to the development of air-conditioning and lifts which together with electric light and telephones have had a great influence on the form of building. These last two services were actually introduced in Lagos in 1886 and 1894 respectively, when most of Europe and America were still using gas or oil lights.

The social changes brought about by mass production and increase in population have led to new types of buildings to house the manufacturing, bureaucratic, educational and other organizations which often have world-wide affiliations. 'The Institute of Peace and Progress,' as The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs has been called, reflects the best of these changes. Its aims include creating and sustaining interest among the Nigerian public in world affairs and presenting the citizen with the necessary accurate information to enable him to make balanced judgments on these issues. The accommodation provided to further these aims includes a comprehensive library with ancillary accommodation including bookstacks and workshops, a lecture theatre and conference room as well as offices and flats for visiting fellows. The design team headed by Design Group, architects, J. Wardlaw, quantity surveyor and Omisore, Afolabi and Partners, engineers, have arranged the accommodation in a logical manner with all the elements easily comprehended by a visitor. The design is dominated by a four-storey block containing reception areas and lounges on the lower two floors, administrative offices, eight research rooms and a conference room on the second floor and two flats on the top floor. The two-storey library has been placed at the rear to shield it from traffic and other noises. The other mostly single storey accommodation has been placed around the main block in positions which allow easy access without disturbing the other areas. The library,

with first floor gallery containing study carrells, offers seating for 120 readers and will ultimately house 100,000 volumes. With its calm atmosphere and ample room this must presently be the best place for study in Lagos.

The four-storey block is the most prominent landmark to Kofe Abayomi Road, (*see* p. 16) which is the usual approach to the Institute. On nearing the buildings, attention is focussed on a large sculptured mural in tooled granite concrete set against a predominantly blue coloured mosaic background representing the 'Art of Understanding'. It is the work of one of Nigeria's most talented young artists, Erhabor Emokpae who was selected as the result of a competition. Owing to the size of the sculpture, the best view of the whole composition can be gained from Anifowoshe Street to which it provides a splendid end foil. From this view it is also easy to appreciate the architectural composition of a forecourt dominated by the main block and flanked by the mural shielding the library workshop entrance on one side and the lecture hall on the other. A porchway leads to the ample foyer in the main block past an ornamental pool and two towers, one rounded following the shape of the stairs and the other rectangular and rather taller to accommodate the lift and its motor room. At the end of the foyer covered ways lead past another pool, with a bronze statue depicting knowledge by Ben Enwonwu, to the lecture hall on the main roadside and a conference hall at the rear. The lecture hall with comfortable tiered seating for 400 persons is equipped with a projection room and modern aids to public address. The octagonal conference chamber accommodates eighty persons in tiered seating arranged on a horseshoe plan facing a chairman's rostrum behind which is a carved wooden symbol of the Institute by Erhabor Emokpae. In a gallery is accommodation provided for



Sculptured Mural, 'The Art of Understanding' by Erhabor Emokpae of tooled concrete which exposes the granite aggregate standing in front of a wall faced with mosaic of predominantly blue colour. The main four-storey block is behind

Four-storey main block framed by the folded concrete slab construction of the conference hall. To the left is the bronze sculpture representing knowledge by Ben Enwonwu. The conference hall is covered in blue mosaic and the horizontal sun-breakers to the main building white mosaic. Windows and vertical sun-breakers are aluminium

the Press and four interpreters' booths equipped for simultaneous interpretation for the use of delegates.

Victoria Island is one of the areas of Lagos which have been reclaimed by pumping sand over swamps, which means that the ground has a low load bearing capacity. The foundation to the four-storey block, therefore, is piled to reach firmer ground below the swamp and the surrounding single storey blocks have raft foundations to reduce the load on the top soils to the level of their bearing capacity. The main block has a reinforced concrete frame with hollow clay pots used to lighten the concrete floors. The lower three floors have horizontal bands of sun-breakers while the flats above which have a different function are protected by a light verandah. The sun rises horizontally in the east, ascends until midday when it is vertical or slightly to the north or south depending on the time of the year and then sinks until it finally sets horizontally in the west. Openings on the north or south can, therefore, easily be shaded by a small horizontal projection, but those on the east and west are difficult to protect from the low sun. As the prevailing breeze needed for natural cooling comes from the south-west, the most economical form of buildings is generally achieved when they face north or south

The library from the gallery which surrounds the main ground floor area

(Below) The library. The columns and balcony are clad in travatine marble, the ceiling has conical acoustic tiles and the floor plastic tiling

The bronze statue representing knowledge by Ben Enwonwu stands in a pool beside the covered way linking the main block to the conference hall. The foyer of the main block forms the background to this view

as these do. This would appear fairly obvious, but many occupants have to suffer from living in buildings that ignore this simple rule. In the main block, the horizontal sun-breakers take care of the sun for most of the day, but vertical aluminium fins placed between the windows are necessary to avoid the horizontal sun which can still be rather troublesome early in the morning or late afternoon even with the optimum orientation for continually occupied buildings. The most interesting structure is the octagonal conference chamber which gains its strength by the inclined planes of reinforced concrete, rather, as by folding paper into the form of a hat or boat we can give it a rigidity that it does not possess as a simple sheet. Apart from the windows it is finished externally entirely in mosaic, and seen from above, this little building has a jewel like quality with a rare example of a handsome modern roof. This element often not visible from the ground, but only too evident from upper stories is frequently neglected in modern buildings, often because present-day materials usually lack the character and discipline of the traditional ones.

The contractors, G. Cappa Ltd. have maintained their usual high standard of workmanship and the finishes generally are luxurious with lavish use of imported travatine marble facing to external walls, local marble for floors and mosaic to the sun-breakers. There appear to be some inconsistencies in the qualities of finish probably due to the fact that some materials were donated during the construction and there might have been difficulties in obtaining supplies of mineral finishes but this is a matter of taste; it is a minor criticism, compared with a most unfortunate feature over which no one concerned with the building has any control. The modernization of the telephone system in areas other than the centre of Lagos has involved the use of thick overhead cable which added to the existing electric wiring obtrude on many of the best views and it is impossible to see or photograph these buildings from the roads except through a veritable cat's cradle of these sausage-thick strands. What is particularly regrettable is that the architects and clients took care to place underground electric and telephone supplies to avoid spoiling the buildings.

Lagos climate has temperatures a little below

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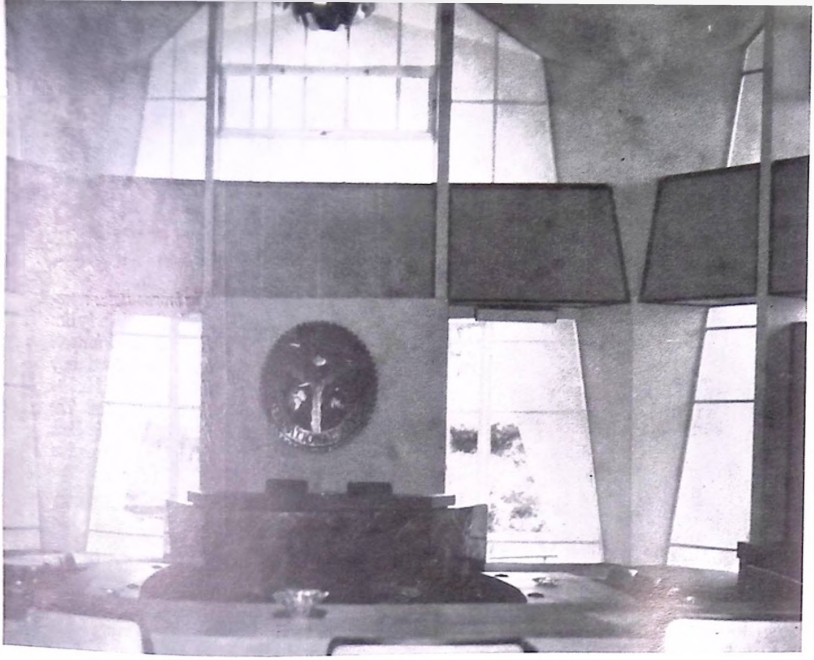
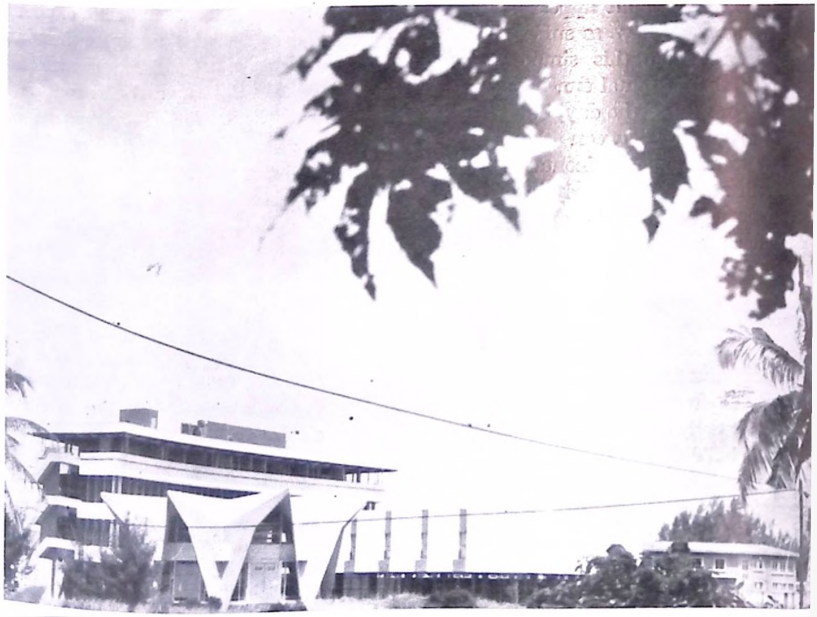


The octago al conferen chamber loo ing towar the Chai man's des



View from the lagoon side. The octagonal conference hall and library are in front of the four-storey main block

body heat and high humidity for most of the year. The principal means of losing metabolic heat is by the evaporation of sweat as the body cannot radiate, conduct or convert heat to surroundings of equal temperatures. On open sites like Victoria Island, provided the rules of breeze and sun control are followed, air-conditioning is seldom necessary. However, in this building it is needed for the preservation of books in the library, for comfort when people are packed together for lectures and to prevent undue hardship for unacclimatized visitors. The conditioning can be turned off for areas that do not require it.

The Institute received grants from the Federal and former Regional Governments, Commonwealth and Foreign Governments and also foundations and firms. The principal donations for the buildings from abroad were £39,000 for the construction and furnishing the Lecture Theatre from the U.K. Government, £100,000 for the construction and equipment of the library from the American Government, through the U.S.A.I.D. and £31,000 for the construction and furnishing of the Conference Chamber from the Senate of West Berlin, and £1,870 worth of books and furnishings from the Indian Government. £12,000 worth of Italian marble was donated by Messrs. G. Cappa Ltd. and U.A.C. (Nigeria) Ltd. £1,000 for furniture. The total cost of the building was about £246,000.

The Council set themselves the goal of providing buildings equal to any abroad, which they have succeeded in doing, while also providing an embellishment to Lagos City.

THE OVIE OF UVWIE:

A CHIEFTAINCY INSTALLATION

By

K. E. Agbamu

TRADITIONAL festivities and the installation of a new chief, now a regular cultural feature in Nigeria, have spread from the big towns to villages of hitherto unpublicized clans. One of such clans is the Uvwie in the Mid-West.

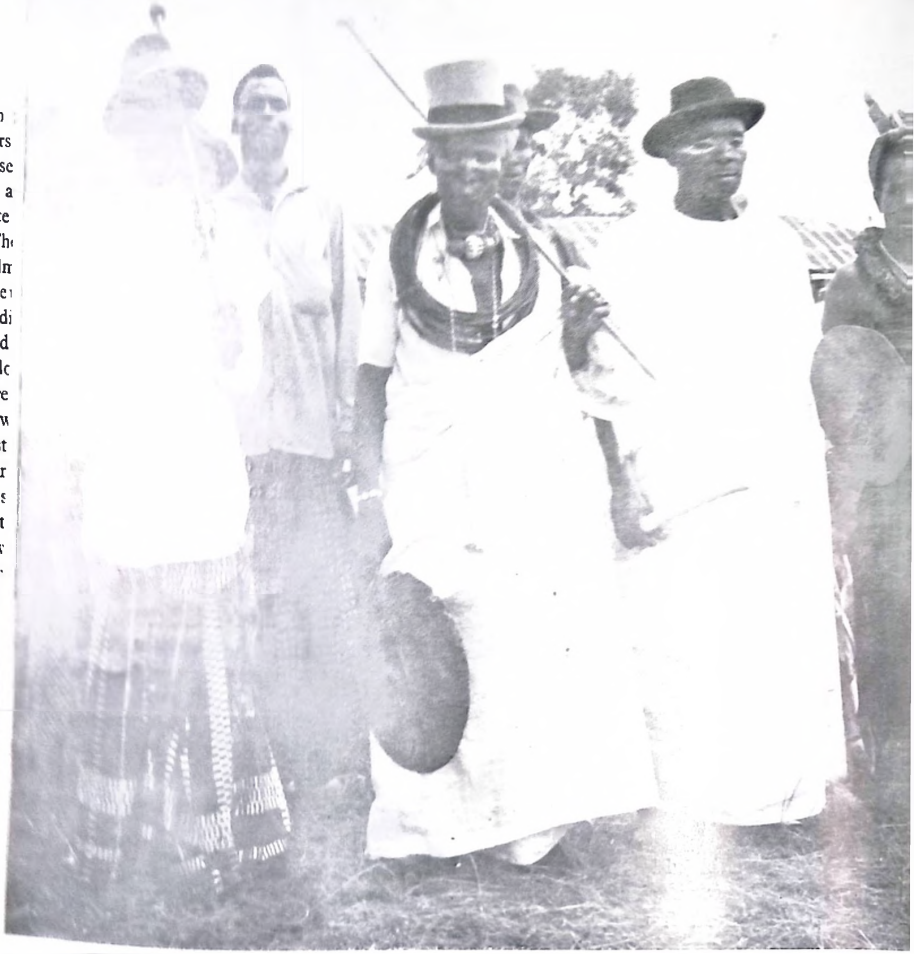
Travelling along winding gravelled and tarred roads through thick timber, wild rubber and palm produce forests, you reach Effurun, the capital of the Uvwie Clan, which is within an hour's drive from Asaba, Benin, Sapele and Warri.

As one travels southwards from Benin magnificent panoramas unfold themselves for some part of the journey and the road is criss-crossed by rain forests—the source of mahogany and iroko from which the area makes its livelihood and contribution to Nigeria's economy.

Effurun lies partly at the foot of a legendary lost ridge at a height of 80′/90′ above sea level and in a lowland 3 miles long and 2½ miles wide, where mythological shrines reveal the cultural civilization of a great clan whose sturdy men were invincible.

In this ancient but developing town lives a ruler revered by his people for his resilience. Since independence, however, Urhobo customs, like the traditions of other Nigerian ethnic groups, have changed, resulting, for instance, in the Ovieship, which was a hereditary office, now becoming elective.

Such a contest occurred at Uvwie in 1954 when two rival claimants to the throne emerged each with his supporters. Neither was officially



The Chief Juju Priest carries his Staff of Office as he leads members of the cult (IRERHE) *to their seat*

recognized, however, till March, 1967 when the Mid-West Military Government accorded recognition to His Highness Johnson Uviekoko Edjekowho who was proclaimed Ovie of Uvwie, Erunowho II.

Oviehip, one of the highest positions of trust and respect in Uvwie Clan, is attained by the acquisition of the Ovie title. Ovie is the title of the paramount ruler of Uvwie whose sway extends over the outlying five villages and settlers occupied by the Uvwie Clan. These villages are Effurun, Ekpan, Ugherikokoko, Ugbomro and Ugboroke. One of his many functions is to confer on the chiefs, solely appointed by him, the high membership of the ancestral cult—*ohovhore*—by elevating distinguished sons of the land from commoners to nobles thereby enthroning them in the exclusive club—the chieftaincy cult.

INSTALLATION

The installation of a new chief begins with a verbal application by the kingmakers, on the

advice and recommendation of the village wanting a new chief, to the Ovie and his chiefs. When a new chief's candidature is approved, he prepares himself for the big day. Formerly, it was the Unuevboro, the traditional Prime Minister, who conducted the installation of every *Ohovhore*—Chief.

On the appointed day, the Ovie and his chiefs assemble in the centre of the town square with pride and majesty as titled men of the village, lead the novitiate to the square and present him to the Ovie for installation. The Ovie orders the rituals to commence. The prerequisites for the occasion include, seven coconuts, *Apere* (elephant tusk), *Adjudju* (leather fan), plantain, kola-nuts, seven yams, a white she-goat with shrivelled hair. This goat is slaughtered at the square and its blood sprinkled on the sacred altar marking the

Ovie Owhoru (Juju Priest) leads members of his cult before the Ovie, His Highness

Some members of the Onhoru Ozii in their full regalia sounding a note with meanings from a horn

initiation.

Before the ceremony begins, the novitiate is signalled to kneel before the Ovie by the senior chief known as *THE UHUEVBOKO* who leads the ceremony. He is blessed by the Ovie and bows in appreciation. After this the oath of chieftaincy is read by the *UNUEVBOKO* while the novitiate repeats each word after him. One of the oaths taken during the ceremony but which in recent times is known to have been broken is that no chief should perform manual labour, such as climbing of trees, felling nuts from palm-trees or ploughing for tillage.

The ceremony involves the consecration by the *UNUEVBOKO* of kola-nuts (*ami*), coconuts (*ikokoha*), plantain (*ovre*), the sacrificial goat (*ehe ovorie*) and emblem of honour (*ukhuha*), this is the novitiate's replica of the god of fortune, his personal god, Osahon, regarded in English as the guardian angel of the Christian religion and in the clan, the clan-chief's ancestral spirit.

A large chain of small brown coral beads is

consecrated and slid round the novitiate's neck. He then kneels down and the *Unuevboro* daubs his forehead, chest and arms with locally made white chalk.

This is followed by sounding of a trumpet, singing and dancing, as able-bodied men of the village, ritually chosen for the occasion, lift the novitiate and carry him shoulder high to his residence where he is left to lie in bed alone for seven days. Even his wife does not 'see' him till

The Chief (Juju Priest) pays homage to the Ovie, with Adjudju (leather fan) in right hand raised in respect

A Masquerade (OKI) *preparing for a dance during the ceremony accompanied by his helper* (IYEN EJOH)

the eighth day which marks the end of the ceremony. Throughout the seven days, the body of the new chief is painted daily with chalk to 'drive' away evil spirits.

'IGBE EMA': THE CHIEFTAINCY DANCE

The chieftaincy dance, the climax of the installation ceremony, and its main social side, takes place on the eighth day. Early in the morning, the novitiate secures the assistance of friends and services of his relations as the final dance ceremony involves plenty of hard work, cooking, feasting and drinking.

The new chief invites all other chiefs and all titled men of the village to the dance ceremony, usually on the seventh night preceding the day of the novitiate's dance.

After the usual breaking of kola-nuts, a formal dinner is served and the titled men proceed in procession to the town square clad in chieftaincy regalias holding swords and traditional *adjudju* fans in both hands after which they retire.

In the morning of the eighth day, the novitiate, flanked by chiefs, relations and titled men, is escorted through the town singing and dancing while money is thrown on him in form of confetti.

The new chief's wife puts on her best dress and dances along with him joined by her friends (the most intimate wearing a man's dress and a cap with chalk painted face) to whom her new status means a great tomorrow for she is then the spouse of a village head—a fountain of justice.

The Traditional Standard Bearers lead the Ovie Eruohwo II followed by his chiefs to his seat

High Priest (Orie Ozuhoru) pays homage to His Highness

Money usually collected through contribution by friends and well-wishers is retained by the chief whose popularity is judged by the size of the purse. The end of the installation festivities is marked by gun shots and cannon booms as drums toll off the final chief's dance, while a soloist, specially picked for the occasion, intones the last dance which ends the ceremony.

Apart from the shrills and shouts accompanying the final dance rituals and occasional outburts of joyful enthusiasm sometimes taking the form of chants, nothing more spectacular happens till at night when the warm embrace of the novitiate's wife marks the beginning of an all night feasting and merry-making which continue till the early hours of the ninth morning.

On the ninth day, the new chief, like his colleagues, wears, as a mark of his new office, rings of brown coral beads round the neck and wrists. A new chief is thus installed.

The Traditional Chiefs dancing in their group before the Ovie

Female dancers dressed with coral beads dance during the ceremony

Some male dancers doing the (ODAH) *dance during the ceremony*

The Ovie sitting on throne, flanked by his Traditional Standard Bearers. (The APERE *Elephant Tusk, in centre behind and on both sides* APERE *(Sword)*

r the ceremony His Highness (in centre) poses in front of his palace with his chiefs, sitting according to their ran

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THE SNAIL AND THE TORTOISE IN YORUBA FOLKLORE

By

Dr Adeboye Babalola

MANY students of folklore at present erroneously regard Tortoise as the top trickster in Yoruba folklore, because of the dominance of Tortoise in the trickster role in existing anthologies of Yoruba folk-tales. But in actual fact Snail is the top trickster in Yoruba folklore. There are several proverbs which stress this fact; for example: *Ọgbọn ti Ahun gbọn, ẹhin l'o ntọ Igbin*, which means 'Clever as Tortoise is, he is but a runner-up to Snail.'

The following is one of the many Yoruba folktales featuring Snail as a cleverer trickster than Tortoise.

SNAIL AND TORTOISE UNDERTAKE A JOINT FISHING VENTURE

One day Tortoise casually met Snail and they both began to chat. In the course of their conversation, Tortoise told Snail that there was something he badly needed and for lack of which he could not really be happy. Snail asked him, 'What is it?' Tortoise said, 'I need a partner for a fishing venture and it must be a stupid person.'

Snail replied, 'Well, that is easy. Here I am, a stupid person ready to undertake a fishing venture with you. You know how sluggish and slow-witted I am. You cannot find a more suitable person than myself for your purpose.'

Tortoise accepted Snail's offer and they both agreed on place, date and time to start the fishing project.

At the start of their first day of business, Snail told Tortoise to go into the bush by the river-bank and cut out several midribs of raffia palm branches. Tortoise did so. Then Snail also went into the bush to fetch some strips of tree barks to be made into ropes for use in the construction of their wicker fish-trap. When they both returned to their base with the necessary materials they started to make their fish-trap. Tortoise of course did most of the weaving because of his position as the brain behind the project. When the trap was ready the two friends carried it to the river and there Snail told Tortoise to set it wherever he thought best. Tortoise set the trap and they returned home.

The next morning, the two friends went early to the river to collect their catch of fish. To their delight, they found the trap full of fishes each as big as a man's arm. Tortoise said, Well, I will take my turn first, and so, today's catch is mine; I will take the fishes home.'

Snail replied, 'That is all right by me, for tomorrow it will be my turn to take the catch and I am sure the trap will be full of fishes each as big as a man's thigh.'

On hearing this, Tortoise changed his mind and said he would prefer tomorrow's turn. Snail conceded the option to him and carried home the fishes.

The following day, the trap had caught many fishes each as big as a man's thigh. Tortoise was glad to see this and he packed the fishes ready to take home. Just then Snail said, 'That's all right by me, but don't be envious and morose tomorrow when the trap is full of fishes each as big as a mother hedgehog, all for me.

Tortoise was excited at the prospect and he said 'Ha! That being so, I am willing to surrender today's turn to you. I will take tomorrow's catch.' Snail again accepted the offer and took the fishes home.

The following morning, the trap was full of fishes each as big as a mother hedgehog. Snail told Tortoise 'Well, this catch is all for you; take it home; but tomorrow when the trap will be full of fishes each as big as

an antelope, it will be my turn to take the catch.' Tortoise once again was so attracted by the bigger catch forecast that he decided to forgo the fishes big as hedgehogs. Snail obligingly agreed to take the fishes home and to allow Tortoise to take the following day's catch.

Next day indeed the two friends found their trap full of fishes each as big as an antelope. Tortoise was thrilled at the sight and he quickly put all the fishes in a sack and was ready to carry them home. Just then Snail said to him, 'I do not envy you, you know. Tomorrow, it will be my turn to take the catch and I assure you the trap will be full of fishes each as big as a western *hartebeest*.'

Again the desire to take the greatest catch of all made Tortoise give away that morning's catch to Snail on the understanding that the following day's catch would be his. Snail thanked tortoise for the gift and he carried the fishes home.

On succeeding days the two friends found the trap full of fishes of successively increasing sizes: as big as lions, as big as leopards, waterbucks, river hogs, buffaloes.

Snail carried home all these fishes as a concession from Tortoise who kept preferring the biggest catch of all which was yet to come.

When the trap caught fishes each as big as an elephant, Tortoise assumed that that was the biggest possible catch and he told Snail his decision to carry the fishes home. To his surprise, Snail said, 'That is all right by me. But let me warn you not to heave sighs of regret tomorrow when it will be my turn to take the catch which will be just one colossal fish by name 'What-on-earth-is-this, the mightiest of fishes.' Again Tortoise was covetous of this promised biggest catch of all and he opted for it, giving the fishes as big as elephants to Snail who happily carried them home.

On their way, Snail gave Tortoise some details about the nature of the following day's catch of fishes. He said, 'It is quite likely that some people will see What-on-earth-is-this in our trap before we ourselves arrive on the scene, because it is the mightiest of fishes and it is bound to attract great attention. Such people will shout, 'What-on-earth-is-this!' When you hear their shout, waste no time; just dash out of your house and make for the site of our trap, exclaiming repeatedly as you run, 'It is me, Tortoise, Tortoise, the clever man.'

In the evening of that day, after nightfall, Snail went to a farm near the river-bank and he deliberately wrought a great havoc on the crops there—he cut down the flourishing maize plants, yam vines, *okro* vegetables, bean creepers and pepper bushes in the farm; he levelled the cultivated plot and sneaked home for the night.

The next day dawned, the farmer went as usual to his farm to do a new day's job. To his horror he found all his crops withered and destroyed. He gave vent to his grief by shouting repeatedly, 'What on earth is this! What on earth is this!'

As soon as Tortoise heard the farmer's cry, he dashed out of his hut and made for the riverside, throwing up a cloud of dust, as he scurried, and shouting in reply to the farmer, 'It is me, Tortoise, Tortoise, the clever man.' He ran into the farmer on his way and the farmer stopped him and inquired, 'So you are the criminal who has destroyed all my crops on this farm?'

Tortoise replied, 'Oh no! Not at all.'

The farmer said, 'You don't mean that. You have already loudly announced yourself as the culprit.'

Tortoise replied, 'I was shouting my name only to identify myself as the owner of the wicker fish-trap by the riverside over there.'

The farmer said, 'It boils down to the same thing. You admit you are the owner of the fish-trap on one edge of my farm. Therefore, I am sure you are the criminal responsible for the wanton destruction of all my crops here.'

Tortoise protested vehemently but all in vain. The farmer seized him and dragged him before the King for trial. The King listened patiently to the case as stated by either side. Then he asked Tortoise, 'What has become of all the fishes your trap has caught?'

Tortoise replied, 'Snail, my partner, took all the fishes; he monopolized them.'

The King thought Tortoise was lying and he wanted to verify his report. If it proved to be false, Tortoise would be adjudged the culprit responsible for the destruction of the farmer's crops. So the King sent a special messenger to go to Snail's house and observe whether or not there was any litter of fish-bones in his back-yard to support the report that he had been eating a lot of fish in his house.

Before this time, Snail had got wind of Tortoise's trouble and had collected all the fish-bones from his yard and deposited them in the back-yard of Tortoise's hut. Then he had returned to his house and lain in bed by the fireside feigning illness. In his mouth he hid two

[illegible] proposed dramatic [illegible]

[illegible] messenger Snail pre- [illegible] He answered [illegible] that a big [illegible] The messenger [illegible] the King.

[illegible] was brought back [illegible] The [illegible] Snail. This [illegible] that Snail was merely [illegible] to press Snail's [illegible] of his boil. [illegible] than one of the [illegible] the raw [illegible] taken in by this [illegible] with a loud [illegible] asleep after the boil [illegible] discharged its pus leaving him greatly soothed and relieved. So this messenger also returned to the palace to tell the King that Snail truly deserved to be excused on grounds of serious indisposition.

The King, however, ordered his messengers to go back to Snail's house for a thorough search to ascerta whether or not large piles of fish-bones were an where there to be found. The messengers underto the search but found no fish-bones either in Snai rooms or in his yard.

Thereafter the King ordered his messengers to subje Tortoise's house to a thorough search likewise. To toise was asked to show the way. Lo and behold, the back-yard of Tortoise's hut, there was a large p of fish-bones. The messengers confronted Torto accusingly and declared, 'You are a liar! We will no take you back to the King for your sentence.'

The King subsequently sentenced Tortoise to niner nine strokes of the cane and descent on a rock outcro from the top of a tree 60 feet high. In receiving th punishment Tortoise's shell and limbs were badly broke and it was only by the kind services of Black Ant, Coc roach and Stink Ant that he was patched up tolerabl His shell was being repaired by Stink Ant when Tortoi complained of the Ant's nasty smell. At that poi Tortoise was left to his fate by all the rescue operator From that day Tortoise's shell has remained uneven an patchy.

BINI PROVERBS

By

M. E. Omijeh

PROVERBS are indispensable in conversation, discussion or in supporting one's arguments. In village meetings, a speaker invariably follows up each idea with a proverb, and they never become too many or monotonous. Chinua Achebe in his novels, especially the first, *Things Fall Apart*, vividly illustrates this use of proverbs among the Ibos (which applies with equal force to the Bini also)—as the most impressive and effective method for expressing one's ideas and feelings.

It is little wonder, therefore, that they are very often used in Bini personal names. Bini names largely reflect Bini thought—especiall since they express in most cases very many idea beliefs and maxims. Bini names are, therefor expressed proverbially, and I choose to ca them so for want of a better term: **PROVERE NAMES**.

They occur in clear-cut sociological cat- gories like family-names: *Ogbe* (family) an *Omo* (child), in *Osa* (God) and in *Ehi* (spiritu counterpart). The following are examples of eac

Emokpae — *Emokpaogbe* — 'It is children wh raise the prestige of a family.'

Omobude—'It is the child who advises.'

man with a child does not require any advice from anyone. Having a child makes one have second thoughts before taking any action.

Ẹhizogie='It is one's *ẹhi* who chooses or predestines a man to be a king.' Whether a man is a king or not is a question of destiny—one's self-destiny.

In this article, I shall discuss only these which do not fall into these broad sociological categories, that is, proverbs which express abstract and, therefore, general ideas and thoughts. The classification of proverbs according to their subject is sometimes adopted, but one finds that some decline to be so categorized. I shall, however, try to classify some of these proverb-names according to the sentiments they express. One fact about Bini proverb-names, like most other African proverb-names, is that it is *often*, though not invariably, the first half of the proverbs that is given as names.[1]

This is purely a linguistic device since the full proverb cannot conveniently be used as a name but one always recalls the whole proverb anytime the proverb-name is used.

PROVERB-NAMES THAT REFLECT BINIS BELIEF IN PREDESTINATION

Bini ideas about predestination are expressed mainly in *ẹhi* names so that the following are only secondary, and merely help to illustrate the notion further.

Amẹnaghamwọn=Amẹnaghamwọn, ẹi lẹ sọmwanrae—'The water meant for one to drink will not flow past one.' Whatever fortunes that have been ordained for one cannot miss one. This is only the good side of the whole aspect of predestination. Its origin is probably from the fact that it is from the waterhole in a dry river-bed that the water comes out. Yoruba have this proverb, but not as a personal name.

Uhunmwunnamure=Uhunmwunnamure a yakhian—'It is the head one has brought (from heaven) that one goes on with (on earth).' The head is associated with *ẹhi* and luck. One's life depends on what one has predestined for oneself. If someone experienced ill-luck or behaves badly, he is said to have 'a bad head.'

PROVERB-NAMES THAT STRESS INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The names referring to predestination may tend to give the impression that Binis are totally fatalistic. The fact is that Bini concept of predestination, like Calvinistic conception of it, conceives, in a way, of a man acting according to his predestination if he behaves morally or according to the norms of the society, and if he is manly. There are proverbs which lay stress on the responsibility of the individual, though in a rather indirect way.

Amadin=Amadin, ainyagbọn—'If one is not courageous, he cannot live.' If one is not courageous enough, one may miss an opportunity or a blessing, or may not be able to cope with the difficulties of life. One has to distinguish this from the Ibo personal name, *Amadi*, which is in no way similar in meaning.

Ẹnọghayin=Ẹnọghayin agbọn, ẹi dahọ ahiamwẹn utuoya—'One who would live (successfully) does not listen to *ahiamwenufoya*,' (*Ahiamwẹn*= a bird; *oya*=suffering, sorrow or misfortune). This bird cries '*oya-o, oya-o*'... (misfortune, misfortune, ..) and '*guẹ guẹ, guẹ, guẹ*' (a sign of good news or fortune). Bini believe that when they hear the cries of "*oya-o*..." there is bad news or misfortune ahead. But the proverb warns that one who is determined to succeed, should not listen to all insinuations or suggestions that one is likely to fail, or to words of discouragement. These two proverb-names help to balance the view that the Bini are fatalistic in attitude which the concept of *ehi* creates.

SELF-ASSERTIVE PROVERB-NAMES

These resemble the self-chosen proverb-names among the Ovimbudu men, by which, for example, they assert or claim equality with the European colonizers.[2]

[1] Examples are *Ovimbundu* proverb-names among the men and women, discussed in Ennis, *e.g.*-women's names among the Ovimbundu of Angola. *African Studies*, 1945; Hauestein. *A – Noms accompagnes de proverbes chez kes Ovimbundu et les Humbi du Sud de L'Angola*. Anthropos 57, 1962.

[2] Hauestein, A, 1962.

PROVERB-NAMES THAT EXPRESS THE HOPE OF FURTHER BRIGHTNESS

Aiyowię=Aiyowięren—'We do not know in the morning (what will happen later on during the day)'.

Owię=Otaso wie (Otas) owię—'The evening is greater than the morning.' These two proverb-names are given when one is experiencing some hardships or difficulty, or when one is poor, or when one is looked down upon contemptuously by others because of one's poverty or a similar reason of an inferior status.

PROVERB-NAMES WHICH INDICATE THE INDIFFERENCE OF 'OUTSIDERS'

(Ẹ)nọruwa=(Ẹ)nọruwarẹn—'Those in prosperity do not know (the suffering of those in poverty).'

Nọmayo=Nọmayo marẹn—'Those who have not gone do not know.' Both express a similar idea: that those who do not know one's own difficulties, can not appreciate fully well their true nature, and are therefore likely, though wrongly, to attribute blame to one.

PROVERB-NAMES WHICH TOUCH ON CONDUCT

Some of the proverb-names already discussed are more or less intended to be moral and social code and ideal patterns of behaviour, but the following are explicitly so. And they are drawn from experience of social life.

Ẹkinadọẹse=Ẹkinadọẹse ana riere—'It is the market one has properly undertaken, that one profits from.' This is a principle meant to refer to the conduct of life in general—honesty and righteousness—in dealing with others.

Nẹkpẹnẹkpẹn=Nẹkpẹnẹkpẹn asirhuwa—'It is with gentleness one draws the rope of wealth (lest the rope be cut).' One has to seek wealth in a prudent and gentle manner, without haste, or one never gets it.

PROVERB-NAMES WHICH EXPRESS GENERAL VALUES

Two of these refer to truth and health

Egberanmwen=Egberanmwen ọsẹre—'Health is supreme.'

Ẹmwanta=Ẹmwanta ọgbe khọe—'It is the truth that calms the mind.'

PROVERB-NAMES COMMENTING ON HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

Aiguokhian=Aiguokhian rhanmwẹn amarua owẹ—'There is hardly a good stepper who will not trip or stumble his foot against an obstacle.' In other words, one can not be so perfect that one does not make mistakes, and that some difficulties in life are inevitable.

Aghaku=Aghaku airẹn aghagui—'When people play together, they do not know they may quarrel (someday).'

This is a piece of advice that one must be reserved in one's dealings with others; secrets told during friendship may be revealed while relationship is strained.

Nọyoze=Enọyoze yẹsẹ, nẹ ghẹgha kpe ogun nọ dumọẹ—'Those who mould bronze metal should do so properly so that people may not continuously condemn the smiths (who apply them to various objects).' This again is ethical—that whatever one does, one should do it properly so that the innocent may not be blamed. In the proverb, customers are likely to blame the smiths for any fault which may be due to those who originally thinned the metal into bars.

Aghahowa=Aghahowa, uhummwun guororamẹ—'If one is seeking wealth, one's head would go through the drainage pipe.' One is prepared to endure the greatest inconvenience and difficulty if one is seeking wealth. The exaggeration in the proverb shows the extent to which one would go or should go.

Aiyamẹkhuẹ=Aiyamẹkhuẹ vbuwawa, ọmakẹ—'Some water nevertheless remains after using the water in the (clay) pot to bathe'. An English equivalent proverb is: Every cloud has a silver lining.

Amẹzẹ: Amẹzẹ ẹizọfọ—'The water from the river does not make one perspire'. This is invariably a female name, and one of the very few which refer to the personal quality of a baby, and it denotes the extraordinary calmness of the baby. It also expresses the hope that her life will bring comfort to the parents. (It is of

[illegible] the all the [illegible] girls I [illegible] in investigation process this [illegible]

These [illegible] lend support to the [illegible] that a culture is a living, organic whole [illegible] elements hang together, influence one another and throw light on one another. Proverbs are bound up fully with the social life of the particular people, and if one is to understand them fully, one must first have a deep knowledge of the physical and cultural setting of the people. These proverb-names are highly symbolic and metaphorical often taken from something very imaginative, specific and picturesque usually from the physical world and ordinary social life which have to be analysed to reach their often deep and remote meanings, which make them all the more compelling and appealing.

Bini proverb-names, like other proverbs, express the morals and ethics of the society, by which they can appraise behaviour in terms of the approved norms; their philosophy in general; their values; their attitudes to life including both wealth and poverty; their character, and their social attitudes.

How, however, are proverb-names different from other proverbs? First, I think because they appeal to a wider audience in so far as the are so often used (as often as the names are used and thus serve some educative value; secondly because they probably emphasize those things which are uppermost in the minds of the people themselves. I have not found an answer, however, to why some proverbs are used as names and others not: but it may be because the ones used are those most appropriate to the occasions, or because they are more easily pronounced, especially as the first half often forms the name.

Perhaps the most important difference is in their perpetuity. In these days of rapid social change in Africa, when much of the traditional oral literature including the proverbs is being forgotten and falling into disuse, proverb-names show in general much greater persistence than other proverbs as these names will for long continue to exist, especially when most surnames tend now to be perpetuated through succeeding generations. It is likely, however, that their meanings will be more obscure, or that their applications will be different, in consonance with the changing cultural patterns, social conditions and values. Whether or not this will be so, and what the trends will be if so, only time will tell.

THE NIGERIAN PRESS AND THE GREAT WAR

By

FRED OMU

THE BELLIGERENT role of the Nigerian newspaper press in the Nigerian Civil War tempts one to examine an analogous situation during the First World War, the first major military conflict in which Nigeria was involved. Viewed against the immense armies produced by the combatant European countries, the Nigerian direct participation in the war was an extremely minor affair. However, our soldiers distinguished themselves in the Cameroons where they vanquished their German enemy. But perhaps we gave the fiercest battles not in the war front but on the pages of the newspapers.

In waging a war of words against the Germans from 1914 to 1918, the Nigerian newspapermen were

not coming new to a war situation. In the nineteenth century, during the Ijebu War of 1892, the Press mobilized itself in hostility to the Ijebu cause. The only newspaper at the time was the *Lagos Weekly Record* owned and edited by the distinguished journalist and politician John Payne Jackson. It may fairly be said that it was the joint vehemence of the *Record* and the then Governor, G. T. Carter, that brought the Anglo-Ijebu crisis to a head for the so-called Ijebu Expedition and its diplomatic aftermath were precipitated as much by Carter's aggression as by the *Record's* militancy. While Carter's pin-pricks provoked the Ijebu people beyond endurance, the *Record*, largely reflecting the popular belief among the commercial community in Lagos that the conquest of Ijebu-land would create an economic boom in the island, and notwithstanding the fact that the paper was at about the same time declaiming against the French invasion of Dahomey, campaigned vigorously for a showdown. Its militant propaganda must have helped to accentuate 'punitive' feelings on the part of the British administration and to have driven it into a more uncompromising position. And when the Ijebu Expedition was launched in May 1892, J. P. Jackson became Nigeria's first war correspondent. He accompanied the Expedition and sent back graphic reports of the 'sharp' and 'decisive' operations of the British forces. It has in fact been claimed that Ijebu-Ode would have been set on fire but for Jackson's presence of mind. He reportedly detected the white flag which the Ijebu people hoisted in surrender and swiftly contacted the British Commander who ordered his men to cease fire. All this impressed Governor Carter who unhesitatingly but unsuccessfully urged the British Government to grant Jackson a medal.[1]

Between the Ijebu War and the First World War, a number of imperialistic wars took place in several parts of Nigeria but they were unpopular wars, hated by most educated people and condemned by the Press. The notable exception was the Benin War of 1897 in which the *Record* shocked the consciences of its readers. When war clouds gathered following the tragedy that befell the British visiting party to Benin, the paper came out in favour of the Bini people, warning the Colonial Government against taking any precipitate punitive action. Benin was nevertheless invaded and sacked but the *Record* could not comment on what happened because it had temporarily ceased publication. When it returned to the streets after two weeks, it had, without the merest hint of what took place, executed an about face. It now denounced the Bini people holding them up to ridicule and describing their sad experience as retributive. The possible reasons for the behaviour of the *Record* can not delay us here as they have been gone into in some detail elsewhere.[2]

When the First World War broke out, the Nigerian Press comprised four weekly *owner-edited* newspapers, three of which were reputedly anti-government. These three included the *Record* the management of which Horatio Jackson, a chip of the old block, had taken from his ailing father; the *Lagos Standard* edited by George Williams and the *Times of Nigeria* edited by the urbane and indestructible West African administrator and nationalist James Bright Davies. The fourth paper was the pro-government *Nigerian Pioneer* edited by Kitoyi (later Sir Kitoyi) Ajasa, a highly successful lawyer whose leaning towards over-moderation exposed him to widespread misunderstanding and denigration. These newspapers were in the main directed at the local audience in Lagos, which then contained a fairly large literate public, and at a few other parts of Southern Nigeria. But the papers had many subscribers in parts of West Africa and, most importantly for our purpose, in the United Kingdom. Indeed in Britain, subscription accounted for only a part of the audience for many British newspapers from time to time reprinted news, stories and editorials from Nigerian and West African newspapers.

The outbreak of the war instantly revealed a contradiction in contemporary African thinking. Africans were usually highly critical of the colonial administration but at the same time they stood for the acceptance of and submission to the rule of the British Government. They considered British colonial policy definitely more humane than the colonial policies of the other European powers. French as well as German colonial rule was often described as too military.[3] In declaring war against Germany, therefore, Britain seemed to them

[1] C. O. 147/86, Carter to Ripon, 21st Dec., 1892.

[2] Chapter Four of F. I. A. Omu, *The Nigerian Newspaper Press* 1859–1937, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, November, 1965.

[3] See *Lagos Weekly Record*, 19th July, 1890; 12th September, 1891.

not only to be fighting to ensure her own survival and consequently the survival of those ideals which Africans cherished so fervently; she appeared also to be fighting Africa's battle against one of the representatives of outrageous colonialism. Nigerians in Lagos inaugurated a Committee of Emergency with Dr Obadiah Johnson as Chairman and Dr Obasa as Secretary, to educate the public about the war and to co-ordinate local assistance to the war effort. And their newspapers threw themselves into helping Britain to liquidate Germany.

Between August and about December, the newspapers made a kind of reconnaissance: they carried out a general survey of the background of German history in which they emphasized the significant role which war had played in the rise of the German nation and the nature of the militaristic passions that moved the German people. They reviewed the growth of the Habsburg dynasty of Austria and gave explanations of the outbreak of war. From about January 1915, the newspapers opened a fusillade of words. The *Record* had a reputation for strong language and the following was typical:

> '... not only is the German mind diseased with and distorted by false doctrines as regards the 'effectiveness' of brute force and unspeakable terrorism but also the Hunnish monster...is much lower than the beasts of prey that slay their victims in order to satisfy the pangs of hunger, since the Hun indulges in the wanton destruction of human lives only to satisfy an inordinate and hellish lust for the mere spilling of blood and infliction of untold cruelties....'[1]

The *Pioneer* also dwelt on the same theme:

> '... the success of Germany was her own doing. Drunk, as it were, with dreams of still greater greatness, she suddenly and ruthlessly attacked with colossal strength and utter disregard the very fabric of civilization'.[2]

Hostile comments on the 'German mentality' usually introduced the condemnation of German colonial policy. As has been pointed out, Africans hated German colonial policy and the newspapers had from time to time given expression to this attitude. A few months before the war, the *Record* spoke of the 'blood and iron' policy which Germany had systematically adopted in her colonies, a policy which was not only 'diabolically repressing' but had also 'goaded the people to that degree of exasperation which is ever seeking a favourable outlook for hostile expression'....[3] During the war the paper commented:

> 'The bare mention of the name of Germany as a colonising power in West Africa conjures up in the minds of the natives a state of affairs which may be fittingly described as *Pandemonium in Miniature* and which invariably stirs from the depths of their souls the most repulsive feelings of horror, or intense disgust and acute bitterness against the fiendish orgies of German tropical rule'.[4]

The most pervading theme in newspaper thought was that England and her allies were defenders of the principles of right and justice while Germany was the upholder of might and brute force. The *Standard* put this most pointedly:

> 'The fate of the world hangs on the issue of the titanic struggle now taking place in Europe. Might and brute force are arrayed against Right and Justice and whether the world shall be governed or ruled with due regard to humane principles as taught by Christianity or whether the old... Thor as reincarnated with all diabolical wickedness and brutality in Kaiser William II and his myrmidons shall ride astride the world hangs on the issue of this war....'[5]

Nigerian Press attacks on Germany constituted one feature of the contribution of Nigerian newspapers to the British war effort. Considerable attention was given to campaigns for contributions towards various Funds inaugurated to promote operations in various theatres of war. Persistent appeals were made to the people to support the Great National Relief Fund organized by the Prince of Wales. A mass meeting was eventually held at Ilupeju Hall on 9th September, 1914 to consider Nigeria's contribution to the Fund. While this matter was being agitated in Lagos, *Reader* reported that the Northern Nigerian Emirs had donated £38,000 to the Fund and that the Sultan of Sokoto had added a personal donation of £1,000. At Abeokuta this information provoked the Alake and chiefs to contribute £510–17s–9d to Princess Mary's 'Soldiers'

[1] 7th Oct., 1916.
[2] 30th April, 1915.
[3] 7th Feb., 1914.
[4] 7th Oct., 1916.
[5] 24th April, 1918.

and Sailors' Christmas Fund' and in Lagos, it caused perplexity and near panic where many had begun to fear that parts of the Moslem North might rise in rebellion in sympathy with Turkey which had just entered the war on the side of Germany. To the *Record*, the gesture of the Emirs was a big challenge to the South and the latter must demonstrate its financial superiority over the North by making a huge donation of least £100,000.[1]

In mid-1915, the *Pioneer*, inspired by an appeal from the Duala front for fresh meat for the two battalions there, master-minded with some success the Cameroons Meat Fund. The following was typical of its ardent appeals:

> 'Our Nigerian troops are sickening for want of fresh meat. Think of it! You in comfort today in Lagos! We shame of it! The pity of it! And for a paltry sum we can remedy all, or nearly all.... The *Pioneer* has sent £5, will you send today at once, now your contribution to us, and we will acknowledge same in these columns....'[2]

And in 1917, the *Record* abandoned its anti-imperialist role and urged the public to 'think imperially' by supporting the Nigerian Overseas Contingents Comforts Fund.[3]

There can be no doubt that all this newspaper activity helped abroad to advertise the British Empire as a diverse entity nearly fanatically united against a common foe and at home to arouse a greater sense of attachment to Britain. The heart of this Anglophile sentiment was summed up in the declaration by the *Standard* that 'Our destiny is indissolubly linked with England and we must rise or fall with her.'[4]

Although the newspapermen demonstrated their loyalty to the British crown, not all were satisfied with the way the war effort was officially organized in Nigeria. Ajasa, for one, did not allow his friendship with the government to mute his sense of outrage against aspects of official policy. On 10th August, 1917, the *Pioneer* complained that Nigeria had not played the part that was due to her importance and size in the war and blamed the fault on British distrust of the African. British administrators, the paper submitted, were unwilling to give deserving Africans places of responsibility in the military hierarchy and in Government departments with the result that initiative was stifled and the country's 'ebullition of loyalty' muzzled. About a month later, on 7th September, the paper again dwelt upon the same theme in a lengthy and memorable editorial entitled 'The Educated Native as an Imperial Asset'. It described schemes of racial discrimination as underlaid by 'insanity' and pleaded with the government to abandon its former 'suicidal' path and regard educated Africans as 'an asset of the Empire to be utilized in Imperial interests'. The campaign for the promotion of African advancement in the colonial set-up was to constitute a major feature of the *Pioneer* before and after the war ended and the success that attended the paper's efforts is indicative of Ajasa's generally unknown contribution to the development of Nigeria.

Criticism of the organization of the war effort was not the only discordant note heard at the time. There was some questioning of the popular support for Britain. Such views found expression in the *Times* of Nigeria. James Bright Davies, who edited the newspaper, was originally in sympathy with the British cause; he was a major inspiration behind the decision of the editors, soon after war broke out, to impose a censorship on themselves. The editors at a meeting with F. S. James, the then Administrator of the Colony, had appealed to the government not to introduce vexatious measures.

The passage by the administration of an unpopular Criminal Code law and the reopening of the highly controversial water rate question in 1915-6, were scarcely the best way to heed the editors' appeal. None the less the editors abode by their undertaking and made only feeble attacks on the government. James Bright Davies chafed under this restraint; he could not endure this apparently one-sided arrangement and his indiscretions led to his first trial and conviction.[5]

Rex v. J. B. Davies, (February 1916), was the first seditious libel case in Nigeria. The main article complained of condemned the policy of the Government which, it alleged, threatened with ruin the progress and prosperity of Lagos 'by the austerities and severities of a continuous series of measures and enactments which could only have been dictated by a rancorous negrophobism and which apart from German rule could only

[1] 6th Feb., 1915.
[2] 25th June, 1915.
[3] 5th May, 1917
[4] 19th Aug., 1914.

[5] What follows is drawn from Newspapers and from the Nigerian Supreme Court records.

flourish under the British Crown Colony System of government or under a constituted and authorized autocracy.' A second article rejoiced with the people of Sierra Leone for being rid of a 'negrophobist Governor' and expressed the hope that someday Nigeria would get similar relief 'from the iron and cruel rule of their own administration' and be freed 'from the galling yoke of its iniquitous measures and laws.' Davies was convicted and fined £100. In addition, he was requested to enter into a recognizance, himself and two sureties in £100 each, to be of good behaviour for twelve months. He would go to prison for six months if he defaulted.

Davies defaulted—or was said to have done so. In August, he attacked British firms and his thinly veiled expression of sympathy for the Germans led to his prosecution. The offending paragraph ran as follows:

The system adopted by the British firms in the produce trade since the war...is responsible for the strong under-current of sympathy for the German cause which pervades the breasts of the majority of the Native population. And the intensity of this feeling is such that one frequently hears the wish and the most sanguine hopes expressed in the daily conversations of the people about trade, that Germany should win this war, as they would prefer to come under German rule if only to escape and be saved from tyranny and exploitation of the British merchants.

Davies was accused of exciting disaffection and disloyalty and of inciting the non-trading community to commit an offence against the trading community.[1] Before the case was taken to court, the Governor, Lord Lugard, had disagreed with the Chief Justice over the demerit of the newspaper article: the Governor thought that it was certainly seditious but the Chief Justice considered that the article was 'justifiable journalese comment.' Nevertheless, the Government authorized the trial and Davies was sentenced to six months imprisonment, to the jubilation of the Governor.[2] The trial judge held that the charge of inciting one class of persons against another was not proved, the question discussed by the paper being 'eminently a question between two sections of the trading community and non-trading community'; on the other count, howe the judge felt that he could not ignore the fact that two separate occasions within nine months Davies 'chosen to publish wicked and malicious libels agai the Government of Nigeria at a time when it [w the obvious duty of every right-minded man to g to that Government his most strenuous and unco promising support'.

Lugard strongly disapproved of the relative freed enjoyed by the Nigerian Press and from 1912 when assumed office in Lagos, he had unsuccessfully pressure on the Colonial Office to authorize the ena ment of a Press law which would fill any potential g created by the Newspaper Ordinance of 1903 wh demanded a £250 bond and the Seditious Offen Ordinance of 1909 which was based on a harsh Indi precedent. The war situation presented Lugard w what he thought was a good opportunity to control t Press. He not only saw to it that Davies was imprison as has been pointed out, but also proceeded the follow year to attempt to introduce a permanent censorsh By this law, he would appoint a censor of newspap and also have the powers to confiscate the buildings equipment of a convicted newspaper. The details fortunes of the iniquitous proposal need not detai here and it is sufficient to say that the Colonial Of rejected it.[3]

The Nigerian Press greeted the end of war with outburst of enthusiastic editorials. The *Pioneer*, example, on 22nd November, described the news 'stupendous and far-reaching.' 'The following week came out triumphantly,'...victory is ours; the victo that we have been striving for almost four and a h years...we...can...say truthfully and honestly...th we have helped with every means in our power... There was probably more than one reason for th jubilation of some of the newspapers. Aside from fact that the papers saw themselves as victors, some

[1] Paragraph 4 of the Seditious Offences Ordinance, 1909, provided that 'Whoever...promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of the population of Southern Nigeria, shall be punished...'

[2] M. Perham, *Lugard: Years of Authority*, 1898–1945 (Lond. 1960) p. 508.

[3] For a full discussion of the conflict betw early West African nationalists and Brit colonial Governors over the freedom of th Press, see Fred I. A. Omu, 'The Dilemma Press Freedom in Colonial Africa: The We African example,' *Journal of African Histo* 1968, Vol. 1, pp. 33–44.

[4] 27th Nov., 1918.

them also gloried in the fact that in spite of official provocations, they remained faithful to the discipline which they imposed on themselves at the outset of war. With Lugard humiliated by the Colonial Office over his censorship bill and with the spread of persistent rumours that the Governor's term would not be renewed, the anti-government newspapers could hopefully look, as Davies once did to his sorrow, to the day when they would be finally rid of 'the iron and cruel rule of the administration' and 'the galling yoke of its iniquitous measures and laws.'

A third reason was the fact that the end of war promised to bring a big improvement in a newspaper trade almost crippled by the war. The volume of advertisements had diminished substantially and circulation had fallen to a very low level thanks in part to prohibitive newspaper price increases brought about by the newsprint crisis of the period. Newsprint was short and the price had risen by 500 per cent. To meet the situation, the *Standard*, for example, had increased its price by 100 per cent from threepence to sixpence. No sooner did hostilities cease than the newspaper business began to show a significant financial revival. European firms strove to acquire a dominant share of the reviving and expanding import trade and so stepped up their advertisement patronage. And the new post-war tone of nationalist thought and activity in part inspired and presently to be intensified by the newspapers, produced a substantial rise in newspaper sales. It is not surprising that the history of the Nigerian Newspaper Press in the years 1919–20 is a story of fierce promotional warfare and gigantic expansionist projects.

BOOKS

The Kanuri of Bornu. 115 pp. By RONALD COHEN. [illegible] New York. 1967. $1.95

THE KANURIS (the plural in their language being [illegible] *Kanuri'a, Kanuriya* or *Kanuriya*), according to the [illegible] Federal Census, number as many as 1,659,465 in Bornu Province alone concentrated mostly in Bornu and Dikwa Divisions of that Province (now part of the North-East State) which has a total population of [illegible]. They are an adventurous, daring, independent-minded, intelligent, proud and suspicious people who are so pugnacious that they within minutes explode into unexpected actions, sometimes fatal, without in the least weighing the consequences. Historians and others who had anything to say about them agree that they have a long history behind them which combination of facts may explain their being gifted in the arts of administration and diplomacy (and may be also the high divorce rate amongst them noticed by the author professionally and experienced personally by the reviewer).

From my reading of their history and personal observation of the Kanuris it seems to me they are analogous to the English as seen through the eyes of Napoleon in Bernard Shaw's Play *The Man of Destiny*, which description seems to fit them perfectly. The only [illegible], as far as I can see, is in the universality of their languages. The Kanuri language, being a difficult but rich one, is, outside Bornu Province, mostly confined to that culture, few Fulanis and the Shuwa-Arabs.

The Kanuris are by no means a 'stick-in-the-mud' or 'never-at-home' people but are so migrant, in fact, (being business and religious-minded as well), that, for instance, according to the same Federal Census, as many as [illegible] of them are recorded as living outside Bornu Province but widely dispersed *within* the Northern States of Nigeria. Also comparatively high concentrations of them are found outside Nigeria in Cameroun; Chad; Ghana; Niger Republic; S[illegible] Arabia; Sudan and the U.A.R.

No matter where they are found the Kanuris have [illegible] thing in common: they do not easily give up [illegible] cultural heritage in the way of costumes (or hair-[illegible] in case of the women) and their inclination to [illegible] expensively when it concerns cosmetics; dress; [illegible]tertainment; feeding; festivities; house-mainten[illegible] (which may include an unnecessary retinue of dep[illegible]ants) and perfumery—and that however highly We[illegible] or Eastern-educated they happen to be once, thro[illegible] wealth or power, they are placed in high positions.

Or, putting it more bluntly, the fact of a Kanuri [illegible] going to Al-Azhar; Cambridge; Edinburgh; G[illegible] Inn; Harvard; Oxford; Sandhurst; Scotland Yard or School of African and Oriental Studies will not, on [illegible] account, as it would others, make him give up or ch[illegible] any of those things and *particularly*—when n[illegible] uniform—his Kanuri attire.

This inseparability from his culture gives the de[illegible]tive impression (detrimental to himself) that ed[illegible] who do not attach any importance to culture (or h[illegible] none of their own but attach exaggerated importa[illegible] to Western dress as synonymous to Western educa[illegible] mistakenly take him to be illiterate or uneduca[illegible]. In actual fact he may, however, be highly rea[illegible] Arabic, English, the Koran or all three which [illegible] combination is not generally found in a non-Mu[illegible] Nigerian. However highly educated, in the We[illegible] sense, he may claim to be.

And the Cultural Anthropology of the Kanu[illegible] precisely what Professor Cohen's book sets ou[illegible] observe and record in consequence of the aut[illegible] carrying out field work in two periods (the fir[illegible] 1956 and 1957 and the second 'in the summers of 1[illegible] and 1965') altogether spending 'over twenty-six mo[illegible]

among the Kanuri and a number of years reading historical documents dealing with their pre-colonial Kingdom in the Chad basin.'

To rid his research and observation of any accusations of cosmopolitan contamination of distinctive Kanuri cultural features and behaviour patterns, Professor Cohen and his wife chose to live amongst the Kanuri in the rural town of Magumeri paying visits to other rural towns such as Geidam and the urban capital itself, Maiduguri (or Yerwa as the capital is locally called).

When it is considered that neither Magumeri nor Geidam has a pipe-borne water or electricity supply or that the local school teacher in Magumeri, who offered to teach them Kanuri, himself 'knew very little English' or that the district head himself mistrusted them when they first arrived in Magumeri to make it their home base; it is remarkable how Dr Cohen (Professor of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Illinois, U.S.A.) was able to gather, observe and record so much authentic data about the Kanuris, their history, family and household life, life-cycle, economic and social life and administrative set-up in so short a time under such set-backs.

Their language and history I may claim to know fairly well (having been thoroughly taught both in the Elementary, *Magaranji*[1] and Middle Schools but I must say that, not being an anthropologist, I have not as much as observed or noted half the other aspects of their life and culture that Professor Cohen has ably done—with all my thirty-five years' contact with the Kanuris.

The few spelling mistakes in some of the Kanuri words mentioned in the book could easily have been avoided had the book, when in its draft form, been earlier read by any of the Kanuris themselves who, like Alhaji Sir Kashim Ibrahim (who, I believe, had published an Arithmetic book in Kanuri), in the author's own words 'has through the years helped to make my visits to Bornu fruitful and intellectually exciting' and who could, in any event, have procured for the author a more up-to-date map of Bornu Province showing clearly and accurately all the five Divisions or Emirates of the Province (Bedde, Biu, Bornu, Dikwa and Fika).

Finally, if I may end this review on a personal note; it would be gross ingratitude on the part of the reviewer if he fails to express his indebtedness to the Kanuris who not only gave him a painstakingly thorough grounding (entailing an overdose of caning in the process) in English and Koranic calligraphy, phonetics, pronunciation, spelling and grammar (leading to a flair for broadcasting, debating, lecturing, and voracious reading and prolific writing) but also arouse in him an acute sense of criticism. Whether or not that criticism has been fairly used on the Kanuris themselves is, however, not for me to say.

A. K. METTEDEN.

[1] An open air day and night Koranic Acadamy where the pupils feed themselves, sleep and provide the firewood and dry grass to light the night fires for their lessons at a *Goniri*—a Koranic Professor's Academy.

Houseboy *By* FERDINAND OYONO. *Heineman Educational Publications, 5s–6d*

THERE is no doubt about it, this is a very compelling novel, beautiful in its simplicity, gripping, humorous, frank and painfully true to life. It is a tragic book and it left me sad and despaired at the depth of moral depravity of Europeans in Africa. A depravity that can not but make the African, no matter how hard he tries, resent them and suspect their intentions. How could historians fail to chronicle these events that have shaped the destiny of the myriad peoples populating the vast and mysterious continent known as Africa?

HOUSEBOY, as the name suggests, is the life story of the Camerounian houseboy Toundi, written in diary form. Toundi ran away from home and became a mission boy under Father Gilbert who was very fond of him. When Father Gilbert died as the result of a tragic accident, he was employed by the local Commandant where in spite of privations, humiliation and insults he worked until he became a victim of the Police System set-up by the French colonialists.

It is a touching story that held me from the moment I started right to the very end. For me, Toundi lives and symbolizes the avenging spirit of Africa that must be appeased before Africans and Europeans could live in peace in Africa. 'KUNLE AKINSEMOYIN.

The City of Ibadan. Edited By Lloyd, Mabogunje and [illegible]

[illegible] a highly complex organism [illegible] comprehensive, it must go [illegible] the technical purview of a single discipline [illegible] multi-disciplinary co-operative work. In this respect, one cannot but commend the thinking which led to the production of this book which arose out of a series of papers presented to a seminar organized [illegible] by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.

Within the framework of four sections which embrace the city, its people, its life and work and the future, twelve contributors, each an expert in his or her own field, have furnished a total of sixteen contributions. Quite appropriately, Dr Bolanle Awe starts the book off with an admirable account of Ibadan's origins. She draws on her own work on Ibadan and the clear-headed character of the narrative whets the appetite of this reviewer for her forthcoming book on the full history of Ibadan. Professor Oluwasanmi discusses the agricultural environment and Professor Mabogunje contributes three papers which make delightful reading indeed. The three include an analysis of the morphology of Ibadan, a study of the local Ijebu community and lastly a peep into the future of the city. Dr Okonjo presents an account of life as lived by the so-called Western Ibo in Ibadan with a wealth of detail which certainly reveals gaps in Mabogunje's article on the Ijebu. There is a valuable article on traditional religion and Christianity by Professor Idowu. The book, indeed, advertises the solid nature of Nigerian scholarship.

The remaining nine contributions (which deal with a wide variety of subjects) are by non-African scholars. They include valuable essays from among others, Dr Lloyd on the elite, Dr Callaway on the transition from traditional to modern industries and also on youth employment and Jenkins on Government and Politics in Ibadan.

A volume by so many hands which seeks to cover so many different fields has this inherent weakness that although individual contributions may be of the highest standard, it lacks a consistency of approach and of quality as well. Not all the contributions, for example, are in harmony with current trends in serious writing on Africa. George Jenkins' analysis of government and politics makes the British Governors the fulcrum of his narrative. For him the central factor in early Ibadan politics is not the reaction and resistance to the British presence but the activities of the colonial rulers, of Captains Bates and Elgee. It is this unfortunate persistence in a long discredited procedure that explains [illegible] misleading comment that Britain in 1892 waged war against Ijebu Ode violating their treaty of peace, friendship and commerce' (p. 214). And this is only one of the shortcomings in the article. No explanation is given for the growth of animosity between Ibadan and the British during the First World War. The Egbe Agbe O Too, founded by a group of Christians in 1914, is described as a 'secret society' on p. 222 and as a 'literary society' on the next page and no attempt has been made to discuss the motives behind the Egbe. Interesting accounts are given of the frequent [illegible] in Ibadan politics but the analysis only scratches the surface of the issue.

Critical reference to the abortive attempt to found a newspaper in Ibadan in 1921 is of interest to this reviewer. For, perhaps, the attempt did not end in total failure. It might seem that Solomon Ayangade's Printing Press was bought two years later by D. Obasa and given the name of Ilare Press. Obasa in January 1924 inaugurated the *Yoruba News*, an eight-page bilingual weekly which he published in Ogunpa Road and which was to survive into the early fifties. The advertised aim of the paper was 'service and co-operation with all that makes for peace, good government and progress'.

The above remarks may give the wrong impression that Jenkins has been unfairly singled out for criticism. Some other contributors have their faults. Dr Callaway, for example, is not quite right in thinking that crafts and small industries are not helped to modernize because they are usually regarded as 'backward'. The truth is that our people want to achieve quick money returns for any investment; this explains why the newspaper business, for example, has not been a very popular investment field.

These observations notwithstanding, this reviewer has enjoyed reading this volume and it is sincerely hoped that it would inspire a similar anatomy of other towns in Nigeria, particularly Lagos.

FRED OMU.

Idanre and Other Poems By Wole Soyinka, *Methuen & Co.*, 16s.

NOT too long ago I was confronted with the question: 'What do you think of Soyinka as a person?' 'Intriguing', I replied curtly. 'What do you think of him as a writer?' asked my interrogator further. Before I could rationalize, he had put the words into my mouth: 'He's a genius don't you think?'

To be sure, *Idanre and Other Poems* bears many of the marks of genius. For here we have a splendid distillation of some of the traits that are native to our African condition; although now and again, 'a disjunctiveness of subject matter and mood, enhanced by an air of deliberate obscurity', obtrudes.

Idanre and Other Poems is deeply rooted in Folklore and made more difficult on that account. To enjoy it fully one must first unravel the lore. That is not to say that the non-initiate cannot read it with relish; for the poems also strike universal chords—Soyinka is never so obscure as to be insular.

First, his preoccupation with the concept of time (time past, time present, time future) as linear progression, as an interval, as a cycle. Light and darkness, incarnation and reincarnation, birth and death, youth and age—themes on which twenty of the poems are constructed—are all functions of time. And certain 'essences' seem to be operative during specific periods of time, hence the admonition:

> . . . . . , *child*
> *May you never walk*
> *When the road waits, famished.*

But the poems are also remarkable for the light they throw on Soyinka as a person: a huge bundle of paradox. He is at once snobbishly detached from and convulsively involved with the goings on around him.

Involvement, however, seems never to have paid off when Soyinka wishes it to serve utilitarian ends and he would do better to restrict it to the realm of art as he has done here his obsession with violence which Ogun symbolizes and which is the towering theme of *Idanre*.

Idanre and Other Poems contains many more fine things besides, not least, its language—majestic, staid, vitriolic—exhibiting the incisive poetic wit of Soyinka.

SOLOMON AYAGERE.

Ajayi and his inherited poverty, *By* AMOS TUTUOLA. 235 pp., *Faber and Faber*, 25*s*.

THIS novel makes very light and easy reading and would be more interesting to those who know Yoruba mythology and understand Yoruba idioms, phylosophy of life, life after death, the spirit world and the different types of gods and their media.

Briefly, the story tells of how the hero of the novel and his loyal junior sister set out on the death of their parents to find deliverance and what they suffered in the hands of those who cheated and deceived them. However, Ajayi, with the help of his wife who outwitted their antagonists, succeeded in freeing them from bondage.

Of course, I would strongly recommend AJAYI AND HIS INHERITED POVERTY to be read by those who really understand the English language. To those who do not this novel will confuse them owing to the author's peculiar use of words some of which do not exist in the English language, and his direct translation from Yoruba to English as shown in this. . .'A hunch does not hinder the progress of the person who has it on his back, as well as unnecessary embellishment like. . . .'Of course when Aina said that she was hungry for food, we discontinued the arguments AT THE SAME TIME. . . .'

I wish it could be translated into Yoruba for it will certainly make an enjoyable reading for Yoruba readers.

GLADYS AGBEBIYI.

A SONG A DAY

A song a day is easy to bray
If you have the mind to pray
To Almighty God for help to say
Your mind in the simplest way.

Getting something to say is the cardinal thing
How to say it is quite another thing:
When to say it is a question of tact
And where you say it cliches the fact.

Not all may have a thing to say
Only a gifted few have a ready say
No matter what you may care to broach
They view the subject from a different approach!

A.K.M.

Poems

FLOWERS OF SORROW

Are of the colour of Night
Thrusted deep in passion's place
Surviving with gall and blood.
Flowers of Sorrow with buds unopened
Unopened Because of songs of war
Forbiding Songs of war
Since they are of the passion's place

Hinting of past and present
With pangs of Sorrow each day
Making a carcase of
All our lonely Yesterdays.

MOYO OGUNDIPE.

BRIEF SOJOURN

In the depth of deep despond
How many have not wished
For death?
At the height of bliss and joy
How many have not wished
For death?

Deep sorrow in brief spells
Great joy in transient spells
Makes of living
A search unending:
For a life to inspire
Through the wilderness of desire

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]

THE MERCENARY

I am a bloody mercenary;
My corny hands are stained
With the precious blood of Afric's
Dashing sons and comely daughters.

I am a soulless mercenary;
An eager agent
Of big business
And of imperial power.
I've blighted
Many a sanguine hope
Of Afric's measured
And peaceful growth.
I've become immensely rich
Through the Blackman's
Agony.

I am a greedy mercenary
Who lives for gore and money.
Before me was the visionary.
In the days of long ago
When fairy tales were told
And held in sacred trust
Just as they were sold,
The Blackman's burden
Was not the hated mercenary.
My tribesmen urged
The guiless African
To forego life's
Known comforts
Here below
For unascertainable
Bliss above.

I am a swashbuckling mercenary.
Arrogance is my shield
And bloody-mindedness
My buckler.
I stirred and sustained
Afric's divisive forces,
And spurned like filth
Her rightful place
In the scheme of things.

E.H.

[illegible]

[illegible] have gone away,
[illegible] carry out
[illegible]
[illegible] more your
[illegible] ful this place
[illegible] possible;
[illegible]

[illegible] TIME.

OSHUN RIVER

Legend of old!
Thy stream runs in a lineal flow
thy lyrics
thy musical notes
and thy weid minstrel voice—
oozing caressingly
behind the cast shadow
of your bathing musical ecstasy.

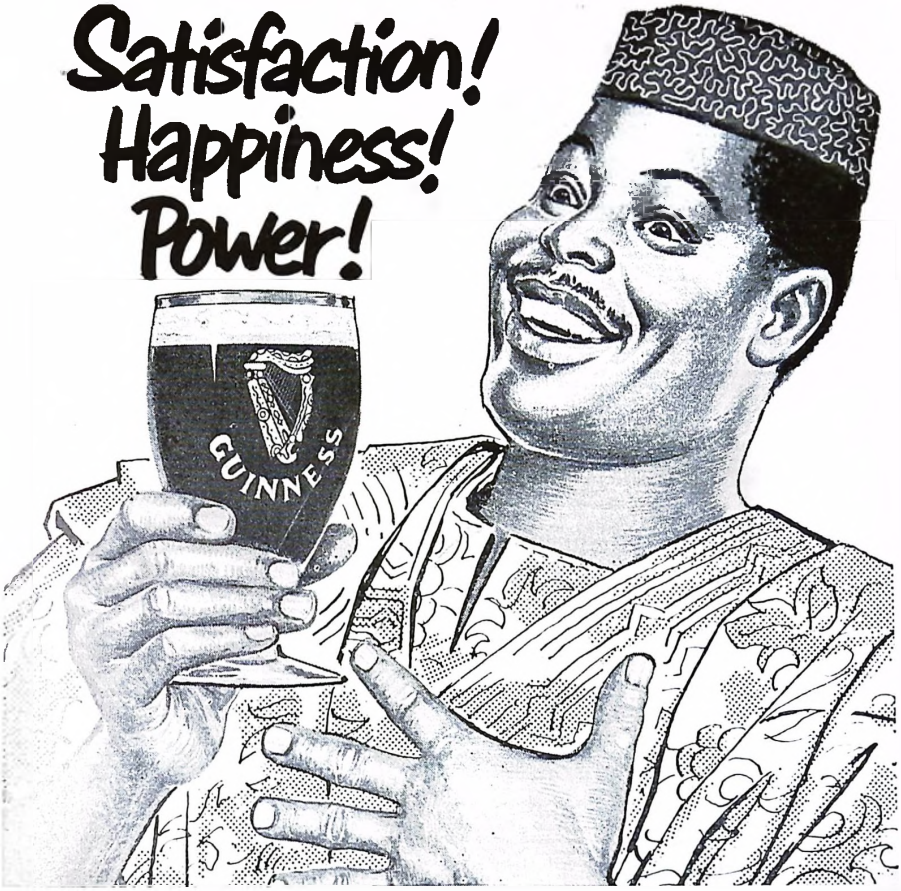
MOYO OGUNDIPE.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dr E. J. Allagoa, who writes on the *Ju Festival* is a senior research fellow in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan. He draws our attention to errors occurring in a former article of his—*Ijo Funeral Rites* in No. 95 of our Magazine. We regret that captions to pictures at pages 279 and 286 were switched; the word *Angalapeleyal'* in the caption to the picture at page 281 should have read *Angalapeleya*, that the word 'dissimiliraties' in the sentence running from page 279 to 280 of the Introduction should have read 'similarities' and the word 'rarely' in the last but one sentence of the conclusion should have been omitted.

Mr Alan Vaughan-Richards, the author of *Nigerian Institute of International Affairs*, who received his professional training in London and qualified in 1959, specialized in tropical architecture in 1952 and has been in Nigeria for the last thirteen years and

Dr Fred Omu, who writes on the *Nigerian Press and the Great War* is a lecturer in History in the University of Lagos.



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No. 97 June/August 1968 two shill

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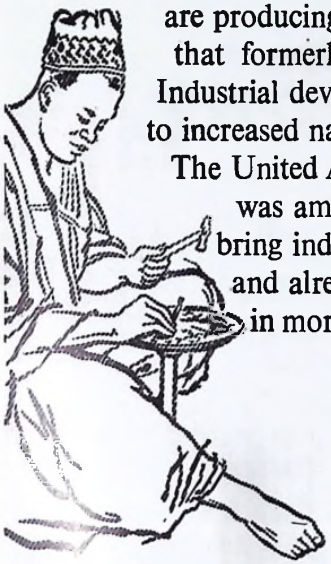

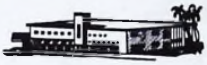

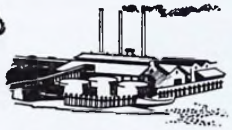

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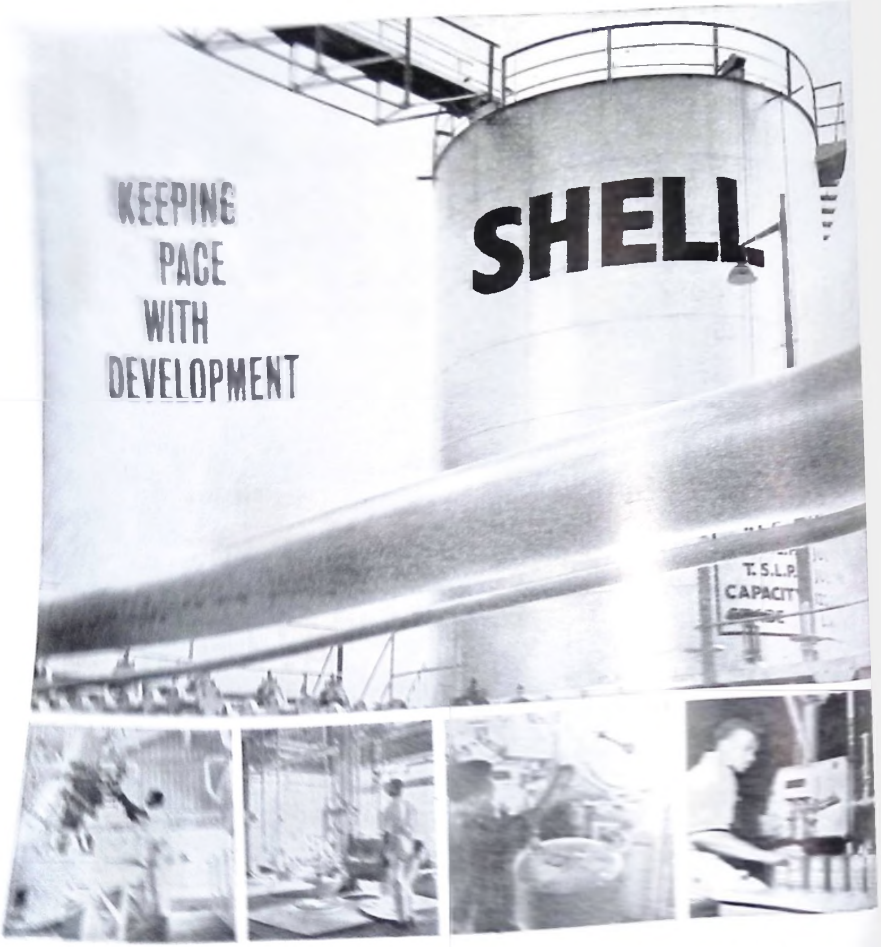

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EDITORIAL

BY one of those strange turns of events this Magazine has for some time pursued an existence deprived of its sustaining influence—an Editorial. This period, fortunately, has now ended and dear Readers, you can be assured that our Editorials will radiate the buoyant vitality that will strengthen the cordial association between us and You so essential to the **life** of this Magazine.

As your new Editor, dear Readers, I look forward to serving you and projecting the true image of Nigeria in the realistic concept of African Unity. This, we are fully aware, calls for the highest standards of journalism, a sense of fair play and an infinite love for humanity. With this end in view we shall do our very best in presenting truth in its purest form so as to promote understanding. Though essentially a cultural Magazine we shall follow the well-established tradition of painting a picture of Nigeria's past and present savoured—and this is our contribution—with glimpses of the future.

The charm, strength and binding force of Nigeria lies in her variety of cultures. Cultures which, over the centuries, have been slowly integrated and will in due course of time bring about a Nigeria that will recreate the pride and glory of African civilization.

Nigeria, one must admit, is going through a phase in which immature intellectualism, hasty judgment and an insatiable desire to ape 'the white man', has posed a formidable and challenging problem in her progress to self-determination. We shall not only overcome this problem but shall also triumph over prevalent adversity because Nigeria has a soul—the spiritual element in her culture has seen to that. But that soul is in conflict, a bitter conflict which is not unusual in a growing nation—Britain, France, America, Germany, Russia, Hungary and China have experienced this. It is therefore rather disappointing that the developed and seemingly matured nations preferred to catalyse the conflict rather than offer the benefit of their past experience. Have they done differently from Nigeria when faced with the same situation?

Furthermore, the fact that a soul is in conflict does not mean that it has split into two. Indeed it is a common practice for an active soul to be in conflict in its efforts to maintain its ideals. This is what is happening to Nigeria and no matter what happens Nigeria's soul is destined to remain one. The augury for this is Nigerian Art which made its impact on the world on the foundation of unity that time has firmly entrenched. But for too long Nigerian Art has been associated with antiquity in the form of Benin Bronzes and Terra-cottas. Happily through the initiative of a group of leading contemporary Nigerian Artists this view that Nigerian Art belonged to the past will soon be corrected. As you are reading this, an Exhibition, the first of its kind and an important landmark in the cultural development of Nigeria, is touring Europe and in this Magazine you are going to meet the Artists whose works undoubtedly show their awareness of the role they must play in maintaining the stature of Nigeria in the world of Art.

Art, of course, has no boundaries for its message is universal but its strength depends on the interchange and influences of indigenous cultures. The fact that Nigeria has a healthy and virile crop of Contemporary Artists is further evidence that Africa in miniature will triumph over adversity to fulfil her destined role.

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Editor: 'KUNLE AKINSEMOYIN

Business Editor: L. ALLAGOA

Asst. Editor: A. K. METTEDEN

Offices: Exhibition Centre, Marina, Lagos.

Telephones: 23134, 26592, 20643

Telegrams: Ednigmag, Lagos.

COVER: *A Nigerian girl training for leadership*

Contents

A KANO MYSTERY

THE WAIKA TABLET

By
H. L. B. Moody

As the movement to reconstruct the origins and development of African history gathers power, many new kinds of evidence are being brought into service, some of the most bizarre and fascinating having been recently described by C. Thurstan Shaw in *Ibadan*, No. 23. One particular kind of evidence, which has often proved useful in other parts of the world in establishing data, in arriving at authentic dates and sequences, has been the public inscription in stone or metal. The pedestal of the statue in Shelley's sonnet, inscribed:

My name is Ozymandias, Kind of Kings
Look on my works ye mighty, and despair.

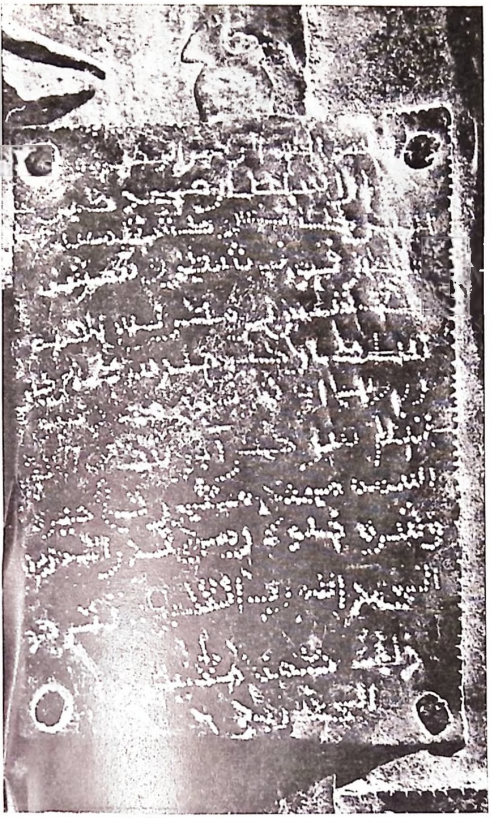
is a literary example that springs to mind immediately but of course there is no shortage of actual instances where the strangeness of the 'finds' and the human ingenuity which has been exercised in their interpretation, shows 'nature completely outworking fancy'. Most famous of all is probably the Rosetta Stone, discovered in the Nile Delta in 1799, which made possible the interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics; but new examples are continually occurring and we have only recently read reports of the stone tablet inscribed to the Greek gods Artemis and Poseidon, which was discovered on the barren island of Failaka and which provided the starting point for the unearthing of an extensive Greek culture in the Persian Gulf.

The cultures of tropical Africa, whilst displaying tremendous skill and artistry in the manipulation of some natural products, for example, wood, clay, mud, grass, have made relatively little use of more durable materials. They have mostly not developed techniques with which to perpetuate their history, their achievements, their ideals, except in the form of orally transmitted legends, myths, chronicles, tales and poems. There is generally supposed to be a wealth of unpublished manuscripts still to be collected and collated in the Western Sudan, but these from the very nature of parchment, are unlikely to take us reliably back further than about a century. There are undoubtedly the Ife bronzes and the Nok terra-cottas and who knows what other archaeological treasures still to be exhumed? —but very little so far in the way of public inscription. One has only to think of such notable rarities in the Northern States of Nigeria as the tablet to commemorate the entry of the Lugard into Katsina by the *Kofar Mandaka*, the opening of the Wudil Bridge in 1928, or Kano Waterworks in 1931, to realize that public inscriptions seem to have arrived along with western technology; even the inscription beside the sacred well at Daura, describing the origins of the Hausa people, was placed there by the Local (Native) Authority quite recently.

All the more interest, therefore, attaches to what Mr A. D. H. Bivar, formerly of the Nigerian Department of Antiquities, has called[1] the 'only historic inscription in Nigeria'; which can be seen safely housed in Gidan Makama, Kano City Museum, and which is illustrated or whether it appears.

This 'inscription' is inscribed on a rather rough, uneven plate of beaten iron, about 6½" × 5" and one-tenth of an inch thick. The plate has the shape of a rather small sized *allo;* an *allo* is normally a flat wooden board on which Islamic

[1] In private correspondence.



The 'Waika Tablet'. A metal inscription formerly attached to Kofar Waika now in Gidan Makama (Kano City Museum) The inscription is mostly nonsense 'SURKULLE', a charm for protection. (Photo by R. Haycock)

malams inscribe prayers or sections of the Holy Quran to be memorized by their students, and is a household object and a common sight in Hausaland. That the tablet has been conceived in this form is indicated by the top line of characters—the traditional Islamic invocation:

Bismillahi arahmani arrahimi

and also by the projecting extension in the shape of the steadying handle at the top, normally used to control the board while the *malam* is writing on it. This projection plays no part in the fixing of the metal tablet to its ancient 'seat'.

The tablet is rivetted by two substantial nail-like rivets on the right hand side—those on the left having at some time broken away—to the old *kyaure* from Kofar Waika at Kano. A *kyaure* is a strip-metal door, which was used to close a City Gate. Quite a number of those *kyaure* are still in existence: three *in situ* in Kano,—at *Kofar Kofar Nassarawa*[1], *Kofar Kabuga*, and *Kofar Kansakali;* several others have been removed to museums, as at Jos and Lagos, while the Kano Museum has three more. A *kyaure* was constructed rather as if by analogy with the traditional lengths of locally-woven cloth, made up from narrow strips sewn together; by strongly riveting many strips of beaten iron about three to four inches wide and two to three feet in length on to a framework of deleb-palm wood. It is presumably this which the first European traveller to Kano, Captain Hugh Clapperton, was describing when he wrote in 1824:

> 'The gates are of wood, covered with sheet iron.'

This tradition of iron-working clearly preceded the introduction of any European industrial techniques into West Africa, and no doubt some kinds of skill in iron-working must be traced back to the very earliest establishment of the city of Kano around the twin iron-bearing hills of *Dalla* and *Goron Dutse*. The construction of the Waika tablet seems to have been a special exercise, a *tour de force*, in the same tradition of craftsmanship as built the *kyaure* itself. Whether it is of the same age as the *kyaure*, or whether it was added at a later date, it is impossible to say. The tablet seems to be genuinely unique in that we have discovered no trace of any similar tablets being used anywhere.

Until 1965, the *kyaure* bearing the tablet was in position at Kofar Waika, one of the most remote and least damaged of the Gates—on the west of the City. Owing to the interest being shown in the tablet by various travellers, the *Sarkin Kofa*, M. Danliti, advised the Emir that this particular *kyaure* with its unusual adornment needed

[1] Since this article was written we learn that Kofar Nassarawa has been demolished: the present location of the *kyaure* is unknown to the writer. (itz BM)

Tablet (Modern), Commemorating the origin of the Hausa people, near the sacred well at Daura

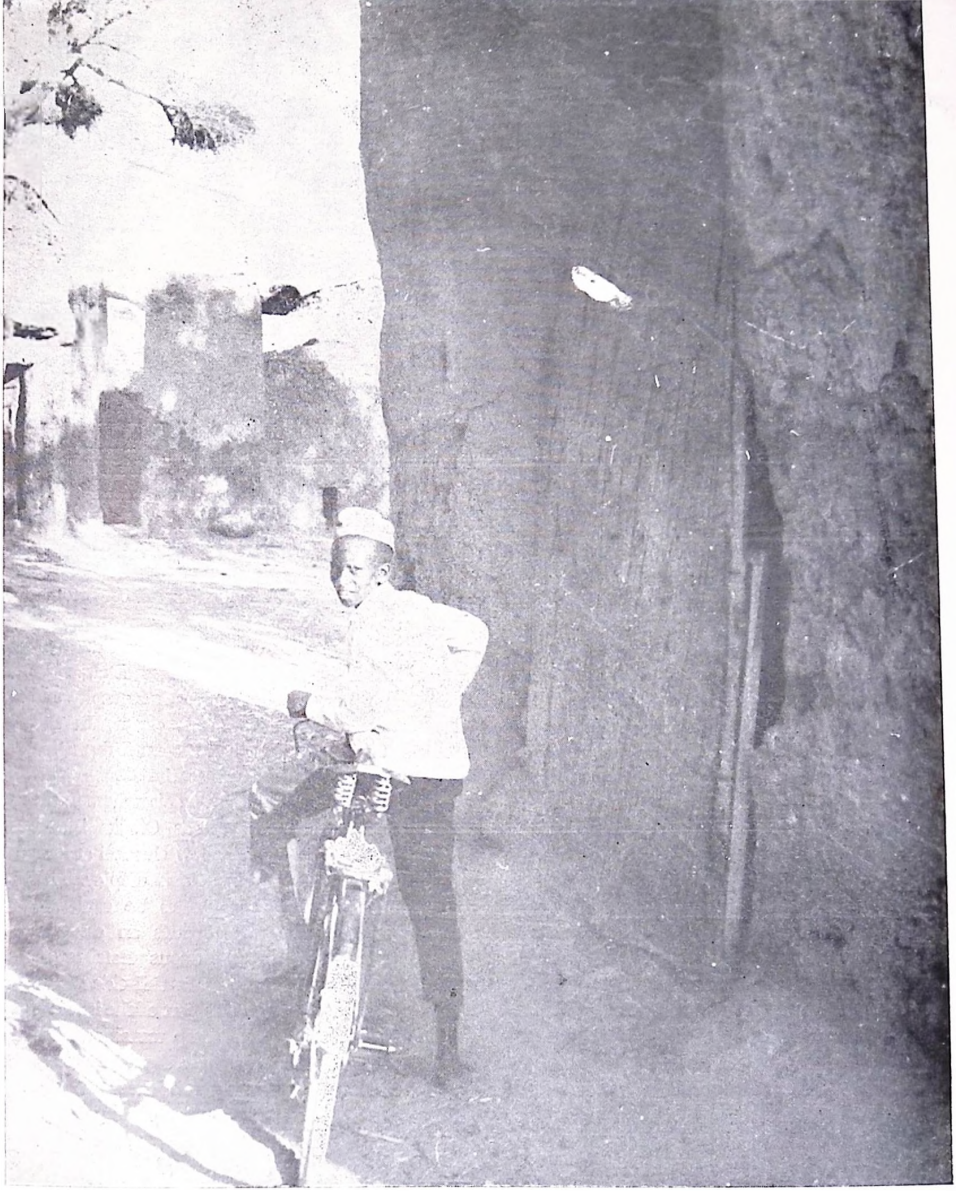
special protection and it was removed to *Gidan Makama*, where it is available for inspection in the *soro*, or entrance chamber.

The tablet bears a clearly distinguishable inscription of thirteen lines, in what appear to be Arabic characters. These are not engraved however in a cursive hand but appear in a kind of reversed braille; they have been punched in the iron sheet with a pointed tool, using the same kind of *pointilliste* technique by which the various geometrical patterns and designs are hammered into the brass and silver plates and bowls which are always on sale to visitors to Kano. Very probably the punching of the inscription on to an iron plate had to be done whilst the metal was fairly hot and this may explain why most of the characters are somewhat imperfect and smaller accents emitted.

For this is the great anti-climax. No one has yet been able to read or interpret the inscription as a whole, or to glean any certain historical information from it. The explanation offered by local scholars, however familiar with the Arabic, Hausa or Fulani languages, is that the inscription must be considered as no more than a *surkulle*; a collection of mostly meaningless and jumbled words from various sources, supposed to have magical powers to ward off evil (*c.f.* abracadabra). Many of these preventive magical compositions, often in verse, still exist among the Hausa people, many of them traditional in quite limited areas,

An old Kyaure—recently removed from its original location at Kofar Duka Wuyal—now used as a door to Gidan Makama, Kano City Museum—Note many bullet holes

Kofar Waika Kano. At the South-West of the City Wall—original location of the 'Waika Tablet'



Kofar Kansakali, Kano. Showing old Kyaure in Situ

or even families. The value of such an inscription, affixed to one of the most lonely Gates of a City which was continually being harassed and attacked by raiders, is easily understood.

The purpose of this short article is mainly to advertise the existence of the problem, and to prompt suitably qualified scholars to give it their attention. Who knows what further information it may be made to divulge?

THE ODUM FESTIVAL

By

DR T. N. TAMUNO

[illegible] of masquerades displayed by the clans of [illegible] Ijos, the *Odum* (*Python Sebae* or African python) receives by far the greatest public attention and acclamation. The *Odum* festival attracts spectators not only from Okrika Clan but also from neighbouring towns and villages in the Lower Niger Delta and beyond.

Such unmistakable attraction, expressed in the large influx of spectators to the festival, can be explained. First, the *Odum* festival is a rare event; hence, the excitement associated with it is not ruined by short-term cyclical performances. Since the turn of the century, it is rare for people to see the same masquerade more than twice in a generation. Its display, during this same period, has often been connected with big occasions—*e.g.*, in recent times, marking the Jubilees of the Protestant Church in Okrika Clan. Such big events are, of course, few and far between.

Second, even in Okrika Clan, only two villages—Okrika and Ogu—specialize in this type of display. The other villages of the Clan, though potentially capable, have never attempted to disturb this monopoly by displaying bastardized forms. There are differences, regarding details, between the *Odum* masquerades displayed by the people of Okrika and Ogu. These differences, as will be shown later, further arouse the interest of spectators in both festivals.

Finally, during the present century no other clan in the Lower Niger Delta has been known to have successfully performed the *Odum* masquerade. This may appear strange when other facts are considered.

Among Nembe-Brass Ijos, the African python (known locally as *Adagba*) is a god; but there is no masquerade associated with it. Though the African python is also believed to have found a convenient habitat in other parts of the creeks of the Lower Niger Delta, the Ijos there have not dedicated masquerades to it.

Not many observers will query the suggestion that there is a close relationship between geography and local gods. One can further add the rider that, traditionally[2] in the Lower Niger Delta, the relationship between local deities, geography and masquerade displays was much closer. In this respect, Okrika and Ogu had a coastal formation and proper water depths that the *Odum* masqueraders found ideal but lacking elsewhere in the Lower Niger Delta. As regards Okrika island, there is often a relatively shallow channel at low-tide around the venue of the *Odum* display. This makes possible the *Kilukulu-ti* to be explained later. This warm up act provides an essential preliminary for the more arduous tests to be encountered by masqueraders at full-tide. Also, the slope of the sea-bed off this part of the island is gradual; hence, there is no sharp transition from shallow to deep waters at full-tide. Again, there are no strong currents along this part of the island that will raise serious impediments to rescue operations

[1] Among Okrika-Ijos the more common, but wrong, translation is boa-constrictor, I am grateful to R. Horton and E. J. Alagoa, both of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, for this information and for other useful comments.

[2] The present writer has seen Efik-Ibibio *Ekpo* displays copied in Okrika. This was not traditional, but an illustration of cross fertilization of culture arising from wider contacts between various groups of Nigerians. Okrika fishermen and traders have been the vectors of this aspect of Efik-Ibibio culture.

Note a group of young braves paddling chiefs and elders as they circle round ODUM *during the ideal tide* KOPUE

By courtesy of New Nigerian, Kaduna

Okrikans are eager to see ODUM ALIAS OWU IMGBILA, ALIAS OGONA *spread* 310 *fee long (like a bow) perfected by master croftsmen, moving majestically in the waters*

By courtesy of New Nigerian, Kaduna

[illegible] water-spirit is not mentioned [illegible] for a successful [illegible] Ogu Inghi- [illegible] religious [illegible] water in [illegible] Orukoroqua [illegible] the Odum [illegible] at Ogu, the Odum [illegible] of Kikiya and [illegible] spirits). The belief among [illegible] Odum is Kikiya's or Aleleya's [illegible] where the festival is in [illegible] a Church event, these ritual as- [illegible] ther played down or eliminated.

[illegible] Odum festival is preceded not only by the [illegible] performed by the Orukoroqua but also by [illegible] elaborate preparations of the Ozu-Ogbo masquerade society. In Okrika, the members of the Ozu-Ogbo for the Odum festival come from two [illegible] Awongburi and Awolemebiri. In Ogu, [illegible] masqueraders are members of the Loko, [illegible] and [illegible] Houses.

In Okrika, the masqueraders display both a male and female version of Odum. The Ogu masquerad- [illegible] use only the male Odum. [illegible] in Ogu that a fisherman- [illegible] with a spear. He [illegible] he may commence, merely to [illegible] of the head. This [illegible] mysterious wounds [illegible] to those he had [illegible] to be wounded. Ogu tradition has it that [illegible] wood by that fisherman- [illegible] during Odum festivals there.[3] [illegible] and the various segments—having a total length of [illegible] feet—are then prepared and decorated by the Ozu-Ogbo members of the particular Houses in Ogu.

The tradition in Okrika is not very clear; but

[1] I am informed that *Duminoya* is also used. If so, this is not to be confused with another masquerade by the same name played on land.

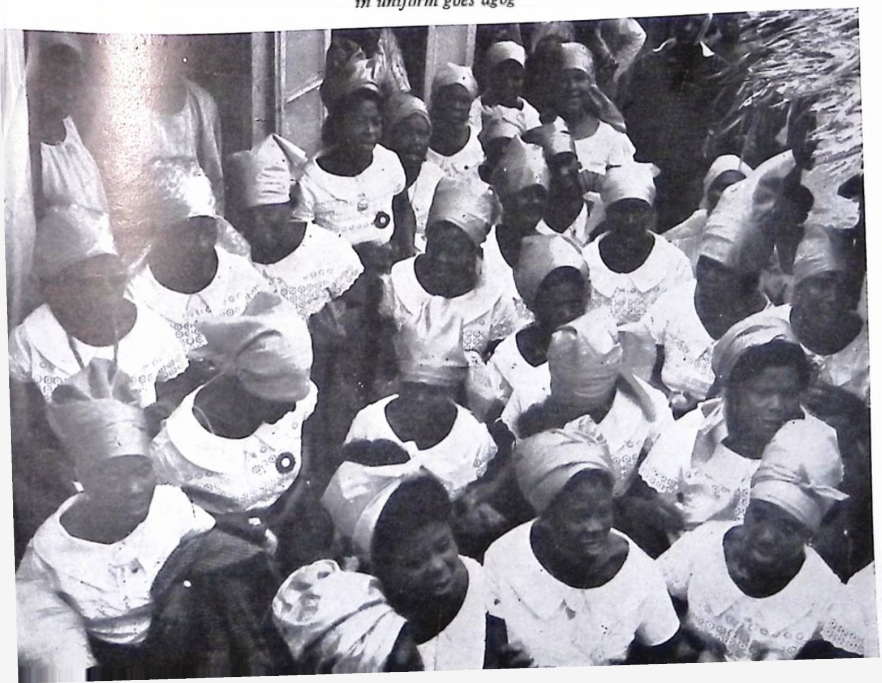
[2] I am grateful to Mr B. T. D. Iruene of the Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos, for this piece of information. Generally, Mr Iruene has provided me with very valuable information on other aspects of the Odum festival at Ogu and Okrika.

[3] Information supplied by Mr Iruene.

The head of ODUM, *well decorated for the occasion, lies resplendent in its proper habitat amidst the excitement of members of the club knee down in water. Note a white cock tied to a palm-tree before it is devoured by* ODUM

By courtesy of New Nigerian, Kaduna

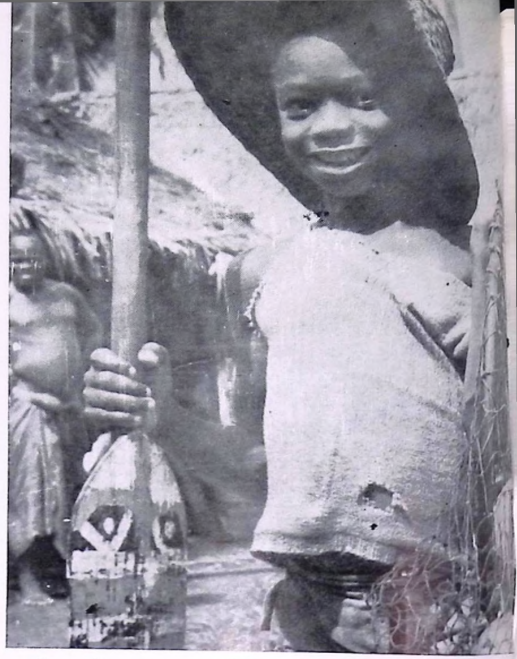
The period of preparations is one of drums, dance and songs. Here a woman group clad in uniform goes agog



By courtesy of New Nigerian, Kaduna

tled men of Okrika in traditional dress pose for a apshot before the great ceremony marking the festival

By courtesy of New Nigerian, Kaduna



Even the young turn fish-catchers during the occasion. This young boy takes after his father's profession

estival scene in a typical Rivers town. Girls wearing coral beads and clad in dashiki skirts and mini-wrappers dance on the eve of an Odum Festival which fell on a market day

according to one account[1] Anyongubiri sector of the island was the first to stage an *Odum* display, Awolomebiri came next with an *Oforofo* (small *Odum*). In time the Awolomebiri people, much to the annoyance of the Anyongubiri masqueraders, made their *Odum* big, by increasing its length. When this misunderstanding was settled, the Anyongubiri people retained their right to display the male *Odum*, while the Awolomebiri people were allowed to elevate their *oforofo* to the rank of a female *Odum*.

There are certain differences between the male and female *Odumu* (plural) of Okrika. Usually, the male is longer than the female. The head-piece of the male *Odum* is also bigger than the female counterpart. As regards decorations, the male colours are, in this case, more elaborate than those of the female *Odum*. Some informants[2] suggest that the colours of the rainbow aptly describe the decoration of the male *Odum*.

Preparing the masquerade for the display may take up to twelve weeks. On the other hand, ready cash and the availability of skilled craftsmen can reduce this period to eight weeks or less.

This period of preparation also serves the purpose of allowing people to spread news of the forthcoming display to people in distant and neighbouring places. At a time of difficult transportation and communications no period less than four weeks was perhaps adequate for wide coverage.

The period of preparation is one of drums, dance and song, but on a small scale. The *Owu-Ogbo* members do the drumming, dancing and singing around the screened-off spots where the *Odum* masks are being prepared. People in the neighbourhood know that preparations for the *Odum* festival have begun as soon as they hear the sounds of the skin-drum bellowing:

dim dim dim
da-da dim-dim
dim dim dim
da-da dim-dim.

The excitement increases as the preparation nears its end. The exact day of the display is dictated by the tide. The ideal tide is *kopuba* when it is full-tide very early in the morning, low-tide by midday, followed by another tidal change towards full-tide by dusk. These tidal changes provide convenient stages in this grand aquatic drama.

The night preceding the display marks the end of the prologue beginning with the first day of preparation. This is the night of skin-drums, dance and song. People are eager to see, the following day, *Odum alias Owu Imgbila, alias Ogona*, perfected by master craftsmen, moving majestically in their waters. The skilled sculptors in wood have accomplished their work and can understandably celebrate their achievement this night. Yet, there is tension in other quarters, among the masqueraders who will perform before critical eyes the following day. Will the play succeed or fail? Have the water-spirits been sufficiently appeased to warrant success? These are some of the burning issues when people awake the following morning.

Let us, for convenience, see how Act One[3] of this magnificent drama begins at Okrika. At dawn spectators find both the male and female *Odumu* lying resplendent against the rays of the morning sun in their proper habitat—water. The male *Odum* dominates the stretch of water close to George Village, while the female glides along Omonokubu, both North-East of Okrika island. At this moment both masquerades are tantalizingly distant—at least half a mile—from spectators on Okrika island. Meanwhile, the ebb-tide has begun, and with that the two masquerades gradually move south-eastwards, and by low-tide they are virtually opposite Chief Samson Adoki's waterside. Not far from both masquerades, *Owu-Ogbo* members wearing sleeveless singlets, white headbands, and carrying short *ibike* (mangrove) staves, move up and down the water close to their masquerades. These club members eagerly chant songs in praise of their *Odum* during what is known as *Kulukulu-ti* (low-tide play). This marks the beginning of Act Two. Some of the songs they sing include:

[1] Information supplied by Madam Iwariwori Oruwari.

[2] The present writer was too young to distinguish colours at the time he saw the performance at Okrika. Information regarding this subject is not quite clear.

[3] According to Mr Iruene, there is no display in the morning at Ogu.

[illegible] accompanying this [illegible] The masquerade is in coils).

[illegible] *Odum* of seven seg-[illegible]

[illegible] group, the *Oxu-Ogbo* members are [illegible] humorously about the coils of their masquerade:

Oxu fungu fungu. (Let the masquerade be in coils).

Chorus

Boru gorgo-gorgo. (Twist with the sand).

Oxum fungu fungu. (Let the Oxum be in coils).

Chorus

Boru gorgo-gorgo. (Twist with the sand).

Oxum [illegible]. (Let the Oxum unwind).

Boru gorgo-gorgo. (Twist with the sand).

[illegible] the [illegible] group moves a public square [illegible] with a song portraying another aspect of his mysterious display. One group wishes to emphasize victory over this *oxu* credited, in this case, with amphibious habits. Hence, the song:

Ẹ ẹ, mongoma xum. (We have overcome you).

Ẹ ẹ, mongoma xum. (We have overcome you).

Chorus

Oxu alayo [illegible] ibobo tubo (Prince among masquerades, whether you come from the swamp,)

Mong [illegible] ibobo tubo, (Or come out of water,)

[illegible] This song is adapted by children during their moonlight plays. Using single-files, they get into, and out of, coils. Participants are required to point to the quarters that display *Odumu*.

[illegible] *Ẹnẹkẹnẹ-ri* phase is the period for the *orukoxupu* to take their presents to the waterside. This is the crucial moment when the goodwill of the water-spirits will again be sought, for with the turning of the tide, the climax of the festival will be reached.

With another full-tide approaching during the afternoon, the *Odumu* will again move northwards, but this time closer to the waterside, closer to the people now gathered in their thousands at the water-front. Dug-out canoes and their poles nearer the seashore are removed before Act Three

[illegible] *Aseinyo,*[3] (O, Asein,)

Chorus

O Aseinyo oreribo gbum. (O, O, Asein, beautiful is the beholder).

Oxube gbum. (Beautiful is the masquerade).

Chorus

Oreribo gbum. (Beautiful is the spectator).

Sebibo gbum. (Beautiful is the dance).

Chorus

Oreribo gbum. (Beautiful is the spectator).

While some [illegible] and dance in land [illegible] proclaim:

Oxu be [illegible] abe. (The masquerade is being displayed).

Njiama [illegible] be obo abe, (A water-spirit is approaching).

Obo njiama [illegible] oressara ma piribia. (To vomit fish for us).

[illegible] R. Horton, 'Ikaki—The Tortoise Masquerade', *Nigeria* Magazine, No. 94, September 1967, p. 239.

[3] Asein is perhaps a reference to crayfish normally found close to the python in salt water.

Woman leader instructs her followers on what role they'll play during the ceremony while men and children watch with delight

Twilight fishing precedes the Odum Festival. Below, five Okrika fishermen draw in their net after a haul

[illegible] the chiefs have special [illegible] while commoners [illegible] the masquerades [illegible] the people at full tide [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] bit. [illegible], the masquerades are [illegible] performance [illegible].

[illegible]

Traditionally, the *Odum* festival marked both [illegible]. It was an act of worship of water-spirits as well as providing entertainment by demonstrating an art of high esteem among [illegible]. [illegible] the *Odum* festival was as important as those connected with other [illegible] water-spirits—[illegible], to mention only the most important. The *Odum* festival, therefore, provides yet another example of the close relationship between traditional religion and art already noted by students of Niger Delta masquerades.[3]

When, however, with changing times, the Protestant Church became one of its principal patrons,[4] the *Odum* festival shed the rituals traditionally connected with it. On such occasions at Okrika and Ogu, the [illegible]*apu* showed unusual co-operation by not making their interest in the *Odum* festival obvious. On account of this contact between the Church and the *Odum* festival, emphasis has shifted considerably to the artistic merits of the displays, particularly as regards design and performance in water. Though rarely [illegible], these valuable skills connected with the *Odum* festival have been preserved and passed down [illegible] from generation to generation. Initially, the appeal of the *Odum* festival was to water-folk; recent [illegible] have shown that more people outside the creeks of the Lower Niger Delta are no less interested.

[illegible]

[2] R. Horton, [illegible]

[3] [illegible] Nigeria Magazine [illegible]

[4] The *Odum* [illegible] connection with [illegible] of a newly completed Protestant [illegible]

CITIZENSHIP AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

By

ELIZABETH AKINSOLA

'TO serve, to strive and not to yield.' This is the 'Outward Bound' motto on which the Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre otherwise known as Man O'War Bay Centre is based. It is an accepted motto all over the world although Nigeria has adopted a new one 'Build the man, build the community' to emphasize the social aspect of the training. The name Outward Bound Sea School was the invention of a British shipowner, Mr Lawrence Holt. The Sea School was opened in July 1941 at Aberdovey in Wales.

About 1936, the British public became concerned about the lack of fitness in the country's youth. Something had to be done to keep them physically strong, help in their character building and make them physically fit. A National Fitness Council was formed. But in the early years, response from youths was not very encouraging. On the outbreak of the Second World War it became necessary to encourage among the youths such activities as would counteract the decline of initiative, skill and of concern about other people. So, after a renewed campaign which was powerfully supported by the House of Commons, an experimental committee was set up under the chairmanship of the then Master of Balliol.

In 1941, Lawrence Holt secured the financial support of the Blue Funnel Line for the foundation of the first Sea School.

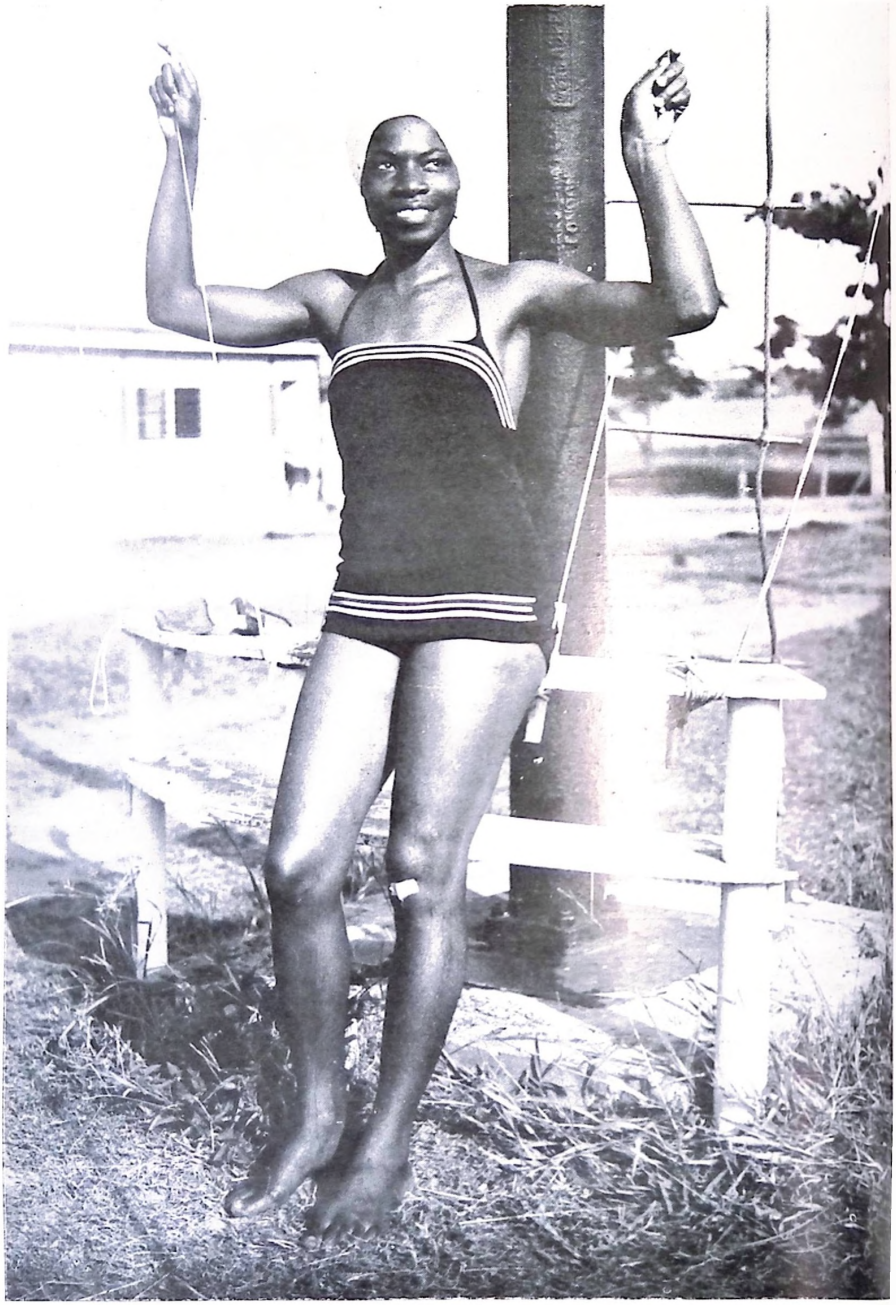
In 1946, the Outward Bound Trust was founded to carry on the work of character building and selfless service to others. Since then the Trust has helped in opening several training centres overseas. Through the years, the aim of the Trust has remained unchanged—service to others.

The duration of the courses is usually twenty-eight days. It may be said that in so short a time, it is not possible to build one's character and instil the spirit of selfless service and leadership into people. But it has worked. It has worked with Germans, Americans, Indians, Malayans, Chinese and Africans and it will work with any group of young people. Already there are more than forty Outward Bound Schools throughout the world.

Some seventeen years ago, three Colonial Office representatives were sent out to the British Cameroons to advise on the development of the territory. During the course of their travels, they found a large double bay surrounded by tree covered cliffs. This was Man O'War Bay, so named because during the suppression of the slave trade British *Man O'War* sailing vessels sheltered in the bay while waiting to waylay French and Spanish slave ships.

Hundreds of Nigerians have undergone training at the Man O'War Bay since its inception. In 1960, it was created a corporate body by the Federal Government. In 1961, it became necessary for the centre to move from Southern Cameroons to Nigeria and a site was chosen at Kurra Falls an elevation of 4,000 feet above sea level. Kurra Falls is some fifty miles from Jos in the Benue/Plateau State.

The Centre is the only training institution of its kind in Nigeria. Another unit, the Sea School, was also opened in Apapa in 1964. The Sea School is sit-



Despite fear of water, hardship and fatigue this lady still looks elegant and happy after a long period of swimmin

With paddles in their hands, life jackets around their bodies and appropriate caps won to differentiate swimming abilities; these ladies are ready to go into the sea in canoes with confidence

The exercise on the rope course, stimulates a growth in self-confidence and [illegible]ual courage. An opportunity for the student to discover her own capacity to face difficulties and [illegible]gencies of all kinds

uated on an island one mile from Apapa and commands a central position between the Porto Novo and Badagry Creeks. The Leadership Training Centre is a meeting place of people from all walks of life in a country of over [illegible] with over 100 [illegible] and diverse cultures. It is necessary for [illegible] and learn to live together. The Centre [illegible] the platform, and [illegible] have the important role [illegible] in bringing opportunity to [illegible] students are one of the [illegible] Wing-O'Wa Ile is unique as [illegible] Nigeria's history. Moreover it is [illegible] country where one finds men

from all over the country living, working and talking together. Students on the course go on expeditions to encourage the spirit of adventures so as to help in the development of a strong spirit of co-operation and understanding.

Each course is an example of how men and women can work together for a common good. Each person has some talent to offer to the common treasury, and each has something to take away.

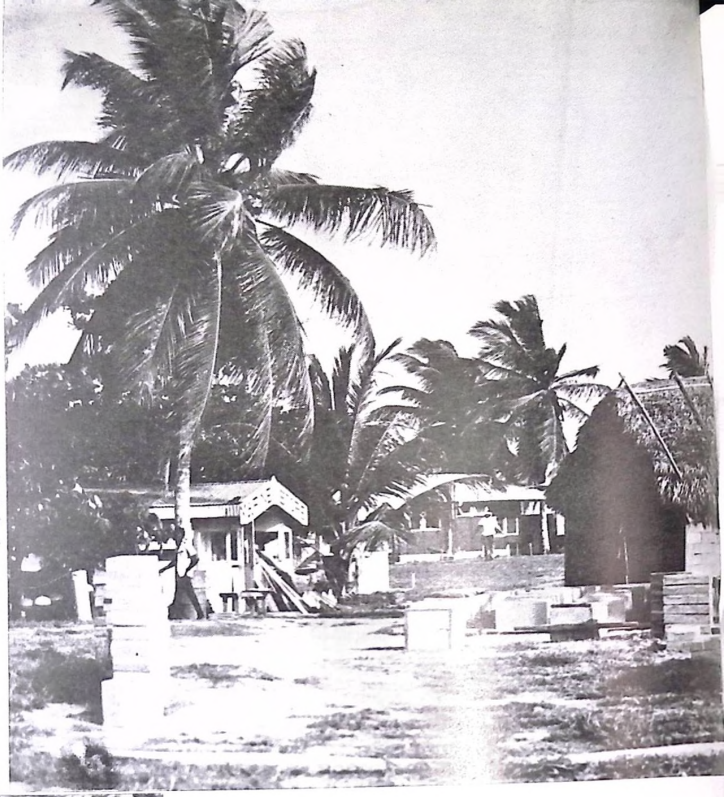
The Centre is run by a Management Committee which is responsible to the Federal Ministry of Education. The Committee is composed of representatives of all governments of the Federation, [illegible] Police, Army and voluntary

The students are coming out of water with a sense of duty and concentration after a session of canoeing

organizations. The principal of the school is also the Director of the Centre. There are two chief instructors, one in Kurra Falls and the other at the Sea School, Apapa.

Mention must be made of the pioneer of the Centre, Mr A. G. Dickson, M.B.E., an Administrative Officer who held the first course in 1951. He was principal of the centre from 1954–7.

The name Raymond Snowsell is synonymous with Man O'Way Bay. For twelve years, he was Principal of Man O'War Bay Training Centre. Mr Snowsell was responsible for the establishment of the Kurra Falls Centre and it is to his credit that the Man O'War Bay has developed from one unit



Camp life predominates at the Sea School. The Cabin on the right is one of the students accommodation for the twenty-eight days of the course

The group and individual effectiveness and leadership are tested by graded initiative tests

to three units—Kurra Falls, Sea School, Apapa and Touring Team which is mobile.

Mr R. A. Elegbe, the present director/principal of the training centre is the first Nigerian to hold the post. After graduating in physical education he joined the citizenship and leadership training centre in 1962. Of course, physical training in schools is quite different from the sort of training which the Centre gives so he had to undergo fresh training. He was awarded a British Council bursary to train in youth organization in Britain for six months. He returned to Nigeria fully equipped for the work to which he is now completely devoted.

Leadership training is aimed at helping members to take interest in social services such as community development, to rediscover themselves and have a greater awareness of themselves.

In February 1959, Miss Margaret Gentle, then Principal of Queen's College, Lagos, organized the first Women's Course at Man O'War Bay. Twenty-four women picked from all over the country from all walks of life attended the course. The aim of the course was to develop leadership ability, self-confidence and a sense of responsibility. Twenty-three of the twenty-four women climbed to the top of the Cameroun Mountain. The twenty-fourth member suffered from mountain sickness at 10,000 feet and had to return. Thus began another revolution by Nigerian women.

Two weeks after the girls had climbed the mountain, there was a most unexpected and spectacular volcanic eruption. Sequel to this the chiefs and elders came to the Centre and protested strongly, accusing the principal of taking women to the mountain to view the crater which they alleged caused the spirit of the volcano to be restless. It is interesting to note that since this incident, two other women courses have been held on the same spot without mishap. Since this experimental course, seven other courses have been held for women, three at Kurra Falls and three at the Sea School, Apapa. In all, about 209 women have trained at the Centre. A few of the women who took part in the organization and instruction are, Mrs Helen Barret, Miss Margaret Gentle, Miss Christiana Okodua and Miss Laide Adesola.

It has been impossible to run regular and more frequent courses for women because of lack of women instructors. It is hoped that Nigerian women will awake to their responsibility and come out to participate in this honourable task. The last women course was held in March–April 1968. Only twenty-four of the forty places offered by the Centre were taken.

The programme for the course includes swimming, first-aid, debates, climbing and expedition. Presently, fifty-six schoolboys drawn from almost all the States newly found in the country are training for leadership at the Sea School, Apapa. I had the occasion to watch a few of them climb the net, skip the wall and balance themselves on the rods. These impressive and exciting exercises require deep concentration. Usually, by the end of each course, trainees become different from other boys having been disciplined and conditioned to lead a new life.

Life at the training school begins at 6.15 a.m. and ends at 10 p.m. To a newcomer, it looks an impossible task, but after a week in the camp, one gets used to the routine.

The Man O'War Bay Training Centre was the first of its kind in Africa, and students from Gambia, Sierra Leone and Ghana attended courses from 1959–66. Today, there are three other centres in Kenya, Zambia and Rhodesia, bringing to four the number of centres in the whole of Africa.

The greatness of a country depends on its citizens. The training of leaders in developing countries cannot be over-emphasized. It is remarkable that the Federal Government is aware of the importance of such training and is giving all available assistance to the centre.

Above: The amphibious expedition gives the greatest test of all—leadership, team-work, initiative, courage and endurance

Right: 'To serve to strive and not to yield'. Without yielding, this student holds fast to the 'Jacob Ladder'

Appropriate forms of life-saving are taught and practised; and the School provides a creek and sea rescue unit

Another ONWUEMA *cap mask from Aminigboko Village*

ONWUEMA *cap mask from Abua Central*

present it. Abua claim that they taught the Kalabari Ijo how to play *Onwuema* and that some of their carvers *e.g.* Major of Digiriga village and Darifa of Okpokuma village have actually carved pieces for the Kalabari.

The purpose of staging *Onwuema* masquerade is to remove all the evil things which came into being during the year and to purify the community in preparation for the annual community festival (*Eyal.*) At this time, all sons and daughters who are scattered in the farms and in neighbouring areas are required to assemble in the village and to participate in this purification and subsequent entertainment.

Each village has its own *Onwuema* represented by a cap mask and each mask represents a water spirit. In the Abua group of villages, the masquerade called *Olubo* at Omagbe village is said to be the oldest and hence the first to appear when the play is staged. However, before he appears, the ground must first be purified of any evil spirits by the *Enung* masquerade. *Olubo* is then followed by the *Igbilla* masquerade of Otari village—a masquerade which has the reputation for being very dangerous. *Obuman* from Omelema village next comes out. Other masquerades—*Okrikala, Semia, Alebia, Agiri, Umani* and so on are then able to perform their dances. *Umani* is a female form and its followers are principally women. In other words women are allowed to join in during the play.

Costume: The masquerades usually have carved head-pieces, and the rest of the head and body is draped with cloth sewn on to the underside of the head-piece. A loop of young palm-fronds is hung around the neck. The masker holds a knife in his right hand and a fan or wooden club in his left hand. As is usual in most Nigerian dances, circlets of locust beans are tied round the ankles to supply rhythm according to the dancer's movements. The men supporting the masquerades are dressed in their loin cloth of 'real India cotton' and shirts, singlets or simply bare torso while the women decorate themselves with chalk, vegetable dyes, loin cloths or 'real India cotton,' and waist bands of brass chains.

Although *Onwuema* has the religious significance of removing evil things from the village, the staging of the play is also an opportunity for enjoyment. The old and the young alike take part in the festivity, in singing, drumming and dancing. One observes a general atmosphere of relaxation and expression of hope that the spirits on which the fishing economy of the Abua depends will bring plenty from the rivers.

While *Onwuema* deals with the cult of the spirits, the *Eyal* deals with the cult of the ancestors.

It is only after the *Onwuema* had been staged that the annual festival (*Eyal*) is celebrated in honour of the ancestors.

In the Abua group of villages where I witnessed the celebration, each *Uwema* of the villages comprising Abua Centre met at *Eruk Ogboko*—the group shrine. This is a hut which shelters the drum of the group of villages. This drum is the physical representation of *Ake-Abua* (the god of Abua). On the day of the festival, the senior *Uwema* of Abua, Chief Uku, accompanied by all the other *Uwema* of the Abua group of villages arrived at the Abua shrine. As each *Uwema* arrived, he was heralded with drum beats and when Chief Uku arrived, the beating was sustained. Chief Uku carrying a medicinal mace on his left shoulder was preceded by diviners (*Oyilokuru*). Some of the other men held iron staffs and some held matchets. These symbols are only held by those who have done great deeds. Men and women lined the front of the Abua shrine while the women sang choruses in praise of the senior *Uwema* and the *Ake-Abua*. Chief Uku then sat down by the drum and placed the medicinal mace in front of him together with some matchets. Three *Oyilokuru* (Diviners) sat on Chief Uku's left-hand side and the *Uwema* on the right side. Each of the *Uwema* then presented Chief Uku with a bunch of grass and a bottle of local gin. By this act each *Uwema* demonstrated his allegiance and loyalty to the senior *Uwema*, who represents *Ake-Abua*. The *Oyilokuru* then divined and pronounced what was in store for Abua in the ensuing year. After this the *Uwema* together with the diviners and elder men formed a long procession to the sacred grove just outside Amalem. The women followed behind singing choruses but did not enter the bush. In

Onwuema masquerade in action

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Orwuema masquerade in action

Chief Richard Uku, the senior UWEMA *of Abua addresses an Onwuema masquerade*

Onwuema masquerades with their men supporters

The occasion for Onwuema play is also an occasion for general dancing and merriment

Another drum—Ake Otaba from Digiriga Village

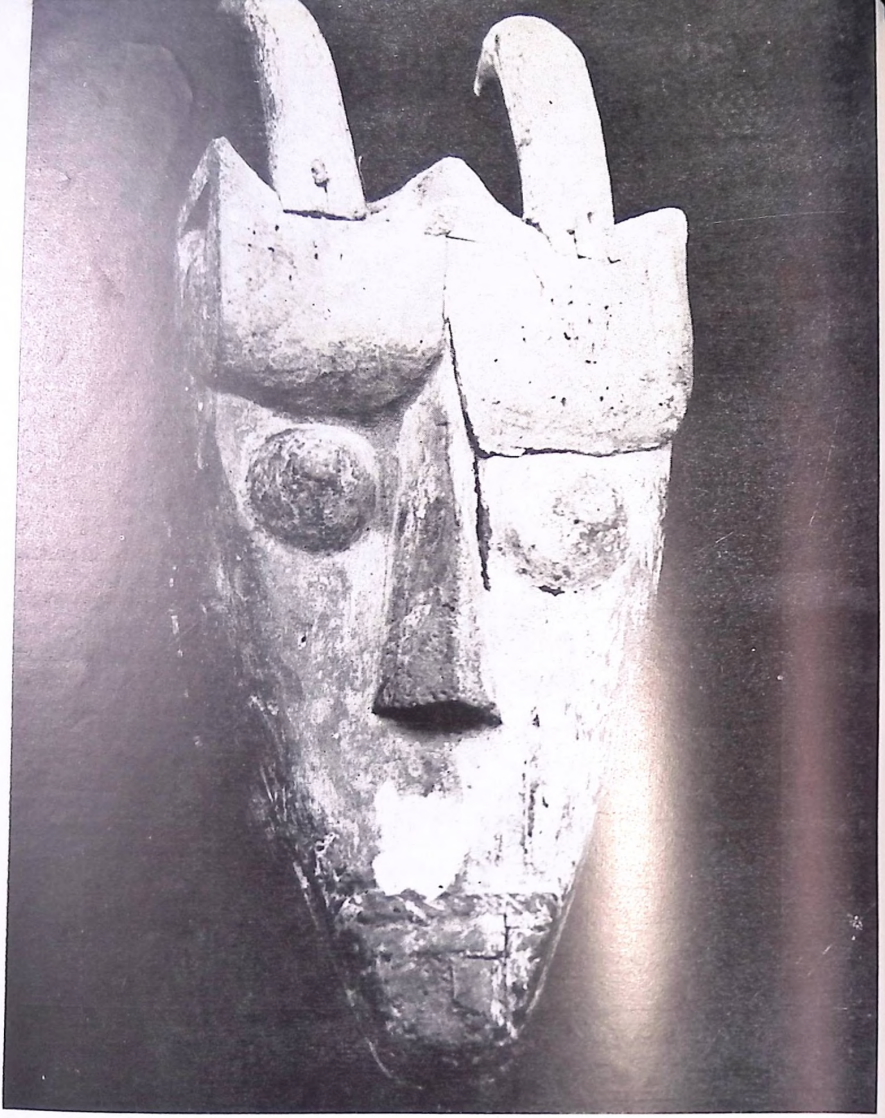
A leading woman participant in full accoutrement

Chief Richard Uku of Amalem with the drum which represents AKE-ABUA (*the god of Abua*)

the bush further divination was carried out and a sacrifice offered to the ancestors. The group then returned to the open space in the centre of Amalem for general dancing, merriment and drinking until it was dark. The *Eyal* Abua had ended; *Ake-Abua* and the ancestors have been called upon to bring health, prosperity and long life to the people of Abua.

Egbukele unlike *Onwuema*, the *Egbukele* play is said to be mainly for entertainment. It is played by all the villages at one time or another, but the leader of the *Egbukele Society* in each village is required to make a sacrifice before the play is staged.

Some Abua people say that *Egbukele* came down from Ekkpahia clan to the north and they can even tell the story of its myth or origin among the latter. This story is confirmed by the fact



Cap mask for ONWUEMA *from Digiriga*

A head-dress for EGBUKELE *in Abua. Note the recent sign of sacrifice between the two horns*

that in the Ekkpahia clan itself, *Egbukele* is taken much more seriously than in Abua.

Membership of the society is open to a son of any age whose father can afford to pay the membership fee. This consists of two bottles of locally made gin and £3 for tuition fee. Teaching can last up to six moons and consists of learning the secrets of the society and dancing with the *Egbukele* masks. At the end of their training the neophytes are led from the bush by *Anyegia*, the masquerade messenger of *Egbukele* to the club house in the centre of the village where they are received by the high priest who then leads them in a dance around the club house.

The *Egbukele Society* is stratified in two layers. The *Araman* (=ordained), the inner circle in Okobo Village of the Amughan group of villages comprises four elders each from one of the following lineages, Otor, Ogini, Ikolo, Ogoni in order of seniority. They remain in that circle for life and have the privilege of having the lion's share of all money and drinks collected by the society. I was told however that other members can buy their way into *Araman* and become entitled to wear an eagle feather, the status symbol of this inner circle.

The outer circle of the *Egbukele* is called *Egbogheghum*, meaning big family. Membership of this circle is open to all initiands but they can terminate their membership if and when desired. The society itself can terminate the membership of undesirable members.

Masks used in the *Egbukele* are usually owned by individuals unlike those used in *Onwuema* which are communally owned, but they all are kept in the common club house. The Chief Egbukele masquerade is called *Opamam Ogbeti* (holder of Ogbeti) and it has the responsibility of protecting other masquerades against evil machinations while the play is being staged. *Opamam Ogbeti* carries a powerful medicine called Ogbeti which empowers him to perform his duties. When the play is staged, *Opamam Ogbeti* leads the procession and is the chief performer.

The next important masquerade is called *Ubom* who normally follows *Opamam Ogbeti*. *Ubom* is followed by the senior masquerades: *Ukia*, *Iberima*, *Akamakama*, *Egikanna*, and then the junior masquerades: *Agbani*, *Uwozo*, *Asieki*, *Oki Urua sawa*, *Olokirika*, *Efuru*, *Aminikoro*, *Anyaezi*, *Ikolobo* come out in turn to display their skill in dancing. Each of these masquerades represents a fish *e.g.* swordfish, shark, guitar fish, etc. Finally the messenger masquerade, *Anyegia* brings up the rear.

Although *Egbukele* is said to be merely for entertainment, it performed some government functions. Reports about theft, violence, adultery, etc. were formerly lodged with the *Araman*, and members and non-members of the society alike were entitled to make reports. Fines were imposed on culprits. However, it appears that their deliberations were restricted to preliminary judgment on civil matters and appeals from here were heard in the *Awara* (a sacred grove in the centre of Abua) which also tried all serious crimes like murder.

Swordfish and crocodile masquerades at Okobo in Amughan

Right: An Egbukele cap made representing a swordfish in Okobo

Below: Women participants in Onwuema play

Abua musical instruments consist of ordinary membrane drums and slit drums

Opaman Ogbete in Abua. Note the recent sign of sacrifice between the two horns

A master drummer from Aminigboko

ITSEKIRI COSTUME

By

EVE DE NEGRI

THE Itsekiri Tribe of the Delta Area of Nigeria which is now part of the Mid-West State, has always been a somewhat unique tribe. Not a large one, but a people with flair and a certain sophistication. Negotiators and Middlemen with the first European traders of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, their constant contact with foreigners of other African tribes and with those from Europe and Asia may have added to their liberal way of thinking. They claim a Portuguese Queen and an *Olu* (king) educated in Portugal under the auspices of Portuguese royalty.

The Capital city is Warri, thriving today as it was in the seventeenth century, when it was already a great trading centre.

The origins of the Itsekiri tribe are said to be linked with Ife and the Yorubas, *via* Benin. The legend says it that Ginuwu, one of the sons of an Oba of Benin, directly descended from Odudua, (founder of Ile-Ife). It is told that Ginuwu left Benin in the fifteenth century to lead his followers to a place then occupied by the Ijaw Tribe. Here they settled and changed the name to Itsekiri. By the seventeenth century they had become an independent people.

Some of the Itsekiri sophistication may be seen in their traditional manner of dressing. With great panache the gentlemen swathe themselves in yards of fine cloth. This, having been passed around the hips, is pleated in kilt-like fashion from the centre out to the left side, where it is folded into draperies left to hang free. The waist edge is then rolled over and over into a fat bundle, which not only keeps the pleats in place, but gives a little swing to them. For more important occasions and for rich men, there is a length of surplus cloth at the left-hand side, sometimes extremely long. This is lavishly draped in great folds over the shoulder or around the arm. The hanging 'train' is then held in the hand or even allowed to trail the ground. The cloth used being costly, this extra allowance of fabric would tend to emphasize the wealth of the wearer. On top of the skirt-cloth a long shirt is worn. This is always worn outside the skirt and varies in length and elaborateness. The style of the shirt is a bit like a smock, or at times like the dandified dress-shirt of Europe in past centuries. The front often with bib-front tucked and pleated in a variety of ways can be quite decorative in its treatment. A band collar fastened in front is usual. The fabric is often striped and may be silk, rayon, fine cotton or other material.

The man's head is usually covered with some form of European-style headgear. (A favourite trading item in the days of the Factors). These hats, *Ekoro*, are wonderful in their immense variety of style. The black and brown bowler, the Homberg of felt, the cloth cap, Stetson, and straw boater... all are there; usually bedecked with a plume or two of ostrich feathers. To complete this costume important men carry a large fan. Around the neck and hanging to the lower part of the torso swing heavy gold chains carrying gold medallions, crosses and pendants. Large pieces of coral *Esughu* in ovals and in thin pipes indicate rank and wealth. The Itsekiri are reputed to have the finest collection of coral in the country (Nigeria). This is not surprising since it was they who met with and traded for this coral and bought it for the wealthy

Itsekiri men's Costume for 'everyday'

'Big men's' formal dress

Costume now worn for a traditional dance.
Note massive array of coral-beads

Upper formal dress with long draperies, note tucked shirt-fronts

Feathered fans carried by chiefs and important men

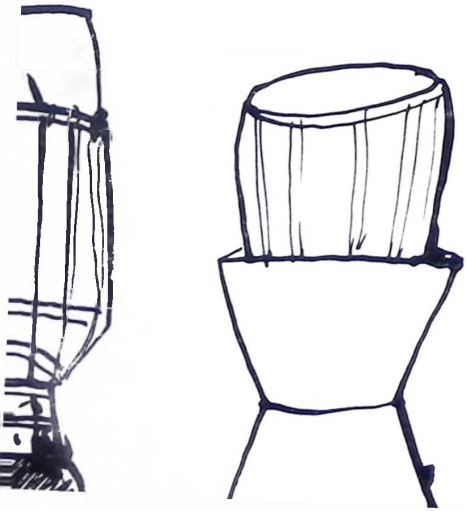
(*Lower*) *Ladies with paper fans*

Women's Costume

Parasol protects mother and babe

An old-style head-tie and elaborate Jewellery

Draping the upper-cloth in three different ways



(*Left*) *Some Itsekiri drum-shapes*

Benin chiefs. Another stone, 'Blue Coral' *Ugo* is also important to the Itsekiri. This 'blue' coral, was described as being found on the sandy bed of the Benin River in the fifteenth century. From there it was taken away and ground into beads, then traded back to the coast.

The first inspiration for the arrangement of the man's skirt-cloth may have come to the Itsekiri along with the now-traditional cloth. This was brought to the Delta by traders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Records show that such cloths were being brought by the Portuguese and others, muslins and calicoes woven in Bengal and other places in India. These fine fabrics were woven in chequered and gingham designs, dyed brilliant colours with fast dyes. Such cloth known as Madras Real India Cloth is still worn by the Itsekiri people to this present day. It is used for traditional ceremonial costume in colours of saffron yellow and red *Ileleji-akpo:* Ileleji means literally body-cloth. It is sometimes woven with silk threads. In order to preserve its colour and texture, the women wash it carefully, using rainwater, good quality soap and juice from limes. After they starch it with cassava starch and dry the cloth in the shade. Three centuries ago it was observed that the Itsekiri people wore fine cotton and silk cloths about two ells long, which they wind about their breasts and stomach. Since the manner of draping the cloth for men is similar to that used by men in parts of India and the Dutch East Indies it is possible that the idea for using the cloth was introduced at the time the trading of the cloth was carried out.

The knowledge of weaving fine cloth existed among the Itsekiri women. A sample of cloth taken from Warri district in the middle of the nineteenth century which was woven on a continuous warp loom (as used by women) consists of four strips joined to make its width and is exceptionally long measuring 92′ × 63′. It is made from cotton and silk with the patterns of silk appearing on one side only as formed by the method of 'floating.' The colours are bright red, violet and bright green, with borders of red and violet and narrow stripes of blue. The warp is left hanging at the ends and these threads form a deep fringe as was usual. Such cloths woven by these women apparently were in demand along the Coast and sold particularly well on the Gold Coast.

The Itsekiri women are very elegant and feminine. They are also powerful! Long years of inter-marriage with the Portuguese and other foreigners have given them greater emancipation than most other Nigerian women. When not dressed in traditional clothes they wear silks and satins and lace and their formal clothes have something of Edwardian elegance about them.

Traditional dress for these women has changed from time to time. The method of arranging the two pieces of clothes varies somewhat but is basically the disposal of the upper cloth *Ubuara*—literally BODY-COVER,—and the lower cloth *Aliekun*—together—Ubuara ba aliekun. The lower cloth hangs from the hips and the upper one is tied in various ways over the breasts. The blouse now seen in present-day styles was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century. A simple loose garment of European style, which has changed slightly fashion-wise since. When the blouse was introduced the upper cloth was at times dropped to hang from the waist. Under the cloth strings of coral beads were worn on the hips and as garters under the knees. Both these items being considered sexually stimulating when touched by the male hand.

On the hair, which might be left long or cut short, a head-dress is worn, *Ulesun*, made from silk. The modern version is large and turban-like, perched high on the head to expose some of the hair at the back. Old-style versions of *Ulesun* was a square one yard in size, folded in half to triangular shape, then one fold to turn back the apex and another to make a long rectangular strip. After folding the strip was knotted three times. The knots placed thus—one on centre of the forehead and the other two one over each ear on the temples. Such a head-tie continued to be worn for ceremonial occasions during the first part of the twentieth century and still forms part of some special traditional costumes. Another style of head-tie is that which when folded into a long strip is passed around the head and back again to tie either at the side of the back of the

head. The two ends of the tie left upstanding.

Rich families own large collections of costly gold and coral jewellery with which the ladies adorn themselves. There are brooches, pendants, drop ear-rings, chains, beads, bracelets and so on worth thousands of pounds. Old golden sovereigns were melted-down and remade to designs of the goldsmiths. At one time all Itsekiri women carried a silken parasol. Painted paper fans have always been used by these ladies and still are . . . the fans are similar to those seen in Portugal and Spain.

Very small cuts, three each side high on the cheek under the eyes, and tiny ones on the temples beside the eyes, were the only ones used by the Itsekiri.

The traditional colours are worn by the women and many combinations of other brilliant ones, mauve, purple, green, orange, bright pinks, these are striped and chequered with lines of black or vivid colour and embroidered with realistic motifs of birds, animals and fruit and other designs. One of the most sought-after cloths today is that known as 'Senior Service' known for its fineness, its colour and its silken threads.

The Itsekiri women are famous for their dancing. The dance costumes are brilliantly coloured and worn in the manner of olden times. Flashing silk scarves are knotted from the waist in some costumes and fly-out in swirling shapes with the vigorous movements of the dance. Sashes feathers, beads, golden anklets and trinkets of all kinds contribute to the effect. Skirts may be draped with voluminous folds. In many ways these ancient-style costumes of the women resemble those of the women of the old Benin Empire.

There are important masquerades with traditional costumes whose origins are buried in legends of the past, there are elaborate costumes with special fabrics and colours for ceremonies of second burials and weddings and for royal ceremonies connected with the Olu. The Olu's precious silver crown and his own regalia and that of his attendants create a dazzling spectacle and a blaze of unforgettable colour and splendour.

Among the masquerade costumes is seen the crocodile head-dress, rather similar to that of the Ijebu Tribe. . . the boat paddle is carried too in some masquerades. In olden trading days the Itsekiri used the waterways of the creeks for the purpose of trading and were one of the few tribes in Nigeria having contact with other Nigerian tribes and with Europeans in those days. No doubt there was also contact through trading, with the great trading centres of the North at that time. In their own part of Nigeria the Itsekiri Tribe have vast quantities of timber and rubber and now the precious oil. A great upsurge of trade and industry today will no doubt bring even further development to these interesting Itsekiri people.

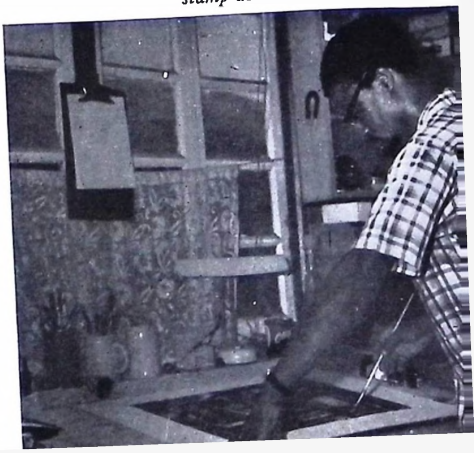
GRILLO—*Art is a translation of my impression of the subject-matter I am handling. What I produce is determined by the mood generated by the subject*

ETSO NGU—*Doyen of the artists—a painte sculptor herself, she taught most of the lea Nigerian contemporary artists*

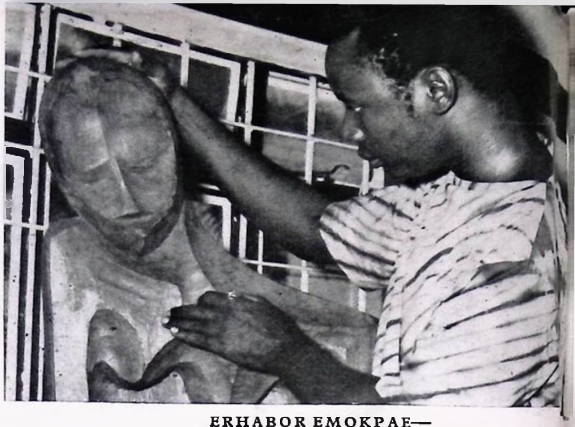
CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ARTISTS AT WORK

JIMO AKOLO—*In pensive mood, soft spoken and uninfluenced by Western sophistication. He is a sensitive painter whose work has caught the eye of connoisseurs*

TAYO AIYEGBUSI—*A painter whose stamp abroad is hard to excel*



FASUYI—*Painter and sculptor. He believes that Nigerian art should be distinctively and significantly Nigerian*



ERHABOR EMOKPAE—*Very powerful sculptor and a vivid painter. He is a traditionalist*

BRUCE ONOBRAKPEYA—*Painter and the initiator of lino bronze relief acclaimed in Nigeria and imitated abroad*

BEN OSAWE—*Sculptor with a difference. His message is more understood abroad than in Nigeria*

Literary Supplement

NEGRITUDE—SOME POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS

By

J. M. Ita

IT is, perhaps, necessary to explain the need for yet another article on Négritude. The present article originated as a rejoinder to Professor Ferguson's *Nigerian Poetry in English* (in *Insight*, Lagos, July–September, 1966).

Recent conversations in university circles suggest that the influence of Madame Kesteloot's *Les écrivains noirs de langue francaise: naissance d'une littérature* (Brussels, 1963) and Mr Makward's *Négritude and the Modern African Novel in French* (in *Ibadan* No. 22, June, 1966) has not yet dissipated the type of misconception typified by Professor Ferguson's article. Many Nigerian students, in particular, seem to have a deep distrust of French African literature, which they have acquired as a result of constant warnings against the doctrinaire nature of Négritude. Such a distrust makes the appreciation of French African literature almost impossible.

This article is an attempt to break down the barrier of prejudice which has been erected largely by literary critics. I make no apology for making again one or two points which have already been made by Madame Kesteloot and Mr Makward. What is worth saying once, is worth repeating.

In his article, Mr Makward questions two main assumptions popular in English-speaking Africa; one is that Négritude is a static and unique ideology; the other is that all French-speaking African writers are to be identified with Négritude so defined. It is these assumptions which I, too, would wish to combat. With Mr Makward, I would concede that there was an 'aggressive' phase of Négritude in the thirties and forties, and that one can, if one so chooses, limit the term 'Négritude' to cover this phase only (though such a definition has against it, the authority of Senghor, Césaire and Alioune Diop). But in this case one must admit that Negritude has not had much support amongst creative writers in French-speaking Africa since the late forties.

Perhaps the most striking of the misplaced attacks on Négritude is to be found in Mr William Fagg's *Nigerian Images* (Lund Humphries) who says Négritude is:

> *A process of intellectual dekinking, applied to French African évolués in the course of their assimilation to French literary culture: a kind of vague nostalgia for an Africa which never was. The concept was originated by the distinguished West Indian poet, Aimé Césaire: like its anglophone analogue 'the African personality,' it obscures and denies the originality of the indigenous African cultures in the interests of a spurious ideological conformity. It is a curiously European kind of fallacy to suppose that one 'personality' will suffice for the African peoples when so many are required even for the relatively integrated peoples of Europe. We should rather take the creative differentiation of the tribal sculpture as an index of what Africa can offer the world in the field of 'personality'.*

At the first Congress of Negro Writers and Artists at Paris in 1956, this very question of whether 'one personality' was to suffice for all African peoples was raised by Mr S. Alexis.

> 'I should like to know,' he asked, 'whether there exists, in Africa in general... an African Negro aesthetic which is valid for *all* the peoples of Africa, or whether there are forms of expression which are properly speaking national although the African forms of expression, in their diversity, show a certain kinship.'

> 'We are,' Aimé Césaire replied, 'certainly justified in speaking of *national* cultures in Africa, and also of African Negro civilization; just as, within the vast western civilization there is room for an Italian

culture, a German culture or a Spanish culture, and so forth.'

It will, perhaps, be argued that Négritude encourages national differences within Africa, but forbids individual ones. Perhaps this is what Mr Cyprian Ekwensi was thinking of when, as quoted by Professor Ferguson he spoke of '*a whole nation*, or even worse, of a whole continent, devoting their creative works to a unique ideology.'

The theme of the Second Congress of Négro Writers and Artists held in 1959 was Unity. Its resolutions might, therefore, be expected to emphasize what Mr Fagg calls 'ideological conformity' at the expense of free expression by the individual. Nevertheless, Resolution IV*d* on Literature, after stating that African literature will, in general, be less individualistic than European literature, goes on to say:

> 'The observation of the literary facts must not lead to tyrannical obligations. It preserves the fundamental individual liberty of the writer, but is calculated to aid him in his work and enable him to realize, in an entirely original manner, the harmonious synthesis between traditions which have been preserved, and modern forms of expression.'

Mr Fagg is not alone in regarding Négritude as a rigid doctrine. Let me quote a few variations on this idea taken from other writers. Professor Ferguson writes: 'They (the Nigerian writers) write as Africans, of course, but they find the *set philosophy* of Negritude *too forced and too self-conscious*.' Referring to Négritude, Mr Wole Soyinka writes of the 'few truly creative pieces that somehow emerged *in spite of its philosophical strait jacket*.'

But what basis is there for the idea that Négritude is a 'set philosophy' demanding rigid conformity? Senghor defines Negritude somewhere as 'the cultural values of Black Africa as a whole as they are expressed in the life, institutions and works of the Negroes.' M. Alioune Diop, President of the Dakar Festival Association, is quoted by Mr Onuora Nzekwu in *Nigeria* No. 89 as saying: 'Négritude has different definitions at different levels. It, however, urges the recognition and acceptance of a rich and historical civilization.' Where, then, is the 'spurious ideological conformity' or the 'philosophical strait jacket'? Is there any difference between 'writing as an African' of which Professor Ferguson approves, and being an 'apostle of Négritude', of which he apparently disapproves?

This last phrase 'apostle of Negritude' deserves some comment. The belief that Negritude is a rigid doctrine seems to have, as its corollary, the belief that it is a proselytizing doctrine. Any person who is held to belong to the literary school of Negritude, is liable, in English-speaking Africa, to be described in pseudo-religious terms, the implication being that he regards himself as a prophetic voice crying in the wilderness. Thus, Mr Clive Wake, in his introduction to *An Anthology of African and Malagasy Poems in French* (O.U.P.) describes M. Birago Diop as '*an ardent disciple of Negritude*.' Professor Ferguson describes Mr Gabriel Okara as '*a strong apostle of Negritude*.' With the possible exception of Mr W. Jeanpierre, in *African Literature and the Universities*, there are, nowadays, few doctrinaire proselytizers of Negritude. Indeed, Mr Sembene Ousmane, in the same work, says that he does not support Negritude since 'it no longer means that combination of revolutionary fervour that people used to think it was.' In other words, he implies, Negritude is no longer sufficiently doctrinaire (in the revolutionary sense) to be worth proselytizing for. It is doubtful whether the term 'disciple', 'prophet' or 'apostle' of Negritude, as used in current literary criticism, has any meaning at all beyond that of being disparaging.

Yet another popular misconception about Negritude is that it preaches a return to the African past, as this is imagined to have been before the arrival of the first Portuguese. Such an 'African past' could, of course, only be a historical and archaeological reconstruction, always subject to fashions in interpretation. It is to this past, I suppose, that Mr Fagg refers, when he calls Negritude 'a vague nostalgia for an Africa that never was.' A return to this remote past would, logically, have involved the exclusion from African life and literature of all ideas held to have emanated from Europe. The belief that supporters of Negritude advocate such a return to the past, has affected even so sensitive a writer as Mr Mphahlele. It is easy to sympathize with the emotional attitudes underlying Mr Mphahlele's antagonism to Negritude. Negritude originally arose (here Mr Fagg is quite right) as a reaction of Africans and West Indians against a white domination which forced French culture upon them. In South Africa, the cultural policy of the dominant white group was almost

[illegible]gitude of the [illegible] We were no longer [illegible] the [illegible] Palace of Sangho[illegible], nor even Chaka [illegible] We were students in Paris and students of the [illegible]tieth century. [illegible] ourselves, we [illegible] incorporate Negro-African culture into the reality of the twentieth century.' There is nothing in Senghor's conception, which is incompatible with Mphahlele's idea of a 'synthesis which does not necessarily reject the negroness of the African'.

I have called Mphahlele's misunderstanding of Senghor a 'trap.' By this I mean, that as a result of it, he has himself isolated from Senghor and from others whom he evidently admires; thus, his misunderstanding cut him from those with whom he would like to be united. But the belief that Negritude means a return to the past is equally popular with other critics whose misunderstandings hardly attain to the dignity of tragedy. Professor Ferguson, for example, quotes a passage from Frank Imoukhede and comments: 'This note of individualism is, in itself, a rejection of the old society, where the tribe was everything and the individual nothing.' Here again, Negritude is equated with the return to the 'old society.' A little later Professor Ferguson writes: 'Others have felt the spell of tradition, even the sophisticated. Soyinka.' Why, once Again, Negritude is equated with a return to the past and 'tradition' with lack of sophistication. We are intended to infer that Mr Soyinka, in 'feeling the pull of tradition' is having an attack of primitive atavism.

The belief that Negritude means the rigid exclusion of all non-African influences often has, as its corollary, the idea that writers of Negritude spend their time proclaiming their blackness without reference to anything else. Taken in its context, Professor Ferguson's statement that 'the African cannot just assert his Africanity without reference to the outside world', is intended to imply that Negritude writers try to do just this. Mr Soyinka's much misquoted question as to whether a real tiger would go round proclaiming its 'tigritude', seems, at first, to carry similar implications.

Mr Moore, in his *Seven African Writers* (O.U.P., 1962, p.xvi) quotes Mr Soyinka as saying: 'I don't think a tiger has to go round proclaiming his tigritude.' This, according to Mr Moore, typifies the Nigerian attitude to 'the intensely romantic and rhetorical tradition of Negritude poetry.' But at the Berlin Conference in 1964, as quoted by Janheinz Jahn, Mr Soyinka comp-

lained that his remarks had been misinterpreted. He said:

> 'It is important to quote what I said correctly. I said 'A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude, a tiger pounces.' In other words, a tiger does not stand in the forest and say 'I am a tiger'. When you go past where the tiger has been, and you see the gazelle's skeleton, then you know that some tigritude has been projected. So, the difference that I was stressing at that conference in Kampala, 1962, was a purely literacy one. I wanted to distinguish between propaganda and pure poetic creativeness.'[1]

It seems, then, that Mr Soyinka was not disparaging Negritude writers in general, or implying that they were all merchants of a rather inauthentic cheap rhetoric. He was merely making the point that as tigers are to be judged on their pounces, poets are to be judged on their poems, and not on their laudable sentiments about Negritude.

Critics who wish to suggest that Negritude involves a crude glorification of blackness tend to do so by means of quotations torn from their context. A quotation which can easily be misused in this way is the following one from *Black Label* by Leon Damas:

> 'The White will never be negro
> for beauty is negro
> and negro is wisdom
> for endurance is negro
> and negro is courage
> for patience is negro
> and negro is irony
> for charm is negro
> and negro is magic
> for love is negro
> and negro is loose walking
> for the dance is negro
> and negro is rhythm
> for art is negro
> and negro is movement
> for laughter is negro
> for joy is negro
> for peace is negro
> for life is negro.'[2]

These lines are, in fact, quoted by Mr Gerald Moore in his introduction to *Seven African Writers*. He describes them as 'invigorating nonsense.' Let us suppose, for a moment, that the lines are as nonsensical as Mr Moore takes them to be; to condemn Damas on the basis of the lines would be unjustifiable unless he had written nothing better; to condemn *Negritude* on the basis of them would be as absurd as to condemn the English Romantic Movement on the basis of the twenty worst lines written by (say) Scott or Wordsworth. Mr Moore himself does not commit this absurdity. His condemnation is reserved for Damas only. He writes: 'The chief danger carried by Negritude is that of degenerating into a racialism as intolerant and arrogant as any other. At its fiercest, it can lead to the writing of defiant, if invigorating nonsense like this: 'The White will never be negro...' (etc). But at its best, it unlocked the talents of a very remarkable group of young negroes; it gave them an attitude out of which they could create; it provided a vehicle for the passion, energy and conviction of a generation.' Nevertheless, by isolating Damas' lines, Mr Moore has endowed them with a crudity which is not theirs when read in context. Unfortunately, many of Mr Moore's English speaking readers will have read no more of Damas than Mr Moore quotes, but they will probably have heard that Damas has some reputation as a poet (of Negritude). In such readers, Mr Moore's treatment of Damas is likely, illogically no doubt, to strengthen the popular belief that poets of Negritude believe as Ferguson says, in 'asserting their Africanness (or Negroness) without reference to the outside world.' Thus, though this is not Mr Moore's intention, the *effect* of his words will probably be to encourage misconceptions.

The lines quoted by Mr Moore are not an entirely self-contained poem, but constitute part of a sequence.

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[1] Jahn, *Geschichte der neoafrikanischen Literatur*. (Eugen Diederichs. Vevlag.) Unfortunately I am not able to quote Mr Soyinka's exact English words, but I have had to retranslate them from the German. I apologize for any inaccuracies which may have crept in as a result of double translation.

[2] Although Damas, L. G. *Black Label—poemes*. (Gallimard, Paris,) was not published till 1956, some of it was written much earlier, and portions of it appeared in Damas' anthology *Poetes d'expression francaise* (Paris, 1947). It is not surprising, therefore, that *Black Label* is reminiscent of the work of the thirties and forties (*see* Kesteloot, op. cit. p.139.) The present English translation is Mr Moore's.

approach this fact by mentioning something that is known to everybody: there has been and still is never so much derouation and hatred, mutual disrespect and persecution as between Africans, Europeans, and Americans, 'black' and 'white'. Even today, after two centuries of Christianization which proclaimed individuals as equal, after Enlightenment having abolished all prejudices among races, creed, and established the royalty of reason, after all the recognitions of psychology and anthropology, not to mention the enlightening accomplishments of natural sciences, and above all, after ten and more years of independence of African countries, having shown their capacity for all the civilizatory manners, there is still, maybe consciously or unconsciously, the living myth of the notion of primitiveness while speaking about Africa. This obstinacy is suspect, suspect above all from the side of the Europeans, moreover it throws a light on the faced problem: why everything concerning Africa has got its special power and explosive force and is loaden with much more emotionality and passion than what is related to other races and continents. This fact, one may guess, has nothing to do—or not primarily to do—with the Africans themselves, but with the Europeans, with their psychological background, their inner face being hidden behind the protective mask of their civilizatory appearance, or, as LAURENS VAN DER POST puts it: because the 'white' sees in the African the dark aspect of his own soul which he has banished into his unconscious; the 'dark brother' is the rejected and disdained or despised aspect of his own ego. Here we cannot only find the origin of the mutual explosiveness, psychical and vital, but also the very ground of the fascination. It is the fascination of what has, at its origin, been loved, feared and adored, the fascination of that which is completely different, as it exists between man and woman, men and God, life and death; these cosmical polarities who, at their origin, were one and have been separated later on, so that one part is still alive in the other, causing the fascination. On this background we can understand why the attraction between 'black' and 'white' is so powerful: because it is closely related to the origin, this means the primitive in the sense of what has been first, and to the act of creation. Therefore, this fascination is so difficult to live with and to master, and because this is so, it very soon has been betrayed and changed to its contrary: into disdain and hatred. At the same time, this fact explains one of the most tragical aspects of human life: that in the deepest ground of the human soul, hatred is nothing else than distress about love and affection which could not be lived with and mastered. This fact is related not only to the 'white'; this psychic mechanism is also working in the modern African himself, or in other words: the accusing question: 'Cain, where is your brother Abel?' is the archetype of the tragic aspect of human love and hatred '*par excellence*'.

But what has this to do with the complaint of Anu Ata Aidoo? What is the connection between the betrayals, broken promises, the Nigerian cataclysm conjured at the beginning of the article? The question—suppose a European has the right to answer to this complaint in which way ever—reminded me of the time of the European catastrophe: when all the neighbours of Germany and amongst them my own country Switzerland, the so-called island of peace, watched the happenings in Nazi-Germany. More conscientious individuals were very reserved about all that could be called interference or judgment from the side of the neutrals or from those who have been spared from similar misery. But nevertheless: we have participated in thoughts, opinions, judgments, and we—not all!—have suffered with the German population, or as MAX FRISCH has put it in his 'Diary'; 'We dwelled at the edge of a torture-chamber, we have heard the cries, but we did not cry; we remained without the depths of the endured pains, but not so far from them that we could laugh. Our destiny seemed to be the vacuum between war and peace. Our way out remained to help.'—These same words could be put again for those who have met and loved Nigeria, the same, in substraction of the word: to help. Not because of unwillingness to help, may be not even of inability, but because this cataclysm came out of deeper sources than an ordinary war, it seemed to go beyond everything realizable by rational notions, the same as the German catastrophe did, it reaches these very sources of origin, the fascination between life and death, the dwelling-place of creativity. And as this dwelling place stands far beyond 'black' and 'white' or what colour it may be, Europeans, I mean, and every human being have the right or even are obliged to speak or to search for an answer. This answer, for the beginning, may only be the acceptance of this most powerful reciprocal fascination as something which has to be mastered.

What this fascination on the part of the Europeans is concerned, Nigeria, for example, has been attractive and is still attractive for many European scientists, writers, artists. Some of them have been attracted particularly by the creative dwelling-places, by Nigerian art, culture and religion, they integrated it into their thinking, into their lives as an inseparable part of their own personality and culture. People like SUSANNE WENGER, PIERRE VERGER, ULLI BEIER, PEGGY HARPER ROBIN HORTON, MICHAEL CROWDER, UNA MACLEAN, KLAUS STEPHAN, JANHEINZ JAHN, GISELA VON FRANKENBERG have gone far beyond the average interest most Europeans have got for the African continent or for Nigerian culture and have developed a particular style and tradition of European-Nigerian approach and integration. And when the rest of the world does not put them on such a high platform as others, who turn around Ife and Benin, may be Nok, when they go far, or pretend to know everything of African matters, their presence and creative efficiency is much more important than the shallow prophecies of these people being disappointed now of Africa because their invested money or their invested spiritual energy does not show immediate results. The dialogue, however, silent or open, of these named people and others with Africans of the same calibre will be the striking surface for the creative spirit, lightening for what one day may become an answer or a confirmation. The Europeans, having been condemned to loose their paradise by guilt, by wars, catastrophes, all sorts of failures and deficiences, may take their own destiny as a guiding force. We, Europeans being an old race in body and in mind, have past the cataclysm again and again, and now we watch those who seemed to be predestinated to avoid the cataclysms, or at least the cruel and enormous extent of it. Because they did not, definitely not, some of us are just a little disappointed.

May be that everything important and great—and Nigeria once laid claim to greatness—has to be dipped into blood as a sort of sacrifice; may be that it has always been so; why, and if it will remain this way in spite of what they call the salvation from the darkness, has not yet been found out by all these listeners to God's breath. So an answer will hardly come out of their ranks but rather out of the vital religious sphere, sometimes called pagan or heathen, the most cruel and powerful side of the creation process, but one of the most true and, may be, inevitable. In spite of baby pills, all sort of gymnastics or procedures to facilitate birth on the human plane, in spite of parthegonesis and the fabrication of the 'humunculus', there will always be sperm, pain, blood, the separation of the child from the umbilical cord, the ejecting of the placenta, the child's first cry and his troubles. This is still more true on the spiritual-psychic-creative ground than for the physical, and it seems that the importance of the sacrifice increases in the same proportion as the importance of the created object.

Out of the background of their recent experience, Nigerians seem to be called for the search about the significance of the sacrifice in the modern world in relation to the creation of a new nation, of peace, freedom, and culture. This search seems to me more important than to analyse, to fix up, and determine art and culture as museum pieces, impaling their details like butterflies carefully and with assiduity at the killing needles. We Europeans—may be not all of us—have lost, at the moment, the capacity for this kind of creativity, we even have past since a long time the moment when protection and conservation of what we once have created had had its sense. We missed the moment of new creativity, we dropped the ball and were not able to interpret the indications out of the invisible partition of final destiny, although, at the time, the cries were loud enough, the misery enormous, the whole carrying an unmistakable and apocalyptic character. So we, or at least most of us, may be prosperous, well fed, wealthy and enjoy our culture's doubtful amusements, but we are not in unity, we are not free, we—and specially Germany which was endowed with the creative appeal—live in a state of political and psychic schizophrenia for which none of the apostles of 'real-politics' has yet found the curing formula.

It is not sure, of course, whether Africa will do better than we did. And as far as the right of the Europeans to speak is concerned, I would ask Ama Ata Aidoo, how far she concedes it. May be first she would like to know many things before giving an answer, may be she would establish certain criteria, and this exactly would be the thing: that there were established certain criteria, a kind of knighting for dealing with the real, invisible, problems of Africa, criteria reaching far beyond investment—lust, money, and social prestige. But who puts them? The creative person, the artist, the writer himself,

venience. To take a European example, Dutch and German are very closely related, but Dutch speakers consider that their language is distinct from German and use a written form which is different from that of German. On the other hand, speakers of the Swiss German dialects learn Standard German in school and use it to communicate with people from outside their local community. This does not mean that they consider themselves Germans; they are proud of being Swiss. In fact the Swiss German dialects are as much different from Standard German as is Dutch, but they have never been treated as a separate language. It is, therefore, not only purely linguistic differences, but also the attitudes of speakers, that enter into the definition of 'languages.'

In the next section, the speech communities of the Delta will be listed according to Greenberg's classification; the term 'cluster' will be used when it is not clear into how many languages a group should be divided. The Delta is defined, rather arbitrarily, as consisting of the whole of Rivers State together with the adjacent parts of the South-Eastern and Mid-Western States.

A. Languages of the Benue-Congo branch

The most easterly language of the Delta is *Andoni*. It is the most westward member of the *Efik-Ibibio* cluster, and appears to be different enough from the rest of the cluster to be regarded as a separate language and not as a dialect of Ibibio.

The *Ogoni* cluster of languages is spoken in Ogoni Division, and, according to Wolff (1964), it consists of three distinct languages: *Khana*, which has three dialects, Tai, Northern Khana and Southern Khana, of which the last one is regarded as the standard and has been used for the translation of the New Testament; *Gokana*, which is closely related to Khana, although it is not established to what extent they are mutually intelligible; and *Eleme*, a small language which is considerably different from the other two.

Speakers of the *Abua-Ọgbia* cluster live in Ahoada, Degema and Brass Divisions. *Abua*, spoken in Ahoada Division, is being developed as a literary language by members of the Institute of Linguistics. Wolff (in a seminar at Ibadan in 1966) considered that *Odual* (*Saka*) was similar enough to Abua to be considered a dialect of it. *Ọgbia*, spoken in Brass Division, is large and diverse. There appear to be three main dialect groups: the dialect spoken around Oloibiri, which has been used for two primers, the Kolo dialects, and the Anyama dialects. Wolff considers that the Kolo dialects are different enough from Oloibiri that they constitute a separate language; but it is said that Kolo and Anyama speakers understand Oloibiri although they do not understand each other. *Kugbọ*, spoken in Degema Division, is regarded as a separate language by Wolff, but is perhaps rather to be included under Ọgbia. '*Mini*' is the name given by the Nembe to a small group living north of Nembe; it is possible that what they speak is also to be regarded as a dialect of Ọgbia, but it has not been studied.

B. Languages of the Kwa branch

The *Ijo* cluster is large and diverse, its speakers living between the Atlantic and the more inland Delta peoples throughout most of the length of the Delta. The names of clans can also be conveniently used as dialect names, and the dialects fall into seven groups:

1. *North-Eastern group*, living mainly in Degema Province, and consisting of the Kalabari, Okrika, Ibani (Bonny) and Nkọrọ dialects. (Speakers of Nkọrọ live in Opobo Division near the Andoni.) Ibani was one of the first Nigerian languages to be written, and several nineteenth-century works were published in it. It has, however, given way to Igbo to quite a considerable extent. Kalabari and Okrika have also been used for publications, which include primers, prayer-books and proverbs.

2. *South-Eastern group*, whose speakers live in Brass Division, consisting of Nembe and Akassa. Nembe has been well developed as a written language, and is the first Ijọ dialect to possess a complete Bible translation and a

dictionary. It is considerably different from the North-Eastern group of dialects, but many speakers of the South-Central group of dialects have made use of Nembe publications.

3. *South-Central group*, consisting of the Apoi, Bassan, Boma, East Tarakiri, Ogboin, Olodiama and Oporoma dialects, whose speakers live in Yenagoa Province (=Brass Division). These dialects are closely related to each other and are not sharply differentiated as a group from Akassa, to the east, the North-Central group to the north, or the South-Western group to the west. It appears, in fact, that speakers of most of the dialects west of Nembe (except for the small North-East-Central group) can understand one another. The South-Central dialects are perhaps the most central of all the Ijọ dialects, but very little has been done to develop any of them as a written language.

4. *North-Central group*, whose speakers live in Yenagoa Province, consisting of the Kolokuma, Gbaran and Ekpetiama dialects, which are very similar to each other and are not sharply differentiated, as a group, from the South-Central or North-Western dialects, with which they are mutually intelligible. Kolokuma has been developed to a fair extent as a standard written language, and is at present the dialect which represents Ijọ on the N.B.C.

5. *North-East-Central group*, whose speakers live in the north-eastern corner of Yenagoa Province, consisting of the Okordia and Amegi (Buseni) dialects. These two small dialects are somewhat different from each other and rather sharply divergent from their neighbours; Amegi in particular cannot be understood by Kolokuma speakers.

6. *North-Western group*, living in Western Ijọ Division and consisting of the Kabo, Kumbo, Mein, West Tarakiri, Oiakiri, Operemọ, Seimbri and Tuomọ Clans. The last two dialects are, however, tending to die out as their speakers adopt Mein, which is the standard for this group and has been used in a number of publications.

7. *South-Western group*, whose speakers live partly in Western Ijaw Division but also in parts of Warri Division, Okitipupa Division and Benin Division; it consists of the Iduwini, Gbaramatu (Oporoza), Ọgulaa, Arogbo, Egbema and Furupa dialects. These dialects have been little studied, but they clearly form a group which is not too much different from the South-Central and North-Western groups.

The *Izi-Ukwuani* cluster has been named after its most north-easterly member, Izi, and its most south-easterly member, Ukwuani (Kwale). The largest and best-known language in this cluster is Igbo, but our concern here is with the smaller languages which are spoken around the northern part of the Delta. It is only in the last few years that any attention has been paid to these languages, but the speakers of most of them have usually considered their languages distinct from that of their Igbo neighbours. *Etche*, spoken in the eastern part of Ahoada Division, has not been properly investigated but seems to be similar to Central Igbo. *Ikwere*, spoken in the southern part of Ahoada Division, is large and diverse. There seem to be at least the following dialects: Isiokpo, spoken in the Isiokpo and Elele areas; Okpombutolu, spoken around Allua and Isoba; Ọgbakiri, spoken west of the New Calabar River; Ọbia, spoken around Port Harcourt. Ikwere has not been developed as a separate written language; the only piece of writing I have seen in it is in a recent pamphlet published by the Rivers State Office. *Ẹkpẹyẹ*, spoken in the area around Ahoada, is markedly different from its neighbours. According to Clark (1968) it has four dialects: Ako, spoken around Ahoada Town, is the smallest dialect, while Upata, spoken to the south in the direction of Abua, is the largest; Ubye and Igbuduya are spoken nearer to the Orashi River. There is as yet no published literature, but some linguistic research and Bible translation have recently been carried on and there is a functioning Orthography Committee. *Ọgba*, spoken to the north of Ẹkpẹyẹ, is also to be regarded as a

[illegible] language, since it is not mutually intelligible with its neighbours. Nothing has [illegible] published in it, but some research is [illegible] carried on into it. There are at least the [illegible] dialects: a western one towards the [illegible], an eastern one called Eg, and a [illegible] which is more similar to Ekpeye. [illegible] of the north of Ogba has not [illegible] to be similar [illegible] in Aboh Division, [illegible] intelligible with either Ogba [illegible] the most prestigious form is the [illegible] dialect, the southern one being in [illegible] Ikwerre and Urhobo. There are no [illegible] spoken to the east of [illegible] in Nkwerre District of Aboh Division. Linguistically, it does not appear to form a separate language from Ukwuani, but its speakers consider themselves distinct: there is said to be a gradual divergence of dialects from [illegible], which is very like Ukwuani, to Ndoni, which is considerably different. Aboh is also similar to Ogba, but is not mutually intelligible with Ogba.

The term Edo is sometimes used for the [illegible] spoken in and around Benin City, or [illegible] languages of Benin Province, [illegible] the term Edo-group in a broader [illegible] to all the languages which fall [illegible] the same group as these languages. Re[illegible] classification of these [illegible] was carried out at the University of [illegible] at the Computing Centre [illegible], that the Edo-group languages [illegible] Northern (including [illegible] Aboh-Edo Division), Central [illegible], Southern and Delta. [illegible] are contained in the [illegible] and will be discussed here. The [illegible] Ivbiosa, spoken at Isoko [illegible] and some adjacent towns in Aboh [illegible] consists, according to Bernard [illegible] personal communication) the following [illegible] Eruwa, which is very divergent [illegible] consider it a separate language; [illegible] Western group, consisting of Ewaw, Imiro [illegible], Ivbiosa and Uhe; the West Central Group, consisting of Ole (Oleh), Uzere (Ozoro), Owhe, Ukpe (Okpe), Elu, Emede and Ologbo; the East Central Group, consisting of Olomoro, Iyede-ani, Unogboko, Itebiege, Uti, Iyowo, Ibrede and Oyede; and the group which constitutes the standard language, Uzere, Aviara and Irri. The standard language is quite well developed as a means of written communication, and there are a number of publications in it, including the New Testament. *Urhobo* is spoken in Urhobo Division, and according to I. A. Umukoro has the following dialects: Agbarho (Agbado) and Agbon, including Ughelle (Ughelli) as a sub-dialect, which together constitute the standard language; Oghara, Idjerhe (Jesse) and Agbarha; Ugiewin, Udu and Evwreni; Olomu; Uwheru; Abraka; Ewu; Orogun; Effurun (Uvwie), which is quite divergent; and Okpe, which is very divergent. There are a number of publications in the standard language, including the New Testament. The *Delta Edo* cluster consists of three small languages, which do not seem to be any more closely related to the Southern cluster than they are to the Central one; the available evidence all indicates that they have been in the Delta for a long time and do not represent a recent movement into the area. *Epie* is spoken by Epie and Atisa Clans in Yenagoa Province along the Epie Creek, including the town of Yenagoa; it has not been seriously developed as a written language. *Engenni* is spoken by Engenni Clan along the Orashi River in Ahoada Division and in the town of Zarama; it is closely related to Epie but not mutually intelligible with it. Linguistic research has recently been carried out into it and a series of primers produced by the Institute of Linguistics. *Degema*, spoken in the town of Opu Degema and the village of Kala Degema in Degema Division, is closely related to Engenni but has to be treated separately for the purpose of producing written materials in it; the Institute of Linguistics is working on this.

Igala is the southernmost member of what may be called the Kwa-Igala group, Igala being its most northern member. Yoruba is the

largest and best-known language of this group. Itsekiri is spoken in an area extending north and west from Warri, and does not seem to be much differentiated dialectically. There are a few publications in it.

The preceding account shows, firstly, that the languages of the Delta belong to several different groups, and, secondly, that languages within the same group are considerably diversified. This second fact shows that the various groups of speakers must have been living in roughly their present homes for many hundreds or in some cases for thousands of years, for we know from general linguistic experience that differences between dialects, which eventually develop into differences in language when groups of speakers finally cease to be able to communicate with each other, develop more and more with length of settlement in one particular area. (For instance, we know from historical evidence that speakers of English have been living in Britain for about 1,500 years, whereas they have been living in America for only about 300 years; this is the cause of the much greater diversity between the local dialects of British English, *e.g.*, Cockney or Yorkshire, than between the local dialects of North America). It follows from this that ancestors of the majority of the present inhabitants of the Delta were settled there long *before* the Benin Empire rose to fame. Nowadays, however, many groups claim descent from Benin. It is of course quite possible that small groups of adventurers or exiles left Benin and settled down with people already living in the Delta area, but most people could certainly claim a more ancient heritage by emphasizing the very long period which the evidence of language shows that they have spent in the Delta.

One other interesting point should be made. Although so many different peoples live in the Delta, there has always been a great deal of intermarriage and of trade between speakers of different languages, and one result of this is that there are a great many people in the Delta who speak two, three or even more languages. For example, there is a town in Okrika clan called Abulomẹ, whose people originally came from the Abua area and so speak a dialect of this group at home. But since they are now part of Okrika Clan they also speak Okrika; and because they trade with the Ikwere and the Igbo they also speak Ikwere and Igbo. In addition, those who have been to school speak English. That is, people of this town speak four or five different languages without apparently thinking much of it. (An Englishman who speaks any language other than his own with tolerable fluency is regarded as a very talented person!)

As a result of this long and intimate contact with each other and of a considerable degree of common environment and culture, there has been a good deal of influence of one language on another. We can in this connection distinguish between two layers of vocabulary in a language. There is first the *basic* vocabulary, words which are not easily borrowed from one language to another because each language has words for certain basic concepts; words of this type are, for example, the lower numerals and the names for parts of the body. It is on the evidence of this basic vocabulary that we assign languages to this or that group, as was done in the first part of this article. But the second part of the vocabulary of a language consists of the cultural vocabulary—words which reflect common material culture or trade contacts. There are many words of this type which are shared between a number of different Delta languages, even those which are quite distantly related. For example, the word for 'mangrove' is angala in most Ijọ dialects, agala in Epie, ungala in Degema, and ngla in Ọgba. The similarity reflects an environment in which mangroves occur and have to be named; people who live further inland and see mangroves less often have presumably borrowed the word from those who live in the mangrove area. The word for 'cast-net' is igbọ in Engenni, igbọ in Ikwere (Diobu), igbọ in Ọgba, igbọ in many Ijọ dialects, because a fishing culture making use of cast-nets is common to speakers of all these languages. 'Duck' is ọdọguma in Ukwuani, ọdọgumọ in Epie, ọdọguma in

Kolokuma; wherever this word started out, it has been borrowed by other languages. The game of draughts is popular all over the Delta; it is called apele in Isoko, epela in Nembe, epele in Ọgba, epele in Andoni, ẹpene in Ukwuani. Some of these common cultural words reflect past trade contacts: thus there is a word for 'key', originally borrowed from Portuguese chave, which occurs in Andoni as atafi, in Kalabari as sambi, in Ikwere as sambi, in South-western Ijọ as isanfi, in Ukwuani as isafi, in Ẹkpeyẹ as sapi, in Urhobo as useve, in Isoko as usiavẹ, and in Itsekiri as iṣafẹ. The same is true with one of the widespread words for 'cassava', a crop which we know to have been introduced by the Portuguese and which they call *mandioca:* it occurs in Itsekiri as imidaka, in Isoko as (i)midaka, in Urhobo as imidaka, in Ukwuani as imalaka, in Mein as emibadaa, in Ọgbia (Oloibiri) as ẹptaka, and in Abua as apitaka. Finally, there is a widespread word meaning 'money' which originally seems to have meant 'manilla'; studying the distribution of this word may therefore give us an idea of the areas where manillas were formerly in use. It occurs in Khana as kpugi, in Gokana as kpege, in Eleme as ekpii, in Andoni as ikpoko, in Nembe as igbogi, in Okrika as igbiki, in Abua as ikpoki.

Similarities such as these show the close cultural connections between all the peoples of the Delta. However diverse their languages are in their ultimate origins, living as neighbours in the Delta has woven a web of common cultural vocabulary that links them together.

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DR KAY WILLIAMSON

REVIEWS

Ife in the History of West Africa Sculpture, *By* Frank Willett, 232 pp., illus., plates, map, bibliogr. London: *Thames and Hudson*, 1967. £4-4s.

THIS book does two excellent things: it presents the art of Ife in a comprehensive form to the general reader; and it gives the specialist the conclusions about Ife reached by the person who has done most work there and knows the material best. What it does not do, and does not aim or pretend to do, is to present a definitive corpus of the Ife material, or to give a full report of the excavations that have been carried on there since the last war. This is why the general editor of the series *New Aspects of Antiquity* in which the book appears calls it in his preface 'a brief but knowledgeable stocktaking,' although there are some 50,000 words of text, over a hundred excellent monochrome plates, thirteen beautiful colour plates and nearly fifty most attractively executed line drawings. If one has regard to today's costs, the quality and importance of the book taken together justify the price of four guineas.

There are seven chapters concerning Ife and its art objects and eight of a general nature or concerning comparative material. It is particularly valuable to have an account within the covers of one book not only of the well-known bronzes but also of the terra-cottas and stone sculptures, although the chapter on the latter is rather brief. The author follows Bernard Fagg in seeing the ancestry of the Ife terra-cottas in those of Nok, in spite of the gap of a thousand years, although he is commendably cautious in pointing out that future archaeological work may show that Nok is not the true ancestor of Ife but merely serves to 'indicate what the true ancestral art forms were like'; and that such future work may also show the Nok culture to be divisible into a number of sub-cultures. One does sometimes wonder whether the 'elements of continuity' have been over emphasized: are 'typical Nok eyes *very similar* to those of Yoruba wood sculpture' (p. 183)? Does the occurrence of noses with widely flaring wings reflect anything more than that the sculptors and their subjects were negroid? It is probably necessary to distinguish morphological features like these from cultural motifs like snakes or mud-fish issuing from nostrils, the separate occurrences of which do strongly suggest some relationship.

Chapter 9 on the origins of the Yoruba and of the art of Ife, while soundly cautious, makes excellent sense of a somewhat tangled subject; not need is felt to invoke successive 'waves' of invaders, nor, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, 'an extra-African origin' for African cultural traits. The 'uncritical acceptance' of a theory 'bringing in customs, institutions and techniques from Upper Egypt' is also condemned.

Chapter 10 concerning the date of the art of Ife is perhaps the least satisfactory in the book; this is not the author's fault, because it must have been very difficult to write at the present juncture; it is the unsatisfactory state of our knowledge which is responsible. It should be stated clearly and emphatically that *at present*[1] *there is no archaeological dating for Ife*, apart from the A.D. 1500

[1] Since the above was written five radiocarbon dates have been announced. (Frank Willett, in 'Stop Press: Radiocarbon Dates from Nigeria,' *West African Archaeological Newsletter* No. 9, 1968; and *J. Afri. Hist.* forthcoming.)

Ife: Ita Yemoo B.P.
Charcoal from bottom of pit below potsherd pavement 1., 990 ± 130 (A.D. 960).
Charcoal in layer from which terra-cottas were excavated, 890 ± 130 (A.D. 1060).
Charcoal below potsherd pavement 4, beneath town wall, 790 ± 130 (A.D. 1160).
Professor Willett comments that these dates confirm that the site is the Ife to which the traditions refer, and that terra-cotta sculpture was being made before the first Europeans visited Benin.

Ife: Orun Oba Ado, B.P.
Charcoal from burial pit 11, 1390 ± 130 (A.D. 560).
Charcoal from burial pit 6, 960 ± 130 (A.D. 990).
Professor Willett comments that this is the site where the heads of the kings of Benin were sent for burial, since it was from here that Oranmiyan set out to establish the Yoruba dynasty there; the date from pit 6 is about the expected date for the foundation of the Benin Dynasty; the date from pit 11 is significantly earlier, but could still represent a tenth century burial.

[illegible] for maize-impressed pottery and any [illegible] thereby dated; the radiocarbon date from Igbo [illegible] tells us virtually nothing. Thus it comes about that some of the chronological hints of other kinds may be a little overstretched. It is rightly pointed out that 'it is not easy to distinguish which end is which when one places antiquities in a typological series' (p. 69) but the assumption nevertheless seems to be that 'crude style and poor execution equals 'late' (p. 66). The whole book is largely a study in typology and a courageous and scholarly effort to wrest some chronological significance out of it. William Fagg's chronological sequence for Benin is accepted but the uncertain nature of this kind of dating system is demonstrated by the fact that it is possible for other art historians to disagree with it entirely. Nor does the reliability of 'brass equals early, tin-bronze equals late' for Benin bronzes seem to be borne out by such facts as we have (p. 151)[1]. The evidence from the manner of portraying ears (pp. 162, 3), while interesting, is admitted to be somewhat confusing. Pages 113, 114 refer to 'the later figures of Esie', but these figures are, in fact, quite *undated*. Page 101 says: 'It was a great thrill to discover,...in the temple of Ori-Ibeji that an ancient terra-cotta head was still being used in worship.' How is it known that it was 'ancient'? Does it mean 'of a style presumed to be ancient'? Perhaps it is pedantic to insist on these distinctions, but Nigerian archaeology is so badly in need of a sound chronological framework, instead of a rather speculative and shaky one, that maybe such fussiness is justified. Thermoluminescence is, as the author points out, the great hope: one wishes fervently that this dating method will soon become sufficiently reliable to entrust to it specimens from the terra-cottas and from the cores of the bronzes that have them; they should *not* be so entrusted until the method is proved reliable. Let it be realized also, in relation to 'the discovery of new evidence' (p. 201), that on urban sites excavation may have to be on a large scale to be effective and that the principal aim should be to seize upon any opportunities that present themselves for getting dates. It was a pity that after the author of this book left Ife in 1963 there was no archaeologist resident there until this year; now that there are two on the staff of the University of Ife it is hoped that no chance will be missed of obtaining fresh evidence. Above all, how good it would be to discover a site where bronze-casting was carried on, and where the broken moulds from *cire perdue* casting might be expected to be found! Although it is unquestionably correct to describe the seated figure from Tada as 'a work of Ife bronze-casting' on stylistic grounds, we do not *know* that it was cast in Ife. There is a good account of the Tsoede bronzes, but we are no nearer a solution of the problems they pose.

The 'naturalism' of Ife, so often commented upon, is correctly put in its place (p. 128), but the phrases 'classical naturalism' and 'Classical Period' are used without explanation either of the terms or of the concept.

One of the things which impresses itself upon the reader of this book is how much Nigerian archaeology is in need of properly detailed and documented publication. The book under review could not be more generously illustrated, but many archaeological objects are referred to in the text which should be described in detail and illustrated in a much needed corpus of Ife antiquities; it is hoped that perhaps Professor Willett and his collaborators will be able to produce one; similarly we look forward to the full reports of his excavations at Ita Yemoo and elsewhere and to his important study of Ife pottery, all now in course of preparation. The excavations previously carried out by the Antiquities Department in the Groves of Olokun, Olokun Walode and Osongon Obamakin ought also to be published. Because of the comparisons made with Nok material, one is reminded too that this most important corpus of material is still in need of full publication, giving all known details of the circumstances of finding and of the associations of all artifacts attributed to this culture.

The following are minor points. The author has obviously been at pains to exercise restraint in referring to the activities of Frobenius at Ife or to make any hints as to the identity of the perpetrator of the Olokun head forgery; unfortunately this will make the references to the nature of the Olokun head rather mysterious for those who do not know the story.

Was it 'laterite' that was rubbed off the bronzes from Ita Yemoo (in the sense in which one speaks of a 'later-

[1] Shaw, Thurstan 'Spectrographic Analyses of the Igbo and Other Nigerian Bronzes, *Archaeometry* 8, 1965, pp. 80–95; and 'Postscript', *Archaeometry* 9, 1966, pp. 148–150.

itized' gravel or surface) or merely hard red soil (p. 31)? It is the opinion of the present reviewer that it is less confusing if archaeological writing avoids this admittedly common-usage employment of the term 'laterite.'

The finding of potsherd pavements, so characteristic of Ife, in many surrounding areas, from Togoland to Benin, is taken as evidence of Ife's widespread cultural influence (p. 104). Pieces of potsherd pavement have now been found by Mr Connah in his excavations at Daima in north-eastern Bornu south of Lake Chad; one questions whether there was any connection with Ife, and if there was, in which direction any influence was travelling.

It is quite correct that it is 'time for another study of the Jukun' (p. 176) and it is good to know that two field-workers (Messrs Rubin and Yamagutchi) are making such a study; archaeological work in the area would also undoubtedly be repaid, both in the form of archaeological reconnaissance and of excavation at such sites as Biepi.

One sympathizes with the use of the term 'bronze' applied to 'any artistic metal-casting composed mainly of copper' (p. 55) as one needs some such generic term, but in discussing metal content it does lead to some confusion when the word is used in a short space of time both in the general sense and in the more technical sense of 'copper plus tin'. Perhaps the term 'tin-bronze' should always be used for the latter. It does not help the situation that on page 55 it is stated that 'the Obalufon mask and four of the life-size heads are all of more or less pure copper, with less than one per cent of all other elements combined' (which is true), whereas on page 151 it says: 'All the Ife pieces have been demonstrated to be of brass' (which is incorrect).

It is not correct to say that Igbo Ukwu was formerly part of Nri (p. 175).

So much for minor points. It is always a most difficult task to write a treatise both for the layman and for the knowledgeable, and on the whole the difficulties have been overcome; nevertheless the author does sometimes seem to switch from one audience to the other when it is felt necessary to explain the meaning of 'terra-cotta' in Note 1, while '*dignitas*' (p. 37), 'keloid' (p. 69; here and elsewhere consistently spelt 'keeloid') and thermo-luminescent' (p. 103) are not explained to the general reader.

It is probably also the desire to prevent notes and references obtruding upon the flow of the text in the hands of the layman that results in a single numeration system for both, which means that when one looks up a note, in many cases it merely refers one on to the bibliography, thus doubling the serious reader's work in tracking down the reference. There are additional irritations for the student: with the lists of Figures, Plates and Colour Plates at the end instead of at the beginning, the reader is in some confusion to start with over the numbering system. The system of marginal references to Plates and Figures is sometimes ambiguous when more than one object is being referred to in the text, especially in making comparisons. Although the Plates, interleaved with the text in groups, count as pages, they are not numbered; and since no page references are given with Plate and Figure references, the reader spends a great deal of time hunting for illustrations referred to in the text. On page 22 one of the Ife pieces is referred to as 'Head 6' without explanation, although this is the first time this useful reference system is used, and nowhere is the complete list using this numbering given. That Fig. 16 is the top right-hand corner of Fig. 17 is not made clear from the caption, and no scale is given for either drawing. On page 61 reference is made to 'the Grove of Obameri' and eight lines lower down to 'Igbo Obameri', which may be confusing to non-Yoruba speakers who may not realize it is the same place. There is some inconsistency in the indexing also, as the Iwinrin Grove is indexed under 'Igbo' but not thus referred to in the text, whereas Olokun Walode is given under its own name but not under 'Igbo'. Other shortcomings of the index are that 'Bronze' and 'Bronzes' do not occur, only 'Bronze-casting'; 'Classical Period', often referred to in the text, is not given; and it is rather surprising that a book on African sculpture should not have 'wood-carving' in the index, although it is naturally mentioned a number of times and pages 180 to 182 concern little else. Apart from the transposition of 'Plate 80' and 'Plate 86' in the margin of page 115, only two misprints were noticed (pp. 7 and 175).

Professor Willett and the publishers are to be congratulated on producing a beautiful book that is also a contribution to scholarship. The author has been honest in observing that he has emphasized the known rather than the unknown (p. 201), and he writes in a clear style, with explanations simply stated and nothing

[illegible]

[illegible] fully published.

THURSTAN SHAW

Dahomey and its Neighbours 1708–1818* *By* I. A. Akinjogbin: *Cambridge University Press, 1967.* 234 pp. 30s.

IN his recently published book, Dr Akinjogbin, senior lecturer in History at the University of Ife has given a controversial account of the constitutional development of the old Kingdom of Dahomey. In doing so he has placed Dahomey in the perspective of the Yoruba-Aga 'Empire' which covered a much larger area situated to the West and South of the curving course of the River Niger (where Nigeria's Mid-West, West and Kwara States are today) and in the West to where modern Togo has its boundaries. In emphasizing the wholeness of this cultural commonwealth, containing more kingdoms, principalities and city-states than pre-nineteenth century Italy (to make a singularly apt European comparison), Dr Akinjogbin has given a new significance to the not unknown history of Dahomey.

Seen against the background of its neighbours, Dahomey's peculiar responses to the strains of the slave-trade, seem all the more remarkable. Dr Akinjogbin's aim is to show that the introduction of the fire-arms which formed the exchange part of the slave-trade, brought about the general decline of the Yoruba-Aga kingdom. After their introduction the Ebi political systems traditional to the Yoruba-Aga peoples based on consent rather than force, were, no longer able to provide adequate security for individuals.

* See another Review on page 141

[illegible] Dahomey's [illegible] at the beginning of the [illegible] century, a wide [illegible] of mighty principal[illegible] [illegible] themselves and [illegible] from [illegible] settlements in Abomey [illegible] the [illegible] of the slave raiders [illegible] Dahomey, a sort of city-state with [illegible] of the modern [illegible]

[illegible] Dahomey, [illegible] with [illegible] policy on the [illegible] for an economic support. In Akinjogbin's [illegible] it is [illegible] that it was not the [illegible] which [illegible] Dahomey strong and [illegible], rather it was that Dahomey [illegible] up, as the traditional Aga had not [illegible] to benefit from the most [illegible] weapons introduced by the slave-trade.

The founders of Dahomey, in a modern and novel way, concentrated all power in the hands of the king. He was the effective civil and military head of state, often going to war at the head of the army; he attended councils personally; he relied on paid officials rather than subject chiefs to carry out his policies in the areas under his control, and, like European monarchs of the period, benefited from royal commercial monopolies.

Indeed it is curious to consider that Dahomey's constitutional adjustment might have been recommended by that Italian civil servant Niccolo Machiavelli himself, so similar to fifteenth century Italy are the circumstances of incipient anarchy threatening to crush an ancient empire; and so similar was the form and method of its remedy to that recommended by Machiavelli to his 'Prince'. Even the apparent submission by Dahomey to the disintegrating Oyo Empire helped Dahomey strengthen its internal administration, avoid costly military operations and to borrow the supposed legitimacy of certain Oyo institutions. The importance and significance of Dahomey in the seventeenth century did not it seems lie in its military prowess, although it was a military state. Its greatest achievement, and its entitlement to fame lay in the abilities of its rulers to keep its administration intact 'in the face of the fissiparous tendencies rampant during the age of the slave-trade,' affecting all corners of the formerly great Oyo Empire.

It is not an adverse criticism to say that this is a specialist's book and does not always make easy reading. In the first place, the author partly with the acknowledged help of M. Pierre Verger, has consulted a wealth of original material in various languages in archives

ranging from La Rochelle to South American Rio. As a historian must, he has used his material sometimes to make detailed historical points in parenthesis to the main theme. Also the non-specialist reader will inevitably want to ask questions outside the scope of the thesis such as was there a philosophy or psychology on the part of the masses which could enable them to fight bravely as soldiers but which would also permit them to be docilely sold into slavery?

Happily, in spite of his academic objectivity, Dr Akinjogbin permits himself to raise half a cheer that Dahomey by making the slave-trade and the gold trade, royal monopolies, managed to avoid the (literally, cut throat competition which debilitated the other kingdoms, and that after 1730, apparently drove hard bargains with the Dutch, Portuguese, French and British traders. King Agaja, it is recorded, demanded sophisticated goods such as guns, gunpowder and cloth in return ('None of these goods were of the cheap and gaudy kind that Europeans had been pleased to exchange for slaves in the past,' wrote a contemporary). But the powers of this strong Dahomeyan king who ruled from 1708 to 1740 were later undermined when the traders turned to neighbouring states along the coast giving them fire-arms which they turned on Agaja himself, as the unscrupulous foreign adventurers had intended. It is said he died disappointed and exhausted from trying to maintain his monopoly by force, although within Dahomey his absolute authority remained unimpaired. A series of strong rulers succeeded Agaja after 1740 until 1818, when Dahomey caught up in the debilitating spiral of the trade itself became involved in a wave of economic depression and constitutional disorder.

This is a significant book and it would be useful to have a second volume covering the period of disorder from 1818 to 1893, when the French invasion began the colonial period. Although the evidence should not go unchallenged no historian of West Africa can afford to discount Dr Akinjogbin's macro approach to the Oyo Empire, nor the constitutional thesis concerning Dahomey in particular, which he successfully argues and upholds.

SALLY JENKINSON.

Political Leadership in Africa. *By* VICTOR T. LE VINE; *The Hoover Institution*, Stanford University, 1967. pp. 114 $3.50.

Peoples of Africa. Edited *By* JAMES L. GIBBS, JR., *Holt, Rinehart and Winston*, New York, 1966, pp. 594 $11.95.

Man-Apes or Ape-Men? *By* SIR WILFRID E. DE G. CLARK; *Holt, Rinehart and Winston*, 1967, pp. 150 $6.00.

'IN any discussion of African matters,' writes M. J. Herskovits in his book *The Human Factor in Changing Africa*, 'it is essential that the word 'Africa' be strictly defined. Too often we are confronted with works bearing the name of the continent which turn out to be concerned with only a part of it'.

The first book, for instance, deals with 'Post-Independence Generational Conflict in Upper Volta, Senegal, Niger Dahomey and the Central African Republic.' It is obvious that by delimiting the countries and their French Metropole, the title of the book precisely confirms Herskovits' observation. It should have been: '....*in Parts of French-speaking Africa*' at most.

Le Vine had only five months (January–June 1965) for his research tour in French-speaking West and Equatorial Africa: which was admittedly too short to visit all the fifteen countries originally planned under the two grants which enabled him to carry out the field work.

The fifteen countries, 'scaled in order of general political and economic development, from most to least advanced' are Ivory Coast, Senegal, Cameroun, Congo Brazzaville, Dahomey, Gabon, Malagasy Republic, Guinea, Togo, Upper Volta, Mali, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic and Mauritania—all French-speaking countries.

However, as the author says, 'after consulting the scaling results, the calendar and airline schedules' the

[illegible] in the capitals [illegible] correspondents [illegible] questions [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the most important [illegible] nominations, as [illegible] followed by sixteen [illegible]

[illegible] earlier said, covering [illegible] would certainly be [illegible] particularly so when it is considered [illegible] four countries from which data were collected by the author—his permission to conduct the research in the Central African Republic having been revoked—have altogether only a total 1965 population of 13,510,000 to, say, Nigeria's single 1963 population of 55,670,000 although in size their total area (685,473 sq. miles) nearly doubles that of Nigeria (356,669 sq. miles).

A much more voluminous and certainly more interesting to readers throughout Africa (if not beyond) because of, amongst other things, its wider coverage is the second book, *Peoples of Africa*, in which specialist authors who not only did field work amongst the communities they delineate but also wrote extensively about them describe as many as fifteen different tribal groups—five of whom are predominantly Nigerian—representative of the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa [illegible]

Of the Nigerian ethnic groups (I am intentionally avoiding the word 'tribal' not necessarily for any [illegible] because of its [illegible] the Nigerian context and [illegible] The concept 'tribe' [illegible] whether [illegible] will be avoided) who live by all the [illegible] forms of subsistence, the Afikpo Ibo of Afikpo Division (Pop. [illegible]) of the East-Central State, the Tiv of Tiv Division (Pop. [illegible]) of the Benue-Plateau State and the Yoruba of the Lagos ([illegible]) and Western (Pop. [illegible]) States are included as representative of those living by hoe agriculture.

Dr Phoebe Ottenberg who did field researches among the Afikpo Ibo in [illegible] and 1959–60 and had published *The Changing Economic position of Women among the Afikpo Ibo* (1959) and (with her husband Simon Ottenberg) *Afikpo Markets: 1900–60* (1962) describes this community while Professor Paul Bohannan who similarly did field research among the Tiv and had published *Tiv Farm Settlement* (1954); *Justice and Judgment among the Tiv* (1957) and (with his wife Laura Bohannan) *The Tiv of Central Nigeria* (1953) and Dr P. C. Lloyd who not only carried out field work among the Yoruba (1949–59) and the Itsekiri (1955–6) but also had been Head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Ibadan and published *Yoruba Land Law* (1962) describe the remaining two communities respectively.

Ethnic groups living by mixed farming, where tillage

[illegible] write H. H. and M. M. [illegible] *The New Nigerian Elite*, 'has [illegible] as might be expected [illegible] concept. Once understood [illegible] the term 'elite' now [illegible] a broader and more [illegible] who, for whatever reason, [illegible] prestige and a corresponding [illegible] influence over the fate of the [illegible] are a part.'

and raising of small animals is supplemented by the keeping of large domestic animals, are represented by the Hausa of (mostly) the Kano, North-Central and North-Western States (whose combined population certainly exceeded thirteen million at the 1963 census).

This large community is ably described by Dr M. G. Smith who had not only carried field research among several Hausa groups in Nigeria and Niger (1949–50) and (1958–9) but had also published *The Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria Province* (1955) and *Government of Zazzau* 1800–1950 (1960).

Those living by pastoralism within Nigeria are represented in the book by the Wodaabe Fulani of West Bornu in the North-Eastern State.

The Wodaabe, in whose lives farming plays virtually no part, are described by the late Dr D. J. Stenning (he died in 1964) who carried out field research in the Northern States of Nigeria from 1951 to 1953 and published the *Savannah Nomads* (1959).

Unfortunately we do not seem to have in Nigeria any ethnic group who live entirely by foraging—that is, hunting and gathering—as the !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert—who, according to Herskovits, 'give themselves no name as a people'—and the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo do. At least there is no sign in the book of a competent social scientist or anthropologist being found to describe for us any such group in Nigeria.

The selection is also representative of the different population sizes and related patterns of social and political organization, ranging from the Mbuti Pygmies found in the Ituri Forest bordering on Uganda to the east and the Sudan to the north (who are said to number only forty thousand) to the populous Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo of Nigeria each of whom certainly numbered over eight million in 1963 (the last census).

Other criteria used in making the selections are: each of the major sub-Saharan *culture areas and ecological zones* as delineated by Melville J. Herskovits in his book *The Human Factor in Changing Africa* (New York, 1962) is represented (*see* p.140)

The Afikpo Ibo, the Tiv and the Yoruba in Nigeria are selected as representative of the Guinea Coast culture while the Hausa and the pastoral Fulani represent the Western Sudan one.

The three major types of sub-Saharan vegetational zones (tropical forest, savannah and desert) are also represented. The five significant indigenous *racial stocks* of sub-Saharan Africa are sampled. Negroids in Nigeria are typified by the Afikpo Ibo, the Hausa, the Tiv and the Yoruba. The Caucasized Negroids or Negroized Caucasoids are represented in Nigeria by the pastoral Fulani.

Groups representative of each of the sub-Saharan *language families* as delineated by Joseph Greenberg in his book *Studies in African Linguistic Classification* (New Haven, 1955) are also represented. The Afro-Asiatic family (Chad sub-family) is represented by the Hausa in Nigeria. A central branch language is spoken by the Tiv, while the Kwa sub-family is represented by the Afikpo Ibo and the Yoruba while the pastoral Fulani represent the Atlantic sub-family.

Further criteria used in selecting the groups were: only groups among which *field research has been conducted* between 1950 to 1960 were included in the book. Finally, the groups selected, or their culture clusters, are all *well represented in the literature on African societies.*

When it is mentioned that each of the fifteen chapters describing the different groups is profusely illustrated with diagrams, maps and photographs as well as backed with long Bibliographies and that each is sectionally divided to treat of obvious factors such as location, physical type, language, habitat, economy, social and political organization and religion and additional topics such as child training and socialization, patterns of formalized friendship, law and social and economic change—it can be concluded that, despite the cost, the book is indispensable to all those who would wish to know almost everything worth knowing about these five predominantly Nigerian groups.

Other groups also described in like manner are: the Bantu Tiriki of Western Kenya, the Ganda of Uganda, the Jie of Uganda, the Kpelle of Liberia, the !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo, the Northern Pastoral Fulani of the Horn (around Ethiopia), the Rwanda of Rwanda, the Suku of South-western Congo and the Swazi of Swaziland.

It is needless to say that a book of such magnitude and variety must also contain an Index (9 pages) and a Pronunciation Guide for African Words which the book invariably does.

My particular criticism in the book is centred on Chapter (14) which describes the Tiv of Nigeria. It seems to me irreconcilable, if not contradictory and unfortunate, that while Dr Bohannan, at page 515, in-

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Dahomey and its Neighbours 1708–1818. *By* I. A. AKINJOGBIN: *Cambridge University Press*, 1967. 50*s*.

DR AKINJOGBIN, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Ife has written a good textbook for University teachers and students. It is a clear, concise, and tightly structured political history of the Kingdom of Dahomey in the eighteenth century showing how and why that kingdom became the slave-trading state *par excellence* in nineteenth century West Africa. The author reinterpretes, in an original manner, all the commonly known written sources, and also brings to light significant data from hitherto unused records in British, French, and Brazilian archives. In addition, he is able to derive new insights from his intimate knowledge of Yoruba oral tradition, and makes skilful use of some Dahomean oral traditions.

His description of the *ebi* theory of government among the Aja and Yoruba provides a new instrument for interpreting the history of this part of West Africa during the eighteenth century. By this account, the Yoruba and Aja kingdoms behind the 'slave coast' lived by the canons of a social and political system based on the structure of the family. Since the Aja-Yoruba states of the area had interlocking traditions of origin, 'the person occupying the throne of the original ancestor was regarded as 'father' of all the other kings and all the other kings regarded one another as 'brothers'. Similarly, within the state, the king was 'father', *baba* (Yoruba) or *dada* (Dahomean) of all his subjects...'. Accordingly, this '*ebi* commonwealth' of the Aja-Yoruba country was based on natural family relationships.

This description of the traditional system highlights the revolutionary change in concepts introduced by the emergent kingdom of Dahomey. About 1620, Dogbagri-Genu had lost a contest for the throne of Allada and moved north. By 1708 Agaja was ruler of a growing kingdom based on concepts foreign to the Aja-Yoruba country. Instead of the family, the symbol of the system was a perforated pot. Each subject had to put a finger in a hole to keep a previous fluid, the king, inside the pot. This symbolism replaced relationships based on descent and kinship with ones based on function, service and achievement. The new state welcomed all comers, every individual migrant being accorded a station in the state commensurate with his ability and contribution.

The author finds that this basic difference in political philosophy may have been one cause of hostility between the founders of Dahomey and their opponents in Allada. Second, he explains Oyo attacks on the new kingdom as motivated mainly by a desire to defend the traditional *ebi* system. And also, that the survival of Dahomey in the nineteenth century when imperial Oyo declined and fell may be largely attributed to the viability of the new administrative structure.

The continual intervention of Oyo in Aja affairs was a further factor in Dahomean history. Oyo military attacks were obviously devastating, and the burden of tribute heavy on the economy. Still, Dahomey was able to avoid expending her resources and energy on external adventure, and to concentrate on building her internal administration for the future because of the cover provided by Oyo. The princes taken to Oyo as hostages also brought back elements of Oyo administrative practice to strengthen the Dahomean system.

The most significant factor in eighteenth century Dahomean history that emerges from this study is, perhaps, the Atlantic slave trade and the influence of its foreign agents. The success or failure of every king between 1708—1818 has been tied to his success or failure to promote the slave trade and to control the foreign agents. The founders, for example, had left Allada because they wished to escape from the evil effects of the trade. Finally, Gezo was able to overthrow the Tegbesu line in 1818 because 'it had failed to maintain a prosperous slave trade and to assert Dahomey's independence of Oyo'. From 1818 the monarchy was fully committed to the slave trade.

These connecting ideas of the study are, naturally, over-simplified in summary—maybe to the point of caricature. But even in the original, one is worried by the nagging doubt whether, as with many great historical explanations, the search for the ultimate cause may not have obscured other smaller, but significant factors. In any case, explanations such as those provided by the *ebi* theory still remain to be tested for their full scope by succeeding workers in the field.

The author may also have overstated his findings in a few places. For example the following: "that 'peaceful slave trade' was impossible. Only war could provide an ample supply of slaves" (p. 151). Other scholars have discovered numbers of different ways in which slaves-

[illegible] J.S. [illegible] North-Eastern [illegible] And the [illegible] the Niger Delta [illegible] warfare.

[illegible] [illegible] arrives from [illegible] oral tradition [illegible] oral traditional [illegible] that the coverage [illegible] admit that his personal experience was with Yoruba oral traditions, and that the types of Dahomean oral tradition available to him were mainly the 'interpretative' kind, the 'documentary' kind (the more useful as historical data) being in short supply.

To take full advantage of the trail blazed by this study then, any future contributor must, it seems, take a closer look at all forms of oral traditional data and at the internal social and economic structures.

E. J. Alagoa

that things would be all right again.

Next evening I could not leave the house early because of visitors and when I was ready to go I could not find the list. I thought I might have put it in the drawer of my dressing table in my haste to conceal it, but there were only handkerchiefs and some odds and ends there. I put the handkerchiefs in my bag, tore out another sheet from my writing pad and drew up another list, numbering it as I had been told. The goat and other things were in my friend's house and I hurried out to collect them.

'I got to the medicine-man's house just as the street lights were being turned on.

' "You're late," he said. I explained to him what had happened. He took the goat into an inner chamber and I followed him in. I was a little frightened to see the paraphernalia of his calling—the *Ado*, cowrie shells, blood-stained feathers and a diminutive idol which stared with malignant hate at the opposite wall.

'The medicine-man asked for my list and I took it out of my bag.

' "Keep it," he said, "but read out the names in the order in which they were written."

'As I read out each name he made a symbol with charcoal on the floor some distance from the idol. When the names had all been called he laid hold on the goat and slaughtered it with some single blow. As the blood gushed out I felt sick. Hastily I took out a handkerchief from my bag.

'The medicine-man sprinkled some of the blood on the idol, then took some of the oil and smeared it on it. The kola-nuts he split up and spread in the pool of blood on the ground. He then began an impassioned incantation at the end of which he was panting. For sometime he gazed fixedly at the symbols he had made on the ground, then began to stab at each one in turn, pausing slightly at each stab. Nothing happened. My heart was beating feverishly as I watched him. Suddenly as he stabbed at the eighteenth symbol a yelping sound came from the wall behind the idol.

' "That's the evil-doer," the man said triumphantly. "Now let's check from your list."

'I began to look in my bag but he said, "that's it over there," pointing to the ground behind me. I looked and the list was there. I was a bit puzzled because I thought I'd returned it to my bag. Nevertheless I picked it up and looked for the eighteenth name and then I got the shock of my life. It was my friend—the only one of them who had shown me any consideration!

' "But—but that's my friend among them all," I protested, my heart beating wildly.

' "My juju never errs, trust no friends," the man replied—"Friends are more dangerous than enemies because they have access to one's belongings. Does this your friend come to your house?"

'I had to admit this and he said, "There you are."

' "What am I to do then?" I asked in a daze.

' "She must be got rid of," he replied.

' "How?" I asked, fear entering my heart.

' "She must die."

' "But I can't do such a thing," I said.

' "If she doesn't die she will surely kill you—if your husband does not agree to drive you away. Meanwhile your children will keep on dying. You will always have *abikus*."

' "Oh God, oh God," I moaned.

' "It is either you or she. Choose."

' "I'm not going to do it," I said and rose.

'He shrugged and I left. When I got home my husband was out as usual. As I sat in my room thinking, the child in my womb stirred and I suddenly saw the implication of my squeamishness. I saw again the little bodies that had to be shut up in the little wooden boxes. I saw a procession of these little boxes stretching like Macbeth's vision "till the crack of doom"—my doom!

'This child at least, I decided, must be given a chance to live. That same night I went back to the medicine-man.

' "I thought you would return," he said, smiling. "I have prepared the medicine for you. Put it in her *Eko* as soon as you have the chance."

'I took the packet away and did as I'd been told.'

She broke off, noticing my horified expression. 'I had to do it, don't you see? I had to. It was self-defence. It was either me or her and I'd suffered enough.'

Her voice was jerky. She leaned forward and gripped me by the arms, hemming me in the chair. Again I had that experience as of one about to be assaulted.

'You understand, don't you? I had to. I had to.' Her voice rose to a scream and her oval face was all puckered up.

'You had to,' I repeated.

She didn't seem to be quite gratified by this. Perhaps it was because I had echoed her words which somehow

gave a tinge of irony to them. Nevertheless she went on.

'One of the things I had dreaded was having to go to her funeral. But I was spared that—by Fate.'

She smiled a bitter smile. She wasn't gripping me now but she had picked up a handkerchief and was twisting it round her fingers.

'I fell ill, very ill, and couldn't leave my bed. Everybody was wonderful and said I must have been prostrated by my friend's death. And so I was—if only they knew the reason!'

She paused and looked into my face. 'I lost the child, after all,' she said simply. 'Miscarriage.' Her next words came slowly, as if in resignation to Fate.

'My husband too. Brought in another wife one evening without a word to me. There was no fight, no quarrel. They simply behaved as if I wasn't there. I had to go. I began to pack my things. One day as I was emptying my handbag—it hadn't been emptied for months and contained a lot of junk—lipstick, nail file, receipts, shopping lists—all the usual sorts of things. I was emptying the bag of all these things when the list I had taken to the medicine-man fluttered to the ground. I picked it up and was about to tear it in pieces when a second list caught my attention. It was jutting out of the mouth of the bag. I drew it out. It was identical with the other I had picked up from the ground—at least it was the same paper. Two lists. So they had both been in the bag! But I distinctly remembered looking in vain in the bag for the list before I decided to draw up the second. When had the first list got into the bag? And then in a flash I saw the whole thing. The handkerchiefs! I remembered now that I'd thrust the first list into the drawer between the newly-ironed handkerchiefs when my husband entered my room. I'd caught up these handkerchiefs without knowing the list was inside them and taken them in my bag to the medicine-man's house. I'd presented the second list to the man and he'd put down his symbols according to the order on that list. Then he had performed the sacrifice and asked for the list again. It was found on the floor though I had a feeling I'd returned it to the bag. I was a little puzzled at the time but now I knew. When I'd taken out the handkerchief because I felt sick the first list which I'd mislaid had fluttered out of it without my knowing.

'I was horrified. Could it be....? Oh God, pray it isn't. It mustn't.... But it was. I checked the two lists and the order of names was different. Number eighteen on the second list was someone else, not my friend. So I'd killed her for nothing. She'd been a real friend all the time!'

Her small eyes were dilated as she ended her story of horror. Again she was gripping my knees and her sharp nails were biting into my flesh.

'You don't blame me, do you? I'm not a murderess. No one can call me that. It was an accident. An accident. Don't you believe me? Oh God, I can see her face now. Every night in my dreams she stares at me with reproach.'

She covered her face with her hands and sobbed.

'But you won't condemn me, will you?' She appealed looking up at me. 'I had to do it and it wasn't my fault the two lists got mixed up. It was Fate, Fate—do you hear? You do understand, don't you? I made sure you would understand. Please tell me you understand.'

What was I to do? Give her the reassurance she wanted? Take the load of sin off her chest and let her live the rest of her life in undeserved peace? When all the time my soul cried out against the horror of her deed! No! With superhuman effort I tore her hands off me and fled from her house, her voice still ringing in my ears. 'You do understand, don't you? I made sure you would understand.'

I had no dinner that night. And I don't go to cocktail parties any more. Suppose I should meet her there? I cannot give her the reassurance she wants and I cannot forget the horrible thing she has done. No, it is better that we should never meet again—really better so.

But I never stop thinking about her. Why had she chosen me as her confidante whom she hardly knew? Why did she feel so sure I would understand? Surely a man would have served her purpose better. Or, is it perhaps that placed under the same circumstances I would have done the same thing?

It is a disturbing thought.

EDUCATION

AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

By

EDWARD AKIN LEIGH

'Though tongue and tribe may differ,
In brotherhood we stand....'

ONE NIGERIA, One people, regardless of tribe, origin or creed.... This was the spirit of 1st October, 1960. If it takes self-determination for a nation to become free, it requires better education of her people, effective communication among her people, selfless economic co-operation and cultural exchange among the people—in short, national consciousness—for the nation to remain one and united. Let us not deceive ourselves, there is no preordained destiny decreeing against the unity of the peoples of Nigeria. Factors which led to the foundation of countries like the United States of America, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and other nations, in spite of the racial, cultural and linguistic differences of the peoples, are also at work in Nigeria. What remains to be done is to make our similarities outweigh our dissimilarities. We must realize that if there is anything at all that can bring together all these factors and help build them into the edifice of One Nigeria, it is national consciousness. National consciousness is that 'Cement' that can hold all the different tribes and linguistic groups of Nigeria together. How then can this panacea of all our ills be developed and promoted?

Four major factors stand out clearly, namely, education, communication, economic co-operation and cultural exchange. It is through these factors that people come to learn more about each other and learn to respect and tolerate one another; it is through them that the interdependence of one tribe on another becomes important; it is through them that unity is born.

How then can education promote national consciousness in Nigeria? That education is suggested as a factor capable of promoting national unity is enough to justify its importance in the life of a multinational country like Nigeria. One of the factors retarding the unity of the peoples of Nigeria is the 'unbalanced equilibrium' of the educational life of the country: One part is educational ahead of another part, with the result that the less educated looks on the educated with hatred and suspicion. So by improving the education and the educational system, much good will be done as the road leading to unity would be improved. But first the improvement must be geared towards *creating*, where absent, and *promoting*, where favourable conditions permit, national consciousness.

During the 'scramble' and partition era (1861–1902) in Africa, the Southern parts were the first to come into contact with the Europeans. Thus it is not surprising that Southern Nigeria started receiving education as early as 1842. It was not until 1906 that the very first school was established in the North. Our 'New Education,' aimed at promoting national consciousness, must correct this imbalance. Again, the mass of the people in

general and in the North are still dwelling in the bane of illiteracy. This must be remedied by our 'new education.'

By 'New Education' I mean not just the building of more schools, increasing teachers' salaries or providing more scholarships to the intelligent, but rather I mean a complete reorientation of all our tastes and ideals. I mean the inculcating in our people, the spirit of oneness, I mean the crystallization of our differences as well as similarities towards producing common nationality. In short, I mean the birth of a completely educated Nigerian without tribal bias, suspicion, and hatred for his fellow Nigerians, but full of tolerance, respect and anti-tribalistic tendencies. Towards this end, the government must provide more interregional education.

The syllabus must include the teaching of major Nigerian languages and encourage students to offer Nigerian languages in their School Certificate Examinations. Our universities must be provided with facilities enabling students to conduct researches into the life, beliefs and cultures of the tribes of Nigeria. The report of such researches must be made available to everyone in all languages. This would allow one section to learn about the other section. It is by learning the history, culture and beliefs of others that we discover our similarities and come to realize how near we are to others.

My idea of the 'new education' needed for promoting national consciousness also calls on the Press and other information media to help. Every movement must be motivated by the desire to promote national consciousness.

Parents, naturally, have great influence on their children. Usually, we find parents through careless talk imbibing their children with tribal sentiments. This is common among the illiterate mass of the population. Hence the need for Adult Education which must equally be geared towards promoting national consciousness. Adult classes must be made to consist of different peoples from different tribes. Without exaggeration if the Bornu cattle herdsman, the Ibo farmer, the Kalabari fisherman and the Yoruba goldsmith sit together in the same classroom and are taught together, within a year, we would have a feather added to the cap of national unity.

Closely connected with the educational factor for promoting national consciousness is the factor of communication. Like many other nations, Nigeria suffers disunity and discord as a result of lack of effective communication. Communication is a wide term including language, information media, transport, etc.

Language is a great and effective unifying factor. I do not advocate a national language for this country. The Indian example is enough to make us realize the difficulties and problems of introducing a national language. For Nigeria, I feel that the English language should remain our 'lingua-franca' but then the government must see to it that the Yoruba man speaks Hausa and Ibo, the Ibo speaks Hausa or Yoruba, the Kalabari speaks Edo, etc. The best way of bringing this about is in the schools and colleges as well as in the Adult Classes. With a man from one tribe able to speak the language of a man from another tribe, we find ourselves coming nearer to our great goal—national consciousness. Because I can speak your language and I know enough about your tribe as much as you do of mine, and this has led to our knowing how similar we are, we shall come to regard each other as member of one nation. For instance, the words denoting 'come' in Ibo, Hausa and Yoruba are monosyllabic and together form a trisyllabic word which is today a popular song for unity. 'WAZOBIA' is the word. Many other examples can be found in our languages. Such similarities would help in furthering national consciousness among our people.

It is true that our languages are multifarious and tend to give to the outsider the idea that Nigeria is a mere geographical expression. I appeal to our journalists, writers, poets, dramatists, and broadcasters not to use the lingua-difference to knock our heads together. Every information media has a vital role to play in promoting national consciousness. The 1957 Act making the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation into a statutory corporation makes it very clear that the duty of the corporation is promoting unity in the country. The N.B.C. is a classic example of a medium of communication

promoting national consciousness. There are many cultural programmes for the different tribes and the news is cast in the three major Nigerian languages. I call on other broadcasting houses in this country to follow the example of the N.B.C. We cannot afford to have regional or sectarian radio stations, but national stations.

The type of things written by our journalists, writers, poets, etc. count a lot and can make or unmake the unity of our society. Every book, or poem or article must be aimed at inculcating the spirit of oneness among the peoples. Which Yoruba man got up from Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* without being conscious of how near he is to an Ibo man traditionally and culturally and even in beliefs. We need more Achebes, Soyinkas, Ekwensis, Alukos, etc. to arouse the feeling of belonging to each other among our people, through their works. It is what they communicate to us that will influence us either towards unity or disunity.

The transport system of a country like Nigeria must be very effective not only for economic reasons but equally so for unity sake. It must be planned in such a way that the interdependence of one tribe on another in moving from his own section of the country to another is greatly emphasized. For instance, goods or passengers from Aba in the East cannot get to Abeokuta in the West except by going through the North in the case of railway and through the Mid-West in the case of road transport. Again, all major means of transportation must be made national. The Railway, the Air, Sea and Road systems must be national. Nothing can make the Ibo farmer more nationally conscious than his realization that his yam can only get to the Lagos market by travelling through the Edo raw-rubber tapper's area by road or the Soso's area if by rail. This may be argued as economic interdependence but it is also communication interdependence—a very good means of promoting national consciousness.

Culture can also be a very good basis of promoting national consciousness. Both the government and the individual have vital roles to play in this context. The aim must be to produce a Nigerian Culture. Before this can be done, the similarities and good aspects of all our cultures must be projected. A Nigerian Cultural Society undertaking travels throughout the country to give talks, lectures, debates, exhibitions, cultural shows, etc. must be instituted. The Festival of Arts as it is now should be encouraged and made nation-wide. When all the tribes come together in friendly competitions much can be achieved, unity wise. The Hausa man would appreciate the winning dance of the Ibo man and would try to improve using the Ibo man's standard as his criterion. In the end, we shall have a Nigerian Culture evolving. Such a culture would serve as a stone-bridge to enable us go safely over the whirpools of hatred and suspicion, of tribalism and sectarianism, which are our potent national ills disrupting the plans for unity.

Cultural exchange among the different cultural groups of Nigeria would surely solve all our problems since it would provide very good basis for promoting national unity which is the daughter of national consciousness.

For a country, like Nigeria, making structural changes from purely subsistence production to monetized modern economy, economic co-operation between the different tribal and economic 'pockets' is very vital. The people must be made to realize that no tribal-state can economically survive both the weaponry and economics of the twentieth century. The lesson of the American example must teach us to unite to form one economic block. Modern economics have proved that large economic blocks command large resources and markets. Thus all the economic units of Nigeria must co-operate with one another and form one national economy. The present transport system of the country can still be improved to emphasize the economic interdependence of our people. This I discussed under communication earlier on. The government can do much to improve the skilled labour-force and improve domestic trade. The Shagamu man's kola enjoys a good market in the North, same as the Hausa's groundnuts enjoy good market in the South in general. For the Ijora Power Station to operate, it is dependent on coal from Udi Hills in the East and Oil from Affam also in the East. For all the

major products of each region to get into the world market, they have to use common routes to reach Lagos before being exported. All these facts show how interdependent is our economy. In order to satisfy the demand of rapid industrialization and progress, it is essential for the country to remain one and form one large economic entity. For this, we need national consciousness.

Thus economic co-operation among the tribes of Nigeria may well be the most vital factor which promotes national consciousness. It will provide an ideal, pluralistic laboratory of harmonious diversity of products, tribes, cultures, etc. Economic co-operation between Mr Chukwudike, Malam Garuba, Chief Ayo, and Mr Little-Harry will provide for Nigeria a good basis for unity and certainly would be the beginning of the end of tribalism, parochialism, sectarian politics, and other national ills which are innocuous as factors of disunity.

Thus the four factors, Education, Communication, Economic Co-operation and Cultural Exchange, are very vital in furthering the unity of Nigeria by promoting national consciousness. Nigeria is a historical reality since economic and social forces have made the different tribes to be integrated into one nation since the amalgamation in 1914. Independence is indeed a vessel and what remains is how and with what do we fill the vessel. Nigeria must be united and remain one. The educational system must reflect oneness of purpose; the communication and economy must emphasize interdependence; the cultures must illustrate a national culture—the result of harmonizing our different cultures.

In all these contexts the individual has a major role to play, in fact only the individual can unite Nigeria for as Billy Graham once said, 'Men must Change Before a Nation can be changed....' I know that the road to national consciousness is strewn with many dangers as far as the individual is concerned. The danger of futility stands above all others. You may ask, what can a man or woman do alone against the numerous array of national ills in this country? It took but one young Italian sailor to discover the New World, one monk to start the Protestant Movement, one woman to reclaim the territorial boundary of France and was it not thirty-two-year old Thomas Jefferson who postulated that all men are equal? 'Give me a place to stand,' said Archimedes, 'and I shall move the whole world.' I say to fellow Nigerians, to come together and work for the unity of the country both individually and collectively. Few will bend history, but it is worth fighting for. If one by one we start making the education we have received meaningful, communicate (penpalship is a good way) with one another, and co-operate with each other economically, very soon—perhaps in our lifetime too—our dreams and vision of one insoluble Nigeria will come to pass. In addressing American youths, the late President John F. Kennedy said, 'the labour, the faith and the devotion with which you endeavour will lighten the burden and bring light to you and the nation you are fighting for....' These words are important to the Nigerian youths too. As individuals we can, through education, cultural exchange, communication and economic co-operation, lighten the burden of the loads of tribalism and disunity and bring unity to our people and to our country.

If it is our sincere desire to produce for Nigeria, a 'System within which the diverse elements can progress at varying speeds amicably, and smoothly, without disrupting the principles and ideals inherent in every element,' then national consciousness, achieved through a better and liberal educational system, cultural exchange, effective communication and economic co-operation, is our answer.

Indeed, the late President Kennedy gave us a universal maxim '....Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country....' I say to one and all fellow citizens of Nigeria, ask not what the country (united or not) can do for you, but ask what you can do to promote national consciousness and thus bring about unity through education, communication, cultural exchange, and economic co-operation.

'Though tongue and tribe may differ
In brotherhood we stand....'

We shall stand on unity with nationally conscious legs.

TALES FROM HAUSALAND*

THE STORY OF 'AUDU OF ANKA'

Translated by

DAVID ELLISON

AUDU lived in a remote corner of the Sokoto Empire, and told this tale to Professor Kreiger when he was eighty.

I was born in the city of Anka in 1881. Hassan, son of Muhammadu Dan Gigala, was King of Zamfara at the time. It was the beginning of his reign. I was circumcized when I was seven years old and in the same year my father sent me to school where I stayed till I was thirteen. It was an open air 'Blackboard School' and I learnt the whole of the Q'uran by heart before I left. I used to farm on my father's land with him. He was called Muhammadu too, and he had been born right over by the Zamfara River at Kiyawa. He was a Muslim as had been my grandfather, Mallam Ahmadu, who was also a citizen of Kiyawa. My mother was born here at Anka but her parents also came from the same town of Kiyawa. When they left there, they first settled at Adubka, a little village in Bukkuyum country. In the past Adubka had belonged to Anka, though it became independent. When he was there, the King of Zamfara, Muhammadu son of Gigala, sent his servant to summon grandfather Ahmadu. Ahmadu gathered his family and brought them to Anka, where the King settled him into a house. He was to become the King's Writer—there was a great demand for war-like amulets when they went off to fight on the campaigns of the day.

I wasn't very old at that time, but I do remember him.

The kind of things that we used to grow on our farms with my father were millet, guinea-corn and beans. These were the main crops—but there were also cotton of the *'yar cukui* variety, coco-yams, sweet potato and water melons. We also grew tobacco, Bambarra nuts and of course indigo.

When I was a teenager, I used to go to the dye-pits to see how my father worked with the indigo. I had to go to the local bush to cut wood with which he used to boil up the liquid for his process. I had to go and draw the water, pouring it into the dye-pits until they were full. Then I had to gather the indigo leaves and add them to this liquid. Off to the 'bush' again to cut a special type of thorn! A fire was ready. When the thorns were quite burnt, I had to pick up the thorn ash and take it to the house. There I separated any earth left in with the ash. When the ash was free of impurities, I added it to the liquid in the pits. After the mixture had brewed for three days, we used to test it and finally, after seven days, it was stirred again, in the cool of the morning. At midday, eight days after the operation began, my father used to come, test it by hand and begin the dyeing of the wraps and gowns himself.

This was a dry-season craft. In the rainy season we never had time to do this as there was too much farm work.

I once made a journey to Bagega with my grandmother. When we set out on our return journey back to Anka, we fell in with a trader and his wife and daughter. But, unknown to us, a Dakakeri had been following the trader right from Bena in the Zuru country. The trader was carrying his loads and bales of cloth. When we were on the way we were chatting with his wife and the rest of his entourage. We then reached a very lonely spot known as Kadaji—it was an awesome place.

'Whoosh!'

I suddenly heard the noise and saw an arrow, the shaft quivering from the trader's hand. Panic! He threw down the load he was carrying, and his wife, brave woman, first looked after it, and then seized his sword; picking it up she charged, myself following. The brigand saw us coming from his hiding place and ran away.

When we returned from the chase, I found my grandmother too had run away, so I set out to look for

* This story was originally told to Dr Kurt Kreiger of the Berlin Museum in 1961 and published in German.

her. On our way back we met the people of Bagega—they'd come out when they heard the news to look for us.

Eventually, we reached Anka and reported. A party mounted to avenge the matter. The Bawa of Bagega who was called Gardamgo also joined our posse. When all was ready, one of the Magaji's men followed the tracks but it was only a long way away, near Gwashi, that they finally caught up with him. When they did, the Dakakeri turned at bay. He shot at Bawa but missed.

Then Bawa closed with him, knocked him down and as he was trying to pinnion him, his hand at the outlaw's face, a sharp set of teeth sank in. It finished with an all-in scrap. The Dakakeri wouldn't let go, Bawa was maddened with the pain and had to gouge the outlaw's eye with his free hand. Only then did the jaws open and let Bawa go.

They managed to truss him up, and brought him back. When the Anka men came up, they found Bawa leading his captive along.

The Dakakeri was brought to the Anka Lock-up, where it was a week before he could see out of his left eye. Isa was his name, and the matter only ended when the King of Zamfara dealt with it himself. We waited till his eye was a bit better, and sent him as a 'Salla greeting' to the Sultan Abdu at Sokoto. It was the eighteenth year of King Hasan's reign.

At some time between my adventure with the Dakakeri and the coming of the Europeans, when I was twenty-three, I went to Sakaba to rescue a younger sister of my mother. The ransom money was 200,000 cowries, about thirty shillings nowadays, but we paid then in cloth.

The tobacco I used to farm was bundled up and taken to Tureta, or Dange, if I couldn't sell it in Anka. If I did manage to find a buyer at Tureta, I would buy in goats for the return journey and take the profit in Anka.

All at the same time—when I was twenty-three—a marriage of the *sadaka* kind was arranged for me, and the wedding ceremony solemnized by the Liman of Anka. Next year my bride gave birth, but the girl daughter didn't live. It was the time of the coming of the Europeans, and the beginning of Gado's reign as King of Zamfara. A year later, my wife again bore me a daughter. She was to prove very fruitful; she gave birth to nine children, two boys and seven girls.

This was the time my father let me into the secrets of the hand-dipping with indigo, and I also learnt the craft of building in mud-brick, though he would not let me follow this as a profession. I didn't take up any other money-making pursuits, except to buy donkeys for my journeys to Bagega, Sabon Birni and Matankari where I used to buy *'yar Cukui* cotton for Talata Mafara. If I got a good price in the market there I'd buy embroidery thread, white calico wraps and calico gowns. These my father would dye. He used to beat them out with a special mallet to give them a deep and shining indigo gloss, much sought after. My friend Mamudu and I would load up the donkeys, and take and sell the gowns at Ruwan Jema. There again I'd buy whites, cotton this time, local wraps and gowns, again for father to dye. I'd be off to Bagega, Sabon Birni and Matankari again, before he could finish the dyeing process, and from those places I'd lay in more white gowns and cloth, and pick up extra special thread and raw cotton. This kind of trading was only done in the dry season, and there were five of us, all friends in the business together.

Finally old Qadi, the Judge, put me in charge of building a house for his son. It was a skilled job to dig out the right sort of building earth and to mix it with water and chopped grass for moulding the conical bricks used in the compound walls. While I was doing this job, Gado of the Zabarma's House went to Talata Mafara to buy a sheep. As he was driving it home with him, somebody stole it. Gado complained to the Judge. The Judge sent for me as I was moulding mud-bricks and said:

'Off with you to Mafara, and summon the man he complains stole his sheep—to my court!'

This was the first official journey I made on Court business. The Judge put me and the complainant together. We set out on the route to Talata Mafara, but when we got to Babban Baki, the Hakim who held the fief there spotted me. I was summoned to his presence.

'Where are you going?' I was asked.

'I am going to Mafara to summons the man who made off with a sheep,' I replied. 'The Court wants him.'

But I wasn't allowed to go any further. The Hakim wouldn't let me. The sheep was mysteriously produced for the man who had lost his goat. I merely took it back to our Judge!

So I became a *Jakada*, a Runner of the Court, fetching people who were 'wanted'. I also acted as the Judge's groom on tour for nine years and served his son as a runner when he took over the Judgeship. I was always free to get on with my farm work if there wasn't a summons for service.

The complainant paid for the summons according to the distance in miles from Anka to Bagega, and he paid two shillings for me to travel on my feet. The next Judge put it up to five shillings!

I married again in the reign of King Mainasara of Anka, a virgin this time. My third wife was a widow, and so was the fourth whom I added in the reign of King Fari.

I finally gave up my farming when I was seventy-seven years old and gave my farm to my nephew. He has always helped me.

May Allah help us all to peace.

POEMS

THE LITTLE CANARY

Tweet Tweet Tweet.
Twee Twee
Twee Twee
Shoo Shoo

Twee Twee
Twee Twee
What cause is there for joy?
My thoughts are sad,
Tormenting,
I am but tried and weary.

Twee Twee
Twee Twee
Leave me little bird
My world to wallow in,
Go away little canary
Leave me to mourn my love.

Tweet Tweet
Tweet Tweet
Tweet Tweet, Tweet Tweet, Tweet Tweet

The blinds drawn;
A ray of sun
Pierces my world;
The little canary
I behold
In gold silken plume,
Hopping
Tweet—Tweeting.
Tweet Tweet little bird
All is not lost.

F. Y. PEREIRA.

THE WHISTLING TEAL

Murder stalks the land where once we kept
The peace, banging heads together,
Strangely loving savage folk:
Even flat foot Satu paid half his debt.

The old and withered hand of Aspate
Pulled his beard, chuckling at young cadets
He'd conned with guile in words,
Gentle with the young who go to 'see the world.'

'Was there any provocation?' tossed across
The dusty court under the market tree,
Round the goat-skinned elders,
Sitting semi-circular in aged dignity.

'The verdict shall be swearing,' wrote
The youthful scribe in the school note-book,
Recording justice and equity:
Two pages for the fines and payments!

The fluting pipes have gone,
The Veldtschoen's rotting in the cupboard—
But herdsmen vaulting lightly down the hills
Still skip and dance and sing.

Forgotten streams had flooded all the plains.
We remember more than the plashing feet.
And 'Yallah' to the carriers, sliding their muddy way
To rainy Yedseram where the stolen cattle lay.

Two lines battered on the office typewriter—
Head-loaded with the bath and stringy chickens—
Are fodder for the archives, staccato
Notelets, 'They say the river turned the village blind'

The fallen duck, plash!—to the gun
Will breed again—'wheet wheet whoo!'
'Dendrocygna viduata,' said the books—
'Chop,' said the gun boy to my Whistling Teal.

'WACELET.'

READER'S LETTER

THE BACKGROUND OF THE URBAN TRADITION IN YORUBALAND LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE

By

MODUPE ODUYOYE

WRITING about urban tradition in Yorubaland in No. 95 of *Nigeria* Magazine, Dr R. A. Akinola referred to 'the traditions which assert that the Yoruba brought with them from their probable Near-Eastern origins certain features of Arab and Jewish civilizations, with which they had come into contact. One of these was the establishment of towns.' I intend to provide linguistic evidence to show the justification for this assertion, and to show that the cautious word 'probable' could be dispensed with. Study the following words:

Insert D-C

Talbot, whom Dr Akinola quoted in the a was not being fantastic when he wrote 'that a wa immigrants from the East, partly of Hamitic or ar brown race, penetrated by way of Borgu and country into Yorubaland about the eighth or century A.D. and supplied the ruling dynasty of three tribes.' However it happened, what is cert that the Yorubas derive their urban tradition fro same source as the speakers of the Hebrew, Arab Ancient Egyptian languages.

	city	*limiting wall*	*city limits*	*administrative unit in city*	*fortress, palace*	*fortifica trenches*
Egyptian ..				dnit 'quarter' of town		
Arabic ..			hadd[2]		hvikal	warada 'descend'
Hebrew ..	'ir[1]			*mvdinah*[3]	hekal	yarad 'descend'
Yoruba ..	ilu	odi	ode ibode	itun Oloritun	ikule, *chinkule*[4]	eredo[5]

[1] r/l as in Yoruba toro, Ibo tolo; *See* Assyria 'settlement, city.'

[2] h- does not occur at the beginning of Yo words. For ib- (ibi) in ibede, *see* Ancient tian bw 'place'.

[3] *ma-* is a prefix, as in isin > Imusin. The remaining *m-diin* 'law'. A religious command is also a law; hence religion, too, is diin: Nuru*deen*, Ansaru*ddeen*. *d* in diin is *t* in itun, just as *d* in good is *t* in German gut. For the word itun, *see* p. 293 of *Nigeria* 95.

[4] *Chinkule* originally meant 'back of the palace.' Otherwise 'back of the house' would have chinle.

[5] Like Eredo Sunungbo in Ijebu Province, extensive circle of fortification trenches described by Peter Lloyd in *Odu* No. 7, 1959. Hebrew yarad is seen in the name for the river rushes down into the Dead S

	house	*hut*	*room*	*chamber*	*wall*	*mat*
Egyptian ..						inw
Arabic ..	'ahl		hujra[7]	gurfa		
Hebrew ..		'ohel[6] 'tent'			qir[9]	
Yoruba ..	ile	ahere ahoro	iyara	ogorupo[8]	ogiri	eni

[6] r/l. In (1) Hebrew r = Yoruba l; here Hebrew l = Yoruba r.

[7] h- does not occur in initial position in Yoruba words. For the j/y alternation, compare Hebrew yomam 'daily' with Yoruba ojojumo 'daily', Hebrew Yarden = Jordan.

[8] Ogorupo in an Ijebu word. f in Arabic shows kp in Yoruba. *See* Ar. fn 'come to an end', Yoruba O pin 'It comes to an end'.

[9] Hebrew q = Yoruba g as in Hebrew qini 'metal worker', Yoruba Ogun; Hebrew qanah 'property' Yoruba ogun; Hebrew qiin 'shaft', Yoruba egun 'thorn', Hebrew qum 'rise' Yoruba *gun* oke 'climb up'.

	king	*father*	*husband*	*wife*	*son*	*to build*
Egyptian					bnn 'to beget'	
Arabic		'ab			'ibn'[11]	bana
Hebrew		'ab	ba'al	'ishsha[10]	ben	bono
Yoruba	oba	iba	baale	aya	omo	mo omole

[10] Hebrew – sh – = Yoruba–y– as in Hebrew enos 'human being', Yoruba eniyan, Arabic 'insaan 'human being.' *See* also Hebrew shin 'tooth', Yoruba eyin 'tooth'. Egyptain sn = Yoruba oyan 'breast'.

[11] bn in Arabic and Hebrew = m in Yoruba, as in 'ibn = omo, bana = mo; baana 'It is clear' = Yoruba mo 'clear, clean.'

	Title' office	*law*	*palace, fortress*	*boat*	*to construct*	*side of*
Egyptian ..	i3(t)[12]			k3'i	k3t construction	gb3
Arabic		baina 'between'				
Hebrew		bayin 'space between'	binyah			
Yoruba ..	oye	ofin[13]	aafin[14]	oko	ko	egbe

[12] It is merely the feminine suffix for abstract noun. Egyptian i' = Yoruba yi as in Egyptian ii 'quill', Yoruba iye, 'feather'.

[13] b/f as in German lieben = English love and German viertel = English fourth. Arabic baina means 'between'. It's root meaning, however, is to put something between, to separate. Ofin 'law' is a demarcation of what must not be done from what may be done. It is a separating, a setting apart of some aspects of life from transgression. Hebrew bayin means 'space between'.

[14] b/f; Hebrew bin = Yoruba—fin. *See* H Laban 'white', Yoruba *lafun* 'white flour' 'whitewash', afin 'albino'. *See* also H l'*bonah* 'frankincense', Yoruba *eefin* 'in Hebrew binyah is 'building'. *See* Yorub aafin 'housewife—Mrs,' not palace quar the two words ikule and aafin, Yorub assigned aafin to royal usage 'palace', chief general use. Note that oba 'king' in Yor related to iba 'father.'

CONTRIBUTORS

Mr H. L. B. Moody who writes on *A Kano Mystery, the Waika Tablet*, is on the staff of the University of London Institute of Education. The author of *Odum Festival* **Dr T. N. Tamuno** is a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of African Studies, University of Ibadan. **Miss Elizabeth Akinshola** who contributes the article *Citizenship and Leadership Training* is an Information Officer in the Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos. **Mr Ekpo Eyo** whose article *Abua Masquerade* appears in this edition is the Director of Nigerian Museum of Antiquities, Onikan, Lagos. **Miss Eve de Negri** who writes on *Itsekiri Costumes* is a Lecturer in Art (Design) at the Yaba College of Technology. **Dr Kay Williamson** who writes on *Languages of the Niger Delta* is of the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan. **Professor Thurstan Shaw** the reviewer of *Ife in the History of West African Sculpture* is the Research Professor in Archaeology at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ibadan. **Sally Jenkinson** who reviews Dahomey and its Neighbours is a Resc rch Ass (Political Science) on the staff of the Institute of I national Affairs, Lagos. **Mr Wole Ogunyemi** who c butes the play *Be Mighty Be Mine* is of the Instit African Studies, University of Ibadan. **Mrs Mabel S** the writer of *The Confidante* is on the staff of Fe Ministry of Education, School Broadcasts Section. writer of *Negritude—Some Popular Misconceptions* **J. M. Ita** is a Lecturer in the Department of M Languages of the University of Ife, Ile-Ife. D **Ellison** the translator of the Tales from Hausaland *story of 'Audu of Anka'* is of the Nigerian Consul Services, and had lived in the Northern States of Ni **Edward Akin Leigh** who writes on *Education— means of promoting national consciousness*, is an ex-st of King's College, Lagos now attached to the Meth Boys' High School, Lagos. **Renato Berger** the a of *Nigeria—Sweet Nigeria* is a regular contributo a Swiss national formerly of the University of Ibad

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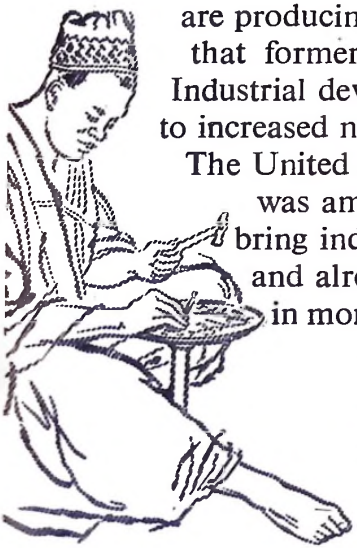

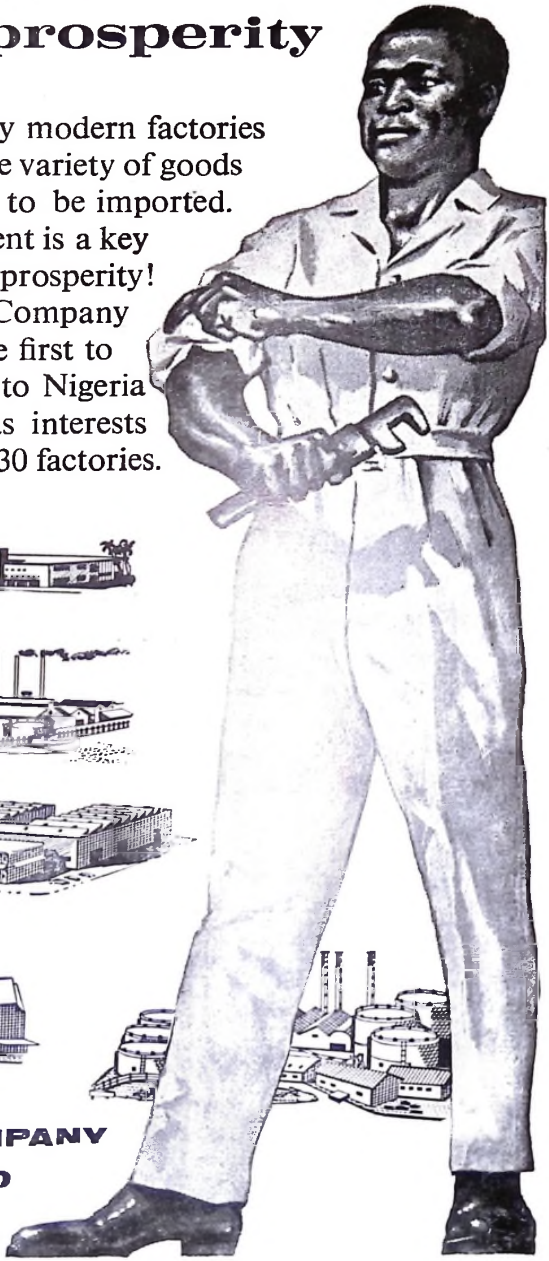

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Nigeria Magazine

September 1968 . 98

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Asst. Editor: A. K. METTEDEN
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Telephones: 23134, 26592, 20643, 20716
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Contents

EDITORIAL

ONE of the encouraging—indeed most important and significant—signs of Nigerian Unity is the inherent respect of the man and woman in the street in any part of Nigeria—East, West, North and South—for law and order. This is a strong binding force without which a state of anarchy would today be the unhappy lot of Nigerians.

Anyone who has travelled all over the country would, despite the religious and cultural diversities, feel the prevailing love for peace manifest in the spontaneous gestures of friendship awaiting the visitor—the cordial greeting, the willingness to help, the friendly smile. These are motivated by a healthy respect, common to all Africans, for the transcendence of life and a philosophy that inculcates regard for the future in what you do today. Wherever you go—Enugu, Kano, Lagos, Kaduna, Jos, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Ibadan, Ilorin, Sokoto, Benin City, Zaria, Bauchi, Oyo, Yola—or any other town—you will find this pattern of behaviour.

The present upheaval, rebellion, armed conflict, call it what you like is not a CIVIL WAR. It cannot be for the main and essential factor in a civil war is lacking—there is no desire whatsoever from the citizens of Nigeria in any part of the country to revolt against constituted authority. Even more eloquent is the speed of the transition back to normal life in the areas affected by the armed conflict once the threat to property and life has been removed. This in spite of indoctrination with the hymn of hate and the chorus of bitterness.

Surely, if there is a civil awar in Nigeria the pattern of life the mode of existence, the atmosphere would be too chaotic for a quick return to the pursuits of a peaceful state. Furthermore, a remarkable feature of the fighting is that there has not been a single case where the local population of a captured area have, actively or passively, resisted the Federal forces. If the ordinary Nigerian man and woman is warlike, undisciplined and inhuman the armed conflict would have gone completely out of hand causing incalculable and serious damage to the economy of the country; which has not been the case.

This pattern of behaviour is integral to our cultural heritage which had its roots in the Nok Culture that flourished as far back as the second millennium and being the oldest civilization known in this part of the world influenced succeeding civilizations and cultures. Consequently, there was friendly and happy relationships between the various peoples who inhabited the area now known as Nigeria. Unfortunately, the happy state of affairs was disrupted by the introduction of foreign religion by subtle as well as forceful means.

Undoubtedly, this is a calamity that could assume disastrous proportions if it is exploited. But this would never be the case for now more than ever the numerous ethnic groups are beginning to be justifiably proud of being Nigerians. And strangely enough, the rebels without exception carry Nigerian passports while roaming the world.

Could there be a better augury for the inevitability of Nigerian Unity? Our survival as a NATION depends on the strength of our UNITY. NOTHING IS TOO MUCH TO GIVE UP FOR THIS. And what is more EVERY SERIOUS MINDED NIGERIAN WILL NOT LET POSTERITY DOWN.

The *Nigeria* Magazine has always reflected and will continue to project the Unity of Nigeria.

THE COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION CONFERENCE

WHAT IT ACHIEVED

By

OTONTI NDUKA

A COMMONWEALTH Trade and Economic Conference was held in Montreal, Canada in 1958. In September 1968 a Commonwealth Medical Conference will be held in Uganda. In between there have been four Commonwealth Education Conferences, the last of which was held here in Lagos from 26th February to 9th March, this year. These and others like them are sister conferences, bringing together representatives of the Commonwealth Countries. Beyond this the connection between a Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference and a Commonwealth Education Conference is, on the face of it, tenuous. But when we learn that, in fact, the First Commonwealth Education Conference held at Oxford in July, 1959 was one of the recommendations of the Montreal Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference, then the connection between the two types of Commonwealth Conferences assumes new dimensions.

For students of contemporary society the origin of the Commonwealth Education Conference is doubly significant. First, it reveals an early awareness, on the part of Commonwealth trade and economic experts, of the crucial role of education in development generally. Development here means not only economic development but also social, political and cultural development. Ever since, using education to develop the human resources necessary for economic and other forms of development has become a basic tenet of social thinking and planning. Investment in education has come to be accepted as real investment, even by hard-headed businessmen.

Secondly, and in retrospect, granted the early acceptance of the concept of total development, the whole-hearted involvement of economic resources in educational activities was a fortunate and fruitful innovation. When the United Nations Organization christened the 1960's the decade of development, education became one of the growth points into which national and international resources were channelled. The First Commonwealth Education Conference (and indirectly the Montreal Trade and Economic Conference) has since blazed a trail not only of inter-governmental co-operation but also of bilateral and multilateral assistance—thus preceding such UNESCO-sponsored regional education conferences as the Addis Ababa Conference of African Ministers of Education (May 1961), the Tananarive Conference on the Development of Higher Education in Africa (September 1962), and so on. Such experiments in co-operation are of the utmost importance for the future of the world.

The Commonwealth Education Conference which ended last March was the fourth in the series, the Second of which was held at New Delhi in January, 1962 and the Third at Ottawa from 21st August to 4th September, 1964. Of the 175 delegates who attended the Lagos Conference 170 were from twenty-three Commonwealth countries, one came from Western Samoa and four from British Dependent Territories. An observer from UNESCO attended some of the sessions.

The First Commonwealth Education Conference considered and adopted schemes of co-

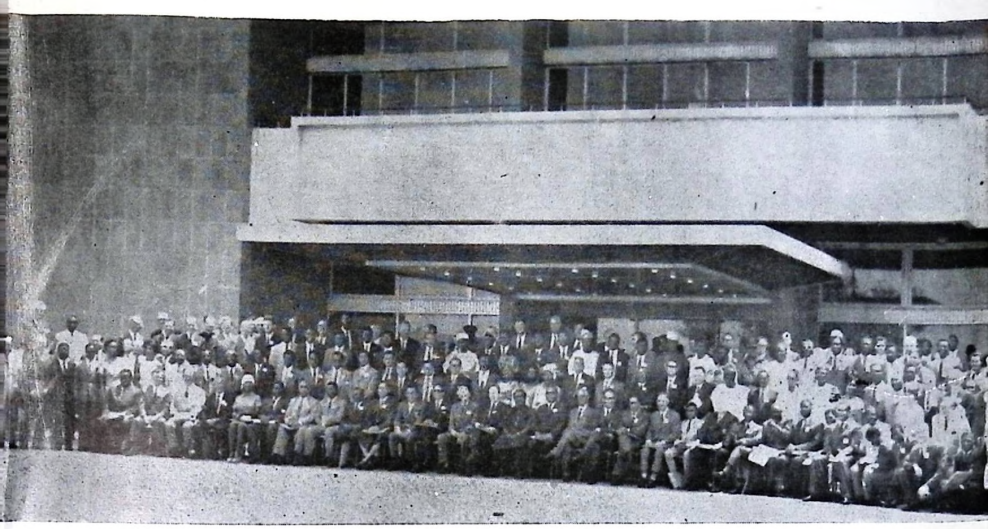
The Commander-in-Chief photographed with his guests at the reception he held at Dodan Barracks for Heads of Delegations

operation in education. The Conference recommended co-operation under the following headings:

(*i*) Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.
(*ii*) The Training of Teachers.
(*iii*) The Supply of Teachers.
(*iv*) Technical Education.

With regard to the Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, the most successful of the schemes of co-operation adopted at the Oxford Conference, the original target was that 1,000 such scholarships, mainly at postgraduate level, should be awarded. Of these, Great Britain undertook to award 500, Canada 250, and the rest were distributed among the other Commonwealth countries. This target was exceeded in 1966. Although, understandably, developed countries have more to offer in this field than the developing ones, an indication of the bilateral nature of Commonwealth assistance in this field is the fact that Nigeria, a developing country, now offers about ten scholarships a year to other Commonwealth countries.

The Second and Third Conferences reviewed the progress of the schemes of co-operation set up at the First Conference and decided upon the expansion of activities to cover a wider educational field. Like its last two predecessors, the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference was convened in order to review the existing schemes of



Delegates to the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference photographed in front of the National Hall, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos

Commonwealth co-operation in education and to recommend ways in which they might be improved. New proposals were also to be examined.

In the light of the foregoing it is hardly surprising that the short list of items on the agenda of the First Commonwealth Conference has since been progressively extended. The agenda of the Lagos Conference was as follows:

1. Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and Higher Education.
2. The Training of Teachers.
3. The Supply of Teachers.
4. Technical and Vocational Education, including the Training and Supply of Technical and Vocational Teachers.
5. Report on the Activities and Administration of the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee.
6. Education for Social and Economic Development.
7. Curriculum Development.
8. The Role of Libraries (School, University and Public), Text-books, and other Books, in the Development of Education.
9. The Use of Audio-Visual Aids and Mass Media in Education, with particular reference to Developing Countries.
10. Conference of Experts (Specialist Conferences).
11. Recognition of Qualifications and Courses.
12. The Establishment of an English Language Information Service.

The general organization of the Conference was the responsibility of the Commonwealth Secretariat under the leadership of Mr Arnold Smith, the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the host government, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria. The latter was specifically responsible for the provision of Conference accommodation, for security, communications and transportation.

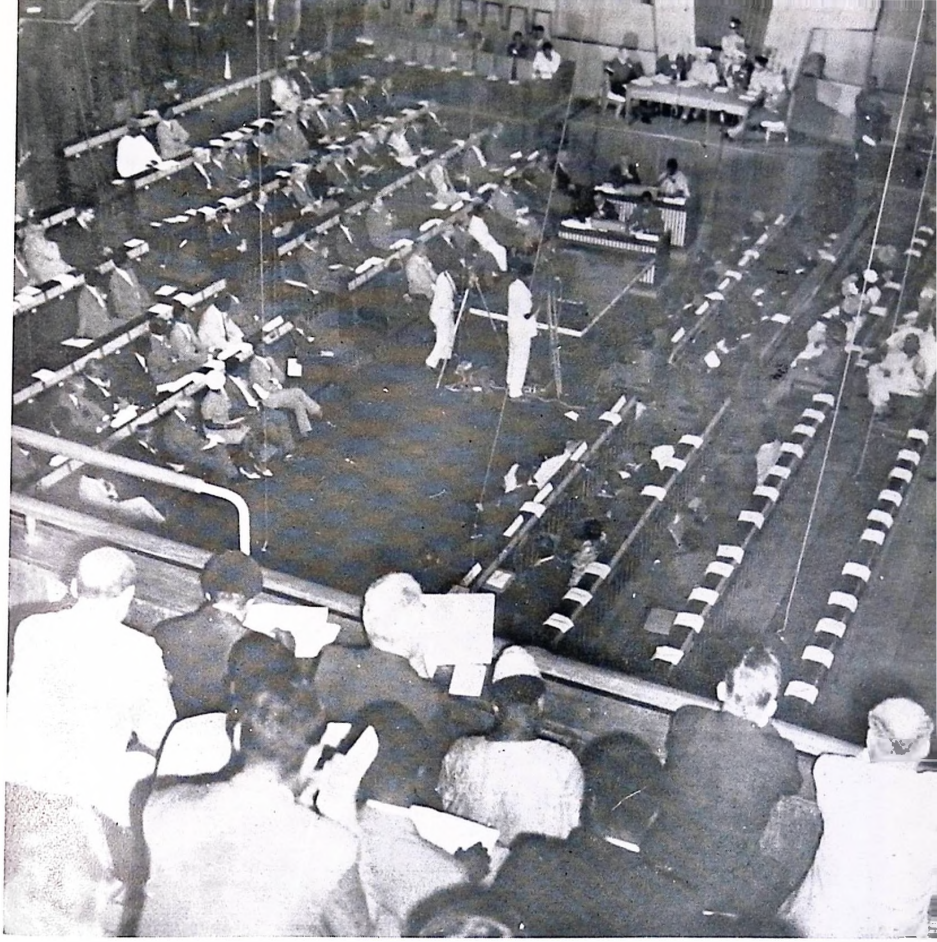
The actual preparations for the Conference, a task which had been entrusted to the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee (Chairman

Mr H. L. Elvin), began early in 1966. These preparations included drawing up the Conference Agenda, documentation, liaison with the host government, and a host of other administrative details. The executive arm of the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee was the former Commonwealth Education Liaison Unit, which had since been integrated with the Commonwealth Secretariat—hence the deeper involvement of the Secretariat in the actual preparations for and organization of the Conference.

At the national level, the Nigerian preparations for the Conference involved a team effort in which commissioners of education, senior members of universities, officials of various government ministries and departments, and representatives of voluntary agencies participated. Various preparatory committees were set up and our briefs on the various Conference agenda were prepared. The eventual Nigerian delegation of 59, led by Mr W. O. Briggs, the Federal Commissioner for Education, was drawn from a wide educational-cum-administrative spectrum.

The Conference, which was held in the National Hall, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos, was opened by His Excellency Major-General Yakubu Gowon, Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Welcoming the delegates on behalf of the Federal Military Gov-

The Commander-in-Chief shaking hands with Mr Arnold Smith (the Commonwealth Secretary-General) immediately after the formal opening of the Conference. Mr W. O. Briggs (Federal Commissioner for Education) looks on



The Commander-in-Chief, Major-General Yakubu Gowon opening the Commonwealth Education Conferenc- the National Hall, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos

ernment and people of Nigeria, he read the texts of a message he had sent to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, as Head of the Commonwealth and Her Majesty's reply. They both expressed the hope that the Conference would help to strengthen the ties which bind the Governments and peoples of the Commonwealth together.

The opening session was also addressed by Mr W. O. Briggs, the Nigerian Federal Commissioner for Education, who was unanimously elected Chairman of the Conference, by Mr Arnold Smith, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, by Mr H. Lionel Elvin, Chairman of the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee, and by Shri P. N. Kirpal, leader of the Indian Delegation.

The bulk of the work of the Conference was done in five committees each of which handled specific items of the Agenda as follows:

The Commander-in-Chief sharing a joke with Mr Arnold Smith (Commonwealth Secretary-General)

Committee A : University and Higher Education
Agenda Items *i* and *ii*.
Chairman : Sir Douglas Logan (Great Britain)

Committee B : The Supply of Teachers and the Training of Teachers
Agenda Items 2 and 3
Chairman : Mr J. L. Hunter (New Zealand)

Committee C : Technical and Vocational Education
Agenda Item 4
Chairman : Mr J. A. Lijembe (Kenya)

Committee D : Curriculum Development,

Libraries and Text-books, and Audio-Visual Aids Agenda Items 7, 12 and parts of 8 and 9
Chairman : The Hon. Mrs W. Gaskin (Guyana)

Committee E : Education for Social and Economic Development
Agenda Items 6 and parts of 8 and 9
Chairman : Shri P. N. Kirpal (India).

A sixth committee, the Steering Committee, was composed of Heads of Delegations and Chairmen of Committees. Mr H. Lionel Elvin was the Chairman of this Committee, which not only provided day-to-day guidance of the proceedings of the Conference but also dealt with matters not covered by any of the other five Committees. Such matters were Item 5 of the Agenda (Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee) and Item 10 (Conference of Experts).

In addition to the committee meetings there were plenary sessions of the Conference, at some of which, among other things, the reports of the different committees were presented and approved. In addition the plenary sessions were addressed by some Heads of Delegations and by three distinguished guest speakers. Of the latter Dr J. R. Wait, Director of the Science Secretariat in the Privy Council Office at Ottawa spoke on 'Education in Relation to Agricultural Productivity.' Dr C. E. Beeby, C.M.G., Visiting Professor, University of London Institute of Education, addressed the Conference on 'Curriculum Planning,' while Dr S. O. Biobaku, C.M.G., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos spoke on 'The Role of Higher Education in Development.' These addresses together with commissioned papers written by consultants pinpointed problems connected with, and stimulated discussion of, the subjects they dealt with.

An activity which gave welcome relief and added point to the deliberations of at least one of the Committees was the mounting of the Book Exhibition in the National Hall by one of the Nigerian Preparatory Committees. A wide range of educational publications from all over the Commonwealth was displayed throughout the duration of the Conference.

The Conference, as a truly Commonwealth occasion, had both a business and a social programme. The latter included a reception at Dodan Barracks for Heads of Delegations by His Excellency Major-General Yakubu Gowon, a reception at the Federal Palace Hotel for all the delegates and other guests by the Federal Commissioner for Education, and a number of other formal and informal parties and receptions given by some other Heads of Delegations and High Commissions. In between the foregoing social occasions and the business meetings, delegates often met informally and exchanged views. The foreign delegates were able to meet and talk to ordinary Nigerian citizens. They not only visited places of interest in and around Lagos, *e.g.*, the National Museum, but some of them also went on excursions to Ibadan, capital of the Western State, and to Kaduna and Zaria in the North-Central State.

In the light of the foregoing one may rightly ask: What, then, are the main achievements of the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference? Such a question is best answered by referring to the purpose of the Conference as indicated earlier. The purpose was, to repeat, twofold: firstly, to review the existing schemes of Commonwealth co-operation in education and to recommend ways of improving them; and, secondly, to examine new proposals for co-operation in education. Those interested in the details of the discussions that went on in each committee will find them in the records of the daily proceedings. A summary of these, embodying the main conclusions and recommendations of the Conference, is available in a publication entitled *Report of the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference* 1968 and published by the Commonwealth Secretariat. What this article attempts is to give an impressionistic account of the proceedings of the Conference, including the writer's view of what the Conference achieved.

One obvious value of the Commonwealth Education Conference is that it provides a forum for the exchange of information on a variety of educational topics. For instance, comparatively few Nigerians and still fewer outsiders know about

the experiment going on in Lagos and parts of the Western State in the use of the 'World Initial Teaching Alphabet.' Delegates were able to hear about this experiment and expressed a desire to know more about the outcome of the experiment. Again, on her own initiative the United Kingdom Government established a few years ago an institution called the Centre for Curriculum Renewal and Educational Development Overseas (CREDO, as it is popularly known). Obviously most countries of the Commonwealth, especially the developing ones, are very much interested in what is going on at CREDO. Obviously, too, it is not worth summoning a Commonwealth Conference at such great expense largely to receive information that could be more cheaply and more expeditiously disseminated by other means. One of the decisions of the last Commonwealth Education Conference was, therefore, that information about experiments and other matters of educational interest to other Commonwealth countries should be channelled through the Education Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Committee C discussed Technical and Vocational Education at great length. In the review of the schemes of co-operation in this field it was revealed that between 1962 and 1967 Commonwealth countries made a total of 502 scholarship awards for technical teacher training. To facilitate the gaining of industrial experience, it was further revealed, a new British Industrial Training Scheme allows up to 500 overseas trainees a year to be placed in British Industry under regular employment conditions. These are aspects of the substance of Commonwealth co-operation in education.

Among the recommendations of Committee C are the extension of programmes of assistance for technical teacher education, the need for Government and industry to develop complementary not duplicatory training facilities, directing immediate attention to a concerted effort to improve attitudes to the land through revolutionizing agricultural prospects, and the adoption of a 'Third Country' basis for the award of certain Commonwealth scholarships and bursaries. Here the Committee's recommendation echoes the sentiments expressed by Mr Wenike Briggs in his opening address to the Conference. He said, *inter alia*, 'We hope it may be possible for a scholar from Uganda to study Agriculture in Nigeria on a United Kingdom scholarship.' But such sentiments and recommendations raise fundamental issues; and the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee has been mandated to make a careful study of them.

As pointed out earlier, among the subjects dealt with by the Steering Committee is that of Specialist Conferences or Conference of Experts. In each of these conferences specialists in a particular educational field meet and examine the developments in their field, hold general discussions and make recommendations likely to advance the interests of that particular field of education. Three such Conferences, namely, on the teaching of English as a second language, the teaching of Science, and the education and training of technicians, have so far been held. Preparations are under way for the fourth, on the teaching of mathematics in schools, which will be held in Trinidad in September 1968.

To talk about education is sooner or later to talk about books. In a world where 700,000,000 people are illiterate (two out of every five according to another estimate), and 1968 being both the International Human Rights Year and the UNESCO Adult Literacy Year, there were added to the Conference's discussions on books and libraries the notes of reality and urgency. In fact weeks before the Commonwealth Education Conference there had been held at Accra a Unesco Regional Conference on Book Production. So important, then, is the twin subject of books and libraries that it was discussed in two of the Committees, namely, Committee D: Curriculum Development, Libraries and Text-books, and Audio-Visual Aids and Committee E: Education for Social and Economic Development. While Committee D stressed the role of libraries as basic resource centres for learning generally Committee E also pointed out that books, libraries and bookshops are essential for the success of programmes of functional adult education. Thus, when in a review of previous schemes of co-operation it was revealed that impediments to the free movement of educa-

The Commander-in-Chief chatting with some of his guests at the reception held at Dodan Barracks. Left to right: Mr M. Dowuona (Ghana), The Hon. Dr S. J. Luyimbaze Zake, (Uganda); Major-General Gowon

tional books throughout the Commonwealth still existed, it was decided that every effort should be made to remove the restrictions.

Among the recommendations of the Conference under this head are the establishment on a regional basis of facilities for training in book production, urgent attention to the development of bookselling and libraries, the implementation of book coupon schemes, and the establishment of a Commonwealth Book Development Fund with a view to tackling the urgent problem of book supply in the developing countries of the Commonwealth.

The scope of this article does not permit of my mentioning all the important issues raised and decisions taken at the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference. Interested individuals are once again referred to the Report of the Conference for a more detailed and more balanced account of the discussions that took place and the recommendations made. It remains for me to say a few things

(Right) The Commander-in-Chief welcoming Senator Donald P. Pear (Trinidad and Tobago) to the reception at Dodan Barracks while Mr Arnold Smith (left) and Mr W. O. Briggs (centre) look on

about what, in my view, the Conference achieved.

Without any conscious effort at achieving such an end the Commonwealth Education Conference has, right from the very beginning, enabled the Commonwealth to be in the forefront of educational thinking and practice considered from a global point of view. The very concept of education as a key to development, which gained universal currency during the 1960's, was already inspiring Commonwealth Educational thinking and planning during the late 1950's. The Specialist Conferences enable us to maintain this lead. Thus, among the Specialist Conferences approved at the last Commonwealth Education Conference is one on Education in Rural Areas. This, it was further agreed, would best be held before the F.A.O. Conference on Agricultural Education scheduled to take place in 1970–71. Similarly there were *avant-garde* references in the deliberations of the Conference to the importance of women's

education, with particular reference to technological and scientific subjects.

Secondly, the Commonwealth Education Conference is the boardroom where plans for bilateral and multilateral assistance among Commonwealth countries are drawn. Perhaps the best known and most successful of the schemes of co-operation so far drawn up is the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, which plays an indispensable role in the production of high-level man-power especially in the developing countries. Now the developing countries are offering such scholarship to other countries, including the developed ones.

To me the most important achievement of the Fourth as of any of the other Commonwealth Education Conferences is the part it played in helping to strengthen the ties which bind the Governments and peoples of the Commonwealth together. This point was stressed in the messages which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second and His Excellency Major-General Yakubu Gowon exchanged with each other. The Commonwealth, that association of equal and sovereign states, binding together people of different races as well as rich and poor nations, is a ray of hope in a world racked and torn by the divisions between the races, between the rich and the poor nations, between the armed camps, between the East and the West. The demonstration effect of the reality as well as the possibilities of the Commonwealth association is a factor of the utmost importance for the future of the world.

A VISIT TO SOKOTO AND WURNO

By

H. L. B. and J. E. Moody

IN the course of six years spent in Nigeria, we had visited most parts of the country, and gone some way to filling in the picture of that great and varied complex of terrains, climates and peoples which made the idea of 'one Nigeria,' long before the present political problems materialized, both an impressive and a worthwhile aim. There remained the north-western area, and at last the opportunity of visiting the 'royal' cities of Sokoto and Wurno occurred, as we needed to search for background material to the translation of a young German traveller's account of his journey in 1885 from Lagos, *via* Brass, Loko, Keffi and Zaria to Sokoto.* Paul Staudinger was the first European to travel by this route, and his purpose was to present the embassy of the German Kaiser to the Sultan of Sokoto, the *Sarkin Musulmi*. Having reached Zaria and made his intention known to Sambo, the then Emir of Zaria, he was advised to delay his departure and to travel north in the company of the Emir and his court, who were to set out shortly to pay the yearly tribute, which was due from all the Sultan's vassals. The Sultan came out from Sokoto, 'sat down' and held court at *Gidan Goga*, where our traveller met him and delivered his despatches. After that he went on to visit the Sultan's brother at Gwandu, and returned to Sokoto to collect his answer, but found the city half-empty as the court had moved to Wurno. He followed the Sultan there and describes the town as interesting and attractive.

During our own time in Nigeria we had heard little of Wurno, and in answer to our enquiries were repeatedly told that there was nothing to see there now, except the tombs of Sultan Bello and his successors which were visited by many pious

* Paul Staudinger: *Im Herzen des Haussalander* (1885)—*In the Heart of the Hausa Countries;* translated by Johanna E. Moody, to be published by Frank Cass, London, 1969.

The Kwatarkwashi Rocks

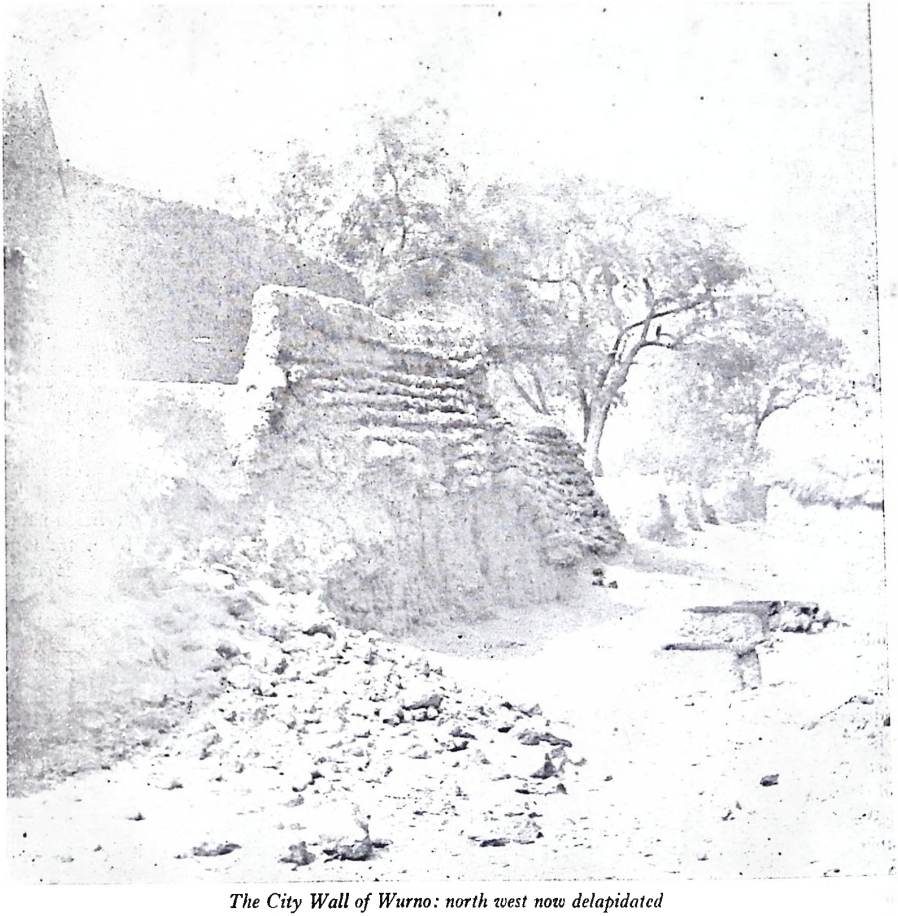
Muslims of the Western Sudan as a place of great veneration. Very few Europeans seemed to have visited Wurno, and this decided us to go and see for ourselves. It is true that mud-built palaces, however imposing, leave not even impressive ruins once they have fallen out of use, but perhaps we would locate the market that Staudinger had described, or the small mosque under construction during his visit; or perhaps the house where he was lodged (there was traditionally one house in a town, or sometimes a particular dignitary, whose duty it was to act as host to important visitors). Unlike other famous cities of the Western Sudan, Sokoto and Wurno have no very ancient history, and reflect the migratory history of the Fulani as against the 'settled' habits of the Hausa. It was in October, 1804, that the Shehu moved his headquarters from Gudu twenty miles southwards to an area of slightly higher ground near the confluence of the rivers Sokoto and Rima. In 1823, only nineteen years later the English traveller, Hugh Clapperton visited Sokoto, and his description indicates the rapid development of Sokoto in less than twenty years from a war camp to a great city:

> '*Unlike most other towns in Hausa, where the houses are thinly scattered, it is laid out in regular well-built streets. The houses approach close to the walls, which were built by the*

present Sultan in 1818 *after the death of his father; the old walls being too confined for the increasing population. The wall is between twenty and thirty feet high, and has twelve gates, which are regularly closed at sunset.'*

Wurno was established by Mohammed Bello in 1822 some twenty miles north-east of Sokoto, on another gentle rocky eminence near the river Rima, chiefly to provide a bastion against the raids of the Tuareg and the Gobirawa, but it quickly became his favourite residence. According to Staudinger, in 1886 '*Wurno must be counted among the large cities of the Hausa States.*'

April is not of course the best month for travelling in the dusty torrid regions of the North-Western State, and the oppressive heat was to be the chief brake on our enthusiasms. Our route was from Kano *via* Yashi, Malumfashi, Funtua, and on to Kwatarkwashi. It had been on 22nd December, 1885, that Staudinger had ridden up to



The City Wall of Wurno: north west now delapidated

The Road to Sokoto crosses the infant Sokoto River north of Gusau

this impressive 'town': he made the following note in his journal:

> '*At one o'clock the high precipitous rocks appeared. At the foot of the largest of them, called* MIKIA *lay the chief village of the group of settlements called Kwatarkwashi* (MIKIA *owes its name to a large variety of vulture, Gyps Ruppeli Natt*...)

Indeed the rocks are impressive and must have seemed more so before the theory of the 'Inselberg' was formed in explanation of these huge, smooth-sided rock-bubbles rising sheer out of an otherwise flat sandy plain, rather like mountain tops just breaking through the surface, and still shaking off the waters, of a sea.

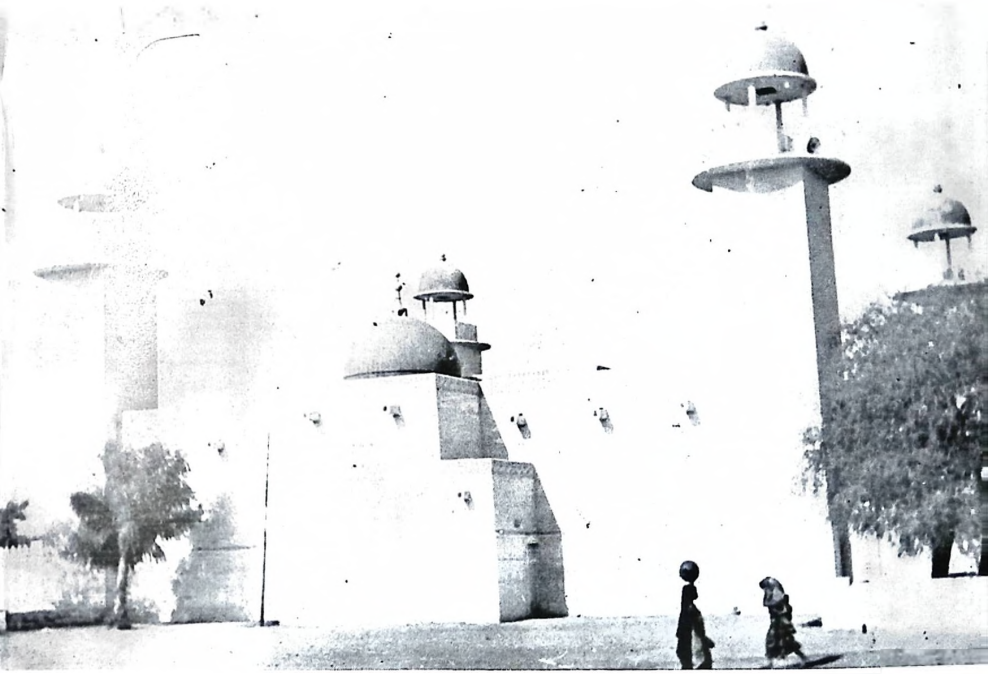
We arrived here, and subsequently in many other interesting and photogenic places, too 'late' in the day to take really good photographs, but, having done our best, we set out again on the road north to Gusau. In such heat, we could not but imagine what it must have been like traversing this country-side in 1885, along narrow footpaths through the bush, on foot or on horse-back, through the dust clouds raised by a train of bearers, without the modern traveller's flasks of iced drinks or even cold water!

As part of the policy of the former Northern Regional Government to link up the North-West with the rest of Nigeria, a first-class road was to be constructed linking Sokoto with Kaduna, thence with the coast. North of Gusau, we found that this construction work was still incomplete. Yet even while following the single track of tarred surface, with its crumbling sandy edges, we were aware of new developments impending: the first stage in the laying down of a new road is the construction of concrete culverts to prevent the surface water from washing away the road after

heavy rain; and many of these were in evidence, lying at odd angles and varying distances from the present road, indicating that the new highway was to follow a somewhat different but carefully premeditated course. At a number of points on the route we could see the signs of at least three 'periods' of roadmaking; the earliest of course the narrowest, most meandering, most subservient to the gradients and contours of the landscape; the latest clearly the most independent and in the fullest sense progressive.

The most impressive feature of the early part of the journey north from Gusua was crossing the Sokoto River, here in its infancy, but still capable over the centuries of having cut a tremendous defile; a broad high modern bridge flies high above the jagged rocky sides of the river bed, which at this time of the year contained only a few pools of water, connected by a clear stream. At length, after numerous detours and diversions, in which the effect of 'work in progress', coated us all with layers of fine dust, we reached the completed part of the road which ran on, unswervingly, rather much like an American super-highway, straight on through the thorn-scrub landscape to Sokoto, varied only by the slightest of gradients or an occasional group of shade trees at a wayside village, on towards the setting sun, with an unspoken prayer that our much-taxed internal-combustion engine would not give up its labours from over-work.

At long last, the road swung round past a number of outlying institutions, and we reached Sokoto itself an hour or two before dark. As with other far-famed cities of the Western Sudan here was no immediately spectacular sight of 'dreaming spires', 'lofty minarets', 'towers, domes or temples:' just a slight rise in the ground, surmounted by a



The Central Mosque, Sokoto

fringe of dark green trees. Having located our resting place for the night, there was time for a quick drive down through the city past the Market (with its recent ornamental gateway incongruously inscribed 'Welcome Princess Margaret'!), the Sultan's Palace, the Central Mosque, the Museum of Antiquities, and out to the vestiges of the Wall on the eastern side of the City. How very little indeed of this remains in comparison with what Clapperton had described in 1823!—hardly more than a faint pattern of lumps of rock running along the crest of the hill. Here we found Sokoto's most impressive viewpoint, as the ground dropped away at a steady gradient and the road eastwards to Kaura Namoda crossed a broad stretch of water from the Sokoto river, which on this side of the town nourished a wide area of lush green vegetation: even well-developed clumps of banana trees were visible, while the farms were producing onions, and rice, and the air was noticeably humid after the eye-ball-drying dust of the arid regions we had passed through to get here. To the west of the City, the famous cement-factory stood up starkly in its rather uncomfortable

Approach to Sokoto from the east: The Old City Wall ran along the crest of the hill

gaunt, concrete grandeur, while numerous forestry plantations clothed the landscape in all directions.

This fertility remains as one of the chief revelations of our visit to Sokoto; the hundreds of miles before the traveller reaches Sokoto from the south, incline him to suppose that he is plunging into sub-Saharan aridities, but the area is in fact well watered. Some of the schemes for the economic development of the North-Western part of Nigeria, which had often been viewed with some incredulity by people from other parts of the Federation, now seemed to us to have a more reasonable basis than is sometimes supposed. Sokoto clearly stands in a key position on the extensive river system which drains towards the south-west into the Kebbi River, and thence into the Niger at Guromba: its possibilities for expansion and development have been by no means fully explored.

Our visits in and around Sokoto in search for relics or memories of Paul Staudinger led us to many interesting places and persons, and, though largely inconclusive, at least brought home how quickly events even of some international significance are effaced in the course of eighty years. One of the treasures, or more exactly 'treasuries', which we discovered was the Sokoto Museum of Historical Antiquities, modestly housed in a

GIDAN AJIYAR KAYAN TARIHI NA SOKOTO: *The Museum of Historical Antiquities, Sokoto*

mud-walled, tin-roofed building adjacent to the compound of the Waziri. Here was a most interesting collection of antiquities, both military and ethnographical, in the care of an elderly and knowledgeable *mallam;* the Museum had obviously been well used by schools and colleges in the area, and in time to come will no doubt be housed in conditions more worthy of the value of the collection.

We had letters of introduction and promise of an audience with the Waziri, Alhaji Junaidu, himself, by general repute a living repository of the history of his family and the Fulani Empire. Though a distinguished scholar in Arabic and Fulani, he understands English well, but does not speak it fluently. We had arrived with a long list of questions connected with the translation in hand, and did in fact elicit some interesting answers, but the Waziri himself, we were told, had just gone to Gusau, which we had recently passed through, but he would surely be back 'tomorrow'. In his absence we were entertained by another Sokoto dignitary, the Marafa, who in no time at all collected together a number of local scholars and elders who helped to fill in for us the history of the past, whilst showing themselves to be important and progressive component parts of the present.

A day or two later, we were ready to make our visit to the former 'twin capital' of Wurno, where in January, 1886, Paul Staudinger had at last conferred, and concluded a treaty with, the then Sultan, Umaru. This involved quite a short journey to the north-east, but we could not suppress a certain feeling of excitement as we approached this historic but little known town. The ground continued to rise very slightly, and for the most part appeared to be rather barren, with only little pockets of sandy soil between the numerous protruding rocks, and with only the sparsest signs of agriculture at this time of year. Some twelve miles from Sokoto a sideroad leads off northwards towards Wurno and the wild, barren nature of the landscape became even more marked, —fit breeding-ground, one might well suppose, for a nation of warrior-mystics trained in contemplation of the eternal verities. Soon after crossing the trail of a long camel caravan heading westwards to Sokoto, we came to the edge of an escarpment and looked down across a vast flat plain reaching into the far and misty distance, with what appeared to be a shallow saucer-like area of shade-bearing trees beginning about a mile below us. There is Wurno, we were told:—and had to look again! The most conspicuous sign was a modern wind-wheel driving a water pump, and perhaps a water tank, and then the eye, having learned to be more particular, began to pick out the traditional mud-built houses nestling among the trees.

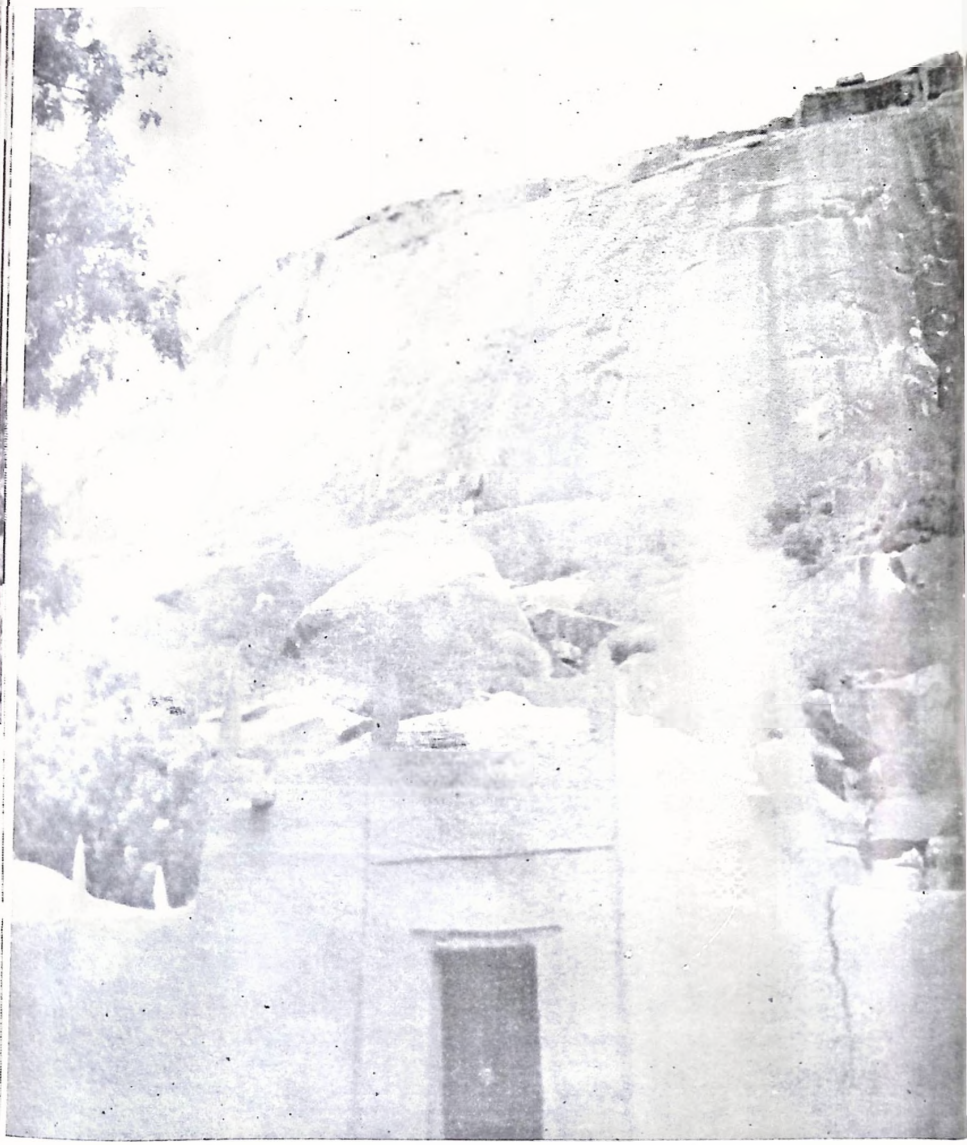
We were taken to the house of the Sarkin Sudan, now the District Head of Wurno and told him of our quest. After some discussion of dynasties, travellers, customs of entertainment, and delapidation of old buildings, we proceeded to inspect part of the old Walls, here much more in evidence than in Sokoto, on the eastern side of the City, and the site of the old market outside the Walls on the north-west of the City. A number of low, straw-roofed, somewhat derelict stalls were still in use, though a 'new market' had been proudly pointed out to us: it had become necessary to abandon the old site because the 'ravines', described by Staudinger, made it impossible for lorries to reach it, and the new site was more accessible. In this area, however, a productive local pottery industry was much in evidence, with huge stacks of the famous round water pots (both fired and unfired), which are supplied to a large part of northern Nigeria and the regions still further to the north. Later we also reckoned to identify the rocky defile through which Staudinger made his way out of the town on a short expedition to the east, and had no doubt that we were looking upon the very scene he had described over eighty years previously. '*Before my departure I made several more outings into the surrounding countryside, one of them in an easterly direction. The path led down fairly steeply to an arid plain through sizeable rocky gorges and deep clay pits.*'

However, as the principal interest of the modern Nigerian is understandably in the things of the present rather than of the past, we could not resist the enthusiasm of our host who wished to

First glimpse of Wurno approached from Sokoto

show us the local irrigation scheme. Having established that it was 'not very far', we offered Sarkin Sudan a seat in our car. Yes, that would be best; and, by the time he had carefully wrapped his white gown about him so as to enter the car with greater ease and elegance, the back was crammed with about ten men, so that we had to appeal for room to be made for our own guide and interpreter.

We drove off, along a narrow ridge of earth between 'borrow-pits' (where no lorry would dare to risk its wider beam), past the dye-pits, and down a further slight escarpment to a kind of causeway following the line of the old town walls. Soon we saw on our left a patchwork pattern of regular green squares between elevated banks, while a narrow runnel of clear water between strips of brilliant green grass accompanied the



Another view of the Kwatarkwashi Rocks from the Town Centre

Market Stalls at the Old Market, Wurno

Below: Water pots stacked near the old Wurno market

Rocky defile east of Wurno leading towards River Rima

dusty, bumpy road. Here was irrigation indeed, and the luscious green of cornfields, onion beds and the paler young wheat seemed something from a different world. The sight of the channel of fresh running water seemed to make us all, visitors and local inhabitants, laugh with relief and happiness, in a temperature which normally compelled us to keep the car windows closed, even when going at speed, to avoid the dehydrating effects of the sun-dried air.

We now paused, and suggested returning to the town, where at least it was shady. Oh no, you must see the dam, we were told! We were still a little reluctant, but water was important here, and our host had come out to guide us, so we smiled politely and drove on until a mud embankment barred the way. We pulled up, and our considerable party tumbled out. A few steps brought us to the top of the slight rise—and there before us lay a seemingly limitless expanse of the waters of the River Rima, forming a huge lake glittering in the sun, with a stiff breeze blowing across, urging the glittering water into choppy wavelets which slapped against the stone-facing just below our feet, each dissolving into its rainbow-crown of spray. Our host surveyed and explained this seeming miracle with sweeping gestures, his long Sudanese gown flapping in the wind. Even so, we were soon glad to retreat, and return to the cool shaded groves of Wurno itself.

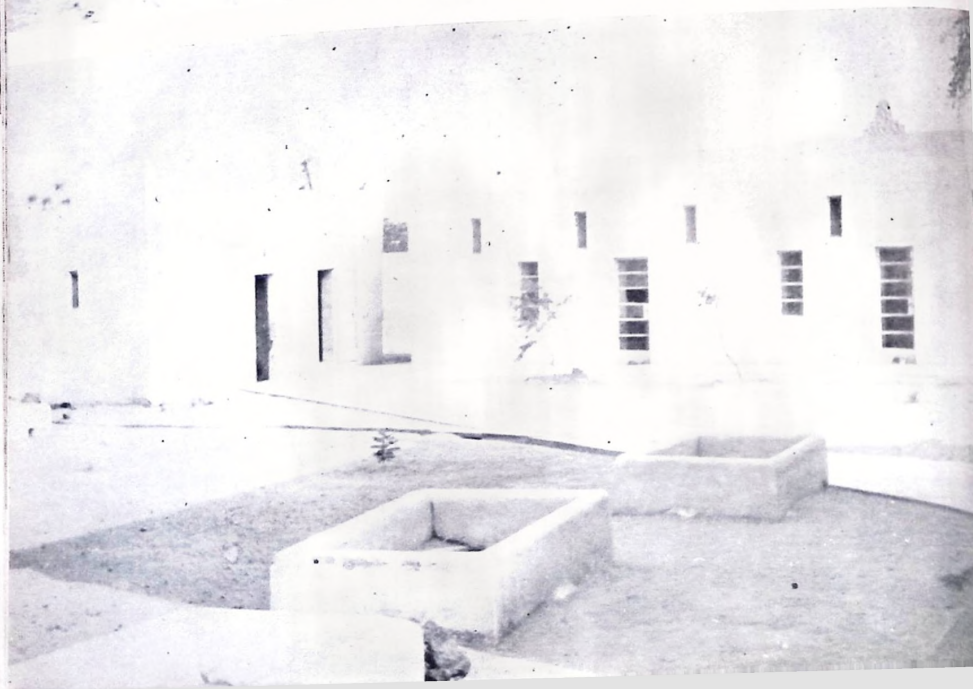
The town seemed prosperous and industrious, though no doubt it has lost its earlier importance, when trade with the north must have been more extensive, and money flowed more generously from the coffers of the court, its vassals and its visitors. We noticed a good deal of weaving in progress by time-honoured methods, one weaver making his 'warp' by walking a ball of wool round the square walls of his compound. There seemed to be few idlers and no beggars in sight: no doubt

The Rima Dam, near Wurno

NEXT PAGE: *Top: Houses in Wurno, well-shaded Neem trees*
Bottom: Inside the Royal Mausoleum, Wurno

such elements in a community tend to flock to the more affluent centres of modern commerce.

Most memorable of all our impressions at Wurno, however, remains our visit, soon after our arrival, to the tombs of Mohammed Bello, his wives, and some of his successors, which are gathered together in an enclosure towards the southern part of the city. The immediate area surrounding the tombs was open and devoid of other buildings, otherwise undistinguished. Our guide indicated that we should take off our shoes, and duly equipped with slippers by the *malam* in-charge, we were admitted to the holy places, the only visitors present. For many years, presumably, the tombs had been no more than the plain earthen mounds which are the typical graves of many Muslim *wali*, or saints. In more recent times, their importance has been underlined by en-

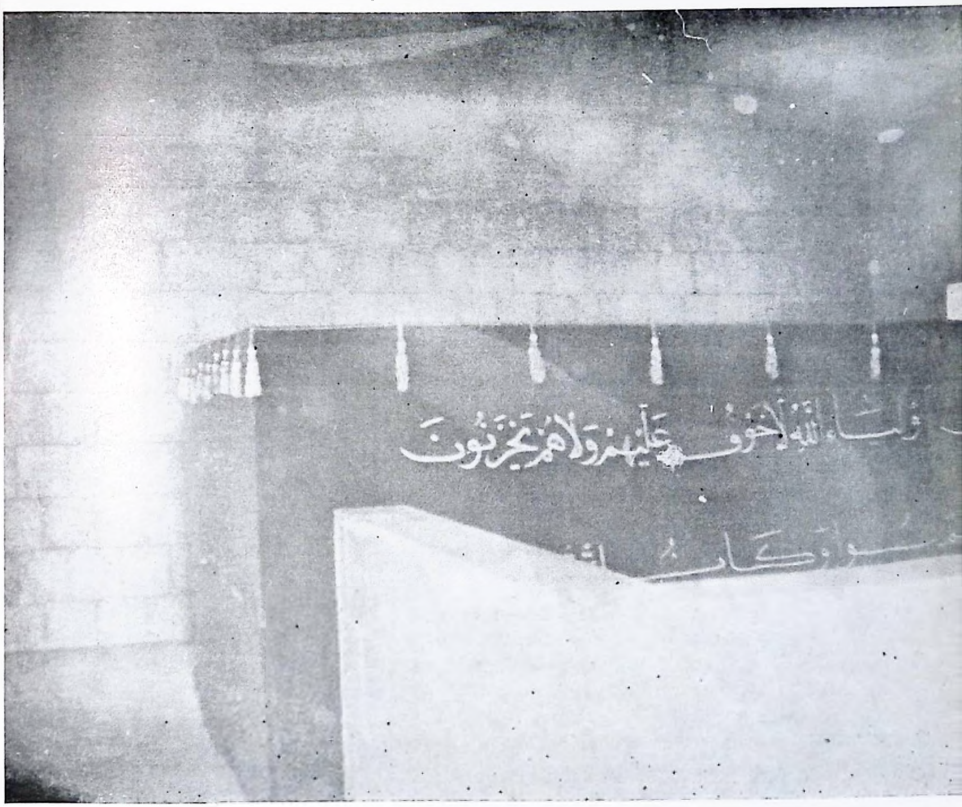


closing them in a group of rectangular, but assymetrical concrete buildings, themselves enclosed in a walled courtyard.

Staudinger described the erection of 'a small mosque' within the Sultan's palace area, but according to Dr D. M. Last, who studied the Sokoto Dynasty on the spot for several years, what he witnessed was probably the erection of an edifice over the tomb of Sultan Bello. The principal tomb, that of Bello himself, is covered by a rich blue velvet catafalque with various embroidered Arabic inscriptions and golden tassels. Although a fundamental atmosphere of asceticism and reverence prevails, the blend of modern embellishment with ancient austerity, in relation to the vast wildernesses in which Wurno itself is situated, is perhaps not entirely congruous. Nevertheless one may possibly sense a strange spiritual power which centres on this spot and which extends far and wide, for example, to Sultan Bello Hall at the University of Ibadan, even—who knows?—to the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and far beyond that!

Very recent trends in Nigerian history are recalled by the modern private 'rest house', built nearby for the late Sardauna in a style similar to the

The tomb of Sultan Bello in the Royal Mausoleum, Wurno



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Women in uniform carry sticks and sing around the town with APO

APO: DARLING OF THE WOMENFOLKS

By

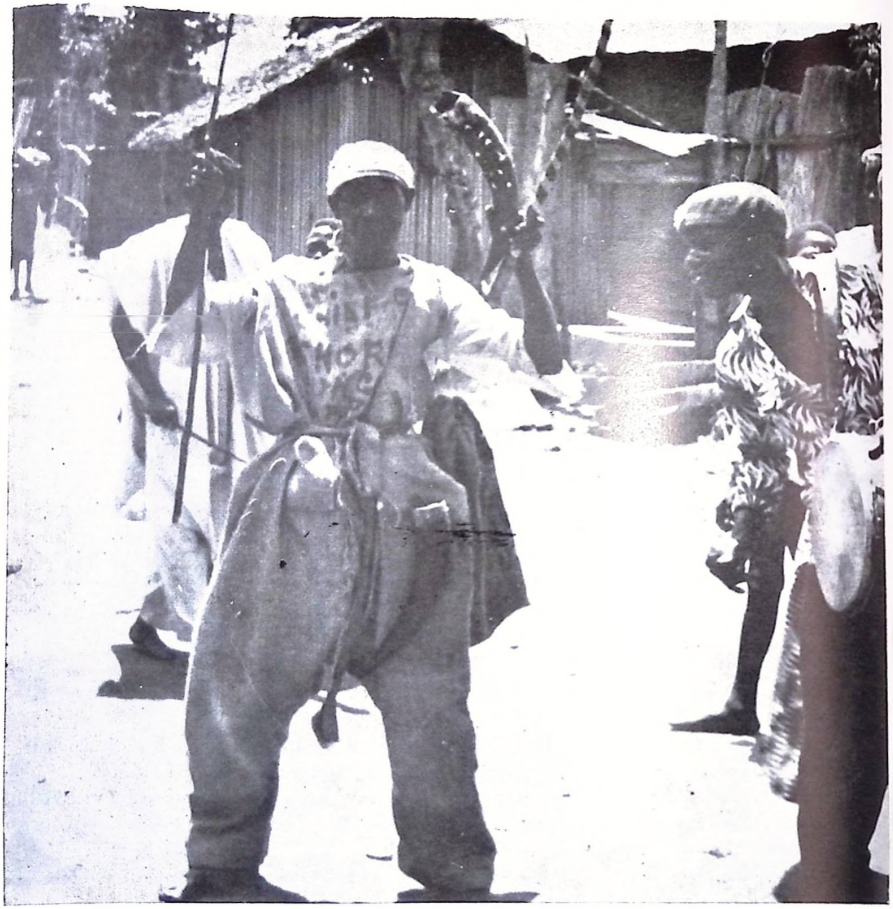
'SOLA ADEOGUN

IN 1896, there was a severe drought in Ejinrin, a lagoon coastal town, sixteen miles to Ijebu-Ode. The drought lasted for a long period and every conceivable way devised to bring rain proved futile. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the elders in the town did not know which god has been offended; of course if they knew, a sumptuous offering could have been the penalty. At last the Ifa oracle was consulted who told the elders to prepare a masquerade which should dance round the whole village, an act that would eventually bring rain.

As the masquerade was to be prepared by the chief of the village on behalf of the people, a large sum was contributed for the purchase of a costly piece of costume for the use of the masquerade.

To the horror and disappointment of the villagers, no rain fell! The Ifa oracle was consulted again and it told them that the masquerade was not supposed to don any costly or flamboyant costume. It must be made of ordinary salt-sack. The people were disappointed that a masquerade of a large village should be attired in a salt-sack, more so when they were expected to invite people from other villages to the ritual ceremony.

They obeyed the will of the oracle and prepared the costume out of salt-sack, using the horns of different animals as the head-gear. The instruction was carried out and by the time the masquerade went round the village, the cloud was heavy and



BASHORUN ABIMBADE, APO'S *first child, a result of a royal wife's devotion to* APO

IYA AGAN, *Head of the women in Ejinrin. She also plays a prominent part in Egungun festival, being the only woman allowed to enter the Egungun shrine*

Back-view of APO, *showing the skin of a deer which is usually hung at the back*

Headgear of APO *showing the different horns and the figure of* APO *in the centre. Right* EGUN ALAPO IYO—*The masquerade wearing a salt-sack. The horns are said to be those of different animals*

difficult to discern the link between two lines of this song.

As the procession goes on, if the drummer feels the enthusiasm of *APO* has reached a low ebb he changes the song again and beats:

Gbemi, b'o le gbe mo

(Give it to me, if you can no longer carry it).

This rhythm is followed by a burst of liveliness again, and village men, now incenced, flog one another.

Usually *APO* goes to the edge of the lagoon, digs its legs into the water and offers prayer for the town. As it leaves the lagoon, all women and children rush into the shallow parts of the lagoon, and with their hands rub their head with water scooped from the lagoon; some drink it, others splash water on their limbs. As they do this, they sing:

Omo Apo dun bi o,
B'a bi l'oni a rin l'ola
E ba mi gb'omo Apo,
Lanti Lanti
(It is easy to give birth
to a child given by *Apo*.
You give birth to it today,
it walks the following day.
Help me carry the child
given to me by *Apo*
It is very fat and robust).

After this ceremony performed at the edge of the lagoon, *APO* retires to a small hut at the side of the lagoon to rest while its followers recoup for another spell. As *APO* takes a long rest more than usually expected the women begin to sing, sarcastic songs like a wife would when abusing her husband:

Alapo iyo, a o fe o mo o,
E w'enu Apo bi ida oya,
E w'enu Apo jati jati
E w'enu Apo jala jala.
(You, who wears a salt-sack,
we forsake you,
Look at the mouth of *Apo* like the
sword of *Oya* (a rival masquerade)
Look at the mouth of *Apo*
unordered and uninviting).

Now, they tell him to his face that he is wearing a salt-sack, otherwise *Apo* which literally means 'bag' is a derivation from a bag of money.

When *Apo* comes out of the rest-house it genuflects to the singing women apologizing for coming late. It is then pardoned and the people sing again:

'*Apo niyi o,*
Ee Ee Ee Apo niyi o'
(This is *Apo*
Ee Ee Ee, this is *Apo*)

Apo belongs to the chief, and therefore it belongs to the whole town. *APO* is reputed for a dual purpose, inviting rain when there is drought and giving children. To both sexes, therefore, *APO* represents two symbols, which vary according to the prominent role it plays in the society. Ejinrin men are mostly farmers and fishermen, and if there is abundant rain, the crops would grow in abundance while the lagoon will overflow its banks providing more fish.

The role of the womenfolk is to bring forth enough issues who feed on the products of the menfolk. This aspect of *APO* must be seen in the context of the latent hostility between the two groups in Ejinrin, each side aspiring to see itself as the leader in the society. *APO* is the propagator of the course of the non-aborigines of Ejinrin.

Picture at page 200 *shows A big baobab tree hemmed on all sides with palm-leaves and mat marks the site of the shrine where* APO *was first inaugurated*

THE RITES OF MANHOOD IN THE BILLE TRIBE

By

PASTOR P. BOE

INTRODUCTION

THE following is a verbal 'photograph' of the rite of initiation of Nigerian youths of the Bille tribe (relatively small in number) into the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of manhood—the ceremony and rite of circumcision. This event, experienced and written about by several African authors (as: by Camera Laye in *The African Child and Child of Two Worlds*), kindly help me recall author of this second book and include title and author here, seems to be uniquely African—although it has parallels in other cultures (as Jewish). Not all Nigerian tribes practise ritual or ceremonial circumcision. Some tribes seem to be abandoning the practice. But in several vicinities, largely those least exposed to 'outside' influences, this is a deeply-entrenched tradition and custom, carefully carried on from generation to generation for hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of years. By witnessing such an event, one is granted a look into an uncalculated past: he is also given a partial answer to the question: 'Had I been born here, what kind of experiences of growing up would I have had?'

I have come to 'identify' with the young people of Nigeria very much; working with them and serving among them has been my chief interest and preoccupation since coming to Nigeria in the fall of 1965, notably in Numan: the many Sunday School children, primary school pupils, and students of the four upper schools: Bronnum Secondary School (S.U.M.), Teachers College (S.U.M.), Government Craft School, and Villanova Secondary School (Catholic). It is through these schools that I became acquainted with the young people of Bille as well as of nearby Bali, 15 (*via* Laru) and 19 miles south-west of Numan respectively. Quite naturally, I became curious about the home lives and backgrounds of these young people; and they were quite willing and eager to share their experiences with me—until they began to beckon me: 'Come over to our villages and see these things for yourself.' It occurred to me that many of these young people were but a generation removed from a way of life that has continued unchanged and unaffected by 'white man's *wayo* (craftiness)' for hundreds and hundreds of years. Yet, it has been my conviction that God has looked after His people during all ages and wherever they have dwelled and that He has nurtured them through means which may seem 'primitive' or 'pagan' to us but which have served His purposes within their own context and setting.

Accordingly, I have observed that among the God-fearing persons of the Bille 'family' the rite of circumcision, being simultaneously a rite of purification and of initiation into manhood is treated as sacred as a sacrament: the sensual significance of circumcision being to this 'rebirth' as water is to the Christian baptism and bread and wine are to Holy Communion. The rite of circumcision, as here described, may be discontinued in not too many years, contrary to the predictions of its adherents. As evidenced at Bille, already the signs of change and the 'dawn of a new era' were apparent. For the newer generation, largely exposed to modern education and Christian influence: a welcome change; for the older generation: a threat of extinction from remembrance in history. Yet, this confrontation between the old and the new is an age-long phenomenon, taking place in every part of the world. In my own life experience I can testify to emerging from a 'pagan' and 'primitive' environment (Latvia and Germany, remembered years: 1941–49) into the 'scientific

era.' It would seem that the Bille young people are suspended between two, radically-different 'worlds' of experience and ways of life. Yet, there is hardly a person who is not similarly suspended in his remembered experience between the 'past' and the 'present,' the 'old' and the 'new.' Let us, then, join these 146 African lads in their 'march through the changing times'.

PREPARATION

My first acquaintance with the African rite of circumcision was acquired through the reading of Camera Laye's autobiography, *The African Child* in 1966. It then occurred to me that there is a 'hidden' portion of the lives of many African young people which very few 'foreigners' ever witness, but a vital portion which provides a sense of 'solidarity' among the Africans and especially within tribal groups in Africa: the ignorance and 'slighting' of which portion by 'outsiders' makes them the more suspected and distrusted as 'foreigners.' While discussing this matter with Nigerian colleagues, I learned that some, not many, tribes in Nigeria still practise circumcision of adolescent boys—and, in some places, even of adolescent girls (clitoris). My curiosity was aroused not so much by the sexual implications of this rite as by the extent to which it actually serves as a point of transition between childhood and adulthood. Young men from the Verre tribe, close to the Cameroun border, had made the long trek to Numan to sell their very beautiful and elegant brass knife-and-sheaths, neck-supporting rods, four-plated helmets, ornate bells, dancing beads and ornaments, *fatanyas* (hoes), and other brass objects—all used in dancing and rituals connected with circumcision. The Verre men, naturally, had to explain the use of these items—and they did this quite vividly. In addition, they brought for sale brass bowls and vases and human figurines of remarkable beauty and craftsmanship, so that one acquired a great appreciation for these people and wished for the opportunity to visit them and to see these items actually being used. Mr Timothy Chappel, curator for the Jos Museum and spokesman for the Department of Antiquities, became alarmed at the rate at which these fine articles were escaping into 'foreign' hands, so that he quickly informed all purchasers of these goods that nothing defined as an 'antiquity' can leave Nigeria except by the permission (after inspection) of a spokesman of the Department of Antiquities. I had learned, through the Verre traders, that there would be a circumcision rite sometime during December of 1966. When I informed Mr Chappel of this, he was eager to make arrangements to attend it—and he agreed to let me in on it. But, inspite of all his attempts to get the Verre people to fix the date for the event (normally the exact date is not known until one or two days before the event), they proved to be unco-operative and Mr Chappel had to give up the plan in the end. The most accessible Verre village was Sulle, not far from Yola; but it was learned that only one candidate was involved there, while the 'really big event,' at which the various brass articles would be used, was to take place in a remote place 14 miles from Sulle, by a foot path over rocks and hills. The date not being certain, a venture to that place was too risky. I myself considered 'roughing' it just the same, but at last gave up the idea.

When I heard rumours that the rite of circumcision would be held at Bille that same December (1966), without the usual luxuries of the Verre people, this seemed to be a second best. But when I met a young Bille boy, Dimas Hassuruna, being interviewed at the Northern Teachers College for admission to S.U.M. advanced schools during the summer of 1966, my interest in the Bille community rose greatly. He spoke positively about the Bille rite of circumcision (having himself gone through it recently) and his description of this rite was similar to the account given by Camera Laye. I later met Dimas at the Government Secondary School, Yola, at a Fellowship of Christian Students meeting in 1967. He stated that the Christian boys had a rite separate from that of the 'pagan' boys, for the latter partook in much dancing and drinking, wore more special garb, and were more prone toward winning the attention of girls for the sake of immediate marriage-these boys being 12–15 years in age. Still, his account was full of

inconsistencies and unclarity. Would the Bille people approve of my attending the ceremony? He replied: Yes... though with some uncertainty. For the time being, I would 'feel out the spirit' and make no plans nor decisions. During the August school break I thought of going to Bille on my 110 cc Moto Guzzi, but the river between Laru and Dong was not dry until December. When I did get there, after school let out, I found almost nobody there, except Pastors Elisha and Theodore conducting a brief course for evangelists. I learned, also, that the rite of circumcision would not be held at Bille until the following December, (1967). I examined Pastor Elisha whom I met

Pastor and Mrs Elisha

Part of Sarki (Chief) Yakubu's household. He has four wives, but only one of them is in photo; he is man on left, his wife is next to him

during my three months of Hausa training at Dashen, during the fall of 1965, attending the Evangelist School there, as to the advisability of my attending it. He responded very positively and promised to inform me as to the exact date of the event as soon as he should learn of it. Again I reminded Pastor Elisha of his 'promise'; and he reassured me that he would keep his word.

Then, during the early part of December, I learned that the date of the rite had been postponed until after Christmas, close to New Year's Day. School would start January 5. Could I afford such a 'diversion'? No one knew the exact days when the event would be held. To 'pinpoint' the event more accurately, I went to Bille on my newly-acquired Honda 90 right after school was dismissed, December 16, taking along with me a Villanova first-year student, Stephen, whom I left at Bali, his home village, and a Bronnum first-year student, Johnson Ishaya, of Bille—also my confirmation pupil. At Bille I met with Pastor Elisha and with Sarki (Chief) Yakubu. I still had some hesitation about attending the ceremony; everything was so uncertain. It so happened that even at this time neither Pastor Elisha nor Sarki Yakubu knew the exact dates for the two-day ceremony. Finally Sarki Yakubu was informed that it would take place Thursday and Friday, December 28–29. Was I free to take whatever photographs I desired? Would I be permitted to make a tape recording of the event? Sarki Yakubu assured me that I would be perfectly free and unhindered to do these things. We sat together on the ground on a *tabarma* or mat and became acquainted with each other, until we felt at ease in each other's presence. Then, darkness coming near, I waved good-bye to both Pastor Elisha and to Sarki Yakubu in a most cordial spirit and returned to Numan with Johnson, a gift rooster from Sarki Yakubu, a gift hen from Sulaimanu Daniel—another first-year Bronnum student and my confirmation pupil, at Bali, and a number of huge, fresh-ripe yams from the store shed of Stephen's father—also at Bali. That was a very 'profitable' journey!

Then came the 'great let-down' on Tuesday,

December 26 Johnson handed me a letter from Pastor Elisha: 'I am sorry to tell you that the dates for the circumcision have been changed. The real big event that you must definitely witness will start about 7.00 a.m. Wednesday, December 27, and everything will be finished by the afternoon of Thursday, December 28. Am expecting to see you.' It was already late in the evening when I received the message. The event would start early the following morning. Staying at Bille two days would require careful preparation. Time seemed too short.

That night I did not go to sleep but prepared my sleeping gear, Uher tape recorder, two cameras, bag of bread rolls, two canteens of water, camera tripod, and other articles. Remembering the shivering cold Johnson and I experienced during our return trip from Bille two weeks earlier, this time I had my long trousers and long underwear on, together with several layers of clothing on the top part, as well as a pair of long, rubber boots. After giving my Honda a final check-over, I was off by 1.15 a.m.

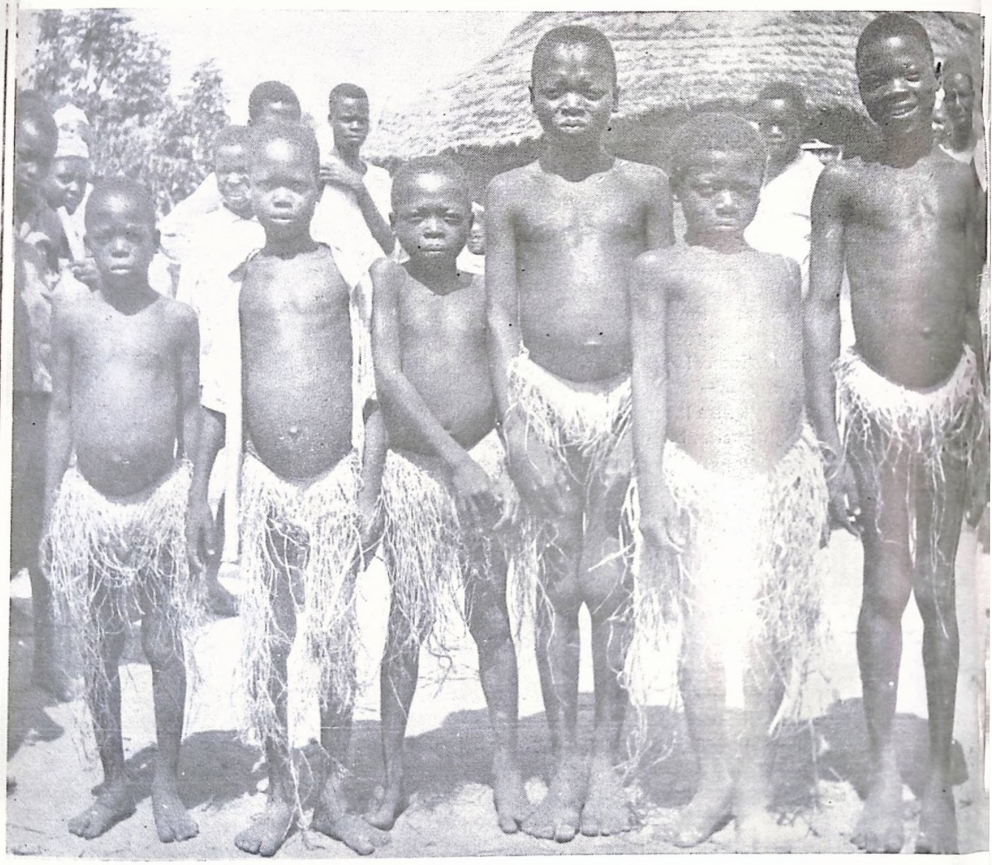
The morning chill (at this time of the year the night temperatures often drop to near-60 degrees Fahrenheit, considered 'ice-cold' in the Numan area), heightened by my 20–25 m.p.h. motion, made me grateful for my extra layers of clothing! My hands became slightly numb. But I made it into Bille shortly 2.45 a.m.—rather fast for the 26-mile-long trek by rough truck road *via* Bali. The town was perfectly still at this time, except for the crowing of some cocks. I parked by cycle on the other side of the church building. And no sooner had I gotten off the cycle than I was greeted by a number of persons who knew me: Pinon Ezekiel, who had just finished the Numan Teachers College and was teaching in the Bille Primary School; Asmuel Lekpan, another N.T.C. student; and Wycliffe, student at Advanced Teachers' College, Zaria. We went to Pastor Elisha's compound to arrange for my lodging. Was I really welcome at Bille? If these friends had any 'uncertainty' about my presence before my arrival, my early-morning arrival proved to them my determination and desire to be among them for this event and dispelled any trace of 'hesitation' to accept me into their midst. I had not come as an indifferent, 'sight-seeing spectator' but as a fellow brother in Christ.

Pinon Ezekiel made his neatly-kept hut and solid bunk bed available to me, while he went to sleep with his close relation or 'brother' Ignatius Dauda, another N.T.C. student. I slept quite comfortably. We woke up about 6.00 a.m., when it was still quite dark outside. Pinon informed me that the boys about to be circumcised were 'out in the bush,' more than a mile from Bille, but that they should be arriving at an assigned clearing for the march toward Bille about 7.00 a.m. At 6.30 a.m. I was anxious to go out to the clearing; but I was advised to wait until 7.00 a.m.—'There is plenty of time.' But it was apparent that the community was filled with a spirit of excitement and restlessness. The young candidates, ages 12–15, had undergone three months of preparatory dancing, training, and psychological 'building up'—together with due feasting and drinking. Now the climatic two days had arrived; now they were ready to endure whatever pains and hardships that were required of them by those who had already been 'initiated.' During this night they had been required to sleep out in the open on bare ground with nothing but a simple loin cloth for a covering against the chilly breeze and air. Up to this time, too, they had been required to wear nothing but a hand-made, burlap-like, gray-brown loin cloth (or 'langta') and also a wooden or ram's horn flute or whistle around their necks. While visiting Sarki Yakubu earlier, I had met five of such boys, one of whom demonstrated for me the use of his flute, held and blown in a traditional way—body bent forward and downward with every blow, one foot forward, as if in a show of 'defyance' against the 'impositions' from 'above'...the boys being forbidden to talk except by permission from the 'initiated.'

THE FIRST DAY: THE MARCH OF DEATH

When we arrived at the clearing, the young boys had not yet arrived. But the fathers and older brothers were already cutting green shrubs and branches as 'camouflage' to 'conceal' them as they would squat down along both sides of the

path of march of the young candidates for manhood. In this position they would appear like naturally-growing bushes lining the way; but, as the young boys would march past, these 'bushes' would suddenly 'jump up' at them and the persons behind them would make shouting, shrieking noises to frighten them as these 'bushes' ran past them. Yet, if all this was supposed to be a complete surprise, the older youths and men were still fetching and cutting bushes while the candidates were at last coming out from the 'bush' and gathering in the clearing, fully seeing what everyone else was doing. At the clearing I met Sylvanus, son of Sarki Yakubu, and Dimas Hassuruna, among others that I had known previously. We met and chatted with one another quite casually. The candidates were still in a daze, as if not fully awakened from their sleep, if not 'stunned' by the prospect



Dong area boys, about four months before circumcision

Bille candidates in traditional garb two weeks before circumcision

of things to come, combined with the chilling cold during the night. Small fires were built, and these boys warmed themselves by these. Immediately the older youths and fathers put on each candidate a grass, braided hat or helmet fitted with two cow horns pointing toward each other. Manasseh, a close relative of the chief and also the chief elder of the Bille congregation, served as my helpful guide and interpreter throughout the proceedings. (Many of my comments are based on his explanations). He later told me that this head piece imposes an image of humility, as of a cow humbly submitting to the yoke of its master. Strangely enough, the boys were next wrapped, from tops of horns to below their knees, in a long, hand-loomed cloth ('n'gurigula') similar in appearance as the loin cloth but generally cleaner and finer in workmanship, usual brown-gray, with dark stripes down its length. Manasseh later explained that this same cloth is used to wrap up the bodies of deceased persons—instilling in these young candidates the spirit of 'deathly seriousness' as well as of the readiness to die. Finally, each boy was given a long reed ('jijue') to hold in his hand during the march, per-

haps a symbol of security to hold on to. And, after they had vented their 'displeasure' by blowing their whistles, they were finally lined up in single file, each person putting both his hands on the shoulders of the person ahead. The musicians started to play, after a brief interruption, and then the long line of nearly 60 young boys and the large crowd of brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, and relatives slowly moved in dancing rhythm toward the Bille dwellings.

The mothers wept as they danced and sang along with the musical accompaniment (four flutists, using hollowed-out pieces of wood); some of the fathers wept, too. The 'bushes' kept 'leaping up' and shouting intermittently, while the boys were reminded that anyone showing but a trace of fear would be killed instantly. Manasseh told me that in the olden days, about the time he himself was 'initiated,' this threat was meant seriously and carried out on some occasions. Now, although no one would be actually killed, any boy who showed fear would be rejected by his parents and clan, he would be denied the right of marriage within his tribe, and all means of support would be cut off from him. Mr Irimiya, the town's dispenser, had confided these things to me afterwards. For he himself had had his own children circumcised at early ages to spare them and himself of the 'emotional grief' that the event induces in both the parents and the candidates. He had his children circumcised at the dispensary or medical center.

This march marked the 'violent separation' of these young people from 'childhood innocence' to the 'naked realities of responsible manhood'—from their mothers' 'apron strings' or psychological 'umbilical cords' to a life of independent 'struggle for survival' within the brutal 'jungles' of the world. Even now the boys are told that it is forbidden for them to look at their mothers. Even while their parents weep, some of them seriously believing that their children might not survive the ordeal, the youths must not show any 'weakening of heart' nor 'girlish whimper.' And so the long line of youths, together with the parents and the crowd, slowly moves in a dirge-like procession toward the zana-mat walls of Bille, the kicked-up dust sometimes compelling the youths to close their eyes and to bow their heads as they feel their way ahead.

At the edge of the Bille compounds the men command the mothers to depart, though the young girls can remain. This makes the mothers weep the more loudly and bitterly. But the mothers comply, if but reluctantly. And the boys, to show their 'unhappiness' and 'displeasure,' are permitted to vent their feelings and hostilities 'only' through their whistles or flutes. That they do: with an energetic and 'angry' gusto, as they enter into a circle for their concluding dance for the morning. The march began shortly before 8.00 a.m. and was concluded sometime after 9.00 a.m. but before 9.30 a.m. From now until about 2.00 p.m. the boys would relax, eat their breakfast, and have all their morning wear removed and replaced by colourful hats or head cloths and beautifully-coloured *zanes* or lower 'skirts' consisting of single lengths of cloth wound around the body, waist down, tied at the waist, with nothing above the waist except the ever-present whistles and the head-pieces ('jemenda'). During their breakfast, the boys were permitted to talk with each other; I chatted with them briefly (they were split up into groups) and posed with one of these groups for a photograph. It seemed that the 'tension' of the morning 'march of death' was completely gone.

I then retired and had a chicken dinner at Pastor Elisha's place, where we dined and talked and had *hira* or fellowship together, together with Wycliffe and another guest. By 2.00 p.m. the boys were dressed in their new outfits. Mr Irimiya told me that the lower cloths were cut by the parents from longer lengths of most valuable, and also most beautiful, material. It is that such luxurious wear has been a recent introduction, conforming to the increased wealth of the citizens, whereas the cloths worn during the morning march conformed more to ancient tradition. The chief had concluded a brief session with the candidates' fathers shortly after the morning march. In the distance, by a creek, less than a mile away, I could see the heads of the few initiation-age boys who had been circumcised at the Numan hospital a couple of weeks earlier. They had slept out 'in the bush,' separated

Top: Bille candidates being prepared for 'March of Death'

Bottom: Bille candidates about to start 'March of Death', Titus Ezekiel in the lead

Bille 'orchestra' during 'March of Death'

from the rest of the boys. Because they had violated the sacred *al'ada* or traditions of the tribe, they were caused to feel the displeasure of the village elders. They could look at what was going on only at a distance, being forbidden to talk and being watched over by an elder until the event should be over. Among these six or so boys was Theophilus, who had been accepted for admission into Bronnum for 1968. I had met him in Numan during his interview and saw him and his brother Agabus, younger, when they were in Numan to be circumcised at the hospital there. His reason for 'dodging' the Bille rite was his desire to be healed of his wound in time for school (starting January 5). Since I had hoped to 'adopt' him as my 'point of familiarity' within the ranks of the Bille candidates, I was somewhat disappointed by his 'withdrawal' from the 'contest.' He would have been an interesting follow-through after the event. I had already gotten to know his brother Dimas Hassuruna. But I did become somewhat acquainted with some of the candidates at this time and met a few of them at various occasions afterwards, all of them being anxious to reflect back upon their recent experience through my colour slides and tape recording.

The afternoon dance took place in front of the chief's compound, around a tree. The candidates

Zanamat shelter and recovery ward for Bille initiates

showed off their dancing ability, to the accompaniment of drums and a two-bell gong; some of them wore foot jingles to accent the rhythm. Periodically they would be told to stop dancing, to bow their heads down, not to look at their mothers. Then they would show their usual 'anger' by blowing their whistles and proceed with the dancing. As 4.30 p.m. was drawing near, the chief and I agreed that we could not wait for the nearby N'torong (about 1½–2 miles away from Bille) people and candidates to arrive for a group photograph. Therefore, I took one only of the Bille group, 58 in number; I posed myself with the group in some of the shots. Then the youths returned to their dance, which went on rather calmly and without too much noise. But then a massive cloud of dirt could be seen in the direction of the creek: a large crowd of N'torong people, accompanying about 60 candidates of their own to be 'initiated' at their own village, appeared as

Group of Bille candidates relaxing after the 'March of Death' with the author posing with them

a herd of buffalo stampeding toward Bille. When Manasseh at first pointed them out to me, I could hardly believe my eyes. It seemed that this large crowd was dancing in one place, not far from Bille. But as we got closer to it, it was apparent that it was moving slowly, chanting and dancing, toward Bille, to join with the Bille throng and candidates. Two lines of men and older youths were holding sticks (whips) in their hands; one man was holding an old gun up in his hand. All in all, it was a far more energetic crowd than the Bille crowd. Mr Manasseh kept saying: 'See how perfectly they dance. They are doing it the correct way. They are doing it much better than the Bille people are doing it. They are following the traditions correctly, while the Bille people are more and more departing from our ancient traditions. Watch closely how the N'torong people do it.' The dress and appearance of the N'torong candidates was not very distinguishable from that of the Bille youths, however, although their dancing rhythm was much more lively, the candidates accenting, the rhythm with their foot jingles and two groups of people chanting alternately. The next day they chanted in unison the phrase.

"*Wo—woye!*"/rest/rest/"*Wo—woye!*"/rest/rest: c[illegible] step/step, etc. (Notes with beat value: start c[illegible] staff and go down—A2/G½–C½!+/rest/rest....)

But no sooner had the N'torong crowd reache[illegible] the edge of the Bille compounds than its stic[illegible]

27th December, afternoon dance (Bille boys)

carrying youths separated into a clearing adjoining the primary school buildings and challenged each other to whipping duels. I was not really aware of their intentions until the Bille chief, Sarki Yakubu, ran ahead of them frantically trying to hold them off against this practice. Apparently they were confused by these instructions and began challenging each other in another, larger clearing where the Bille and N'torong groups were to join for the final, joint dance of the day. Not being able to use that area, they then tried again in a smaller open area adjoining the dancing field. A group of youths, some of them quite young, would strip to their waists and await their challengers, whips ready in hand. Then a group of challengers would emerge from the dancing throng, in rhythm with the singing and dancing, and would face their challengers, cursing them to arouse their anger and 'manly daringness.' Somehow, the chief's command had 'gone through.' So long as the chief or Manasseh was watching them, they could do nothing but go through the motions of whipping each other without actually touching each other.

Mr Manasseh explained to me that, the year

of a policeman to keep things 'within bounds.' No policeman showed up. Whether I liked it or not, I served the same function as an 'official observer of the law.' Also, had the whippings taken place, they could have created a scene more embarrassing to all concerned than the embarrassment I felt in being regarded as the 'tradition-restraining officer.'

As the youths realized that their continued attempts to prove their manliness were futile, the younger ones began observing me as equally as I was paying attention to them. I greeted them and let them listen to part of my recording of the day's proceedings on tape recorder. Some thought this to be a strange machine, indeed. By the time their curiosities were satisfied, it was nearly 6.00 p.m. and the chief was calling the whole throng, 1,100—1,300 persons in all, together for his final send-off words for the day. Everyone, except the chief, was seated and a strange hush filled the air as the chief spoke, welcoming the N'torong group and giving a word of blessing for the events still to come. I stood up to take a couple of photographs but I think by now the people were accustomed to my presence.

(To be concluded)

WOMANHOOD IN THE KALABARI

By

B. N. Ivalla

A THROUGH traditional customs and ritual [illegible] in most villages of the [illegible] every number year, few of [illegible] are now slightly modified because of [illegible] influence. One such is womanhood, a [illegible] rite of young girls of the same age-group which features prominently in Kalabariland, relating much of the mode in which it was initiated and practised by their great-great-grandmothers many years ago.

The early morning the ceremony begins, that *Iwala Ete* or *Bin Sara* is known as WOMANHOOD. Fattening room ceremonies are not [illegible]. The name fattening room is not a misnomer, for a young bride during this period puts on weight before the period she lives in isolation (away from sex) is complete. The occasion of her exit from the fattening room is celebrated with pomp and gaiety because, as mostly expected, a new virgin is about to be desecrated.

Kalabari customs, however similar to those performed at Bonny, Okrika, Nembe, Amasoma (the fresh water people) in many respects have some unique but distinctive features which interest historians.

Before a teenage Kalabari girl, say a girl of fifteen, who has experienced her first menstrual cycle, gets married, several rites are performed.

At that tender age, a young girl is taught the essential rules of marital life, which will guide her through her journey to marriage. Because of the importance of maintaining the same pattern of family behaviour, regarded as taking after the mother, she lives with her parents from birth till the beginning of these rites. She thus learns from early age the norms of puberty — how to cook, squat, walk, stand, laugh, speak to people of different social status, and the proper manner of sitting alone or before elders. Above all, she is taught what to say and how and when to say it politely. Small wonder then a Rivers girl is widely accepted as well bred, bred and behaved.

IKUTA EDE

After the menstrual period and prior to the *Iriabo* (fattening room girl) dance a young girl prepares for the *Ikuta Ede* (Beads Display) ceremony. To a young girl from a well-to-do family, this is a rare opportunity which, judged by the custom of the Rivers people, is determined by the value of strings of beads, necklaces, wristlets, armbands, etc. worn by the young girl during this occasion. A girl from a rich family may wear a silk or velvet, muslin, or tafetta, a rich blouse over silk skirt, or velvet, damask, or other rich woven skirts, thus revealing the maiden build, beauty and youth to the admiration of spectators, whose relatives are perhaps anxious to choose a new bride.

Usually, apart from the necklace looped round the neck, strings of beads, some cerise, golden corn, golden yellow flame in colour, measuring about one foot in diameter are also worn round the waist. These beads are tokens passed down from mother to daughter, collected or traded in when the Kalabari Chiefs had trade intercourse with the early Portuguese. In the remotest villages of Kalabariland, young girls and brides engaged in fattening room ceremony wear leg rattles; some show elaborate scarifications in the chest, arm or thigh, like Tiv girls during betrothal.

The family of an *Ikuta Ede* girl, who comes from a poor home, sometimes, borrow coral beads of various shapes and sizes, carefully chosen for the occasion as well as costly wrapper and strings of beads looped round the waist. There is no frugality of dress on this occasion; the fisherman or the trader who has tucked away several months' or even years' savings for the purpose of purchasing wrappers, shirts, jumpers, walking-sticks, etc., must provide for his family to keep pace with their colleagues.

Side view of the Ikuta Ede girl. Note the strings of expensive and colourful beads worn around the waist, the string of small coral beads worn diagonally across the body and the strings worn around the neck

KONJU FINA STATE

After this initial ceremony the girl goes about the town in mini wrapper which only covers half the thigh. Now she is known as *Pakiri Inwain Erebo Tubo* (the maiden in mini wrapper). Shortly after this the ceremony moves straight into the second phase—*Konju Fina*. Now the bride is dressed in very rich cloth in mini style. The erstwhile useful beads are stocked away leaving only the corals which are strung across the body diagonally, and worn round the neck. By now her maturity is certain and she finally moves up to the next stage—Tying the cloth full length)

BITE SARA

She can now tie her wrapper full ankle length. The ceremony continues with the display of family wealth evidenced by the richness of the cloths tied by *Iriabo*, the strings of coral bead worn round the neck and arm. A rich head gear is usually worn to crown it all. Such head gear may be made of coral beads, or some other rich material. It all goes to make WOMANHOOD complete. For this is the stage after which the bride can move into her husband's home as a full wife.

IRIABO DANCE

If she is lucky to have a child, after childbirth the *Iriabo* dance is performed. *Iriabo* fattens for a period of three or more months and after the outing she dances.

There are several steps danced by *Iriabo*. In some she lifts her two hands with a walking stick in the right and a saucer in the left or an ivory tusk in

A maid in the bite sara stage. The rich embrocature in the hair, the arm band, the wristlet, the knee band all go to portray the ancient wealth of the people. The necklace and diagonally worn beads as well as the others are all corals of varying shapes and sizes

the left and a fan in the right. She steps forward, right, right, left, and then suddenly changes direction moving left, almost running and then coming to a sudden stop, she stands and shakes for some time before continuing on another step. Some of her steps tally with the fall away in modern ball room dancing; she moves in a circle at times, then wheels herself round and round to perform another step. One half turn, to the right, another to the left, two or three steps forward, halt, then a move left, left, left, and so on; at times she wriggles like a snake as if in pain. The grace and poise of the dance sequence performed by a well groomed Iriabo excite spectators who donate more funds to her coffers in appreciation. There are among many other steps such steps as the *Ikosikosiko*, *Ma Buo Edele*, *Isuku*, etc.

Often it happens that the *Iriabo* is accompanied by her younger colleagues in the *Ikuta Ede*, *Konju Fina* and *Bite Sara* stages. When this is the case, they dance in the centre of the town perhaps led by a Chief's daughter or an expert in dancing and may be accompanied by a masquerade who in passing makes their play a success.

Iriabo in a standing posture with ivory-elephant's tusk in left hand and traditionally decorated fan in right hand

Such dances in the market square are preceded by outings round the town when they visit people from house to house, especially calling on their relations who donate to them freely.

These dances are always accompanied with singing by other women and members of the ceremonial group.

When *Iriabo* is the only performer there is a Master-drummer known as the *Kuku Faribo* (pot drum beater) who adds music to the show by beating on the tops of three to seven or eight water pots half filled with water, thus giving various frequencies and resonance thus producing rich and mellow music. He is assisted by two others: the *Alili Pelebo*, who plays on a small percussion drum, at times two or three such drums, and the *Kpokpo Pelebo* who plays a wooden gong to the tempo of the other drums to aid the singing. The three drummers together control the tempo of the chants and the steps to be danced by *Iriabo*.

Although it must be borne in mind that not every woman performs the *Iriabo* dance, close relatives may join in it. It is the practice to invite men of stature led by the bride's fiance *Iriabo Dibo* who donates graciously thereby further enriching the purse of *Iriabo*. They often dance with her in turns as and when she plants her walking stick in front of them.

Iriabo is led in all her steps by *Iriabo Yingibo*, *Iriabo's* mother, who in fact is either a close relative or another woman so appointed because of her knack in dance steps.

It is interesting to note that mini skirts which are worn today to the annoyance of most people are not new to Kalabari society. They date back to earlier than the fifteenth century and were frequently worn by teenage groups about to attain the full age of womanhood. In all aspects of the traditional ceremonies in womanhood, the young girls wear plaited or specially designed hair styles adorned with coral beads, sandwiched with gold and other brooches fixed in the hair which glitter in the sun during the dance and outing ceremonies.

These ceremonies leading to womanhood are not necessarily restricted to virgins only. They are part of a customary pattern designed for girls of the same age-group irrespective of the status of their parents. Although twenty years ago a newly married teenage girl who was found unchaste brought humiliation and disgrace to her family, it is no longer so these days. After the *Bite Sara*, a would-be bride would move to her new home, but not without completing the marital ceremonies ending up with *Bo Ari I Lekiri* (advance for recognition). The morning after this nocturnal ceremony, the husband's family, if the girl is chaste, take the traditional presents to their mother-in-law amidst jubilation marked by singing and dancing.

On the other hand, if a new bride is found unchaste, presents are not offered to her parents, rather, gloom decends on the village as members of the husband's family frown with disdain. However, this custom has been overtaken by the influence of western civilization and husbands no longer bother their heads about virgins. Although the womanhood ceremony is performed with some zest till today, some stages are left out. Nowadays the *Ikule Ede* and *Konju Fina* stages are skipped during the womanhood ceremonies.

The world of virgins is fast disappearing but the pride of womanhood ceremony is still with us. Whatever one may say about the 'grapes are sour' attitude of modern parents who can not rear their daughters chaste and scorn those who can, THERE IS GLORY IN VIRGINITY.

Iriabo and Iriabo dibo out to do a dance

Iriabo and her attendant (Iria pali bo). Iriabo never moves alone so an attendant always accompanies her

Iriabo and Iriabo Yingibo, who leads her in all her dances

The ceremonial set. It is customary to have the young lady in the bite sara stage to lead the parade. She is always followed by Iriabo, then the konju fina girl with the ikuta ede girl bringing up the rear

Literary Supplement

THE FUNCTION OF THE SONG IN OLOKUN CEREMONY

By

M. Welton

IN this brief article, I propose to examine the function of the song related to the Bini superhuman spirit, *Olokun*. Next to *Osanobua* in power, *Olokun* is the powerful son of God. God has delegated the control of wealth, health and fertility to *Olokun*. *Olokun* can be viewed then as the repository of blessing, serving as the source of such to those operating within the framework of this Bini traditional religious system.

One cannot trace precisely how each song has come about. It is possible, however, to make a number of generalizations. Each song now sung in *Olokun's* presence has arisen out of a particular historical situation in which man was before *Olokun*. For example, one may have come to *Olokun* with a seemingly insoluble problem. The priest may have received a message from the deity, taking the form of advice, revealing the nature of man's problem, and what he should do about it. Conversely, some individual may have received blessing from *Olokun*. Thus he would have come before *Olokun* to praise and give thanks to him. Essentially, these songs have arisen out of man's interaction and communication with *Olokun* in the many experiences of life, but experiences that are more likely to be related to the concern and sphere of power and authority of *Olokun*: health, wealth and the giving of children.

In my analysis of Bini Olokun-songs, we will also see that these songs contain a great deal of information about the deity. Although it is possible to categorize Olokun-songs (as I shall do), each song contains some information about the deity. A newly initiated member of any Olokun-cult will soon know precisely who *Olokun* is, what he can do, and has done for man.

The Olokun-song has another very important function—a practical one—besides that of revealing information about the deity. During the performance of the *Ugiolokun*, various members bring their requests before *Olokun*. The appropriate song is then sung. For example, a woman may come before the *Olokun* shrine desirous of money. She will offer her prayer. The members may sing '*ya ya ya o, ya y' uwa re o; ya ya ya o,*' which means '*Olokun*, please bring fortune upon me.' Whether the narration of one's message to the deity be thanksgiving, praise or supplicatory in nature, the communal singing of the right song at the right time reinforces and strengthens the efficacy of the prayer offered to *Olokun*.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that Olokun-songs serve another function not discoverable from a study of the transcribed songs. The Olokun-song is integrally connected with what seems to be the main focus of the *Ugiolokun*. The *Ugiolokun* is the formal ceremony performed every five days. The main focus of this ceremony is the hoped-for descent of *Olokun* upon his chosen channel of communication, the priest. Accompanied by dancing, drumming and the playing of gongs, the song appears to assist or persuade *Olokun* to descend. The singing and dancing are preliminary to the desired possession—experience, for it is then that the people can hear their deity speak, albeit indirectly.

I propose to analyze a number of Olokun-songs under the following general categories: praise, supplicatory and didactical. I note here that it is difficult to categorize these songs precisely as some of the songs contain elements of each category. After giving each song with its translation, I will suggest the practical

situation in which each song would be sung and the information revealed about the deity.

I. Praise Songs

Uwu ghi gbe mwen; emiamwen ghi gbe mwen; do, orimwian, orimwian do!

Death will not kill me, sickness will not kill me, hail, *Olokun*.

Situation: Confidence is being expressed in *Olokun*. One has faith that his life will be protected from bad spirits now that he is before *Olokun*. One's protection against evil spirits is thus ensured.

Information about the deity: Olokun is able to protect one from ill health. The Bini believe that evil spirits cause sickness.

Okun mwen n' lele, a gha lele ogie ai ghi vio oya.

I follow *Olokun*, for you cannot follow a king and be slighted.

Situation: The situation is one of thanksgiving. The singer telling *Olokun* that since he has followed him, he has never been a disappointed person. All things have been going well since he began to follow *Olokun*. He is also inviting other members to become constant members of *Olokun*.

Information about the deity: Here we see the very high regard *Olokun* has in the conceptualization of the Bini. He is thought of as a king, a person of great power, *Olokun* is, in fact, the powerful son of *Osanobua*.

Ese ne olokun ru me, ona re ese ne ghi fo vb' oto.

What *Olokun* has done for me, I will always remember.

Situation: Olokun has met one's needs. This song is offered in praise of *Olokun* for what has been done for the singer.

Information about the deity: Olokun is the source of blessing for man.

I ya nomo, do; I ya hehehe, I ya nomo, do!

Olokun (bearer of child), I salute you, I salute you!

Situation: Olokun is being addressed as the giver of children. This song is sung in praise of *Olokun* for performing this particular function for man.

Information about the deity: Olokun is the source of children. It seems here that *Olokun* is ready to assist females more than males. It is also worth noting that the majority of those serving *Olokun* are women.

Gi 'ma d' ugi' olokun oghogho ma ye

Let us celebrate the festival of *Olokun* for we are in absolute gladness of mind. We are all happy.

Situation: This is obviously a song of praise. Thanksgiving is being offered. There have been no set-backs; all has been successful. This successfulness is attributed to the workings of *Olokun*.

Information about the deity: Olokun is worthy of being served because he has rained wealth, blessing and children upon us.

II. Didactic Songs

A gha lele okhuo, a dee

If one follows the dictates of a woman, the end will always be downfall.

Situation: The man making a prayer before *Olokun* must have been telling *Olokun* some problem related to his familial situation. When *Olokun* descended upon the priest, he revealed to the priest that this man was depending too much on woman, which was the cause of his problems. We learn that woman should not be solely trusted. One should not live carelessly.

Information about the deity: Olokun has superhuman insight into the nature of man's problems. He is also able to solve man's problems, through his chosen media of communication, the priest.

I vbare, I vbare, I vbare edionikaro.

I meet, I meet those who go before me.

Situation: This song is sung in remembrance of those who have departed and were responsible for the priest's membership in the *Olokun* cult. Before the present priest served *Olokun*, others served before him. Those gone before (*edionikaro*) served *Olokun* faithfully. So should those presently serving *Olokun*. The most important lesson we learn is that *Olokun's* service must be upheld by those whom he chooses.

Information about the deity: We learn the importance of the members following in the footsteps of those who served *Olokun* faithfully in the years gone by. *Olokun's* orders must be carried out without disobedience. The rules and regulations of *Olokun* must be carried out properly so that the good name of *Olokun* will continue to be praised.

U gha ru n'uwa, ghe mia mia mwen

If I, *Olokun*, bless you, do not forget me.

Situation: Man desires the help of *Olokun*. *Olokun* has responded to man's plea for help. This is a warning

IMO HILL
A SHORT STORY

By

Mrs A. Adesigbe

ILESHA is a thriving Yoruba town in Western Nigeria, but whenever I revisit it, Elsie's story comes to my mind so vividly, it seems as if it had happened only yesterday.

I was then a young Rural Medical Officer and on the day I met Elsie, I had been working from dawn at the various dispensaries situated between Ibadan, my Headquarters, and Ilesha and at six-thirty in the evening, I was still at Ilesha seventy-two miles away from my home. I remember my relief when the last patient left. I had then packed my bags and hurried out to call my assistant and my driver. Passing through the waiting-room, I had stopped short! Sitting alone and still as a monument was a woman. She was dark and so gaunt, she appeared taller than she probably was. Her face, averted from me, was long and narrow and she clutched at a tightly tied cloth bundle on her lap. She was wearing, like the people of the nearby Mid-West of Nigeria, bright and shining head-ties, with the usual blouse and wrapper. Though exhausted, I approached the waiting figure and with a forced smile, I said,

'Well Ma'm, and what can I do for you? Everyone has gone. Why did you not ask my assistant to show you into my office?'

She then looked at me!—God! not at me, rather through me, so far away was her look; so uncanny the light brown eyes, set strangely in so dark a face. She had not even returned my smile, merely replied to my question in pidgin English,

'Assistant, he na' fool! He not 'gree to call you, so me, I sit. Think you 'na Docta here sah?

'Yes, I am the Doctor.'

'Well me na' Elsie and I cam' from one far place to look for job. Me wanta job for Whiteman house.'

Her manner was strange. Then it struck me that her eyes constantly sought the window to stare long at Imo Hill, which was visible, though very distant. Imo Hill is the central peak of the dusty blue hills of Ilesha and it is visible wherever one may travel in the town. The hill had never failed to fascinate me with its dark-wooded look and a seeming air of remoteness. Perhaps it was the tales of the ancient Priests who had once lived there and who were reputed still to haunt it that held me; but at the time I had wondered what spell it held over the strange being before me.

'What kind of job?' I asked with some surprise. Plaintively she replied.

'Any job, working for whiteman inside house—you na 'Docta' and so you know plenty Oyingbo—me na' poor woman and wanta work.'

With this she had thrust a bundle of papers into my hands—they were testimonials. I hesitated, being ill at ease at her presence but after reading her testimonials I said sympathetically:

'Wait here ma—I am going to 'phone to someone in need of a helper.'

An idea had come to me—surely a most ill-omened one! Outside Ilesha resided the elderly widow of a deceased European missionary. She was a Mrs Rona Thompson. She had elected to remain to work in Nigeria after her husband's death. The mission had given her a chalet with a large compound to use. Here, she conducted classes for adults, held Sunday School classes and prayer meetings. She maintained a library and kept a fruit and vegetable garden for mission use. Mrs Thompson kept two servants—an African male cook, Sunday and a female companion—who I learnt had left. So I rang up Mrs Thompson and explained my reasons for phoning. Her voice came over the wires, clear, crisp and brisk.

'Thank you so much Dr Ajumobi, please send her to me with her testimonials. She surely could not be

[illegible] Then [illegible]. Then [illegible].

[illegible] Elsie [illegible].

[illegible] Elsie to Mrs Thompson's [illegible] suddenly, I had a sudden premonition of her. That look had made her face so demonic or was it [illegible] I shivered, then dismissed the thought.

The dispensing of medicine to painful, sweating and swarming crowds under varying degrees of heat made me forget about Mrs Thompson and her new female companion. However an incident soon brought them very forcibly back to my mind.

Driving home through Ilesha one evening, I saw Sunday, Mrs Thompson's cook, talking excitedly to the dispensary watchman. Evidently he was waiting with the hope of seeing me, for he called out to me, to stop. As he ran towards me, I read fear in his eyes as he stammered out these words.

'Master, [illegible] woman you bringa for we house!'

'Calm yourself Sunday. What's wrong?' I laughed [illegible] thinking that after all Sunday only had a [illegible] tale to tell.

'No [illegible] laugh oh! Elsie has bad, bad ju-ju. When my Missus [illegible] with her she go for her room [illegible] and laugh with something she just bringa' [illegible] but it dey for one Calabash. [illegible] I fear look at this Elsie she [illegible]. That not for good, oh!'

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] her head was a basket [illegible]. I was about to call [illegible] lost in a trance. [illegible] and ragged creature [illegible], who was hungrily [illegible] seen me and [illegible] forest. Who, I wondered, was Elsie and whence came she? Without delay, on my return home, I wrote to the mission people on her testimonials. The next day I visited Mrs Thompson. An unusually impatient and nervous Mrs Thompson had met me, she who was usually so very brisk and sure of herself! When I asked for Elsie she told me that Elsie had taken to disappearing daily in the afternoons.

'Do you know to where she goes?'

'No, Dr Ajumobi, but I surely intend to know and check it!'

I said, 'Mrs Thompson I really came to see you about Elsie and advise you about her, as I feel a certain responsibility having brought her to you. Certain incidents make me conclude she may not be sound in mind. Has not your cook Sunday told you of her strange wanderings to Imo? I myself saw her one day.'

Impatiently she replied, 'Oh don't listen to Sunday; He has become so superstitious and fickle through thinking more of palm-wine than of his spiritual needs. I do not fear Elsie or her ju-ju as Sunday calls it'.

'Despite that, Mrs Thompson I suggest we contact Elsie's former employers and let her stay in the main hospital under observation until we hear more about her. This would make me feel much easier in my mind about you'.

'[illegible] Doctor, I understand these people better than [illegible] Lagos before you were [illegible] with them. Elsie is just [illegible] interesting to be [illegible]'.

I [illegible] and was about to make a sharp [illegible] myself. Despite Mrs Thompson [illegible] she was after all a naive and [illegible] woman. She professed to know my own people better than I [illegible] had never been amongst those who [illegible] to penetrate into or understand the culture and customs of those whom they were governing. She was amongst the stupid who lived apart in every way placing herself at a height, Christ did not reserve for himself on earth.

But there was no time to reply for just then Elsie returned. I hardly listened to Mrs Thompson's shrill remonstrations, as I was watching the servant. Never had I seen the glint of hate showing so clearly in anyone's eyes before; eyes grown so very hard with sudden hate! Then Elsie lowered her head to listen respectfully; and she went through to the kitchen at the back of the house with a:

'Sorry Missis. Me naw know you naw go like make I go out,'

With many misgivings, I left the house, my mission unfulfilled.

A few days later the reply to my letter came. The contents were concise. I was informed that Elsie had run away from the mission with the testimonials. As a child, Elsie had been taken by the mission from a crazed and wretched woman who had been found wandering around Imo Hill. She had been driven from her home because of some deformity and derangement. The mission had taken and trained Elsie and they thought she had developed with no touch of her mother's derangement. She had therefore been sent out to work as a housemaid and given testimonials. It was all too soon realized that she could not work far away from those who had reared her. It was also unfortunate that she had learnt something of her own story through foolish gossips, and from then she had begun running away and always taking with her the first testimonials given to her. She had usually been found at Imo, looking for the mother the Mission had presumed dead until they had received my letter. Immediately, I prepared to go to Mrs Thompson's. My telephone began to ring but I ignored it. The ringing was so persistent that I rushed to answer it thinking it might be an emergency call from the hospital. Over the wires came sounds of convulsive sobbing and a thick voice croaked out:—

'Masta cam' oh! cam'—na my Missis done die so! Oh! oh!'

It was Sunday and I was immediately geared into greater action and with a terrible speed I drove to Mrs Thompson's house. Sunday had met me outside the compound, shaking with fear and in a state of near collapse.

'Masta, thank God you done cam' na snake, big ju-ju snake, don surround Missis' in neck Elsie she go but na she wey put the calabash with the snake under Missis bed, after Missis she sleep—Wey 'tin me eye de, see oh!" and with this the boy collapsed and was of no further use to anyone. I entered Mrs Thompson's house alone. Already the Mission Doctor and the Ilesha Police were there. What I saw on the bed unnerved and horrified me, hardened Doctor though I was!.

Elsie has never again been seen, nor the crazed creature, her Mother, who had roamed Imo forest; Imo Hill guards its secrets well and the vast depths of Africa make it possible for such as Elsie to become as if they had never been—who is there to care? And despite all the changes in our midst Imo Hill still stands, remote and aloof as before—a symbol of our past seeming to mock our modern growth, decked as we are in borrowed plumes of doubtful values. On some days the peak of the hill is brightly clear as it shimmers in a haze of glaring sunlight, its dark silent woodedness more intense; other times the summit of the hill is merged in a density of floating soft white clouds. Sometimes the hill is a mere ominous, threatening blurr on the landscape looming darkly from under heavy thunderclouds. Moonlight makes the hill silvery and pencil clear in the darkness, more serene, more intense, more remote, holding as it were within it all the secrets of Africa's future, for us to read, if we could but understand.

AGE GROUP IN YORUBA TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

By

A. Fajana

AFRICAN traditional society was, in many ways, very complex. There were many institutions some of which are still to be studied in detail. One of such institutions is the age-group which is sometimes referred to as age-grade.

The age-group was an association embracing all people born about the same time in a town or village who were initiated during a single period of four to six consecutive years. It was a corporate entity, whose members not only felt conscious of their unity and of their distinctiveness from both older and younger groups in the village but also often acted together.[1]

Age-group was based on the principle that the proper companions for a youth were to be sought among those in the same age of physical development. To each group was attached its rights and duties which must be learnt at each stage; and for every individual to be successful in life, he must be sure of the harmonious support of the group to which he belonged. On the other hand, society tried to imbue a group with a sense that powerful protective qualities radiating through each stage were best achieved by adhering to the conventional manner of life that the society believed to be right for the group.

Each group determined its own organization, rules, duties though, as we shall see, definite duties might be assigned for a particular age-group.

In some parts of Nigeria, membership of the groups was compulsory and the groups in such areas formed a vertical cross-section of the society. In other parts like Nupe, although every boy or youngman belonged to one or the other age-group membership was not compulsory. In other words, no coercion was used to induce individuals to join, even though failure to do so would be regarded as unusual, and under certain circumstances, even suspicious.[1]

This paper deals specifically with age-group in Yoruba traditional society. But it needs to be emphasized that it is not a feature of Yoruba society alone. As has been indicated, it was to be found all over Africa and constituted an important feature of Nigerian traditional organization. It was common both in Nupe and Hausa; in fact the rank system was common all over Northern States of Nigeria.[2]

Among the Tiv, it was so powerful that it played an important part in the judicial system of the society. There were formerly certain types of disputes which were settled by the age-groups acting in concert.[3] In the Muslim areas of the North, the influence of Islam seemed to have reduced the influence of the age-group if it had not totally killed it.

How do we explain the present distribution of age-group in Yorubaland? Discussing the question with respect to the whole of the Southern States of Nigeria, Talbot asserted that the greater part of the Southern States was divided into age-classes but that in Yorubaland it could only be found among the Ekiti people who became acquainted with them when under Benin

1. For further details, *see* A. W. Hoenle: 'An outline of active conception of Education in Africa,' *Africa* Vol. 4 April, 1931 p. 152 ff. Also P. H. Gulliver: *Social Control in an African Society*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1963.

1. S. F. Nadel: *A Black Byzantium. The Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria*, O.U.P. London, 1942, pp. 383-4.
2. *Ibid*. p. 16.
3. Paul Bohannan: *Justice and Judgment Among the Tiv*, O.U.P. London, 1957 pp. 157-8.

rule.[1] He went on to say that age-group in Ekiti was confined to Owo people who borrowed the custom from Benin. He arrived at this conclusion because each of the five age-groups in Owo had a distinctive name of Benin origin.[2]

There are many errors in this statement. Firstly, age-group, as this article will clarify, was an important feature of Yoruba traditional society and was not restricted to a particular area. Secondly, it still exists today in many parts, though with modifications. Thirdly, it is not true to say that age-group in Ekiti was limited to Owo people because Owo has always been distinct from Ekiti. In other words, contrary to what Talbot has said, age-group in Ekiti could not be a borrowing directly or indirectly from Benin.

There is no doubt that there were connexions among Benin, Owo and Ekiti if stories of origin are of any significance.[3] Moreover, since the fifteenth century, Benin had undergone a great deal of expansion, especially under Ewuare, Ozolua, Esigie and so on.[4]

During this period Benin armies made considerable incursions into parts of Ekiti and Akoko at various times; but what is not clear is whether Benin cultural impact was strong enough to justify Talbot's statement. However, Bradbury explains that whenever Benin conquered an area, she would divide it into tribute units, and representatives of Benin king would be appointed to watch his interest.[5] But as soon as the hold was slackened, the representatives usually settled down in the kingdom to engage in a trade, such as metal work which was more attractive than serving as an isolated agent of a distant king. Sometimes the representatives intermarried with the inhabitants of the kingdom and were eventually absorbed. Oguntuyi[1] confirms this view that Benin conquests only resulted in nominal overlordship as the conquered territories were merely declared as vassals, and there was no control over them.

There were however limited possibilities for cultural exchange between Benin and the conquered areas. For example, trade was opened up and many articles brought from Portugal to Benin also reached Owo, Ekiti and other areas. These articles included cloths, swords, pen-knives, guns and gun-powder.[2] In the same way it was possible for Ekiti to have borrowed the institution of age-group from Owo, assuming that Owo inherited it from Benin. We know, for example that Owo, like Benin, invaded Akoko on many occasions. Akoko and Owo traditions speak of at least twenty-seven invasions of Akoko country by Owo armies.[3] Yet age-group is not as strong in Akoko as in many parts of Ekiti where contacts with Owo were less close.

What emerges from this evidence is that age-group in Ekiti and Owo can not be regarded as a borrowing from Benin. As Talbot suggests, there are five age-groups in Owo, but the four associations or Otu which survive at Benin are not real age-groups but castes which are entered at puberty. If age-group was a heritage of Benin, one would expect, under normal circumstances to find remnants, at least, of true age-group in Benin itself; but this is not the case. Instead, outside Owo and Benin, we find age-group functioning in its original form.[4]

The present distribution of age-group in Yoruba-

1. P. A. Talbot: *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria* 4 Vols. O.U.P. London 1926, III, 543.
2. The five names are: *Ilera*, *Ndebumor*, *Ijamija*, *Okor* and *Omoregiwa*; *Ibid.* p. 544.
3. S. Johnson: *The History of the Yorubas* C.M.S. Lagos 1921 pp. 7–8 Jacob Egbaveoba: *A Short History of Benin* I.U.P. 1960 Ch. I There are various reports confirming the connexion. *e.g.* F. B. Carr: Int. Report on Owo and Ifon Districts 8 12 34; also J. H. Beeley 2 12 34.
4. R. E. Bradbury: *Benin Kingdom and the Edo Speaking Peoples* I.A.I. 1957, p. 20 ff. Also J. Egbaveoba, *op. cit.*, p. 14 ff.
5. R. E. Bradbury: *op. cit.*, p. 44 ff.

1. F. A. Oguntuyi: *A History of Ado-Ekiti* 2 Vols. Adutaleke Printing Works, Akure. I. p.1.
2. *Ibid.* p. 2.
3. N. A. I. Beeley. 'Intelligence Report on Akoko Division,' pp. 1–20. Also M. B. Ashara: *The History of Owo*, 1951 pp. 11–24.
4. Field-work in Ido district of Ekiti Division shows that in many towns and villages, there are as many as ten age-groups. In Aye, for example, the following groups still exist and many of them are functioning well. They are: *Origbo*, *Ekunle*, *Owere*, *Ose-Egiri*, *Kogido*, *Ose-Esa*, *Efosan*, *Uku-Esa*, *Elegbe* and *Agba*. These names are fixed and groups are promoted to the next higher one every four years, until the highest grade is reached at about fifty. This means that the lowest grade is constituted at about the age of ten.

land can be attributed to various factors. Firstly in areas where monarchy was very strong such as Oyo and those areas which came directly under her rule for centuries, the rulers seemed to have removed the organization of public duties from the hands of existing bodies such as the age-group and placed it firmly under the king's control. For example, no special duty was assigned to the modified type of age-group in Oyo today because the Alafin had shared political and other responsibilities among his chiefs, particularly the Oyomesi. The Areja title, a recognized family, was responsible for cleaning the market.[1] Representatives of the family could ask sellers to sweep the surrounding. They were paid indirectly for their work, for they were permitted by law to take without payment a limited quantity of what they liked from sellers such as yams, beans, and salt. Their role in this capacity was recognized. In the same way the repair of the Afin was arranged by various chiefs each having a particular duty to perform. The work was co-ordinated by the Aremo.[2] This strong administrative machinery of the court made an organization like the age-group redundant. In Ile-Ife[3] public works were arranged by groups of men drawn from various compounds, thus making age-group as a government within a government unnecessary.

Secondly, evidence seems to point to the fact that what remained of the age-group was swept away during the Yoruba wars of the nineteenth century. From about 1821 until they were defeated in Oshogbo in 1840, Ilorin armies destroyed most of the Northern Oyo towns.[1] They raided old Oyo itself, cut off its supplies and forced the Alafin to abandon his capital. Furthermore, there was migration southwards. Towns like Ogbomosho and Iwo emerged and the overflow settled in Ife, Ijebu and Egba farms. New towns such as Ibadan, Ijaiye, Modakeke, Abeokuta grew up. This process, led to the decay of many customs and institutions and those which did not contribute directly to the dignity of the monarchy seemed to be overlooked. Even when attempts were made to restore tradition, those which allowed for the recognition of the monarchy generally took precedence. For example, all that Atiba could do was to set up a well ordered court full of splendour and colour to boost his position. It seems likely also that in the smaller towns and remote villages which were removed from the theatres of war, life probably went on among their inhabitants, unaware of the great events just as were the peasants of England during the civil wars of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.[2]

Thirdly, in the hilly and dissected topography of the Ekiti country contacts were made difficult and therefore, the sub-kingdoms were kept almost intact.[3] This communication difficulty, ironically, made it possible for the states to keep their culture intact or very little modified, preventing devastating influence as to be found in the more open areas in the Northern States. For even though Oyo might molest Ijesha, Igbomina Ekiti and even Ijebu, there was no real hold. It is not surprising that the institution of age-group remained strong or only slightly modified in these areas.

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1. Mr J. A. Okunlola of the Registrar's Office, University of Ife, Ile-Ife informs me that the Iyaloja title is still important in Oyo even though the Local Council has taken over the cleaning of the market. The system whereby authorized people take things from sellers without payment was not regarded by the people as an oppressive one even though it could be and was sometimes, misused.

2. I am grateful for the two long interviews granted me by Chief Adedokun Gbadamosi, Balogun Maye of Oyo, September, 1964.

3. Mr Ogunfidodo of Ile-Ife shared his wide experience of this subject with me in an interview in July, 1965. The position in Ketu is similar to that of Ife. The Alaketu, in an interview in January, 1966 claimed that organization of the State was through the court and that age-group is now a social affair.

1. C. K. Meek: *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*, O.U.P. London, 1937, p. 197.

2. I am grateful to Prince William Adetona (now the Orangun of Illa) who granted me a long interview. He had a wide knowledge of the working of the age-group in this area. The validity of the system of choosing names by oracle is still subject to controversy. There are many who believe that *Ifa* is an accurate method of consultation. There is need for research into this claim but it cannot be easily dismissed.

3. J. F. A. Ajayi and R. S. Smith: *Yoruba Warfare in the 19th Century*, C.U.P. 1964, p. 64 ff.

It is important to point out that the age when people began to be organized into age-groups varied from place to place. In some areas the groups were organized from about the age of eight in an informal manner. In other areas, groups remained unorganized for a long time, sometimes until members reached the age of fifteen or eighteen.

In some areas, there were rituals marking the formation of the group. For example in Ekiti, this consisted merely of summoning all the children of about eight years old in the village and giving them recognition. On such an occasion, a leader was usually chosen.

The choice of a name for the group and of a leader also varied from society to society. Among certain Ekiti peoples, the names of the various groups were fixed and as soon as the group was constituted, it merely took the name appropriate to the age. In Illa Orangun[1] and the Igbomina area the choice of the name of the group and its leader was made by consulting the *Ifa* Oracle. The situation in Ijebu was slightly different; the group was constituted when children of about 7–10 in a village or quarter of a town came together and asked the king for a name. The king would then confer a name after consultation with other chiefs. The name given usually related to an important event that occurred in the life of the reigning king. For example, Obagoroye in Ijebu-Ode indicated that the group was constituted when a new king had just ascended the throne. There is probably no parallel among the Yoruba to certain practices among some Ibo tribes, whereby the group was not allowed to take a name until it had performed a deed of prowess, such as raiding a neighbouring village. Today, their names still show that they had taken part in some constructional work such as the building of a road or a bridge.

The intervals between one age-group and another also varied from place to place. Four years interval seems to be more common. Since the groups were not constituted at the same age, it was common to have as many as ten age-groups among some tribes as we have seen in the case of Ekiti and only four in the case of Owo. There seems also to be a great deal of mobility between groups within a tribe. In Abeokuta, for example, a man who belonged to the 17–20 age-group might decide to join the former, he was likely to have more authority within his group because of his age. But unless he had great ability, he would not have any authority in the latter. The advantage of joining an older group, however, was that one would enjoy the privileges of seniority over the junior group from which one had moved.

The age-group as an institution was, in the first instance, a convenient means of differentiating 'seniors' from 'juniors' in a society where seniority was of a great social importance. Among the Yoruba it was usual to show respect to those older than oneself. This meant that a senior age-group had the right to direct and command a junior one if necessary. In this way the institution provided a suitable means by which public duties could be performed according to accepted principles or whereby education could be imparted. A group might be commanded by the elders or the political authorities to clear the footpath to the next village, to clear the bush round a chief's house or the market, to carry yams for an important chief, to act as market police, or even mount guard in times of war. In fact, all political duties of a collective nature were performed, and what little political rights could be most effectively asserted collectively were claimed on the basis of membership of the group. For once a duty was apportioned to the groups, by their official designation, it became the task of their leaders to arrange the details of execution among the rank and file. Here the work of the group in carrying out the educational policy of the society can easily be appreciated. For, if any process not known previously was assigned, the opportunity must be taken to learn it. Every member of the group had to be 'standardized,' that is, trained in a way to be able to do the duty appropriate to the age. To take one example, a group responsible for the repairs of the chief's house could not complain of inability to climb the palm-tree to cut leaves. In fact, any member of the group could be called upon to fetch palm-leaves (a thing which involves the knowledge of climbing). It was therefore the responsibility of the group to so train its members in all ways—in punctuality, physical fitness—so as to be capable of carrying out promptly its public duties. Many devices were used to encourage members to work. For example, at a public work, groups usually came with their drummers who beat to a working rhythm and made it a happy thing to work. It was common among the Yoruba to work to the

1. *Ibid.* 53.

[illegible] announced everyone [illegible] the roll was called [illegible]

[illegible] the day. Any people were [illegible] not only rebuked by [illegible] food and drinks were [illegible] people would only qualify for [illegible] it might become necessary to [illegible] the usually performed [illegible] to the group. Those who showed disrespect, disobedience or [illegible] the leader. The leader [illegible] the group, whose [illegible] might be, had [illegible] over all. Office too, he was not allowed to [illegible] work as a sign of respect for his office. But he and the leading workers ruled.[a]

At the end of a public duty, it was usual for delinquent members to be dealt with. First, the late-comers were accorded the opportunity to explain why they did not come punctually. Usually, they would apologize as there could be no satisfactory excuse since everybody had been duly notified. In most cases, they were pardoned, the only exceptions being habitual late-comers who might be asked to do extra work or be sentenced to pay some fines. Those who were absent were generally severely punished except where absence could be convincingly proved to be due to illness or other handicaps. Such cases would naturally be overlooked. But, unless so excused, absentees were heavily fined.[b]

Since incompetence and indolence could not be condoned among members of an age-group, it was the responsibility of the group itself to provide means whereby its members would be trained to acquire the necessary skill. Training in physical fitness was particularly necessary because strength and agility were required at almost every stage of development. To meet the demand, the group would organized various activities including flooding, swimming and wrestling. There were festivals at which the young trained participants and young men willingly offered themselves to be flogged in order to display their ability to endure pain.

The age-group was the guardian of public morality. Each was a sense monitor for its own members. It was usual for common action to be taken against members who committed an offence or behaved in an unseemly manner. A man who was caught stealing would be called upon to restore the stolen property and then pay a fine. The elders of the village might consider the fine an adequate penalty as to make further action unnecessary. Rudeness and disobedience to elders were usually dealt with firmly and severely. A case of rudeness to an

a. *Ibembe* is a type of drum with a wooden frame and covered at both ends with leather whose diameter varies between 12"–24".

b. As soon as a member was flogged, the whole village or quarter would immediately hear of it. This was regarded as a disgrace and most people would avoid such a situation by working to the [illegible] A person flogged for laziness [illegible] find a wife when old [illegible]

[illegible] into two or three [illegible] of officers and [illegible] the ordinary members [illegible] a few kolanuts and [illegible] presented on a fixed [illegible] leader. But with a habitual offender, a goat or a sheep might be caught anywhere in the village, killed and eaten. The owner would be advised to demand compensation from the offender. The action of the group was final and not subject to questioning. Serious cases might lead to expelling the member from the group—a tragic thing since it amounted to ostracism. The member might decide to leave the society.

1. In certain societies, the organization of wrestling tournaments could become very elaborate. At first, informal practices would take place in the front of the huts in the farm or in any open space where boys would be taught various techniques. There were informal practices too at home especially when women were not near to raise alarm. By the time the boy had become a member of an age-group, these practices would have become more and more formal. Wrestling contests were arranged within the age-group itself, then between members of the group living in different quarters in the same village and finally sometimes between age grades from two adjacent villages. These contests were occasions for members to advertise their ability. Participants prepared various charms and learnt incantations believed to be capable of 'falling' the opponent or making it impossible for the user to be vanquished. Victors on such occasions were admired not only by their group but also by young ladies.

elder by a member was first reported to the age-group leader who would then lay the complaint before the group at their subsequent meeting. The group would then investigate the matter, and if confirmed, they would send a delegation to the elder concerned to tender their apology on behalf of the offending member. This was invariably appreciated and accepted. But the matter did not end there. The member would be strongly condemned by the group for his behaviour[1] and could be fined or suspended from the group.

Misdemeanour of a more serious nature within the age-group was treated with corresponding seriousness. For example stealing by a member of the group could scarcely ever be pardoned. The severity with which such a case was normally dealt with was a deterrent to other members in the future. The first offender might be dealt with secretly but after that, should he persist in stealing, he would certainly be disgraced. During the next festival, the offender normally became the subject of public ridicule. The group would sing various songs of abuse, dance round the village or quarter telling the world about the incident.[2] In the case of murder or poisoning, the member was arrested by members of his group and handed over to the appropriate authorities for trial.

Fadipe has suggested that age-group stood only for political duties and rights.[3] To accept this view is to overlook the many other functions which age-groups performed. For example, each age-group was a society of companionship, of mutual aid and mutual protection. During festivals, members would visit and entertain one another; and the more, the merrier. Furthermore, the group played an important part in members' lives especially in connection with marriage and funeral ceremonies. For example, during courtship, a man enjoyed the co-operation of members in whatever services[1] were required by custom to be rendered to the parents-in-law. They accompanied him on formal visits to his father-in-law and offered him gifts during the marriage. If he himself required help in clearing his farm, he would ask for it through the group leader. This form of assistance was however confined to the clearing of virgin soil and the making of heaps. People offered help in this way were expected to be present when other members asked for similar aid.

The group could exert educational influence on members. A member who failed to marry at an age expected by society was summoned by members of his group. His problems would be frankly discussed; but if he was found to be responsible for his fate they would threaten to expel him unless he promised to change. On the other hand, if his failure was due to ill-luck, members would do everything to help him to get himself established.[2] When eventually he succeeded in obtaining a wife, all members would come to rejoice with him and offer him valuable presents.[3]

From what has been said, it is clear that the age-group performed many functions in society. It served as an agency of education for each member. It helped to make him fit by every means, to perform duties demanded of him by society. Furthermore, individual behaviour was regulated. Since a member was constantly

1. The behaviour of a member of the group was believed to have reflection on the whole group. *See* also C. E. Hope: *The Pastoral Fulbe Family in Gwandu*. O.U.P. London, 1958 p. 45 for discussion of social control among the Fulani in comparison with the Yoruba.
2. In many villages in Ekiti, people of the same age-group carried this system of social control to the extent that they cut branches of trees and deposited them at the door of a member who was guilty of such a misdemeanour as rape or stealing. It could become so painful and disgraceful that the member would leave the village and seek shelter elsewhere. It is interesting to point out that there was no such law as libel against the group. Their action was usually supported by the authorities.
3. N. A. Fadipe: *The Sociology of the Yoruba*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1940 p. 773.

1. *Owe* is one way in which members helped to render services to one another. These services were given free and members were only provided with food and drink at the end of the work.
2. Members helped by contributing money to enable one of them to pay the usual dowry. If his problem was shyness, some members would offer to get him a suitable wife among their own relatives or outside the society.
3. The Balogun Maye, Mr Adedokun Gbadamosi of Oyo, recalled presents of 200 cowries contributed by each member of his group and given to a newly married member. In return he provided food for them to mark the occasion. This collective present did not prevent individuals from giving personal presents to the bridegroom.

coming into contact with other members of the group, he was bound to find it difficult to remain indifferent to their opinions. In Western societies, where the principal agency of social control is the law and its functionaries, the individual who throws away convention and custom need only to leave the ward or borough in which he lives, and he could then remain indifferent to what opinions people might have about his actions. As a rule, the Yoruba in the traditional society could not afford to pretend to be indifferent to his associates and their opinion, especially since the association would continue for the rest of their lives. A member of an age-group was made amenable to the opinion of the group; he learnt from the group by imitation, instruction, reward, persuasion and punishment when necessary. Thus it would be difficult to disregard their opinion and their prejudices. He struggled against laziness because he knew his age-group and the public were against it. He aspired to get married at 'the right age' to avoid the reaction of his group. He had to build a house for himself to avoid criticism[1] from the rest of the group.

There were other functions performed by the age-group: functions which helped individual members to achieve higher status in life. One such function was the organization of *Airo* or *Oya*, whereby a group was organized to work for each member in turn. In the first place this was not an exclusive function of an age-group. *Airo* could be arranged by any number of people so long as they were willing to abide by the rules; but it was easier to arrange it within the age-group. Often, too, it was organized by a small group within the age-group if the entire members of the age-group would prove too cumbersome to be organized.

Apart from the advantage of achieving more, while working with a group in this way, each member was sure of a minimum amount of work during the period. Yet, the educational value was even greater. While members worked together, the stronger elements set the standard for the others to follow. There was the learning of technique,[1] the exchange of ideas particularly on the choice of specie of crops and their care. Furthermore, some members learnt from others persistence and endurance at work which otherwise they would miss. Most important of all was the opportunity for competition among members of the age-group. Within the group would be found hardworking people operating on a large area of land and others working on a much smaller scale. Members would then have the opportunity of comparing their efforts, and lazy ones would learn to work harder. In fact the rest in the group might be compelled to speak frankly to a member if they believed that he was not doing enough. In exceptional cases, the matter might even be referred to the age-group executive where disciplinary measures might be taken against the offending member.[2]

Members of the age-group learnt from personal contacts how to live a disciplined life. It could be an offence for example, for a member to marry too early. Such a member could find things made difficult for him by other members to the extent of making him repentant or even miserable.[3]

A number of age-groups could combine to act as police or executive agents of the council of elders. In the case of alleged stealing, they would act promptly by seizing the suspect's property to ensure his appearance at a public investigation.

Today, traces of the age-group can still be found in many parts of Yorubaland. In some areas, it is still a factor to be reckoned within the organization of the

1. In some societies, when a man had reached a certain age and had not built a house of his own, he was summoned to a meeting of his group where he would be asked embarrassing questions. He might even be given a time limit to build one and if he failed, he could be flogged or suspended from the activities of the group.

1. In the process of working together some learnt working songs like *Ijala* or *Alamo*. Those who were good in them were inspired to work harder as they chanted. Members who did not know the songs would listen.
2. There have been occasions when after such a discovery, a selected group was set up to inspect the farms of individual members and to report on their work. This group would inspect the rows of yams at harvest, the barn where cereals were kept, the care of the crops, and would then report.
3. A member of the group who failed to cope with with group work was often suspected of having early sexual relations and his weakness or impotence was usually attributed to this. If a good case could be established against him, he could be disciplined.

society. In most parts, however, its functions have been taken over by other agencies—the local government, the co-operative societies, youth organization and even schools. In its modified form and restricted role, it is bound to survive and adapt itself to the changing condition of the Yoruba society.

BOOKS

SENEGAL

A Study of French Assimilation Policy. MICHAEL CROWDER, *Pp.* 151; *Methuen*, 1967: 12*s*–6*d*

MESSRS Methuen have just published in a revised edition the excellent study by Michael Crowder of French Assimilation Policy in Senegal. This work was originally brought out by O.U.P., in 1962, but now revised by the author, (the newly appointed Head of the Ife Institute of African Studies, and one, time Editor of this journal), it appears as a paperback, and at 12*s*–6*d* it is happily in reach of a much larger audience.

Senegal is one of the most individual of the Francophone countries having enjoyed (and endured) a long history of contact with France. It has produced a rare elite, more self-consciously metropolitan and thereby more defiantly African than anywhere else in Africa. It is no accident that Senegal's President, L. S. Senghor, in collaboration with Aime Cesaire of the French Antilles, is one of the founders of the philosophy of Negritude. As the inevitable reaction to Assimilation, it has to be proclaimed aloud if there were the slightest suspicion that it could be doubted. As a Nigerian writer has since astutely retaliated, 'I don't think a tiger has to go around proclaiming its tigritude.'

In treating this history and sociology of Senegal from the viewpoint of the controversial French policy of 'Assimilation,' Michael Crowder has set himself a difficult task for it was in many ways a non-event; like Christianity or Communism, it was never really tried. However Senegal of all the African countries under French domination was the only one where an attempt was made to 'assimilate' even a tiny proportion of the population, so that it became something of a showpiece from which other nations 'have tended to misconstrue French colonial policy.'

Assimilation meant many things. Outstandingly it meant cultural assimilation of the French language, the French culture and the Christian religion. Politically it came to mean the aspirations and the wherewithal that the French education produced, to demand the same political rights demanded by Frenchmen in France. Quoting the German philosopher Heinrich Barth, Michael Crowder shows that to the colonialists the aims of the assimilationist theorists were 'that France above all should understand this great mission which the Lord has entrusted to her by sending missionaries composed of men of clear courage and integrity, and of superior intelligence, to serve as intermediaries and interpreters between these more or less savage people on the one hand and the civilization and institutions of Europe on the other.'

In practice, these patronizing ideas never progressed very far beyond the coast where a mixed trading community (significant from about the year 1700) had developed. It is believed that the settlement at St Louis had about 600 European inhabitants, a mulatto community of about 1,500 and a smaller number of 'free' Africans. Although the degree of assimilation

differed, this group formed, it is said, a 'free and integral part of the French colonial community, professed the Catholic faith, assumed French style civic responsibilities and accepted French cultural values.' It was the decendants of this group who later benefited from the policy of political assimilation into metropolitan France of Goree and St Louis. Although the author does not put it in these terms, the community in fact became a fairly junior partner in the French colonial exploitation of the rest of the inhabitants although their own grievances remained real.

In theory, the French revolutionary decrees of 1794 made French citizens of all men without distinction of colour domiciled in French colonies, but it was not until after the second empire of 1848–52 that Senegal acquired the right to send a deputy (a European) was finally elected. In practice the furthest that territorial assimilation went was to the creation of locally self-governing communes in Refisque, Dakar, Goree and St Louis—'*the Quatre Communes*'.

About this time, the French were becoming interested in establishing colonies rather than trading posts, and began to find the assimilationist policies inconvenient. At the same time the inhabitants were asking that they should be applied more effectively. At this point it became clear to what extent the assimilationist policy was a sham (one can perhaps compare it with Britain's recent willingness to give passports to certain members of the Commonwealth—always provided they were never used). After all, it was clearly unthinkable to a nineteenth century Frenchman that France should grant a franchise to the colonies, which, if exercised, would swamp that of metropolitan France. The Senegalese, however, kept up a constant battle for their rights, and during the 1914–18 war, they were able to make the cynical bargain of swapping service in the French army, for the rights of citizenship.

The book falls naturally into three parts; firstly the colonial period which effectively expresses the contradictions of the assimilationist policy, and its gradual substitution by the new concept of association. The second part covers the dynamic political period of post World War II, and the third brings us up to the present day describing the unique relations which exist in independent Senegal between the Senegalese themselves and the fifty-thousand strong French community, which has made itself very comfortably at home in the locality of the old '*Quatre Communes*'.

The period of the second World War witnessed the importance of French Africa in the triumph of the Gaullist Free French over Hitler. In consequence the colonies could not be refused their right to have significant say in the two Constitutional conferences which were to attempt to draw up the Constitution of the Fourth French Republic, including the position within it of the territories of the French Union. This was the period which saw the rise of political parties all over French-speaking West Africa which were far from being confined to the literate or 'assimilated' Senegalese. The part of Senegal in these deliberations and the remarkable contributions of Lamine Gueye and Leopold Sedor Senghor are well recounted in this book. I know of no other work in English which explains so adequately these complicated events so clearly or with such economy of style.

In conclusion one can say that this is a tightly written, well-documented account of an important subject and as all scholarly works should, it sets up some necessary signposts towards areas needing further research. As a general study, it fills a real need in English language scholarship in the field of French-speaking West Africa.

SALLY JENKINSON

Parliament and the People, 128 *pp. By* B. CRICK and S. JENKINSON. *Hamish Hamilton*, 1966. 8s–6d

THIS book is one of thirteen in a series called *Men and Movements* under the General-Editorship of Dr K. W. Watkins although rightly or wrongly there is none of them written by the General-Editor himself!

Quite rightly too both parliament and people certainly deal with 'Men and Movements'. In the book under review, written in simple, straightforward and flowing style, Dr Bernard Crick and Miss Sally Jenkinson (the latter recently in Nigeria) in ten chapters tell us how people in Great Britain are governed, how Democracy was established there, the work of an ordinary British M.P., the jobs of the whole House of Commons, why the House of Lords still exists there, Parliament and the Civil Service, Parliament and the Prime Minister, Parties in Parliament and the Country,

what general elections decide and public opinion and Parliament.

Additionally there are 'Suggestions for Further Reading'; 'Questions', 'Index' and Tables.

Though small in size the book would seem to be indispensable to those aspiring to political life in countries adopting democracy and the British system of Parliamentary rule and this is particularly so to those in Nigeria, most of whom, other than those who are lawyers or have read on their own Constitutional Law or Political Science lacked that knowledge.

Hitherto until the end of the civilian rule, most of our Parliamentarians would appear to be ignorant, before finding themselves in Parliament, of such basic background knowledge as The Origins of Parliament, Votes for everyone, Votes for Women, M.P's conditions of work and Payment and what M.P's are supposed to do.

On all those points we may be grateful to the authors to learn, for example, that—

'*In the 1260's it happened that many of the barons were at war with the King. Their leader, Simon de Montfort, trying both to restore peace and to retain their power, called a Parliament to London in January 1265. Here for the first time every 'Borough' or city of England was asked to send two of 'the more discreet, careful and prudent citizens and burgesses' to Parliament. De Montfort realized that Parliament would be more powerful if it were more representative, and as in some Parliaments before, two knights, from each 'country' (or shire) were selected. The knights and the burgesses then set together in one room, while the barons and the bishops sat in another. Gradually this became the settled custom: that there was a House of the Lords and a House of the Commons.*'

On votes for everyone and votes for women, they had this to tell us: '*Benjamin Disraeli, the Conservative leader, saw that reform was inevitable, so he tried to get the credit for it in 1867 by taking the risk of giving the vote to all householders. He called it 'shooting Niagara'. 'It was only after the 1914–18 war, when many women had distinguished themselves as nurses, ambulance drivers and munition workers, that the vote was grudgingly given to women over thirty.*'

About an M.P's conditions of work and payment, it is interesting to read that: '*Only since 1911 have Members of Parliament been paid at all, and for a long time it was ridiculously little. They now have a salary of £3,250 per annum, but out of this they must pay all the expenses of the job, including the salary of a secretary, and probably run two homes—one in their constituency and one near Westminster.*' These, certainly, are things which not many of our double-jobbed, paid M.P's were doing anyway!

Finally on what parliamentarians are supposed to do the authors tell us, among other things, that: '*Mr Gladstone once said to the House of Commons, "Your business is not to govern the country; it is, if you see fit, to call to account those who govern the country." In other words, Parliament must* influence, *not direct the exercise of power;* advise, *not itself command;* criticize *rather than formulate actual plans and, above all, act* in public *rather than is secret.*'

In short, and with particular application to Nigeria, Parliament is certainly not entitled, nor is it so mandated by the electorate, to arrogate to itself the prerogative of such totalitarian actions as passing Press Laws as the last civilian Federal Parliament did despite overwhelming opposition from the electorate and the Press.

They should have been the last parliamentarians to usurp such powers in as much as most of them were expected to have read Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644) and Mill's pungent words, in his *On Liberty* (1859) that: '*The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by, when any defence would be necessary of the "liberty of the Press" as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear,*' and his further words: '*A State which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished.*'

The book, in fact, is so short and well-written that even for the purpose of general knowledge, it should be one of our text-books in schools.

A. K. Metteden.

The Experience of Literature: A Reader with Commentaries. By L. TRILLING; *Holt, Rinehart and Winston*, 1967; pp. 1320; $9.95

The Experience of Literature: Parts 3 and 4: Poetry. By LIONEL TRILLING. *Holt, Rinehart and Winston*, 1967; Paperback, 528 pp. $4.25.

In a single volume Professor Lionel Trilling of Columbia University collects as many as eight plays, twenty-two short stories, twenty-two poems—all with commentaries—and an additional 259 poems without commentaries.

With such a variety the book, therefore, is divided into four parts. Part I, on Drama, (also separately available in a paperback (as the others) at $4.25 (432 pp.) contains Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*; Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of King Lear*; Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*; Checkhov's *The Three Sisters*; Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* and more recent and less familiar plays like the Italian Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author: A Comedy in the Making*. Yeats' *Purgatory* and the German Brecht's *Galileo*.

PART I—DRAMA

Few comments are needed on the classical drama except that about *Oedipus* the author says the plot therein 'is at once the most ingenious and the most terrible that has ever been conceived'—which is quite an inducement for those who have not read it to do so and about *The Wild Duck* the author wonders that Ibsen, of all people, who 'had made his reputation with four plays—*Pillars of Society, A Doll's House, Ghosts* and *An Enemy of the People*'—in each of which 'he had pressed home the view that falsehood, whether in the form of social lies and hypocrisy or of self-deception, weakens the fabric of life and deprives human kind of its dignity' should, in 1884, publish a book whose purport suggests 'that it is wicked for one person to seek to impose upon another a greater amount of reality than can comfortably be borne' which suggestion epitomizes a sentence, now become famous, that 'Human kind cannot bear very much reality'—which Trilling tells us was first uttered by the character Archbishop Becket in T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935).

On Checkhov's *Three Sisters* Professor Trilling starts off by saying that it 'is surely one of the saddest works in all literature. It is also one of the most saddening'. By no means, surely, a nice encouragement for those who have not read it to do so! But, paradoxically, for that reason to do so.

Quite contrary to what the title would suggest, the author comments that such conclusions as we may draw from *The Doctor's Dilemma* 'are not about medicine at all; they are, rather, about "life", and do not seem different in kind from the conclusions that Moliere's plays frequently yield—that Nature and common sense are good and should guide our judgement; that committing oneself to a ruling idea goes against nature and common sense and leads to error or defeat or ridicule, or all three; that a genial flexibility of mind is a virtue, and that intellectual pride is a vice; that thinking in the terms prescribed by one's profession leads to personal and intellectual deformation; that true morality transcends moralistic judgement; that affectionate and charitable emotions are to be cherished, self-seeking motives to be condemned'.

Not the less interesting are the commentaries on the less familiar plays. Of the first of these the author comments that 'of all the theatre's many celebrations of its own mysterious power, of all the challenging comparisons it makes between its own reality and that of life, Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* is the most elaborate and brilliant'. And there can certainly be no better recommendation for those who have not read the play to do so!

About *Gelilio*, Trilling says 'Brecht set himself implacably against the element of the theatre that has always been thought its very essence: he had nothing but contempt for illusion. He poured scorn upon the devices of compositions and production which induce an audience to believe that it is experiencing an actual event to which it responds emphatically, with the emotions that follow upon making an 'identification' with the protagonist. Brecht sought to produce the very opposite effect; he wanted his audience to be at a distance and disengaged from what happened on the stage.'

All that, however, is for the lovers of drama, and for those interested in fiction (Part 2 of the book) and the stories selected running to twenty-two (including one of the author's) there is a much wider variety. Famous authors include such names as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Dostoevski, Tolstoi, Somerset Maugham, Guy de Maupassant, Checkhov, Henry James, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Forster, Thomas Mann and Earnest Hemingway as well as Franz Kafka, Isaac Babel, Isak Dinesen, William Faulkner, John O'Hara, Albert Camus and Bernard Malamud.

All this big collection of story-tellers is, as mentioned earlier, also available in a paperback edition, running to 400 pages, at $3.95.

PART 2—FICTION

That the author of *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–64) also wrote good short stories is not known to many. In this anthology Professor Trilling starts with Hawthorne's 'My Kinsman, Major Molineaux' for us to read at least one of them. It may also come as a surprise to those who know or have read *Moby Dick* (1851) to read one of the author's short stories: 'Bartleby The Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street.' Trilling comments about this story: 'It is possible that Melville never heard of Karl Marx, although the two men were contemporaries.' (Melville, like Hawthorne, was an American) 'but Melville's "Story of Wall Street" exemplifies in a very striking way the concept of human alienation which plays an important part in Marx's early philosophical writings and has had considerable influence on later sociological thought. Alienation is the condition in which one acts as if at the behest not of one's own will but of some will (Latin: *alius*) than one's own. For Marx its most important manifestation is in what he called "alienated labour", although he suggested that the phrase was redundant, since all labour is an alienated activity'.

'The next story *The Grand Inquisitor* (1879) comes from the Russian novelist Dostoevski (1821–81), the author of *Poor People* (1846); *Crime and Punishment** (1866); *The Idiot** (1866); *The Possessed** (1871) and the unfinished *The Brothers Karamazov** (1880). That, however, a Russian could be condemned to death in the same Russia for revolutionary activities should come as a surprise to many. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature* says of Dostoevski: 'Russian novelist who in 1849 was condemned to death for revolutionary activities, was reprieved, and spent years of hard labour in the Siberian mines.' In a headnote to this short story we are introduced to 'the Grand Inquisitor' thus: 'In

* Available in Penguin Classics.

Dostoevski's last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, near the end of a long theological conversation which centres in the question of whether or not human suffering can be "justified", Ivan Karamazov tells his younger brother Alyosha that he has written a poem. It is not, he says, really a poem but a poem in prose, and he did not actually write it but he would like to tell it. Alyosha is eager to hear it. "My poem is called *The Grand Inquisitor*," Ivan says; "it is a ridiculous thing but I want to tell it to you," and proceeds to do so.' And we may as well proceed to read Professor Trilling's comments on this story. He says:

'Of *The Grand Inquisitor* it can be said categorically that no other work of literature has made so strong an impression on the modern consciousness or has seemed so relevant to virtually any speculation about the destiny of man. The peculiar interest it arouses is not hard to explain. With extreme boldness and simplicity Dostoevski brings into confrontation the two great concepts that preoccupy the modern mind, freedom on the one hand, happiness and security on the other... the person who does all the talking in the story imposes his authority upon us not merely because he is very old, powerful and intelligent but because he is Satan himself; and the silent person is divine. No other modern literary work has speculated on human fate in terms so grandiose.'

'To the reader of the present day,' says Trilling, 'the knowledge that Dostoevski wrote *The Grand Inquisitor* in 1879 may come as a surprise. For the story takes for granted a form of social organization that we know nowadays from actual experience but that Dostoevski did not know, the totalitarian state.' That within fifty years the Bolsheviks led by Lenin in 1917 should ruthlessly adopt the same system for which Dostoevski was condemned to death in 1849 just shows not only how the human brain can change backwards and forwards but also that those who do think and act ahead of their times always court trouble!

The next story *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch* (1884) is by another Russian Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) the famous author of *War and Peace* (1865–72); *Anna Karenina* (1875–6); *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1890); *Resurrection* (1899); *What Is Art?* (1898); *Confession* (1882); *What then must we do?* and many other essays, short stories and plays the greatest of which is *The Power of Darkness* (1886).

About the author Trilling comments 'He repudiated art and his own achievements as a novelist and proposed the doctrine that artistic creation was justified only when it led men to morality' and *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature* (1939) says "The union of a great moral conviction and realistic details, and an immense imaginative vision, combine to make him one of the great European writers.' And there certainly can be no higher recommendation for those who have not read Tolstoy to do so!

The Treasure—the next story in this anthology—is from W. Somerset Maugham (1874–1966) the author of so many novels, plays, short stories and travel books which include *Lize of Lambeth* (1897); *A Man of Honour* (1903); *Home and Beauty* (1909); *The Narrow Corner;** *The Razor's Edge;** *Of Human Bondage** (1915); *The Moon and Sixpence** (1919); *The Circle** (1921); *The Trembling of a Leaf* (1921); *On a Chinese Screen* (1923); *Ashenden** (1928); *Cakes and Ale** (1930); *Don Fernando* (1935); *Sheppey**; *The Sacred Flame;** *The Constant Wife;** *Our Betters** *The Painted Veil;** *The Summing Up** (1938) and *A Writer's Notebook* (1949) as well as many essays and criticism. A prodigious achievement for a seventy-year life-span!

In the Preface to the first volume of his *Collected Short Stories* (30) in Penguin Books (1963) Somerset Maugham says 'This is the first volume of my collected short stories. In my early youth I wrote a number, but they are so immature that I have preferred not to reprint them. A few are in a book that has long remained out of print, a few others are scattered in various magazines. They are best forgotten'.

Of *The Treasure* itself Trilling says it 'is different in kind from all the other stories in this volume. The difference *can be stated quite simply: The other stories are serious, this is not.* It does not undertake to engage our deeper feelings or to communicate anything new about the nature of human existence. It proposes to do nothing except entertain.' Certainly a good recommendation to read the story despite the fact that, according to the author: 'if ever an author wrote stories, as Santayana says Maugham did' because writing stories is a profession, 'it was Maupassant' and not Somerset Maugham.

This reviewer has not come across Maugham's defence of Santayana's criticism and nothing pertinent is said in his autobiographical *The Summing Up* (Penguin Books, 1963). In the Preface to his *Collected Short Stories* quoted earlier Maugham says 'Though to be read is not the motive which impels the author to write, once he has written his desire is to be read, and in order to achieve that, he must do his best to make what he writes readable.' A sure confirmation of Santayana's verdict, it seems! In the same Preface we read: 'my stories are of very different lengths. Some are as short as sixteen hundred words, some are ten times as long, and one is just over twenty thousand.'

It is not just by mere accident that the next story—*Duchoux* of Guy de Maupassant (1850–93) follows Maugham's *The Treasure*.

Elsewhere in his introduction to the Penguin translation of Maupassant's *Miss Harriet and Other Stories* (1951) H.N.P. Sloman tells us that Maupassant 'was encouraged to write by his godfather, the great stylist Flaubert (1821–80); and in 1880 he published a volume of verse and, in Zola's *Soirees de Medan*, one of his greatest 'nouvelles' or long short stories, *Boule de Suif*. From this date till his early death in 1893—he died in an asylum for general paralysis of the insane, the result of a veneral disease for which no cure was then known—he lived by his pen, and his output was so enormous; in thirteen years he wrote in addition to his verse six full length novels, three volumes of *Travel Sketches*, four plays and some 300 stories.'

We are not told the titles of those novels, travel sketches and plays: and the invaluable *Concise Oxford Dictionary* referred to earlier steps short at saying: 'His *Une Vie* (1883); *Bel Ami* (1885), *Pierre et Jean* (1888); are notable works, marred by a certain morbidity'.

All that, however, does not show any connection between Maupassant and Somerset Maugham or their stories. Certainly not. Going back to Sloman's* translation, he says: 'Mr W. Somerset Maugham in the Introduction to the volume of his own collected stories called *Altogether* acknowledges him as his teacher "It is natural enough," he writes, "that when at that age I began writing stories myself I should unconsciously have chosen these little masterpieces as a model. I might very well have hit upon a worse".

* Available in the Penguin series in their individual titles or in the 4 volumes of *Collected Short Stories* and one volume of *Selected Plays*.

Coming back to Trilling's anthology with which we are more directly concerned at present he says in his commentary on this story: 'In violation of the chronological order in which the stories of this volume are arranged, I have put *M. Duchoux* after *The Treasure* because I think that something is to be gained by reading the stories in this sequence.' He goes on to say 'The two stories address themselves to the same theme. Each is about a man of extreme self-centeredness who is drawn to another person only to retreat from the relationship because it threatens his established mode of life. In both instances,' he continues, 'the self-regard of the man is expressed in his attachment to a certain style of living—Harenger in *The Treasure* and the Baron in *M. Duchoux* are committed not only to comfort but to elegance.'

'Yet,' he writes, 'despite this virtual identity of theme, the two stories are very dissimilar in effect.' It is here that the quotation noted earlier about Santayana's comments on Maugham follows and as an explanation for placing Santayana's boot on Maupassant's foot rather than Maugham's Professor Trilling continues 'And *M. Duchoux* has indeed the air of having been written only to amuse. Yet we can scarcely fail to see,' he says, 'that Maupassant's story has a weight of meaning that Maugham's cannot claim.' Thereby inviting readers to read both stories and judge for themselves!

The following story is 'Enemies' of Anton Checkhov whom we met earlier in this review. Trilling's first sentences in the commentary on Checkhov's *The Three Sisters* are certainly not attractive and readers who have not read him (Checkhov) might feel the same of his novels, other plays and short stories. But the very informative *Oxford Dictionary* kindly intervenes at this stage to say that Checkhov (1860–1904) was a 'Russian dramatist and novelist, whose gift of satirical humour has given a wide vogue to his works. His first play', the *Dictionary* says, 'was *Ivanov** (1887), followed by *The Seagull*,* *Uncle Vanya*,* *The Three Sisters*,* and (what is generally considered the best) *The Cherry Orchard*.* Checkhov's fame rests chiefly on these and his short tales, but he also wrote a number of novels.' All that, certainly, should encourage us to read anything of Checkhov's!

The next story *The Pupil* is from Henry James (1843–1916) the author of *Roderick Hudson* (1875); *The Europeans; Washington Square; The American* (1877); *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881); *The Bostonians; The Princess Cassamassima; The Spoils of Poynton; The Tragic Muse* (1890); *The Awkward Age* (1899); *The Wings of a Dove* (1902); *The Ambassadors* (1903); and *The Golden Bowl* (1904).

Born of Scottish and Irish ancestry in Washington Place, New York, Henry James moved to Europe and settled in Paris in 1875 and moved to London the following year where we learn from his *Selected Short Stories* edited by Michael Swan in the Penguin Modern Classics Series (1963) 'he became such an inveterate diner-out that in the winter of 1878–9 he confessed to accepting 107 invitations. In 1898 he left London and went to live at Lamb House, Rye, Sussex.' He 'became naturalized in 1915, was awarded the O.M., and died early in 1916.'

'In addition to many short stories, plays, books of criticism, autobiography and travel,' we are further informed, 'he wrote some twenty novels' which include those mentioned earlier. We are not told why Henry James was awarded the Order of Merit and when but the invaluable *Oxford Dictionary* (*q.v.*) goes on to inform us 'besides nearly a hundred short stories [including the well-known ghost story *The Turn of the Screw* (1898)] James wrote several volumes of sketches of travel and literary criticism; a number of plays, of which the few that were acted were not successful; and a life of Nathaniel Hawthorne.' Quite the opposite of Bernard Shaw's fate who woefully failed as a novelist but succeeded as a dramatist in the same London from 1892 till his death on 1st, November 1950. Very few people, like Somerset Maugham, for instance, succeeded in being successful in both story-telling and play-writing!

Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* follows James's story in this anthology and Trilling comments: 'one of literature's most engaging themes is the initiation of a boy or a young man into a new stage of his development toward maturity. We have seen it strikingly handled in *My Kinsman, Major Molineaux*—(the first story in the anthology by Hawthorne)—'and now we meet it again in *The Secret Sharer*, which sustains comparison with Hawthorne's story in the subtlety and range of its psychological drama.' About Conrad himself Trilling says, in parenthesis, that he 'held a master's certificate in the British merchant service, and there was nothing in his life of which he was prouder.'

It would be quite unnecessary to introduce Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) to lovers of sea stories for they must have read some of his books, except to say that, although he wrote in English and was a first-class polyglot (he was accredited as fluently speaking at least eight European languages) he was in fact born of Polish parents in the Ukraine. He satisfied his long-felt craving for a seafaring life in 1874 when he became member of the crew of a French vessel. He became naturalized as a British subject in 1884 and left the sea in 1894 to devote himself to literature. The result can be judged from some of his productions like *Mirror of the Sea* (1906); *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1898) and *Lord Jim* (1900) and in his short stories *Youth; Heart of Darkness and Typhoon* (1902) which, the *Oxford Dictionary* says, are 'Three of his finest short stories.' All of which, combined with Professor Trilling's commentary should recommend *The Secret Sharer* to Conrad's fans.

Right on the heels of Conrad's story and coming nearer our times comes the Irish novelist's *The Dead* of James Joyce (1882–1941). And Trilling's commentary on this story is as interesting as Joyce himself. He says: *The Dead* is the last, the largest, and the most complex of the stories of James Joyce's volume of fiction, *Dubliners*. Of this book Joyce said, 'My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because the city seemed to me the centre of paralysis.' 'What Joyce had in mind,' continues Trilling, 'when he spoke of "paralysis" is suggested by an incident in *The Dead*, Aunt Julia's singing. For a fleeting moment there is a remission of the "paralysis", for the old lady sings surprisingly well and we are told that to follow the voice, without looking at the singer's face, was to feel and share the excitement of swift and secure flight.' 'If one did look at her face,' Trilling goes on, 'Joyce is telling us, one saw the approach of death and the limitation of mind and spirit that marks not Aunt Julia alone but all the relatives and friends who

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* The same author has also translated, in the same Penguin Classics, Maupassant's *Boule de Suif and other Stories* and *The Mountain Inn and other Stories*.

* All these as well as *The Bear, The Proposal* and *A Jubilee* are available in a single volume edition of the Penguin Classics with the title: *Checkov: Plays* (1959).

are gathered around her. One saw the poverty of experience and passion, of gaiety, wit, intelligence—the death-in-life of a narrow, provincial existence.'

As if that is not enough invitation to make us read *The Dead* Professor Trilling continues to say 'Joyce writes of his own nation and city with passionate particularity. But when we consider the very high place that *The Dead* has been given in the canon of modern literature, and the admiration it has won from readers of the most diverse backgrounds, we must say that Joyce has written a chapter in the moral history not only of his own country but of the whole modern western world.'

The next story—*The Hunter Gracchus*—comes from an unfamiliar name Franz Kafker (1883–1924) which the classical *Oxford Dictionary* simply does not recognize and we are indebted to Professor Trilling only for telling us, in a footnote, to his commentary: 'It should be mentioned that, throughout Kafka's youth, Czechoslovakia was part of the Austrian Empire; and that Prague was a bilingual city, part of the population speaking German, part Czech. Kafka had a good command of Czech, but his mother tongue was German, he attended German schools, and he thought of himself as a German writer.'

His translators, Willa and Edwin Muir, Trilling says in another footnote: 'have been most faithful to the original text and notably sensitive in their rendering of it. But in allowing us to think of the town (Riva in Italy) as a seaport they have made one error of some importance. The German word *See*,' he says, 'is used for both lake and sea; when it means lake it is a masculine noun and when it means sea it is feminine. In the German text of the story the word is used in both genders—the death-ship sails all waters, great and small. But as we see it coming to Riva, it is sailing only a rather small lake. Our awareness of this might well intensify the sense of confinement and constriction that the story generates' concludes Professor Trilling.

Unfortunately not all students of English Literature understand German and it is not surprising, therefore, John Mulgan—the editor of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature* (1939) politely drops the name.[1]

David Herbert Lawrence (1885–1930) the author of the next story—*Tickets, Please*—is so controversial, famous and popular that his story should not require any inducement to be read.

In the author's note to a Four Square Edition (1963) of '*Portrait of a Genius* But . . .' Richard Aldington tells us: 'use of an odd sub-title needs justification if the author is not to be suspected of affection or some catch-penny motive or both. I describe this book as *Portrait Of A Genius* But . . . firstly because it is a portrait and not a detailed exhaustive biography which, with all the material available, would be twice or thrice the length. Then,' he continues, 'in going over the books and letters, I noticed that somewhere or other almost everyone used the phrase: 'Of course, Lawrence was a genius, but . . . .' 'The phrase inevitably,' Aldington goes on to say, 'came up when people argued about him in his lifetime usually with more emphasis on the "but" than on the "genius". Lawrence himself noticed and remembered it,' he says, 'for little that has reference to him escaped that intensely observant mind or faded from that almost superhuman memory.' 'In the early days they were always telling me I had got genius,' he wrote in *Assorted Articles*, 'as if to console me for not having their own incomparable advantages,' Aldington quotes.

Well! That is Lawrence all over speaking like his other contemporary bearded genius who survived him for twenty years—the Irish G.B.S.!

As a test of knowing whether or not Lawrence was a genius Aldington in his book quotes the Irish satirist Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) who says: 'When a true Genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the Dunces are all in Confederacy against him.' They certainly were against Lawrence! However that comment may be a matter of opinion but our usual reference *Dictionary* tells us 'Rampion in Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter-Point** (1928) is an idealized portrait of Lawrence.' A valuable piece of information for those who want to make comparisons.

A modern author's—(E. M. Forster)—story follows on the heels of Lawrence's and the story is 'The Road from Colonus.'

The remaining stories in the fiction anthology are *Disorder and Early Sorrow* of Thomas Mann (1875–1955); Isaac Babel's *Di Grasso: A Tale of Odessa; The Sailor-Boy's Tale* by Isak Dinesen (1885–1962) another unfamiliar name which Trilling explains as 'The pseudonym of the Baroness Karen Blixen. Her mother tongue was Danish but she wrote in English'.

Trilling's commentary on the next story—Earnest Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants*—is so interesting (and the author himself so famous) that it is unfair to readers to lump them both amongst 'etc. etc.': considering that Hemingway was, in fact, the Nobel Prize winner for Literature in 1954.

'Earnest Hemingway,' says Trilling, 'recalls that when he first began to write and his stories were being steadily refused "with notes of rejection that would never call them stories but always anecdotes [or] sketches." One of these early stories was *Hills Like White Elephants*, and it is interesting to speculate why the magazine editors of the 1920's thought it was not really a story.'

'One reason may be that,' says Trilling, 'they thought of a story as primarily something that is told whereas *Hills Like White Elephants* is scarely told at all. The author,' he goes on to say, 'makes every effort to keep himself anonymous and out of sight; he seems to refuse to have any connection either with the reader or with the people in the episode he is presenting. The scene is set in an opening paragraph which is as brief as it can be and severely impersonal in tone;' (The paragraph in question reads: '*The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white. On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun. Close against the side of the station there was the warm shadow of the building and a curtain, made of strings of bamboo beads, hung across the open door into the bar, to keep out flies. The American and the girl with him sat at a table in the shade, outside the building. It was very hot and the express from Barcelona would come in forty minutes. It stopped at this junction for two minutes and went on to Madrid.*') 'and thereafter almost everything is left to the dialogue between the man and the girl, with the author intervening only to inform us that the drinks have been served, that the man carries the bags to the other side of the station, and on two occasions, to tell us what the girl sees when she looks at the landscape' . . . .

[1] Franz Kafker and Isak Dinesen do, however, appear in *Everyman's Dictionary of European Writers* (1968) being reviewed in our next issue (*ED.*)

* Available in Penguin Books.

'This stubborn reticence,' Trilling says, 'this refusal by Hemingway to relate himself to the characters and to say anything about them must surely have led the editors to feel that *Hills Like White Elephants* lacked the degree of meaning a story is expected to have as compared to an anecdote or sketch'. . . 'A story, like a joke, is successful if it sets up in us the sensation of our having understood it.'

No doubt the magazine editors who first read *Hills Like White Elephants* felt that the remoteness of the author, his refusal to comment explicitly on what he presented, implied that he was not making the expected effort to give his readers this sensation.'

The story that follows that of Hemingway is another American novelist's. It is *Barn Burning* of William Faulkner (1897–1962) who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949.

The remaining four stories are John O'Hara's *Summer's Day*, the author's *Of This Time, Of That Place*, Albert Camus's *The Guest* and Bernard Malamud's *The Magic Barrel*.

We may end this part two on Fiction with Trilling's commentary on the inclusion in the anthology of his own story. He says of himself: '*It is not unheard of for an editor to include an example of his own work in an anthology he is making, but it is sufficiently unusual to call for a word of explanation. My thrusting upon the reader a story of my own will perhaps seem less immodest if I say that the idea of doing so originated not with me but with my publisher and that the argument he advanced for its propriety seemed to me to be cogent—he said that something was to be gained for the understanding of literature by a writer's setting down his thoughts about his own work, especially if he gave an account of the process by which a particular work had come into being.*' Italics are the reviewer's just to show that similarly, though occasioned by both, much else has unconsciously crept in which is neither in the stories themselves nor in Trilling's commentaries!

PARTS 3 AND 4—POETRY

AS both deal with the same subject and are, in fact, available together in one paperback edition (528 pp. $4.25) we may, for review purposes, take them together: Part 3—Poetry and Part 4—Poetry for Further Reading.

Starting with an anonymous poem 'Edward' Part 3 contains (with commentaries) such famous pieces as Sir Thomas Wyatt's *They Flee From Me*, John Donne's *Forbidding Mourning* (A Valediction); Milton's *Lycidas*, Andrew Marvell's *To His Coy Mistress;* Pope's *Essay On Man;*—Epistle 1 (the most interesting)—Blake's *Tyger!;* Wordsworth's *Resolution and Independence;* Coleridge's *Kubla Khan;* Lord Byron's *Don Juan* An Episode from Canto II; Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind;* Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale;* Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach*, Walt Witman's *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking;* Manley Hopkins's *The Leaden Echo* and *The Golden Echo;* Emily Dickinson's only 8 lines of *Go Tell It—What A Message;* Yeats's *Sailing To Byzantium;* T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land;* Robert Frost's *Neither Out Far Nor In Deep;* E. E. Cummings's *My Father Moved Through Dooms of Love;* W. H. Auden's *In Memory of Sigmund Freud* (died Sept. 1939) and Robert Lowell's *For the Union Dead*.

Part 4—Poetry for Further Reading and without commentaries contains as many as 259 poems about 120 of which (although not as fully as in this anthology) can also be found in standard anthologies such as Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* in the Oxford World's Classics, or the same book in the Collins' Classics; Sir A. Quiller-Couche's *The Oxford Book of English Verse; The Dragon Book of Verse* of W.A.C. and N. H. Wilkinson and *Immortal Poems of the English Language* edited by Oscar Williams (Pocket Books, Inc., New York).

Starting with 6 'anonymous' Poems (which include *The Cherry-Tree Carol; The Three Ravens* and *Mary Hamilton* not available in the anthologies cited); the selections are made from 75 different poets ranging alphabetically from Matthew Arnold to W. B. Yeats and in chronological order from the fifteenth century John Skelton to the youngest modern poet Allen Ginsberg (b. 1926—).

Naturally no anthology would be complete without including pieces from Shakespeare and it is not, therefore, surprising that in Trilling's anthology also he leads with as many as 13 selections (including 8 Sonnets) followed by Wordsworth with 11 selections and, surprisingly, Emily Dickinson (1830–86) with as many as 9.

Unfortunately, however, at least 14 other apparently more widely known poets to Nigerian readers—including John Dryden; Thomas Gray; George Meredith and Edmund Spenser—whom fans would like to read more of their poems have only one piece each selected and included in this anthology.

Finally, quite apart from the scholarly Commentaries on the first 22 poems in this anthology other factors which would recommend it to book-lovers and students are the facts that the book contains nearly 260 poems which are not found in any of those mentioned earlier and that throughout the anthology all archaic; anachronistic or unusual words in the poems which had changed their meanings and usages since are all scholarly explained in footnotes. The Index, however, is only 4 pages which appears to contain all authors and titles cited in the whole book.

A. K. METTEDEN.

Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Backgroup; O. NDUKA, O.U.P.; 13*s*–6*d*; (*Paperback*—8*s*–6*d*) 168 *pp*., 1965.

AN absorbing and exciting study of the historical development of the Education system which Nigeria inherited from Western culture and the inevitable resulting changes in the social pattern of life in Nigeria. The study is exciting because not only theories and lofty ideals are propounded, but the main concern is how to put them into practice and the urgency with which to do this if the type of society planned by the Ashby Commission is to materialize. It is absorbing because the style is simple and the material makes easy and interesting reading.

The survey deals with the period from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day outlining the origins and foundations laid by Missionaries and Government for Education and it ends with the fortunes and the future of Western Education in this country. The fundamental philosophy of the book is that—'the education system of a country is closely bound up with contemporary social and economic conditions and can only be understood in relation to them' so the opening chapters consider conditions prevalent in Nigeria under the 'Pax Britanica' and the assault by the alien culture on the indigene culture; the work of the missionaries in the founding of the first schools in Nigeria and the years 1926–1940 are considered carefully because of Britain's first statement on an Educational Policy for Nigeria in the 'Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa,' resulting in the Commission sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund of America and the Colonial Development and Welfare Act passed in 1940. This was the beginning of Higher Education which spread due to the agitation and demands of the people, demands heightened by the nationalist activities of 1941–1950. One long chapter is devoted to—Moral Education—because our educational system has always been and still is dominated by missionary enterprise, from which there has been benefit and also much detrimental to the indigenous culture, because of the slavish imitation demanded. As the author says: 'however well we may teach morals in our schools and colleges, our efforts will be nullified unless the mass of the people of this country become genuinely interested in seeing a higher standard of moral behaviour in private and in public affairs.' 'The effects of contact between our indigene and the dominant Western Culture has been the lowering of the moral standards of the indigene and the foreign.' The missions have never succeeded in teaching that to achieve moral emancipation we must work hard at it. The final chapters deal with the commission of 1951–60 sponsored by Nuffield Foundation and in 1959 the Ashby Commission which planned for the development of the high-level man-power needs of Nigeria so that she could be self-sufficient by 1979. This Commission prepared Nigeria for Independence. 'Retrospect and Prospects' stresses, through a summary of the previous chapters, the weaknesses of our present Education system in which the school, Primary, Secondary or University, pulls the pupil or student in one direction and society in another; it is theoretical and not related to the environment; cultural values are dwarfed by the persistent quest for material wealth. The author feels the country must stop planning from Top to Down and concentrate on where needs are greatest—*viz* the Primary Schools, especially those in the rural and less privileged areas of the country, and the formulating of an Educational Philosophy which plans the type of society the country needs and the moral values. On an optimistic note the author is sure that if Nigeria could settle down in humility to learn the secret of Western Greatness in the field of science, learning to make rapid adjustments so an indigene culture is purged of grosser elements whilst cherishing and strengthening the precious, a strong united nation would emerge.

In 'Postscript', the last chapter, the author looks beyond Ashby and notes that the stress which was made on the need for technological education has been lost in the consideration of the estimate for high-level man-power so that ten years after Ashby factories are still run by foreign technicians and engineers whilst Nigerians are still satisfied with white-collar jobs, imitation of foreigners and the possession of the goods of the technical age; thus it could happen that twenty years after Ashby there may be no Nigerian of significance even in the field of oil technology; added, to this, our continued moral bankruptcy and corruption, academic advancement would be dwarfed and 'the army of so-called high-level man-power visualized may be turned into willing or unwilling accomplices in a gigantic fraud.' 'This terrible vision, which would be the reverse side of the coin designed by Ashby, needs to be faced in time and

calls for an urgent re-examination of educational bearings on the scale of the survey of 1951–2' but conducted by Nigerians who can plan from the foundations to the top.

The book should be read by all in the field of Education in particular Teacher Training Colleges which neglect such subjects inspiring original thinking as—Sociology, Psychology, and the history and philosophy of Education.

AYO ADESIGBIN

The Igbo of South East Nigeria,* 111 *pp. By* V. C. UCHENDU; *Holt, Rinehart and Winston*, New York, 1966, $1.75.

DR V. C. Uchendu's book, *The Igbo of South-East Nigeria*, represents one of the known attempts by trained African anthropologists to describe the culture of their people. This is why Dr Uchendu's work is welcome. Hitherto, a great deal of anthropological work on African culture has been written by non-African authors; the adduced justification for the practice being that the native bearer of a culture loses objectivity if he has to write an ethnographic history of his culture. This argument is, undoubtedly, controversial. European and American authors have studied and produced works on their own societies and cultures, yet the argument that they would not be objective has not been raised to deter them from carrying out their studies.

Therefore, one has to look for more tenable reasons why anthropological studies, in particular studies on African communities, have been the exclusive preserve of non-Africans. Firstly, until the 1950's, Africa had no trained anthropologists. Secondly, to help the colonial masters in their administration of various portions of Africa during their rule of the continent, many anthropological studies of African peoples were undertaken either by the administrative personnel of the colonial masters themselves or by special missions or scholars invited for the purpose by the colonial masters. Thirdly, from about 1945 onwards, Africa gradually became the focus of world attention as a result of many stirring political events which began to take place there. In order to view these events in their proper perspective, it became increasingly important for non-Africans, especially people from Europe, the United States and Canada, to understand Africa's past. The result was an increased tempo in the rush by non-African authors to study Africa, its culture and history.

From about 1950, however, Africans began to train as anthropologists and study the culture of their own people. There are Dr K. Busia from Ghana who has produced authoritative works on the ethnography of the Ashanti; and Dr Nketia, also from Ghana, who is an expert on African music. Dr F. I. Nzimiro, an Igbo from Nigeria, has also produced an original work on the culture of the Igbo. Dr Uchendu's work is thus an addition to the increasing volume of anthropological studies on African communities written by Africans themselves.

Dr Uchendu has tried to achieve a great deal within the compass of his work. Writing for students in the United States, the author has employed a very simple direct language devoid of much anthropological jargon. He has in just over one hundred pages depicted lucidly the Igbo culture as he understands it, a competitive direct democracy with a great receptivity for change. Indeed, the competitiveness inherent in such an open society seems to have the greatest factor responsible for the dynamism of Igbo life. The author, however, seems to have over-stressed this spirit of competitiveness. He associated it with the Igbo idea of helping the village or the individual 'to get up' and creates the impression that Igbo community is excessively materialistic without any moral compunctions. Any rule of the game is fair provided that the competitor concerned emerges victorious. It is difficult to accept this description of the Igbo life at its face-value and the reader is tempted to conclude that the author is emotionally involved in his theme since he is writing for the American society which adores individualism and keen competitiveness

*This book under review is from a series of 25 under the general heading of *Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology* by the same publishers. The first one bearing on a Nigerian ethnic group—*The Kanuri of Bornu*—was reviewed in our issue No. 96 of 1968—*ED*.

as a way of life.

A key question which arises, then, is: how authoritative can Dr Uchendu claim to be in his book? In other words, can this brilliantly-written work be regarded as a serious study on the Igbo culture—the result of the author's own first-hand research? Conscious of this important question, Dr Uchendu, in the introduction to his work (*pages* 5–10), gives a brief sketch of his life from about 1930 when he was born until he graduated from the University of Ibadan around 1961. He tries to show that he has been privileged to gather the data for his book as a 'full participant' in Igbo culture because he lived all his life until around 1961 (excluding the period he spent at the University of Ibadan) in rural Igboland.

This claim, however, is deficient in essential details. For example, the reader is only left to assume that Dr Uchendu was born at Nzirimo where he grew up (*page* 6). Even then, the description of the location of the village is not adequate though the village is shown on the map of Igboland facing the title-page of the book. More importantly, Dr Uchendu is not categorical in his assertion that teaching brought him 'into contact with a wiser Igbo community....' Firstly, he failed to mention in what part of Igboland he assumed duties as 'a grade school teacher in 1946.' (*page* 8). Secondly, where, in Igboland, was the teacher training college at which he trained as a teacher located? Furthermore, he left the reader in a confusion as to whether on completion of his training as a teacher, he taught in a high school or in his *alma mater* which is a grade school. Or did he teach in both categories of schools? If so, where was the high school located, for there was none at Nzirimo? Moreover, the reader would like to know in what parts of Igboland Dr Uchendu spent his holidays when he was a student at the University of Ibadan.

The author still has to give these vital details to convince the reader of his claim to present a first-hand information on Igbo society and culture. Such details will be necessary because there are sectional variants of Igbo culture which the author has glossed over and one cannot claim to be an expert on them except he is closely acquainted with many parts of Igboland and has participated in or watched the cultural activities of all the groups subsumed by the name Igbo.

Linked with the question about Dr Uchendu's certificate of worthiness' is the more important point of objectivity. The author himself a culture-bearer anthropologist, tries very hard to argue his own case. He, however, has to agree that the emotional involvement of the culture-bearer anthropologist in his subject guides the reader in his assessment of the author. This is a very crucial point from which to examine Dr Uchendu's standpoint on Igbo world view (*Chap.* 1).

Although anthropologists now believe 'that a close relation exists between dominant attitudes towards social relations and proper use of resources and the established beliefs concerning the nature of human society and its place in a wider universe of cosmic force,'[1] it is generally accepted that a community normally adopts theories that project on to a plane of supernatural action, the desires and aspirations they know in the realm of human action. This is why the author's analysis of Igbo conception of the non-temporal world to explain their dominant social relations tends to be misleading. Moreover, the reader would have liked him to analyse Igbo theories 'about the origin and character of the universe' (which he cleverly puts aside) in order to see how far this agrees with their cultural activities and the definition of cultural goals and social relations (*page* 11). It is also relevant for the author to show what impact new ideas about the universe have had on the Igbo traditional beliefs.

Furthermore, Dr Uchendu emphasizes Igbo belief in their ability to manipulate the world around them and attempts to establish a strong relationship between it and the competitiveness which is an outstanding factor of Igbo life. It is dangerous to stress too much the link between these two features of Igbo life. For, there are many other African communities which believe that they too can manipulate the cosmic forces to their own advantage, yet their social and economic organizations are dissimilar to that of the Igbo. The Lovedu of the Transvaal in South Africa is a case in point. According to J. D. and E. J. Krige, the Lovedu 'conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled ...' and reject a natural order inexorably going its ordained way.[2] They are akin to the Igbo in their attitude to

[1] Forde, D. (ed.) *African Worlds*, O.U.P., 1965, p.i.
[2] Forde, (ed.) *op cit.* pp. 68 and 61. In fact, the idea that nature can be manipulated by the individual, the chief or the community is common among African peoples.

justice, 'the fundamental objective (of which) is the re-establishment of relations that have become broken or strained, and that objective is achieved, not so much by vindicating rules as by reconciling parties.[1] Hence, the execution of a judgment is left to the parties involved. Unlike the Igbo, however, the Lovedu are ruled by a divine queen. All elements of competition within the society are abhorred. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated. In order to prevent the accumulation of wealth, no markets are held and trading is disliked. The goal of the community is moderation in human relations as well as self-sufficiency in economy.

In addition, the author shows a great weakness in his knowledge of the history of the Igbo. Firstly, he lays himself open to criticism over his new theory on the origin of the Igbo (*page* 3). His two inter-related hypotheses on the subject are, in fact, not related at all. The first hypothesis which is about the dispersal of the Igbo to the north and south from a nuclear area bounded by the towns of Owerri, Awka, Orlu and Okigwi has nothing in common with the second theory of migration of people into Igboland from Benin Kingdom to the west and from Igarra to the north. Moreover, although there is no agreed date yet for the Benin migration into Onitsha, it did not take place during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as categorically stated by the author. Dr N. Azikiwe[2] puts it during the seventeenth century while Thomas Hodgkin suggests 1504.[3] Furthermore, Igarra influence over the riverain Igbo to the north became predominant during the nineteenth century.

The theory about a nuclear Igboland which was a dispersal centre for the Igbo people lacks any supporting evidence. It is, indeed, rather a surprise that Dr Uchendu is ignorant of the results of archaeological discoveries in Nigeria and the light they throw on a possible origin of the Igbo. For example, what about the Nok culture which flourished in Jos in the Benue/Plateau State about the beginning of the Christian era and the similarity between Nok art and Igbo art? Although this is a slender evidence, yet it points to the possibility of culture contact between the people of Nok and the ancestors of the Igbo. There are also the discoveries at Igbo-Ukwu in the East-Central State by the Federal Department of Antiquities of Nigeria and other various discoveries scattered over the former Eastern Region made by the Department of Archaeology of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Although these finds may not resolve the issue of the origin of the Igbo, they throw some light on the existing darkness which enshrouds it.

Secondly, traditional stories of migrations alone cannot sufficiently explain the peculiar political system found among the Igbo to the west of the River Niger (otherwise known as the Mid-West Igbo) and in Onitsha and in the area of Nsukka (*pages* 3, 44–45). A more tenable explanation is that of culture contact. The Igbo population in the Mid-West State of Nigeria and those of Onitsha were for many centuries before the nineteenth century under the political suzerainty of the Benin Kingdom; while as stated above, Nupe influence over Nsukka area was strong in the nineteenth century. These contacts explain why kingship institutions occur among these sections of Igbo.

Thirdly, it is misleading to state, as Dr Uchendu does (*page* 4), that European contact with Igbo-speaking peoples dates back to the arrival of the Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century. It is a well-known historical fact that the Portuguese first arrived in Benin through Gwatto, a port situated in the non-Igbo area of the Benin kingdom, about 1483. Three years later, around 1486, a Portuguese factor was established at the port. European contact with Igbo-speaking peoples cannot be said to be earlier than around mid-seventeenth century when, with the gradual rise of the Niger Delta states, the Igbo hinterland became a rich source of the slaves that were sold to the Europeans in the markets of the various Delta city states.

Furthermore, the author's reasons for the Aba riots are grossly oversimplified. It is evident from this that the author had no access to the recent work on the warrant chief system in the former Eastern Region of Nigeria produced by Dr A. E. Afigbo.[1]

Thus, it is hard to accept that Dr Uchendu's work is authoritative on the Igbo. His claim that he wrote

[1] Forde: *op. cit.* p.77.

[2] Azikiwe: 'Fragments of Onitsha History' *Journal of Negro History*, vol. xv. October 1930, No. 4.

[3] Hodgkin: *Nigerian Perspectives: an Historical Anthology*, OUP, 1960.

[1] Afigbo, A. E.: *The Warrant Chief System in Eastern Nigeria* 1900–1929 (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Ibadan, 1964).

his book as 'a full participant' in the culture of rural Igboland is not proved. It is evident that he has relied mainly on published works to supplement his own first-hand knowledge of Igbo culture as it pertains to his own village in order to have an over-all view of the culture of the Igbo. His book is, however valuable because it treats this over-all view of Igbo culture. But, it should be read with caution.

B. A. AGIRI

ON READING OLD POETS

By

A. K. METIEDEN

NEARLY one hundred and fifty years ago the English essayist William Hazlitt (1778–1830) wrote a charming essay—'On Reading Old Books'—in the *London Magazine* in February 1821.

Hazlitt's first sentence in that essay abruptly reads: 'I hate reading new books'. 'New-fangled books', he goes on to say 'are also like made-dishes in this respect, that they are generally little else than hashes and *rifacimentos* of what has been served up entire and in a more natural state at other times'. While lesser-men and reviewers, in particular, cannot go that far, on my part I personally hate reading new poems for much similar reasons although, unfortunately, it is part of the job! This is precisely the reason for the present attempt to bring back the old masters for our joint pleasure 'Lest we forget'.

As Sir Arthur-Quiller-Couch (1863–1944) succinctly put it, and as the following pieces would show, 'the Muses' house has many mansions: their hospitality has outlived many policies of State, more than a few religions, countless heresies'.

The novelist, Oscar Wilde (1856–1900) was, however, of the opinion that 'one man's poetry is another man's poison', which may be true. But centuries earlier than Wilde the Roman poet and epigrammatist, Martial (born in Spain in A.D. 43) expressed the view that 'he does not write at all whose poems no man reads'.

The writer has certainly read the pieces that follow in one anthology or another if not made to recite some of the bits in school, as I believe, our readers also. Trusting that what follows would give readers as much pleasure as he derived, and still derives, from reading or reciting, we beg to remind you of your old favourites in the realm of poetry: the fact, notwithstanding, that even if it could be possible, no single anthology even can include everybody's favourite poem or poet in the English language much less in a single resume and, of course, no such claim is made here. However, the 'Who's Who' covered in what follows includes such favourite celebrities as William Blake; Ralph Waldo Emerson; Edward Fitzgerald; Thomas Gray; George Herbert and Robert Herrick whose short biographical notes are given at the end of the extracts. With these brief remarks we hope you may now read, reflect and rejoice!

ALEXANDER, W. Earl of Sterline (1567–1640) from 'TO AURORA'

O if thou knew'st how thou thyself dost harm.
And dost prejudge thy bliss, and spoil my rest;
Then thou would'st melt the ice out of thy breast
And thy relenting heart would kindly warm

. . . . . .

And whilst we thus should make our sorrows one,
This happy harmony would make them none.

ARNOLD, Mathew (1822–1888) from THE FORESAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away:
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shoreward blow;
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,

Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

From MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides,
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides;
But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd

From THE FUTURE

A wanderer is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time;
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light,
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream

BERKELEY, George (1685–1753) from 'On the Prospects of Planting Arts and Learning in America.

Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

BLAKE, William (1757–1827) from 'Auguries of Innocence'.

A dog starv'd at his master's gate
Predicts the ruin of the State.
A horse misus'd upon the road
Calls to Heaven for human blood.

. . . . . .

The lamb misus'd breeds public strife,
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.

. . . . . .

He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be belov'd by men.
He who the ox to wrath has mov'd
Shall never be by woman lov'd.

. . . . . .

Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
For the last Judgment draweth nigh.

. . . . . .

The beggar's dog and widow's cat,
Feed them, and thou wilt grow fat.

. . . . . .

A truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent
It is right it should be so;
Man was made for joy and woe;
And when this we rightly know,
Thro' the world we safely go:
Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.

. . . . . .

He who doubts from what he sees
Will ne'er believe, do what you please.

. . . . . .

To be in a passion you good may do,
But no good if a passion is in you.

. . . . . .

Every night and every morn
Some to misery are born,
Every morn and every night
Some are born to sweet delight.
Some are born to sweet delight,
Some are born to endless night.
We are led to believe a lie
When we see not thro' the eye,
Which was born in a night, to perish in a night,
When the Soul slept in beams of light,
God appears, and God is Light,
To those poor souls who dwell in Night;
But does a Human Form display
To those who dwell in realms of Day.

CARTWRIGHT, William (1611–1643) from 'No Platonic Love'

I climb'd from sex to soul, from soul to thought;
But thinking there to move,
Headlong I rolled from thought to soul, and then
From soul I lighted at the sex again.

. . . . . .

So lovers who profess they spirits taste,
Feed yet on grosser meat;
I know they boast they souls to souls convey,
Howe'r they meet, the body is the way.

. . . . . .

For searching thus to be for ever rich,
They only find a med'cine for the itch.

COLERIDGE, Samuel Taylor (1772–1839) from 'Epigram'

Sir, I admit your general rule,
That every poet is a fool,
But you yourself may serve to show it,
That every fool is not a poet.

COWPER, William (1731–1800) from 'Light Shining Out of Darkness'

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

. . . . . .

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain.
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

DYER, Sir Edward (1550–1607) from 'My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is'

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more,
They are but poor, though much they have.
And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live,

. . . . . .

But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

. . . . . .

I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence;
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I!

ELIOT, George (pen-name of Mary Anne Cross) (1819–1880) From:

'O MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE'

O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

. . . . . .

This is Life to Come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious.
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused
And in diffusion ever more intense,
So shall I join the choir invisible,
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

EMERSON, Ralph Waldo (1803–1882) from BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not the subtle ways,
I keep, and pass, and turn again.
Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.
They reckon ill who leave one out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.
The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pin in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

From TO EVA

O fair and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine;
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will.
A sympathy divine.
Ah! let me blameless gaze upon
Features that seem at heart my own;
Nor fear those watchful sentinels,
Who charm the more their glance forbids.
Chaste-glowing, underneath their lids,
With fire that draws while it repels.

FITZGERALD, Edward (1809–1883) from 'Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam of Naishapur'.

'When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?'

.....

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!
Some for the Glories, of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

.....

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.
The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

.....

I sometimes think that never blows so red.
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure—house,
And preadventure to THE MASTER too.

.....

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

.....

O threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise
One thing at least is certain,—This Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies
Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through
Not one returns to tell us the Road
Which to discover we must travel too.
The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their fellows, and to Sleep return'd.

.....

The Ball no question makes of Ayes or Noes.
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed you down into the Field;
He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows.
The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a word of it.

.....

With Earth's first clay They did the last Man Knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed:
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.
YESTERDAY This Day's Madness did prepare;
TOMORROW's Silence, Triumph, or Despair.

.....

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much wrong;
Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.
Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?

.....

I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

.....

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries
'Fools! Your reward is neither Here nor There'.

.....

And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—'While you live,
Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return.'
And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
You were—TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

.....

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

.....

GAY, John (1685–1732) from 'To a Lady on Her Passion for Old China'

Philosophers more grave than wise
Hunt science down in butterflies;

Or fondly poring on a spider
Stretch human contemplation wider;
Fossils give joy to Galen's soul;
He digs for knowledge, like a mole;
In shells so learn'd, that all agree
No fish that swims knows more than he
In such pursuits if wisdom lies,
Who, Laura, shall thy taste despise?

. . . . . .

But man is made of coarser stuff,
And serves convenience well enough;
He's a strong earthen vessel made,
For drudging, labour, toil, and trade;
And when wives lose their other self,
With ease they bear the loss of delf.

. . . . . .

If all that's frail we must despise,
No human view or scheme is wise.
Are not ambition's hopes as weak?
They swell like bubbles, shine and break.

. . . . . .

A courtier's promise is so slight,
'Tis made at noon, and broke at night,
What pleasure's sure? The miss you keep
Breaks both your fortune and your sleep,
The man who loves a country life,
Breaks all the comforts of his wife;
And if he quit his farm and plough,
His wife in town may break her vow.
Love, Laura, love, while youth is warm,
For each new winter breaks a charm,
And woman's not like china sold,
But cheaper grows in growing old;
Then quickly choose the prudent part,
Or else you break a faithful heart.

GOLDSMITH, Oliver (1728–1774) from 'Woman'

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy?
What art can wash her tears away?
The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from ev'ry eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom is—to die.

GRAY, Thomas (1716–1771) from 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard'.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

. . . . . .

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

. . . . . .

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

. . . . . .

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

HERBERT, George (1593–1633) from THE GIFTS OF GOD

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span.
So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honour, pleasure;
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.
For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.
Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.

from 'Man'

My God, I heard this day
That none doth build a stately habitation,
But he that means to dwell therein.

What house more stately hath there been,
Or can be, than is man, to whose creation
All things are in decay?

. . . . . .

Till then afford us so much wit
That as the world serves us we may serve thee,
And both thy servants be.

HERRICK, Robert (1591–1674) from COUNSEL TO GIRLS

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
Tomorrow will be dying
The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting:
That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst,
Times, still succeed the former.
Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

from TO DIANEME

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes
Which starlike sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud, that you can see
All hearts your captives; yours yet free:
Be you not proud of that rich hair,
Which wantons with the love-sick air;
When as that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone,
When all your world of beauty's gone.

from 'The Argument of His Book'

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers.
I sing of Maypoles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal-cakes.
I write of youth, of love and have access
By these to sing of cleanly wantonness.
I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,
Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris.
I sing of times trans-shifting, and I write
How roses first came red and lilies white
I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The court of Mab and of the fairy king.
I write of hell; I sing (and ever shall)
Of heaven, and hope to have it after all.

JONSON, Ben (1573?–1637) from THE NOBLE NATURE

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
A lilly of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

As Editors, in the words of the English novelist and dramatist Israel Zangwill (1864–1926) 'are constantly on the watch to discover new talents in old names', and receiving no new books for review by this reviewer,[1] or receiving them late, we hope all the same, that at least those interested in lyrics, poems and songs have found most, if not all, of these immortal lines of the old masters and their masterpieces entertaining.

Space and time not permitting, you may notice that most of the major poets, the Brownings, for instance, have not been included. But the same factors permitting and your interest persisting we hope to refresh your memories with bits and pieces of these and others.

Those not interested in poems may, however, like Sam Weller in Charles Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*, think: 'This is rather a change for the worse as the gen'l'm'n said, wen he got two doubtful shillin's and Sixpenn' orth o'pocket-pieces for a good half-crown'.

To them the answer would be, in F.T. Palgrave's words, if this selection 'teaches those indifferent to the Poets to love them, and those who love them to love them more, the aim and the desire entertained in framing it will be fully accomplished.'

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BLAKE, WILLIAM: The remarkable thing about this

[1] See page 242

poet, whose 'Songs of Innocence' you must have read in full, was that he did not, unlike you or me, go to school but was only apprenticed to one engraver, James Basire. That, notwithstanding, in 1783 out came his 'Poetical Sketches' followed by the 'Songs of Innocence' which he engraved and published in 1789. Turning to prose, Blake's principal prose work the 'Marriage of Heaven and Hell' came out in 1790. In this work he takes up his revolutionary position by the denial of the reality of matter, the denial of eternal punishment and the denial of authority. Reverting to verse again, and in contrast to the 'Songs of Innocence', out came the 'Songs of Experience' in 1794.

EMERSON, RALPH WALDO: This American philosopher and poet did, however, go to school, like you or me, with the added meritorious difference that he was a philosopher and studied theology both of which might have eluded us if not beaten us hollow. He was even ordained but, having his own views on the sacrament, he had to resign.

Out on a European tour he visited England in 1833 where he met the English literary worthies Coleridge, Wordworth and Carlyle.

On his return to America he lectured extensively on literature, biography, history and human culture. In 1836 out came his prose essay 'Nature' which earned for his philosophical doctrine the epithet 'transcendental' implying a tinge of mysticism in his idealism.

Emerson lectured on various reforms between 1838–39 and edited the idealist periodical *The Dial* until 1844. His first volume of *Essays* was published in 1841, followed by the second in 1844 and a collection of poems in 1847.

A second visit to England in 1847 resulted in the publication of *Representative Men* in 1850 and *English Traits in* 1856.

FITZGERALD, EDWARD: Fitzgerald, whose chief work, the English version (from the Persian) of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* anonymously published in 1859 needs no introduction, was a friend of co-celebrities Carlyle, Thackery and the Tennysons. His *Six Dramas of Calderon* was published in 1853.

GRAY, THOMAS: Thomas Gray of 'Elegy' fame, started his work as an English poet in 1742 with the publication of his odes 'On Spring'; 'On a Distant Prospect of Eton College'; 'On Adversity' and the 'Sonnet on the Death of West'. Although he did not finish it till 1750, it appears he began writing the 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' about the same time.

Taking him that long, it is not surprising that the popularity of the 'Elegy' led to his being offered the (Poet) laureateship on the death of Colley Cibber in 1757.

On prose, in 1775 out came his most finished prose work the *Journal* and his *Letters* are accredited among the best in the English language.

HERBERT, GEORGE: George Herbert, one of the first and greatest Metaphysical poets, was public orator at Cambridge—where he was educated—from 1619 to 1627.

All his poems, it appears, were included in *The Temple*, a collection of 160 poems of a religious nature, which came out in 1633.

HERRICK, ROBERT: Robert Herrick, an apt and charming exponent of the Horation way of life, published his *Hesperides*—a collection of 1,200 poems—in 1848. Over three centuries later the present writer will be grateful to be informed of any body else who has written half as much: and that is enough testimony to Robert Herrick's poems, of course.

NEW NIGERIAN POETS

A NEW NIGERIA ALL ALONG!

THE same fascinating old story
of a New Nigeria emerging.
People, in all walks of life did cry
for this era when the whites were coming.
The blacks and whites continue to tarry
in anticipation all along.
And Today, we are waiting
for certain obvious verity
that a New Nigeria will dawn all along.
Tomorrow, the same tune will be sung
as a nourishing pansy
that comes all along
like a veritable seasonal play.

ADESEGUN ODULARU

FESTIVE WAKE

am waking to your festive dawn
As your sudden high pitch calling
Cuts through the air's silent mood

Bid the clarion callers hit harder
Upon the face of your sacred tom tom
Send the crier's sonorous gong ringing
Heralding the wake of this your festive dawn

With a song on every lip
And
A cowry to cast upon your ritual stand
We at your feet stand Slaves
Bowing low under a Suppliant's loadstone.

MOYO OGUNDIPE

AFRICAN RAIN

RAIN! RAIN!
Rich, cool, rain!
Cool, African rain,
RAIN! RAIN!
Rich, cool, rain!
Cool, African rain!

'Little child,
so still,
so still
beside me here;
What think you,
of rain?
African child,
so still,
so still
beside me here;
What think you
of rain?
Cool, African rain!'

'When it rains,
Mummy gives me,
a nice glossy coat,
a nice glossy cap,
a large umbrella,
and black, shining boots,
I ride in a car,
and I never get wet!'

'Little child,
how sad,
how sad!
never to have felt,
the delicious coolness,
of African rains;
slipping o'er bare-skins
slithering under bare feet.
How sad,
how sad!
Never to have drunk,
the cool deliciousness
of African rains'.

The childhood,
we once knew,
is gone
as we progress
on paths away from nature
away from our very souls
away from God,
Giver of Rains.
Rain! Rain!
Rich, cool, rain,
cool, African rain!,
Rain! Rain!
Rich, cool, rain,
cool, African, rain!

AYODELE A. ADESIGBIN

READERS' LETTERS

Sir,

I SHOULD like to express my appreciation to you and your staff for publishing, in the March–May 1968 issue of the *Nigeria* Magazine, (pages 17–23), the long and well illustrated article on our Institute. It was good of you to collaborate with the author, Mr Vaughan-Richards, in bringing to the public's attention the existence of the Institute, its physical resources, and its purpose.

Only one small mis-statement: the £100,000 from the American Government was contributed for books and library equipment only, not building construction.

Yours Sincerely,
L. A. FABUNMI,
Director-General,
Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

Sir,

The Ovie of Uvwie: A Chieftaincy Installation

I DRAW your attention to the above-named article 'OVIE OF UVWIE: A Chieftaincy Installation' by K. E. AGBAMU which appeared in *Nigeria* Magazine No. 96 of March–May 1968 (pages 23–35).

While thanking Agbamu for his efforts to publicize Uvwie, I have to point out first, that the very title of the article is not correct because all the pictures illustrating the story were those taken during the celebration of the anniversary of the Installation of His Highness (Chief Johnson Uvwiekoko Edjekowho) Eruowho II, Ovie of Uvwie. It should have been 'The Ovie of Uvwie Installation Anniversary, 1967'.

Secondly, it is not true that the office of the Ovieship of Uvwie is elective. The office had been, and still is, hereditary. What Agbamu called elective Ovie is the rotation of the office among the three ruling houses—*Eruowho, Imade* and *Abe*. It was, and still is, an exclusive right of the three ruling houses and no more.

A third correction is that the present Ovie, Eruowho II, was installed as the Ovie of Uvwie in 1954 and he was officially recognized by the Government of the former Western Region in March, 1962. This recognition had been reaffimed by the political Government of the former Western Region in 1963, the Interim Government of the former Mid-Western Region, the elected Government of the former Mid-Western Region and finally by the Military Government of the Mid-West. So it is incorrect to say that he was recognized in 1967.

On the Installation of an Ohovhore (Chief), the Ovie was responsible for the performing of the ceremonies connected with it. But at a stage when there was no Ovie (interregnum), the Unuevboro, the Ovie's Prime Minister, (Unuevworo) assumed this duty which the present Ovie has allowed his Prime Minister to perform still. The ceremonies the Ovie performed during the anniversary were to confer honorary titles on deserving Nigerians and the ceremonies took place in his Palace and not at the usual Eche (Shrine).

There is only one Ovie in Uvwie, so there is no Ovie Owhoru but Obah Owhoru (Priest of Owhoru).

Captions to four pictures are also incorrect:

(*a*) Picture on page 24 is that of Obah Edjuvwie—Okpo (Edjuvwie Priest) and other members of the group standing in front of the Ovie ready to pledge their loyalty.

(*b*) Picture on page 25—Ebah Owhoru, Egbodo re Ekpan avore Ekpokpo (Owhoru High Priests of Ekpan and Ekpokpo).

(*c*) Picture on page 26—The members of Egwagwa cult going to pay their homage to Ovie, Eruowho II.

(*d*) Picture on page 30 is Obah—Owhoru Ekpokpo (Owhoru—Ekpokpo Priest) with hand raised paying his homage. On his left is Obah—Owhoru Ekpan (Priest of Owhoru—Ekpan) with some Irheren.

Believing that the above corrections will be published and thanking you in advance,

I am,

Yours, faithfully,
JOSEPH IJOKOH,
for Secretary Uvwie Traditional Council,
Ovie's Palace, Effurun.

(We thank Mr J. Ijokoh for drawing our attention to these errors which were as a result of (a) our original Benin-based commissioned writer, who attended the celebration, failed to write the article for us; (b) our photographer, whom we sent all the way from Lagos to cover the ceremony, had already taken the photographs and (c) believing that it would be a waste of time, money and effort if we could not commission one of our office staff, who actually hails from that area and claims to know about the ceremony, we just had to make do with his writing what he knows. We do hope, however, that not only the people concerned but also our other readers must have enjoyed reading it despite the errors. E.D.).

CONTRIBUTORS

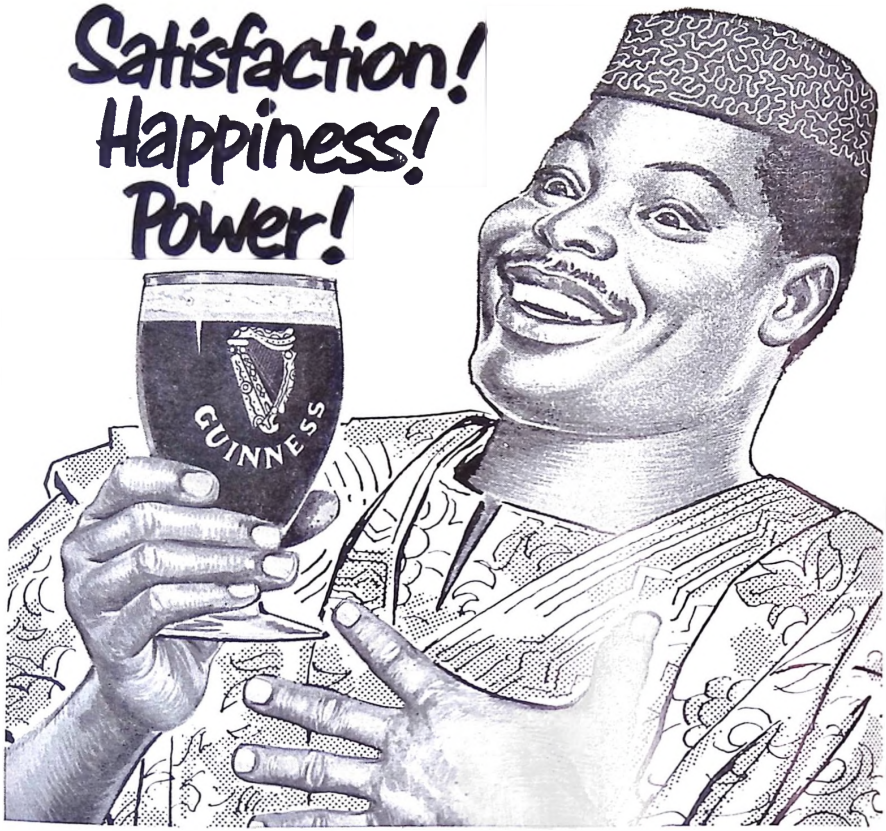
Mr Ontoni A. Nduka, who writes on *The Commonwealth Education Conference*,—formerly a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka—is a Senior Education Officer in the Federal Ministry of Education.

Mr H. L. B. Moody (the writer with his wife J. E. Moody) of *A visit to Sokoto and Wurno*, who was at Abdullahi Bayero College, Kano (A.B.U., Zaria) and then later at the University of London, Institute of Education, is now back in life as Reader in English in the Department of English of that University.

Mr 'Sola Adeogun, who writes on *Apo*, is a staff of the Department of Antiquities, Lagos.

Pastor Peter Boe—the writer on *Bille Tribe* was, until recently, on the staff of the Sudan United Mission, Numan, but has since left for the United States.

Mr M. R. Welton, who writes on *The Function of the Song in Olokun Ceremony* is on the staff of the Federal Government College, Sokoto.



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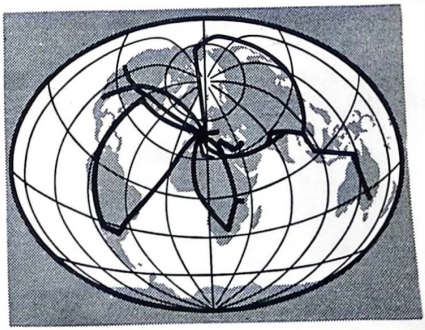

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Nigeria

Magazine

No. 99

December 1968 | two shillings

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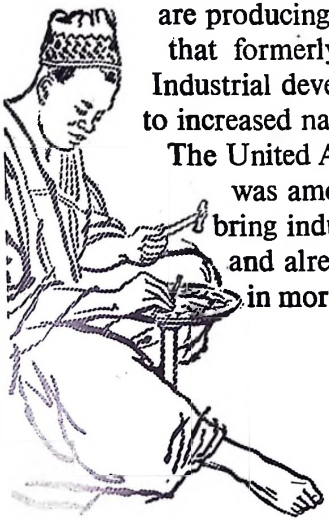

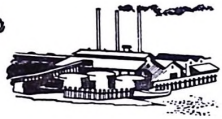

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Business Editor: L. ALLAGOA
Offices: Exhibition Centre, Marina, Lagos.
Telephones: 23134, 26592, 20643, 20716
Telegrams: Ednigmag, Lagos.

COVER: *An Itsekiri Dancer from Warri*

Contents

VIEWPOINT
CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND THE INDIVIDUAL

THE patterns of behaviour of any given individual are normally conditioned by the values of the community into which he has been born and/or bred. These values comprise modes of speech, beliefs, customs, tools, dwellings, works of art, etc. which collectively we call CULTURE. Thus, the individual's thinking, feeling, living and general behaviour as a normal human being are merely expressions of his participation in a cultural process, and the community is the hub of this process. In short, the community is both the source and custodian of culture.

In this role, the community will determine what language the individual will speak, what gods he will worship, what funeral rites he will perform in disposing of his dead and how he will marry or prepare his food. Poor man what else could he do but react to the culture that surrounds him from birth to death? No tribe or people ever makes its own culture; it inherits it ready-made from its ancestors.

Does this mean that culture is static and that the individual is a mere slave to his own habitat? By no means. The values which every community regards as its culture are constantly interacting with each other, thereby creating new groupings and syntheses. In this process, new elements emerge in the system, while old ones drop out. Thus our culture today was determined by the past and the culture of tomorrow will be but a continuation of the trend of the present. In other words, culture is a continuum a string of values that flows freely down through time from one generation to another.

This interaction of the values of a community enables the individual to play more than a passive role. It is true that his thinking, feeling and entire values are conditioned by the cultural milieu into which he has been born. Nevertheless, as the "human-carrier" of these values he provides the stimulus for this process of cultural interaction. For example in Africa, there are significant cases of some affinity between cultures. This can be explained as the direct consequence of the slave trade and inter-state wars which brought about a cross-movement of people—the "human-carriers" of cultures. But this is only a partial reason. An equally significant factor is the frequency with which the individual becomes exposed to external cultures. For example, Western cultural influences have made serious in-roads in other communities through traders, missionaries, administrators and the armed forces. They have not disrupted the values of other communities but through the "human-carriers" they have produced the necessary stimulus for effecting significant modifications and additions to the native cultures. In this way, there emerged organised industrial production, free and wage-oriented labour, systematic education, etc. Because of these developments we are living better than our ancestors.

For essentially the same reason too, Nigerians and indeed Africans can transplant their cultures in other communities. They can attain this objective by showing a deeper appreciation and understanding of their native values *i.e.*, cultures, with a view to exposing other communities to the wealth of their heritage. When it is remembered that cubism in art was borrowed from Africa without due acknowledgment and later re-exported to Africa with a European label, every Nigerian must regard himself as a true torch-bearer in the crusade to establish his cultural identity. Nothing can be nobler than this task.

V. A. G. WARMATE

THE KAINJI DAM—

A RESETTLEMENT*

By

I. A. ADALEMO

ONE of the side effects of the Kainji hydro-electric power development project is the displacement of some 50,000 people whose villages will be flooded by the rising waters of the Niger above the Kainji Dam. The Niger Dams Authority has planned ahead to relocate these villages and resettle the villagers in more convenient locations along the edges of the future lake.

Resettling 50,000 people at the same time is a task of such proportions that one cannot but think of the problems that the resettling authority would have to grapple with. This article intends to look at these problems in relation to the present situation in the Kainji Dam area and what is being done to solve the problems involved in such a large scale resettlement. The lessons learnt here are bound to prove very useful in future projects both within Nigeria and in other parts of Africa.

THE FUTURE LAKE BASIN

The reservoir marked out by the 465 feet contour will gradually fill up to form a lake approximately 480 square miles in area. It will be eighty-five miles long extending from the tip of Kainji Island to Yelwa on that stretch of the Niger which seems to run in a straight north-south direction. This lake will form behind the Kainji Dam with an impressive total length of about 2½ per cent miles excluding the two per cent miles of low saddle dam on the left bank of the river. This structure has as its main features a concrete gravity dam across the left channel and Kainji Island (1,800 feet long and 215 feet high), a rock and earth fill dam across the right channel (8,000 feet long and 235 feet high), and a similar rock and earth fill dam beyond the right channel (4,000 feet long and 120 feet high). The maximum height of the reservoir is estimated at 465 feet above sea level with a drawdown to 435 feet (normal minimum) and 420 feet during extremely dry years (*Figure* 1).

The lake is going to be long and narrow for most of its length. Average width is about ten miles. The dominant factor here is the nature of the river valley itself. The Niger, forced to cut down through a hard crystalline rock, has carved out a narrow trough-like structure which is deep enough to be able to take most of the increase in volume which impounding will bring about. For most of its length, the maximum area to be inundated on either bank of the river does not exceed four miles. This means that the land bordering the Niger channel rises fairly rapidly to 500 feet and above. The only exception to this is Foge Island, a

* This article is the result of preliminary survey done at the start of the socio-economic research project jointly sponsored by the Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER) and the F.A.O. The author gratefully acknowledges the support provided by NISER.

The original village type houses built of mud with thatched roofs; note the Niger in the background. Most of these villages were built along the banks of the river

relatively flat extensive plain situated in the middle of the future lake basin. It forms part of an extensive flood plain which extends beyond the eastern bank of the left channel. Elevations over the whole of this flood plain are generally below the minimum reservoir level. This means that all the settlements on Foge Island will be completely inundated. Foge Island and the adjoining banks of the Niger will be totally submerged providing most of the storage area of the reservoir. The lake will also be very wide here extending for some fifteen miles at its widest point.

Three Emirates will be affected by the inundation. These are Yauri Emirate in Sokoto Province, Borgu Emirate in Ilorin Province and Kontagora Emirate in Niger Province in the Kwara and North-Western States. Over sixty-two per cent of the land to be inundated is in Yauri Emirate followed by Borgu with twenty-eight per cent. Within each of these provinces are to be found different ethnic groups the most important of which are the Gungawa, the Bussawa and the Kamberi. Others are the Lopawas, the Laru, the Hausa and the Yorubas. The last two groups are mainly town dwelling traders. The Gungawa live along both banks of the Niger and on the several islands which dot the river channel. With the exception of small enclaves such as the village of Libata across the river from Old Bussa, the Gungawa are generally found north of Foge Island.

They constitute about one-fourth of the total population to be resettled and probably the most important economic group. Their economy is based on an intricate system of intensive, terraced and irrigated dry season farm and a less intensive upland 'rain garden' cultivation. Fishing is also done on a part time basis by most Gungawas. Full time fishing with some upland grain cultivation is practised by the Lopawas who are believed to be related to the Gungawas. The Kamberis, a predominantly pagan group, are found all over the Kainji Lake Basin. Their distinct hairdo (a small round patch in the centre of an otherwise clean shaven head) and the fact that they are always seen nude from the navel up, set them apart from other ethnic groups in this area. The Kamberi woman also carries her load on the shoulder rather than on the head. They are mostly upland grain farmers and hardly do any fishing. The Bussawas, found in Borgu Emirate, are mostly farmers and traders. Their chief town, Old Bussa, like Yelwa to the north, is essentially a trading station and deals with goods moving east and west across the Niger.

A cursory look at the economy of the Kainji Lake basin would show that the most important occupations are those of farming and fishing. A consideration to the present land use and settlement pattern is therefore essential if we are to appreciate the degree to which inundation and the necessity for relocation would affect the total economy of the future lake basin.

LAND—USE AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Apart from fishing which does not leave any particular pattern on the land surface, one can identify four major types of land—use in the area under study

(1) Intensive cultivation on irrigated lands and *fadamas*,
(2) Upland cultivation
(3) Grazing and
(4) Settlements.

But before we look at each of these in some detail let us examine the distribution of different land categories within the areas to be flooded. Table I (page 270) shows the number of acreages under each category including the area at present occupied by the river Niger and its tributaries.

It would appear from the table that the amount of cultivated land which will be lost as a result of inundation by the lake is only 35,780 acres or roughly ten *per cent* of the total land area which will go under the lake. When we add the categories under marshland, land under light bush and land without bush however, we arrive at a figure of 272,840 acres. While this is likely to be an exaggeration of the total loss of potentially useful land due to inundation, it nevertheless is a nearer figure than that obtained by merely reckoning with land area at present under cultivation. This assertion follows from the fact that marshland (*gungandoki*) would include some *fadamas* (occa-

sionally flooded areas) as well as areas suitable for fish ponds and dry season pastures. Land under light bush and land without bush are likely to be the results of the shifting system of cultivation. The latter group serves as grazing land for Fulani cattle and would be available as farm lands when it becomes necessary to abandon land at present under cultivation. Unlike rivers, such as the Mississippi in the United States of America, the Hwango-Ho and Yangtze Kiang in China, and the Nile in Egypt, the Niger within Nigeria cannot boast of an extensive flood plain. Much of the silt which would have formed such a plain had been deposited in the inland delta of the Niger ever before it enters Nigeria. Also because of the geology of the area, the Niger is confined within a narrow channel above Lokoja and, as was mentioned earlier, would not spill much beyond these bounds even during floods. Yet it should be noted that after the annual floods the *fadamas* are sufficiently replenished to stand another year of cultivation. These *Fadamas* will be permanently inundated and are likely to be replaced by land of doubtful quality in the drawdown[1] area of the future lake basin.

INTENSIVE CULTIVATION ON IRRIGATED LANDS AND FADAMAS

Along the Niger, on both banks and on the islands, the Gungawas have developed an intricate system of irrigated agriculture. At the end of the rains and with the arrival of the Black Floods the land is prepared for irrigation. The islanders use calabashes[2] to lift water through a series of channels to the carefully terraced farm plots which are intensively cropped with onions—a major cash crop. Onions are intercropped with other crops such as cassava and rice. Planting of onions in nursery beds starts around September; transplanting occurs sometime in October and mature onion bulbs are harvested about three months after planting. Onions are usually taken in canoes to the local markets; occasionally however, the onion farmer sets out with his onions down river to Jebba, Lokoja, and Onitsha from where he purchases and brings back large boats which are not locally available.

According to a survey of the farm lands below the 472 feet contour done by the Agricultural Officer (Resettlement), the total area of cultivated land for six village areas in Gungawa District is 3,996 acres and of these 252.5 acres are devoted to Dry Season irrigated farming (*see* Table II p. 270). The great disparity between total farmland acreage and acreage devoted to irrigated farming points to a deficiency in the irrigation system. There seems to be a limit to the area of land that could be irrigated by hand. In the six village areas this averages out to about 0.4 acres per individual engaged in dry season farming and very few farmers cultivate up to one acre. This *per capita* acreage could be raised considerably with the introduction of a more efficient irrigation system. The Ministry of Agriculture is introducing pump irrigation to the area. At present about twenty-five acres are under irrigation in Gungawa territory. Although there are difficulties not yet overcome, those farmers taking part in the pump irrigation scheme who were interviewed expressed satisfaction with the scheme. This is significant since it means that this innovation can be successfully introduced to other farmers who will be affected by the resettlement project. Yield could be considerably increased to provide additional revenue which will take care of the cost of pump irrigation with a substantial margin representing net returns to the farmer.

If onion farming is to continue in the drawdown area of the lake, and it would be disastrous if this is not possible, plans should be made towards the installation of pumping schemes at least in those areas where the Gungawa will be resettled. This means that the Gungawas should be resettled as close as possible to the lake. According to P. G. Harris in his *Notes on Yauri*, there is a claim that the Sarkawa (Gungawa) cannot live save close

[1] The drawdown area of the future lake basin is the land area between the maximum and minimum lake levels. It is estimated that the lake will fall from the maximum (465;) to elevation 460; between January and April and will subsequently drop progressively to 435.

[2] Occasionally one comes across a shaduff made with the simplest materials available nearby raised on a mud platform on the river bank.

Resettlement: Villagers moving from an old settlement to their new homes

to the water. Even if this were not so, it would be unwise and a waste of human resources to locate these irrigators far away from the lake shore where they will not be able to practise a skill developed over the years. Fortunately the villages are being relocated very close to the lake. The only uncertainty is the period of time it would take to develop an 'onion land' within the drawdown area. According to some estimates, two years is the least time necessary to develop good 'onion-land'. All indications seem to point to a need for subsidy to enable farmers defray the initial expenses of preparing the land for cropping especially with regard to fertilizer application and extension services in general. Apart from increasing the yield per acre from the present ten tons to twenty tons (already produced on Yauri Native Authority experimental farm) or more, it may be possible to extend the onion season.[1]

[1] Thayer Scudder: *Resettlement Problems in the Kainji Lake Basin: An Introductory Description*, (NISER. Ibadan, July, 1966), p. 3.

TABLE I

EXISTING CATEGORIES OF LAND IN THE AREAS TO BE FLOODED BY EMIRATE IN ACRES

Type of Land	*Yauri*	*Borgu*	*Kontagora*	*Total*
Marshland	47,000	13,290	180	61,170
Land under dense bush	5,100	9,200	1,490	15,790
Land under light bush	102,200	53,300	18,200	173,800
Land without bush	1,840	250	—	2,090
Land under cultivation	23,900	9,200	2,680	35,780
Rocky ground	250	2,800	390	3,440
Area occupied by water	19,000	50	3,170	22,220
Towns and villages	380	360	60	800
	199,670	88,450	26,970	315,090

TABLE II

DRY SEASON FARM POPULATION AND ACREAGE IN SIX VILLAGE AREAS—GUNGAWA DISTRICT, YAURI EMIRATE*

Village Area	*Total Farm Population*	*Dry Season Farm Population*	*Total Farm Acreage*	*Dry Season Farm Acreage*
Yabo	479	178	905.4	51.96
Baha	453	174	828.8	58.00
Zamare	493	98	878.4	63.15
Sawa	228	37	233.5	10.12
Tillo	313	71	331.8	23.64
Tondi	398	148	435.9	45.62
TOTAL	2,364	706	3,613.8	252.49

* Daa processed from files of farm compensation survey kindly made available by the Agricultural Officer (Resettlement) stationed at Old Bussa.

UPLAND CULTIVATION

Behind the riverside settlements and at higher levels than the *fadamas* and irrigated fields upland crops are cultivated during the rains. Important crops include guinea corn, millet, cotton, and rice in marshy areas. Groundnut is also grown but not in appreciable quantities and where it is grown, it is usually interplanted with either one of the major crops or some other minor crop.

Table II shows that quite a few acres of 'rain gardens' will be inundated. This poses a serious problem for the resettlement officers. Fertile land is a scarcity in the lake basin region. NEDECO, Engineering Consultants to the Niger Dams Authority, carried out a soil survey of the region while conducting preliminary investigations on the Kainji Dam Project.[1] The Mokwa Agricultural Research Station has since carried out a more detailed soil survey of the resettlement area and on the basis of this has been able to advise on the location of the villages that had so far been relocated. The problem becomes more acute because of the constraints imposed by political boundaries. The hardest hit Emirate in this respect, Yauri, happens to contain the highest number of people to be resettled. It does not seem that adjacent Emirates would agree to give up part of their territories for use by the affected emirates who in turn would not like to lose part of their revenue-yielding population. This same problem has affected resettlement policy and has virtually made it impossible to carry out some experiments involving the grouping of villages into larger settlements. We shall say more about this later.

GRAZING

The Fulani, with his herd of cattle, is a common sight all over the lake basin. Carefully avoiding the cultivated areas, the Fulani drives his cattle on the hoof through light bush and grass covered land. The cattle graze as they move south towards Jebba resting occasionally where pasture is abundant. There is a definite seasonal pattern to grazing in the lake basin. Grazing land is found mainly in the upland areas during the rainy season while the *fadamas* become the major pastureland during the dry season. The Fulani therefore moves his cattle from upland to lowland (*fadama*) and back again with the seasons. This transhuman grazing becomes pronounced on Foge Island which is an extensive pastureland during the dry season. The Fulani herders pitch their camps on the island and on great 'flats' (exposed sections of the river channel unto which grasses have encroached from the adjacent land area). These temporary camps are disbanded and moved as the Fulani move southwards. This great pastureland will be completely lost when Foge Island is inundated. It will be turned into a fishing ground instead. The Fulani will be forced to drive his cattle through potential agricultural land and the authorities may have a problem on their hands resulting from friction between agricultural land-use and grazing unless something is done now to compensate for the loss of the dry season pastureland. As Scudder[1] already pointed out, attempts are being made to provide alternative grazing land. The big question is, how adequate a substitute would these irrigated grazing-lands prove to be? Another plan is to bring the Fulani into a sedentary livestock rearing economy. One such scheme is now located near Mokwa on the Mokwa–Kainji road. The success of this latter plan will not completely solve the problem posed by the loss of grazing land within the lake basin for the following reasons:

(1) Nomadic cattle herding is a way of life with the Fulani and it would require a complete social re-orientation to change the pattern which develops very early in life,
(2) the cost of establishing these schemes may be and are usually so prohibitive that it would be virtually impossible to absorb all the Fulani cattle herders within the lake basin,
(3) there is bound to be political opposition to a

[1] The report of the soil survey is contained in volume 5 (Irrigation) of the seven—volume report *Niger Dams Project*, (The Hague 1961) prepared for E.C.N. by NEDECO (The Netherlands Engineering Consultants) and Balfour Beatty & Co.

[1] Thayer Scudder: *op. cit.* p. 2.

scheme which will mean a loss of revenue to the different local authorities in the area. Each local authority may demand that one or more stations be located within its territory which for the reason mentioned in (2) above, among others, may prove impossible. There will always be nomadic Fulani cattle herders who will need dry season grazing lands and part of the resettlement problem is how to provide for these.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Most of the villages in the area to be affected by inundation are located above high water level on both banks of the river and on the islands. This location pattern is dictated by the fact that about eighty per cent of the riverine population is in agriculture or fishing. A substantial proportion of the population in towns such as Yelwa, Bussa, and Warra are involved in trading and deal in goods moving east and west across the Niger as well as the transfer of goods moving north and south over the Niger. The river is so important a factor in the location of these settlements that many of them are accessible only from the river. Another factor responsible for the river bank and island locations is the *edaphic* factor. The soils on the *fadamas* and flood plains are much richer than those in areas farther away from the river. The latter are developed over old crystalline rocks and are very poor in mineral content. They are also more difficult to work than the alluvium on the river banks. Therefore the villages concentrate in a ribbon-like pattern along the banks of the river where adequate farm land is available. With the exception of a few places where the access roads occasionally run close to the river (*e.g.*, near important trading stations), one gets the impression, travelling by road through the future lake basin, that the region is a desolate wilderness. The contrast is too great to be missed even by the most uninterested traveller.

There are at least two distinct village types—the permanent and semi-permanent villages. Both types of villages differ from the 'shifting' or migratory tents of the Fulani cattle herders. The permanent village is one which is continuously inhabited throughout the year. Often, however, the farmer finds that one or more of his farms is located at such a distance from his permanent village that it would not be convenient to commute between the village and the farm. He therefore builds a farm-house on his farm and lives there for a few days at a time looking after the farm. A collection of such farm-houses would constitute a semi-permanent village. The pattern exhibited by fishing villages located near the river is different from that of the farming villages located farther away from the river. While the latter is dispersed the former is nucleated. A farming village is made up of several individual family—households each surrounded by its farmland. The fishing village is a compact unit with some cultivation (*Rama* for ropes and vegetables for food) on the outskirts of the village. For administrative purposes villages are grouped into Village Areas. A number of village areas (from 2 to 9 in Yauri Emirate) make up a District.

A few rural towns exist within the region offering services such as [illegible] facilities, post offices, schools and courts. [illegible] has a hospital in addition and agricultural [illegible]ion officers have their headquarters in the [illegible].

RESETTLEMENT

From the foregoing review it could be seen that the problem facing the Authority responsible for resettlement in the future lake basin is not a simple one. Adequate provision has to be made for the welfare of the displaced persons and considering the diversity of ethnic groups within the basin, this is not going to be easy.

Resettlement policy has not been spelt out in detail. What there is of the general policy had to be obtained by interviewing those involved in the resettlement scheme. It seems as if three different policies were considered before the Niger Dams Authority finally decided on the present policy of rebuilding all the villages to be relocated. The policies considered were:

(*a*) to give the affected people cash compensation for losses sustained due to the inunda-

This building is typical of the new village houses. The walls are made from sandcrete, and roofed with ribbed asbestos sheets all specially made for these structures

tion of their houses and farmlands. Each village is then given an alternative area in which to rebuild a new village without any further help from the government other than the advice which the agricultural extension officer will be giving from time to time on how best to farm the land;

(*b*) to aggregate and relocate in grouped villages with amenities, not presently enjoyed, provided; and

(*c*) to relocate each village as a separate unit; only aggregating where the original pattern suggests such a grouping (*e.g.*, where smaller settlements were satellites of a larger settlement). The Niger Dams Authority will be responsible for rebuilding the houses in each village.

Whichever of these policies is adopted, there is implicit in the resettlement plan a desire to improve the agricultural economy and rehabilitate the rural areas.

About 2,000 people in eighteen villages have actually been relocated under the first policy. One thing which strikes a visitor to these eighteen villages is that they look exactly like the old ones. The only difference is that some compounds are slightly larger than those in the former villages. There is no improvement whatsoever and the opportunity afforded by the shift for rehabilitating the people and introducing innovations has not been fully exploited in this case. The urgency with which they were moved, necessitated by blasting operations near their former sites, may account for the situations mentioned above. The people, however, seem to be satisfied and to have adjusted very well to their new villages and farmlands. There may be some merit in allowing the villagers to rebuild for themselves. We would have to wait for reactions to villages now being constructed by the government to determine which is the better policy.

The second policy, that of regrouping the villages and relocating them as larger settlements, has the advantage of concentrating people in large enough settlements which will support some basic public utilities—piped water, sewage, electricity, markets, schools, health centres and other community facilities. These would then serve as 'central places' for the rural areas round them. The policy was never implemented probably because of the lessons learned from the Volta Resettlement Scheme.[1] A report on a symposium organized to discuss the Volta Scheme points out that 'there was some disquiet about the wisdom of concentrating so many small settlements into a few large ones'.[2] The report also outlines the arguments against this policy:

(*a*) that small agricultural settlements represent a response to the level of soil fertility and the number of people who can be supported on a given area of land;

(*b*) merely grouping many villages and hamlets into small towns does not necessarily provide a basis for urban development especially since the population is still distinctly a rural one;

(*c*) because improvement in the agricultural system may include the enlargement of each farmer's plot of land, the plan should be for a dispersed rather than a more concentrated form of settlement. The distance of a farmer's farm from the settlement, if a concentrated form is adopted, may be such as to force him to move away from the settlement to stay near his farm.

The factors influencing the size of villages within the Kainji Lake Basin are yet to be isolated but, as we mentioned earlier, the amount of fertile land available definitely places a limit on the size of settlements. Geological and soil surveys have not shown that the situation would be different in the new areas where villages will be relocated. It is therefore a wise decision on the part of the Resettlement Authority to relocate the villages separately as they are now. This will also simplify the work of rural rehabilitation since frictions would be at a minimum and the present administrative set-up would be least disturbed under this system.

The Niger Dams Authority has decided to rebuild all the villages to be relocated. The first

[1] 'A. L. Mabogunje: 'The Volta Resettlement Scheme —Some Comments' (mimeo).

[2] *ibid.* p. 4.

town to be completely rebuilt and relocated is New Bussa; Yelwa at the northern end of the lake is at present being relocated. Unlike Bussa, however, it is merely being moved some distance from the edge of the river. The villages on the east bank will be relocated first. This is because access roads, skirting the edge of the lake, already exist here whereas those on the west bank are yet to be built.

NEW BUSSA

New Bussa is a completely new town in every respect. Built almost entirely of sandcrete wall and asbestors roofing, the houses blend very beautifully with the surroundings. The compound system which exists in (old) Bussa is replicated here but the variety in compound sizes has been destroyed. With the exception of the Emir's palace and Councillors' houses, each compound is of standard size and contains an ante room (*zaure*), a room for the *Maigida*, and others for his wives. There is also a large open space within the enclosed compound in which more rooms could be built by the occupants themselves as the need arises. It was proposed that the Bussawas would move into their new town as soon as it is completed but the moving date has been shifted forward to allow the farmers time to harvest the crops on their present farms before moving out. When these people finally move (in probably early 1969 during the slack season when they normally build or rebuild their houses), their reaction, one hopes, will be noted carefully so as to provide additional information which will guide the relocation and rebuilding of other towns and villages. One problem which is bound to come up is the allocation of compounds to families. According to the architect responsible for designing the town, some families will have to spill over more than one compound. Each compound is built to accommodate ten to twelve people but family compounds containing as many as forty people have been recorded in (old) Bussa. The need for continual social services cannot be over-emphasized since the people will find themselves in a new environment. The houses have been constructed in such a way that it would need only a minimum of attention from the occupants. The sewage system that has been installed, it is claimed, will not need much attention but since this is an entirely new system to the people, one wonders whether it will be as easy as the architects think for the people to use this and other new amenities properly.

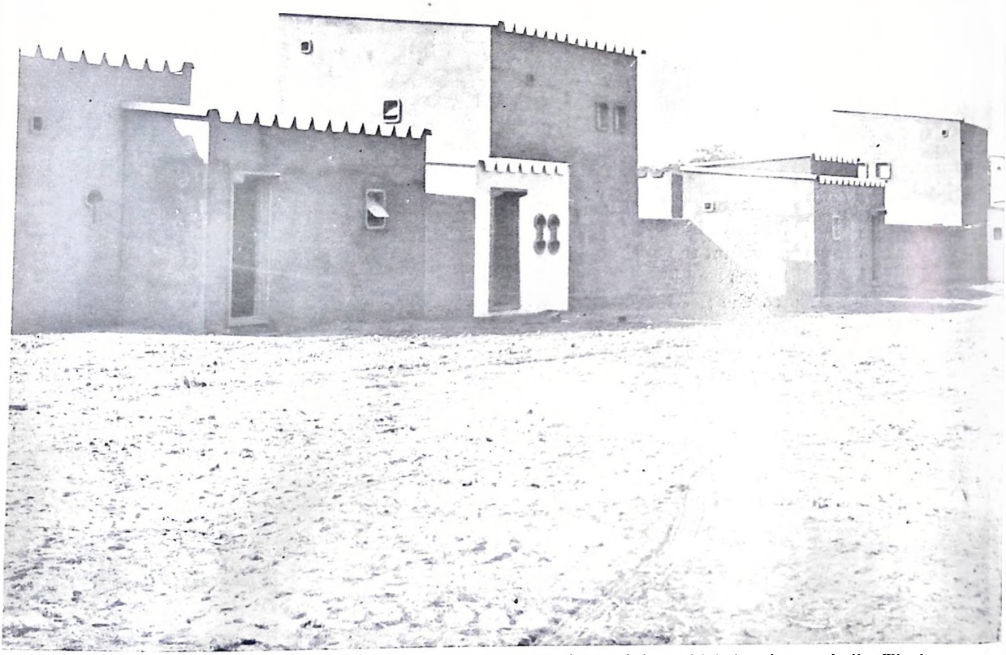
YELWA

Surveys are being carried out at present in Yelwa in the area to be submerged. Located about eighty miles upstream from Kainji Dam, and therefore at the northern-most extent of the lake, only a part of the town will go under the lake. Because Yelwa is a major centre of trade along the Niger and is at the head of lake navigation, plans are being made to protect it from being inundated. An embankment is being built along the river bank and the area behind the embankment would be filled to raise it above the lake level. This plan will make it unnecessary to relocate the city thereby reducing the dislocation of the economy which such a relocation would have caused. Some of the houses at the water front will be demolished and new ones built in open spaces within and on the outskirts of the town. The lake front would then be improved and provision would be made for port facilities along the embankment with about 600 feet or quay wall built in and allowance made for future extensions. Roads and bridges will be realigned where necessary.

OTHER VILLAGES

Villages, about a hundred of them, will be moved from areas to be flooded and relocated all along the lake front. The string—like pattern that now exists along the Niger will be retained. Only, this time, it will be a more orderly pattern. Each village will be accessible both by water and by road. A group of research personnel went into the field to record individual village patterns which has guided the architects in planning the new villages.

One strong criticism of the whole plan is its exorbitant cost. New Bussa was built at a cost of



Part of the township of Yelwa, the head of navigation on the future lake, which has been rebuilt. The houses along the lake shore have been demolished to create space for a quay

£1,000 per compound. There are a total of 256 compounds to accommodate 3,000 people. When the cost of social amenities—Slaughter House, Agricultural Centre, Police Post and a Market, among others, is added to the cost of building the compounds, the total cost soars up to £460,000. While one may argue that the 2,000 people resettled under the first policy were resettled at much less than two-thirds the cost of building New Bussa, the fact still remains that the level of development which may be achieved in New Bussa may never be attained in those other villages. The results from the infusion of such a development into the lake basin region may outstrip the expectations of even the planners and, in the long run, may turn out to be a very wise investment. This, however, depends on how the social aspect of the resettlement project is handled. The people have to be helped to readjust to the new situation that would face them. It would therefore be advisable to have social workers work closely with the people at least during the first few years of resettlement. In the Volta River Resettlement Scheme, each person (preferably each head of a household would suffice) resettled had a file with the Social Welfare Department and some of the social workers actually take part in the administration of the villages as Town Managers and members of Town Development Committees. Our Sociologists and Social Anthropologists would be contributing immensely to rural development in Nigeria if they would now embark on basic research which would furnish social workers with data on which to work during the initial stages of resettlement. All the studies that are being done in the area have, so far, concentrated on the economic activities of the people.

CONCLUSION

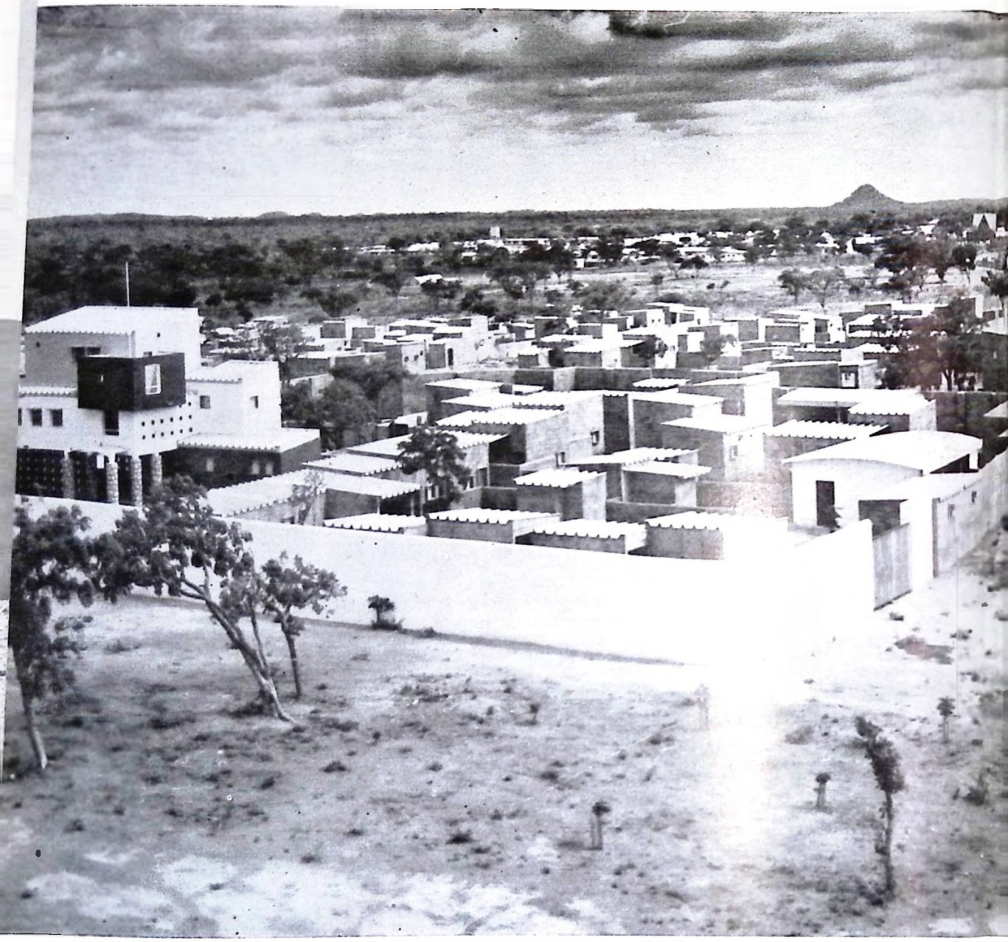
Probably the most important question in any resettlement project is: Will the displaced persons be able to continue and improve upon their present occupations or find alternative ways of making a livelihood in their new locations? This question has been partially answered in the preceding pages of this article. We would like to mention something about the nature of research being done for the social and economic implications of the Dams Project for the displaced persons and for the area as a whole.

The consequence of a huge lake forming in an area where a river formerly flowed through a relatively narrow channel is that the pattern of living of the people will be changed somewhat howbeit so little. The ecology of a lake basin is usually different from that of a river bank. Former methods of fishing on the river and the social organization tied in with the occupation will become obsolete. The people affected will have to learn new methods and organize themselves differently. Apart from this, their economic situation is bound to change hopefully for the better. The problems involved and their probable solutions are the objects of research work now being carried on in the Kainji Dam Region.[1] There will be a need for organizing fishing communities on a co-operative basis for efficient lake fishing. The possibility and advisability of stocking the lake with varieties of fish species is being investigated.[2] In the area of Agricultural rehabilitation, the Agricultural Officer (Resettlement) Mr Mansfield—is working on actual farming practice and soil suitability. Research is being done on the economy of the Gungawa irrigation farmers and the marketing of farm products. The development of cottage industries is another area being investigated.

The whole region is likely to become an important tourist area with main attractions being the dam, New Bussa, and the 'model' villages along the shores of the lake. New Bussa is admirably well placed to serve as a resort town. Its location, very near the dam, the amenities at present being used

[1] Research topics connected with fishing in this area are:
(*i*) Technology of Fishery of the Future Kainji Lake,
(*ii*) The supply of Fish to Local Markets in the Kainji Dam Region, and
(*iii*) Marketing of Fish (particularly from the port of Yelwa).

[2] The University of Ife has been conducting biological investigations in the future lake basin region since 1965. Analysis of species and fish ecology is done at the Shagunu Research Station right on the banks of the Niger river.



The Emir's Palace, New Bussa. Note the beautiful landscape behind the palace. In the background is the workers' quarters and the Catholic Church for the Italian Engineers and other Catholic workers. The palace has provision for the Emir's wives, a stable and a small school for the children

by those working on the dam and which can be easily improved or enlarged—air conditioned rest house with catering facilities, residential houses which would become vacant when the dam workers leave, a first class hospital, recreational facilities and other social amenities—plus the beautiful physical setting and easy accessibility (road, water and air) all have combined to chart out a new destiny for New Bussa which may overshadow its present importance as a trading town.

The role of Yelwa at the head of lake navigation will be different. While it will share in the tourist business, its importance as a port and market town will be enhanced especially after the construction of the quays at the lake front. Agriculture will still be important in the villages as irrigation and farming methods are improved upon. This will be even more true for fishing in the whole lake region and especially in the area of Foge Island where a major fishing centre is likely to be established.

The complexity of the resettlement problem in the Kainji Dam region is underpinned by the variety of its geography. The complex ethnic composition of its population has, in conjunction with the physiography and geology of the region, produced diverse land uses and settlement patterns. The resettlement authorities are compelled to replicate these patterns as much as is possible while at the same time attempting to introduce innovations and improvements. The social and economic implications of the changes made in the geographical setting are the objects of the several research projects now being undertaken in the area jointly by the Nigerian Institute for Social Research and the F.A.O. The results of these research efforts would contribute tremendously to the understanding of this and similar regions and to the benefit of the people who are affected by these changes within the Kainji Dam region and elsewhere in the world. They would serve as the basis for drawing up plans for the development of the Dam area as an economic region. Whatever lessons are learnt here could be applied to regional development planning in other parts of Nigeria.

THE SHEHU'S INSTALLATION EVENTFUL BORNU CEREMONY

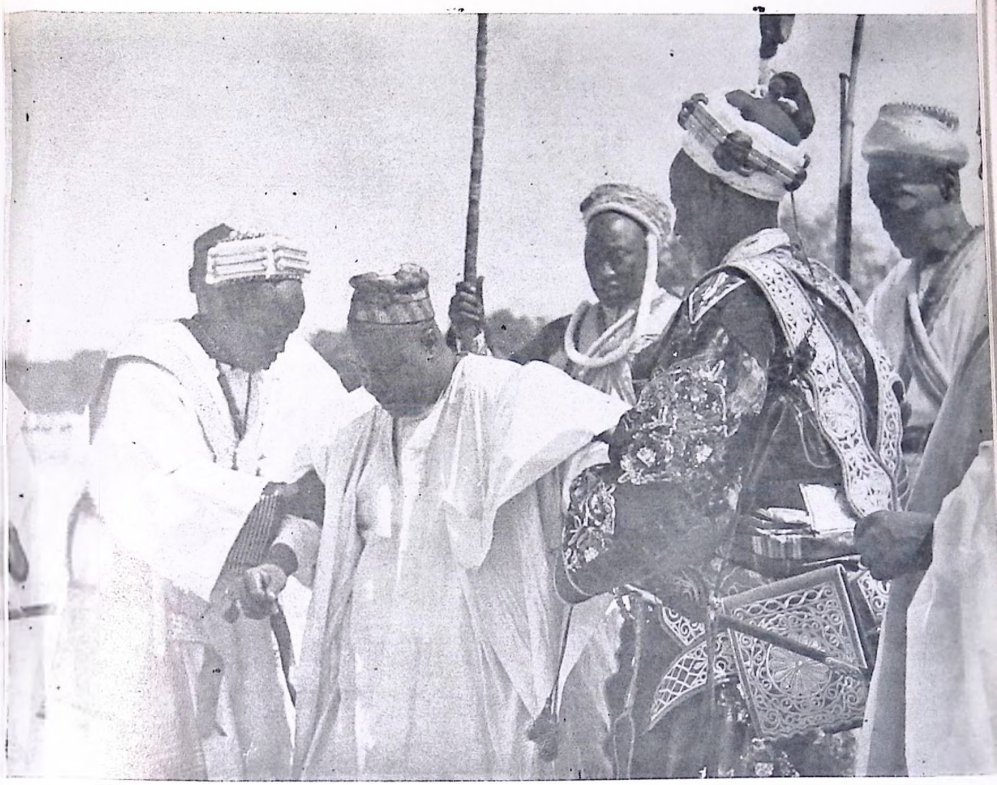
by

W. K. R. Hallam

BORNU Emirate is a vast area of 33,000 square miles stretching to the west and south-west of Lake Chad. In the south it runs through thick hill-studded forests along the confines of Adamawa. Northwards in the sahel scrub the river Yobe, the last river before the Mediterranean, forms the desert frontier; and the western marches make contact with the eastern Fulani emirates. The dominant group among the two million inhabitants of Bornu is the Kanuri, to whom are attached many Kanuri speaking groups of common ethnic origin. In addition the Shuwa, Baggara Arabs of Sudanese provenance, graze their cattle along the sandy slopes bordering the Lake; they also occupy important positions, both official and commercial, in the Emirate; and throughout the whole area from the forests to the sand-dunes and papyrus swamps of Chad, pasturise various clans of Fulani who, having adapted themselves to, and in a certain degree been assimilated into, the particular Bornu mode of life, are known as Fulanin Bornu. There are nearly one and a quarter million head of cattle in Bornu.

Soon after the commencement of the Islamic era a group of migrants of Arab origin moved from the Nile Valley into the sandy wastes of Kanem east of Lake Chad. Their ancestors had left Yemen following the death of the great Sef Dthu Yazan who, having delivered the Yemen from Abyssinian rule with the aid of the Persian Chosroes, was assassinated by his Abyssinian bodyguards. This independent nomadic group, joined as time went on by other migrants, notably refugees from the house of the last of the Ummeyad caliphs who fled, as Ibn Khaldun puts it, to seek refuge in the [illegible] bowels of the earth to escape the terrible vengeance of the next caliph, gradually crystallised into a pasturising aristocracy led by a Mai or king. This was the beginning of the Sefawa dynasty, believed to hold descent from the Yemenite liberator Sef. These Mais are also known as the Maghumi Mais and ruled for a thousand years.

Inevitably the Mais became sedentary and from their dune encircled capital of Njimi gradually extended their sway over an empire which stretched from the fringes of the Nilotic Sudan to Hausaland, from the hilly forests of the Benue watershed to the oases of Fezzan. Just before the end of the fifteenth century pressure from the Bulala of Lake Fittri, an early splinter faction of the Kanem aristocracy which had achieved autonomy, caused the Mais to move and build a new capital called Birni Gazargamu in the Yobe valley west of the Lake. From here the soldier-



The New Shehu being lifted thrice by the traditional Kingmakers: on his left is the Yerima, on his right the Shettima Kanuribe and behind him the Kaigama

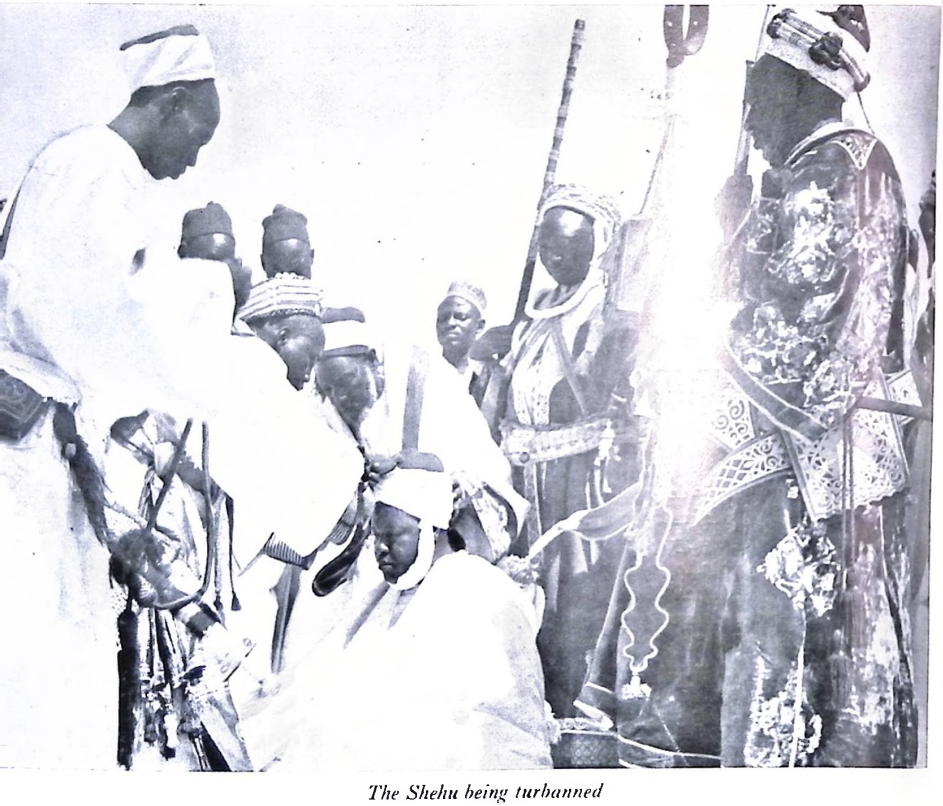
Mai Idris Alooma soundly defeated the Bulala in seven arduous campaigns and there was no further threat to the sovereignty of Bornu until 1808 when the Fulani from the west, carrying the banners of Shehu Othman Dan Fodio, made serious territorial inroads and drove the reigning Mai from his capital. The Court retired eastwards along the Yobe where they encountered Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi, a pious and highly cultured scholar from Kanem who had, with his father, spent over twelve years in some of the leading Islamic cultural and religious centres.

His father was of the Kuburi Borguwa of that stretch of Northern Kanem lying to the southwest of the Tibesti mountains; his mother was the daughter of Abdu Zalil, son of the Sheikh Muhammad al-Nafarawi of Zeila in the Fezzan.

Al-Kanemi raised a force of Kanem warriors and sent the Fulani from Bornu. From that time, although he reinstated the Mai, he was the real ruler of Bornu from his base in Kukawa and after his death in 1835 his son Umar assumed the title of Shehu (sheikh) and the ascendancy of the Sefawa Mais lapsed. Gazargamu had already fallen into ruin and was never reoccupied.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century Bornu faced the lowest ebb of its history when the eastern Sudanese military adventurer Rabih, having devastated most of the lands between Darfur and Bornu, descended on the Chad basin like a bird of prey. For seven years his rapacious followers, well armed with modern rifles, despoiled and devastated the countryside until he was killed by the French. This brought Britain and Germany on the scene; the scramble for Africa was in full spate. The French, after a brief stay in Dikwa, Rabih's former capital, from where they raided the Shuwa Arab cattle settlements and attempted to extract large sums of 'indemnity' from the Bornu court, retired eastwards and founded their Chad colony. Bornu then became 'British' and 'German'. The main court was established in the British zone but the Germans also installed a Shehu in Dikwa and to this day Bornu and Dikwa emirates, although ruled by the same family, are separate entities.

In 1907 Shehu Abubakar Garbai made his headquarters in Yerwa with the colonial administration in nearby Mafoni fort. This whole com-



The Shehu being turbanned

The Magara drums being beaten announce the completion of the traditional ceremony

place later became known loosely as Maiduguri after a village some miles to the north, and has developed into one of the best laid out towns in Nigeria.

The dominating feature is the imposing red brick palace of the Shehu into which is incorporated the administrative offices of the Bornu emirate. Westward from the palace the wide *dandal* stretches to the western gate of the city. The dandal is a feature of nearly all Bornu settlements, however small, a wide main road from east to west, dominated at the eastern end by the residence of the community leader, be he the head of a district, village area or hamlet.

Immediately adjacent to the Shehu's palace is the modern mosque, the courts and some of the government offices. Facing them are the old Treasury and reading room with their lawned gardens and the brick city council hall. The whole city is traversed with wide tarred thoroughfares bordered both by modern well styled houses and by older walled dwellings of cement or red earth. On the north lies the great Monday market, the approaches to which are lined with the shops of prosperous merchants. To the well-travelled Nigerian from nearer the sea or from Hausaland, Maiduguri presents an aspect which is in many ways reminiscent of the Arabian peninsular and the Nile valley, and reminds one that Bornu has ancient historic ties with those parts.

Shehu Garbai died in 1922 after a distinguished reign which saw the rehabilitation of Bornu from the ravages of Rabih. He was followed by Shehu Sanda Kura who in turn was succeeded in 1937 by the late Alhaji Sir Umar al-Kanemi of blessed memory. Now in 1968 Garbai's son, Shehu Umar ibn Abubakar Garbai al-Kanemi is Shehu of Bornu.

Shehu Umar is particularly well fitted for the task of leading Nigeria's oldest emirate in its con-

The Shehu being invested with the al-Kyabba by H.E. the Military Governor

The Shehu delivering his address

tinued progress into the modern world. Born in 1919 he became a school teacher immediately on leaving the Yerwa Middle School, and remained in that profession, rising in rank, until 1942. He then transferred to the district administration and served for fourteen years in Fune District of Western Bornu before being appointed District Head of Maiduguri District, which surrounds but does not include the emirate capital of Yerwa, in 1957. From this position on 29th March, 1968 he was elevated to the ancient and honourable throne of Bornu.

The Bornu installation ceremonial nowadays can be divided into the traditional and the modern. The modern is no less impressive than the traditional, consisting of the handing over of letters of appointment and the staff of office by the Governor, with speeches and a durbar. The traditional ceremony means much more, however, to those who know, but to the uninitiated it is not easy to follow all the implications.

First of all a special area is prepared with a smoothed stretch of sand at the side of which is suspended the Holy Koran from a post surmounted by an iron ring. Before the arrival of the Shehu the sand is guarded by the Kaigama and one of his Kachallas carrying spears and another Kachalla with a sword. The Kaigama is one of the two leaders of the Shehu's armed forces and the head of his slaves, as well as being one of the Kingmakers, and the Kachallas are his officers. A third Kachalla guards the pendant Holy Koran.

The new Shehu then is called to the scene and seated by the Digima, one of his courtiers. Before he arrives the Imam Idaini writes a passage from the Holy Koran in the smoothed sand in the presence of the Imam Jumma'at, the Mainin Kinandi and the Talba. These four comprise the senior religious leaders of Bornu.

On the Shehu's arrival the traditional Kingmakers come forward. First of all the Shettima Kuburibe passes a shield to the Kaigama

and the Yerima who place it over the inscribed area of sand and cover it with a gown known as dawura. The Shehu is then seated on the shield and lifted three times to signify his acceptance of the three canons of his rule: to be honest in his dealings with his subjects; to follow the true path of God; and to ensure that the law is obeyed. The Shettima Kanuribe then takes a *dawura* gown from the Yerima and puts it on the Shehu, followed by a cap. The turbanning is commenced by Mallam Turab and completed by the Shettima Kanuribe, after which a cloak is affixed on the Shehu's shoulders and a sword laid in front of him after having been touched across his shoulders.

This is the end of the traditional installation and to announce it an official known as the *Libulama* blows a silver trumpet. Two court officials, the *Ngijima* and the *Babuma*, the holder of the traditional staff of office, then address the Shehu after which the *Zarma* instructs drummers who have been assembled nearby to beat their drums. These drums are very old, dating from the days of Birni Gazargamu, and are only used on deep and significant occasions such as this. The first drums beaten are the *Magara*, followed by the smaller *Tumbal* drums and the *Ganga Kura*. This

H.E. the Governor, the Shehu, the Provincial Secretary

beating of drums is the public announcement of the completion of the ceremony and is followed by the yodelling of women.

On the day of the official installation of the new Shehu, 24th October, 1968, ceremonies commenced with the arrival of the Military Governor in an open car escorted by scarlet coated horsemen of the Nigeria Police. His Excellency inspected a combined Police guard of honour before mounting the dais. Then the traditional installation was again performed in part in front of the dais at the durbar ground on Maiduguri racecourse, after which the Shehu, accompanied by the Waziri, Galadima Mai Kyari, the head of his administration, mounted the dais and, greeting the Military Governor of the State, took a seat by his side. Before leaving the traditional and installation ceremony it should be stated that the traditional Kingmakers are far from being mere traditional title-holders. They are also active officials under the Shehu; for instance, four of them at present are District Heads, four of the twenty-one such officials who are the backbone of the emirate's administrative complex.

On joining the Governor the Shehu embarked upon the modern ceremonial and was administered the oath of allegiance and invested with his cloak, letter of appointment and staff of office. In making the investiture His Excellency first read a message from the Head of State in which General Gowon mentioned his own personal ties with Bornu, from where his ancestors came. The Governor's own speech was followed by that of the Shehu in which he reaffirmed his loyalty to Nigeria and to his State. Then the four religious leaders mounted the dais to offer prayers and were followed by the Waziri and Council members paying their traditional homage.

Then the great Durbar commenced in slow stately magnificence, a living manifestation of twelve centuries of history. Twenty-two contingents were lined up to pay homage to the new Shehu. In turn they came forward, each preceded by mounted standard bearers carrying personal flags of the District Heads, the poles surmounted with a crown of ostrich feathers. Groups of gaily dressed women and young men on foot in distinctive uniforms swinging horse-tail switches in unison followed them. Then came the District Head in lavish robes with his personal band of drums and algaitas in attendance, and sometimes jesters and praise singers. Behind him, in line abreast, were formed anything up to a hundred and fifty horsemen, both they and their horses gorgeously attired for the occasion.

On reaching the place immediately in front of where the Shehu sat with His Excellency most District Heads greeted him by holding aloft and shaking the traditional Rum spears bound together by red and green cloth and then plunging them in the ground. Some of the contingent leaders used other traditional weapons to perform this homage; the Zanna Kyari, for instance, had his usual broad bladed hand battleaxe. Then, in filing off, the horsemen brandished their swords and shouted greetings to the Shehu.

The Waziri's contingent led the durbar and the spectators roared their applause as his horse, on approaching the Shehu, delicately pawed the ground in a dancing motion in time to the throbbing of the music. The Waziri also holds the post of Galadima, the traditional commander-in-chief of the army charged with the safeguarding of the north-western frontiers of Bornu.

He was followed by the Yerima Mastafa, District Head of Geidam and traditional warden of the eastern marches of Bornu, who has some of the finest horses in the State, and whose contingent was led by a beautifully matched troop of light chestnuts.

Each District Head included in his contingent a feature particular to his own area. From Mobbar came some Fulani clad in sombre dark blue and wearing wide conical hats decorated with ostrich feathers; these Fulani are nicknamed *hana gambo* ('prevent gambo') for it is said that when they have passed with their cattle the grass known as gambo never grows again. From Gubio came the well known mounted hunter, tightly clad from head to foot in black, with the neck and head of an Abyssinian Hornbill affixed to his crown. When hunting he is able to deceive the animals by mimicking the actions of this big bird. From Kanembu District administered from Kukawa, the

Bornu Camels

al-Kanemi Shehus' first capital, by the Shettima Kanuribe, one of the Kingmakers, came some camels, one of which, on approaching the dais, knelt down and hobbled forward on its front knees. Another contingent included some Shuwa Arab oxen bedecked as for a marriage ceremony, with the would-be brides seated on them and almost hidden by carpet and mat howdahs completely covered with bright enamelware and gourd marriage gifts.

The last contingent was that of the Kaigama Zubeiru, District Head of Marghi District and traditional commander of the Shehu's forces in the south. In the old days, too, he was in charge of all the slaves in Bornu. The Kaigama, mounted, is of particularly splendid appearance, since his horse wears a red trouser upon each leg and no other person in Bornu may assume this ceremonial distinction.

After the district contingents had all recognized the new Shehu and left the arena the Shehu's own household followers came forward in column as opposed to the line abreast of the district contingents. The bodyguard made up a large part of this column, all dressed in white, wide sleeved jellabia-like uniforms adorned with coloured rectangular designs, and carrying swords. The palace horses, saddled but unmounted, the Shehu's personal horse shaded by an ornate umbrella, were led in line and the movement of the whole column was made to the music of the Shehu's personal band.

This band plays an important part both in the Bornu court ceremonial and in the daily life of the palace, and accompanies the Shehu if necessary whenever he goes outside. Daily performances are held inside the palace, one of which is always at 9 p.m. in the evening when the Shehu retires for the night.

The original of this band was formed by Abdu Zalil, the maternal grandfather of Muhammad al-Almin al-Kanemi, the founder of the line of Shehus. During the rule of al-Kanemi's son Shehu Umar, Abdu Zalil died leaving no immediate heir, so Umar, his great-grandson, inherited the band. A certain Said Birma brought the band to the Shehu under Aji Mashayi and a man called Sanda Washumi, as well as the algaita player, Muhammad Furrum. Shehu Umar appointed Malam Kunguru to be leader of the band; other appointees of the Shehu were Malam Zeid, Alamai Gana and Girema Aji.

The present leader of the band is Mala Abdu Gangama, a son of the first leader, who succeeded his elder brother in 1930. Their family originated from Dambam in Bauchi Province and were brought to Bornu with an expedition led by the Waziri Aji Bashir in the time of Shehu Umar before he inherited the drums.

The band is normally about twenty strong,

Part of a Shuwa Arab section

A District Head

the majority being mounted but with some on foot. There are nine drums of varying sizes including kettledrums, two algaitas, six *kakaki* trumpets and a modern addition, two military bugles.

At the end of the Durbar the Shehu, escorted by his personal followers and band, made his way back to his palace to receive guests.

In the afternoon an exhibition of traditional dancing was staged and after dark, as a fitting ending to the day's celebrations, the Waziri held a cocktail party on the lawns of the reading room near the palace.

The entire installation celebration was organized and performed with the usual high standard of precision and efficiency which is normal in Bornu and one of the most striking features was the huge attendance of distinguished Nigerians from other parts of the country, to say nothing of members of the diplomatic and consular corps and many other non-Nigerians. It was perhaps the largest assembly of such guests for a ceremony of this nature in Nigeria and is a precedent to be followed in other parts of the country, for the opportunities offered to meet and exchange ideas, as well as to observe, understand, and thus respect, different cultures will go far in attaining the unity of purpose and feeling of common citizenship which we are all striving to achieve.

Part of the Shehu's bodyguard

BILLE CIRCUMCISION

By

PASTOR PETER BOE

THE NIGHT AND THE FINAL DAY

All the Bille candidates were ushered into the chief-of-circumcision's compound. This *sarkin kachiya* was a bearded, elderly man who seemed to know the 'tribal bible' by heart, to the letter. Sarki Yakubu introduced me to him that morning; and although he had some 'reservations' about my intentions and general attitude toward these events, we greeted each other and shook each other's hand quite cordially. He, too, assured me that I could take photographs and/or tape recordings of any part of the proceedings and he would instruct his fellow circumcisers to that effect. His consent gave me the 'open door' and 'front position' to all proceedings that would follow and I would be very grateful for that, although I endeavoured not to violate certain 'universal bounds' of human respect and relationships. When in doubt, I consulted Manasseh; and, invariably, he consulted whatever persons necessary to gain my access to observations of events transpiring in the lives of the candidates. I had earlier shared with Sarki Yakubu that my chief motivation for wanting to attend this ceremony was my interest in young people and to get an understanding of what it would have been like for me to have grown up in the Bille 'family.' I shared with him my background; the fact that I was the product of a war environment and that I did not know where, how, to whom, and when I was born but that at one time I was in a 'family' of some 130 other 'homeless' children who nevertheless had a home of some kind to stay in during and after the Second World War, before their being dispersed to different lands. I also testified that I had come to regard a good number of Nigerians, especially

the young people—including those of Bille, as my brothers and sisters before God. He took me for my word; and, at least for the time being, we 'adopted' each other as members of the 'same family.' It was in this same spirit of 'one family' consciousness that I sought and was enabled to 'participate' in the trials and ordeals of the young candidates. *Dukammu guda daya ne a gaban Allah* I kept saying to Manasseh, *i.e.*: We all are one family before God. He agreed. If this spirit of mutual acceptance could not be sustained, I wanted to have nothing to do with these proceedings. A photograph of an unwilling subject brings only ugly reflections and deserves to be destroyed. But this feeling of 'ugliness' or of mutual incompatibility never arose. There occurred, instead, a 'marriage' of souls. Even during the Wednesday morning 'march of death' I experienced in myself a 'lump' of grief and sorrow while walking side-by-side with the wailing women. In Africa the acquiring of good health and long life are still considered luxuries in many areas. When they cease to be luxuries, this rite of circumcision will also cease to have its sombre significance. So, too, during the final serenading of the candidates upon the shoulders of their fathers or older brothers or close relatives, I felt no reservations about marching (in dancing step) side-by-side with them and singing, *Wo, woye ya ka Bali-ya*! There was one big difference: I had not come to attach the sacramental significance to circumcision that these people had. Yet, had I been brought up in their environment, this event would have meant as much to me as baptism and Holy Communion mean to me at present. The difference is merely 'functional' and not really a distinction

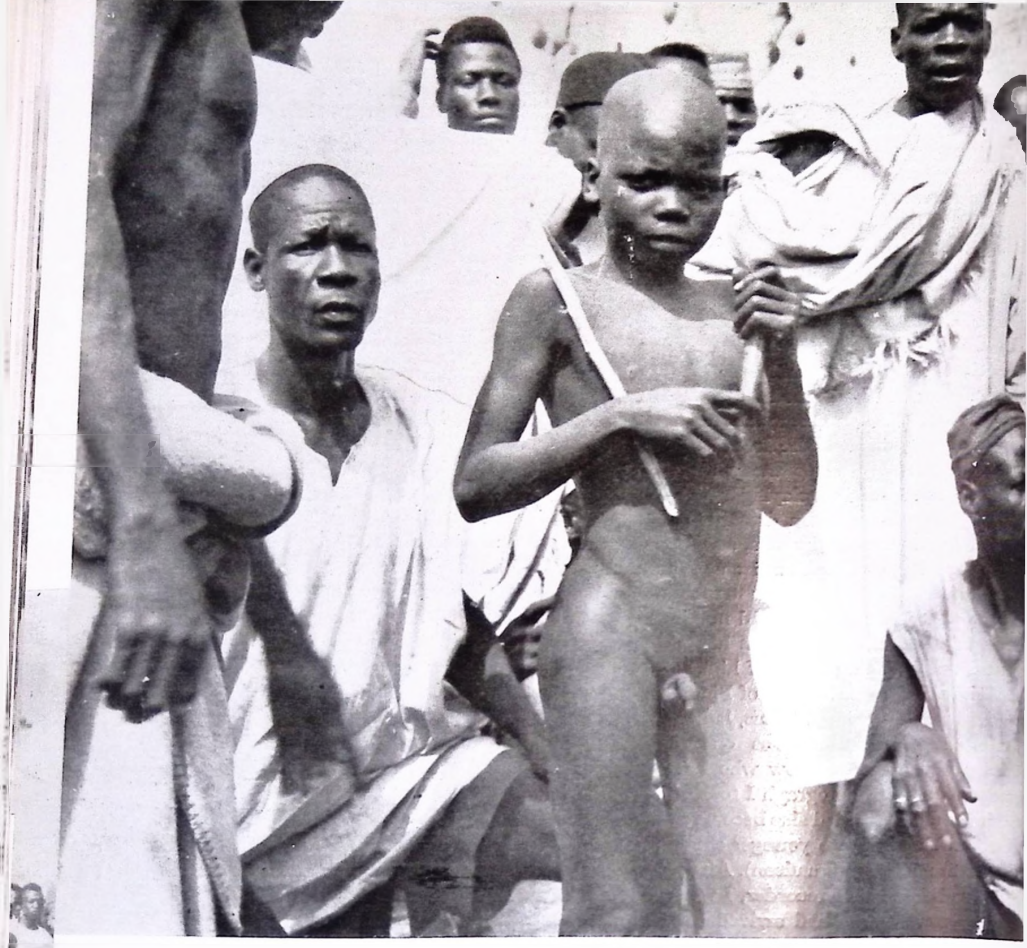
Group photo of Bille candidates, afternoon of 27th, with Sarki Yakubu in back row

between the Path of Life and the Path of Eternal Death, as some might wish to regard it.

Manasseh led me to the chief-of-circumcision's compound, where all the candidates had entered and where the fathers and relatives of the boys had come to give them final blessings as well as to reclaim their garments, for the boys would sleep out in the open, in the compound, stark naked—all part of the *al'ada* or tradition (custom). At this time, also, the heads of all the candidates were shaved. With that we departed to our own quarters and prepared for sleep. In Mr Ezekiel's (father of Pinon) compound I listened for a while to the chattering of peoples voices, to the subdued buzzing of the men sitting near the fire and relating the events of the day, and to the whispering and humming of little children playing by the fire. One of these youngsters was Buba, dressed in a good set of bright green shirt and trousers, aged nine or so. By chance I had met him earlier at my Numan residence where he had brought to me four sticks of firewood for sale; then he had nothing on but a 'G—string' and I noticed that his gums were infected, and I took a picture of him. There was also Bilar, the younger brother of Pinon. Another younger brother of Pinon, Titus, led the procession as one of the candidates on Wednesday morning, but I did not know who he was until after examining the photograph I took of the line-up of the candidates. I had also become acquainted with Sarki Yakubu's two younger children, Usumanu (son) and Aleni (grandson). After recording these sounds on my tape recorder, I went to sleep. So many new persons had arrived in Bille that Pinon and Ignatius had to surrender their sleeping places and to sleep outside, just outside my hut. I did not feel right about this arrangement, but Pinon insisted that I use his cot.

So, we all went to sleep, but not for long. About 2.30 a.m. I woke up and heard a shrill whistle piercing the still, cold, early-morning air. Except for the crowing of cocks, no other sound could be heard. But I sensed that the young candidates could not sleep on account of the anticipation of the events to come. Also, I took this whistle (multi-toned) call to mean a signal for all to rise and to prepare for the day's events. It was not difficult to know where the sound had come from. The light of a large fire and the chatting of boys' voices could be noticed in the direction of the chief-of-circumcision's compound. Assuming that they had become accustomed to my presence, I quietly walked up to where they were and found the boys standing naked around two large bonfires, trying to keep warm and whispering and chattering to one another, perhaps partly to keep 'active' against the cold. There were a few men and some older boys, brothers of the candidates, watching over the candidates. I explained to one of these men that the call of the whistle had awakened me and aroused my attention. What was the significance of it? He stated that he thought it was 5.00 a.m., time for the candidates to rise and to go to Sarki Yakubu's compound. When I informed him it was only 2.30 a.m., he seemed surprised and made the boys go back to sleep, after he had agreed to have one of the boys blow the same morning call on his whistle for the sake of my recorder. I was permitted to enter the chief-of-circumcision's compound, where I saw the boys all crowded together like sardines, perhaps to keep warm, body to body, some of them snoring quite loudly. A fire was kept going by the watchmen; I took some photographs of the boys sitting near the fire and then recorded their snoring.

As 5.00 a.m. was drawing near, I was sitting near the chief-of-circumcision, who was chatting with a man who was carefully sharpening a two-edged, rounded-end, $5\frac{1}{2}''$—long by $1\frac{1}{2}''$—wide blade. The other man also prepared a porridge or guinea-corn 'liquid' with a medicine of some kind to be drunk by the boys to help them endure the pain of circumcision. Then, at 5.00 a.m., the boys were lined up single file and marched out, forbidden to speak, to the chief's compound. As they went, they slapped their hips with their hands in marching rhythm—'to warn any girls that they are passing by, for it is forbidden for the girls to see these candidates at this point.' But I noticed that the candidates had more of a schoolboy spirit at this point than a spirit of morbid consciousness of the events to come and I felt as one of their 'counsellors' as well. In fact, they came to regard me as one of their elders. I felt some responsibility for their



One of Bille boys about to blow his whistle for the last time before circumcision

welfare and would surely have expressed a negative reaction to any wrongful act committed against them. Having accompanied them and been witness to their experiences to this extent, even to this day I feel responsible toward them, to encourage them in the faith which they then displayed and to stand judgment before them for any wrong committed against them in my presence at that time, if such a wrong took place and if I had failed to act against it to the extent of responsibility relegated to me by God: responsibility entrusted to every God-fearing elder, no matter where he may be and in what situation he may be serving.

At Sarki Yakubu's compound, the chief selected the first and the last two boys to be circumcised, the first one being called *muragura* and the last two being called *bana* and *murapana* respectively. Each boy was then marked with an orange chalk from the top of his head down the neck and back as part of the *al'ada*. Then,

Bille candidates being serenaded on shoulders before circumcision

after a brief word of encouragement from the chief, they marched out single file, again slapping their hands against their hips as they went to a specially-prepared zana-mat compound. They would remain naked until being informed that the Ntorong boys had all been circumcised. The Ntorong candidates and crowd were to dance to the Bille chief's compound about 7.00 a.m. to officially open the day's events. While waiting, the Bille candidates became restless outside, burning the grass off the area where they would be finally serenaded before circumcision, warming themselves by the fires and blowing their whistles furiously and repeatedly to arouse and alert the Ntorong group. Seven a.m. at last arrived. The sun was appearing above the horizon. The Bille boys could now been seen naked in the daylight and they withdrew into their zana-mat compound, partly out of embarrassment. But as the minutes passed by and the Ntorong group did not come, the Bille group grew apprehensive. It was not until nearly 8.30 a.m. that the Ntorong group finally arrived the crowd repeatedly chanting the phrase, "*wo-woye!*" /rest/rest. The Ntorong can-

didates now fulfilled a special part of their tradition: they were 'smoking' long-handled tobacco pipes (without tobacco), and Manasseh was quick to point out this distinctive feature of their *al'ada*. At the chief's compound the chain of Ntorong boys separated from the rest of the people and did a special dance for the sake of the chief. Then one of the candidates, a young fellow, stepped before the chief blew his whistle twice (everyone else was quiet for that instant), quickly muttered something like, *Anjima zan zama mutum, ba yaro ba!* ('Soon I will be a man, no longer a boy!') and then, in a fit of 'anger' and 'defyance,' kicked the chief's stool as he huffingly departed. The chief replied: '*To!*'—*i.e.*: 'So let it be!'—and then quickly the drumming and beating of the two-bell gong and shouting resumed as the Ntorong group quickly departed for their village, Bille people running along to witness the bravery many of the Ntorong initiates and to run quickly back to the Bille candidates to cry out to them: 'They have done it! They have done it! Now it's your turn to do it! What have you to be afraid of?! Are you weaker than the Ntorong boys? Will you show them that you are cowards?'

It took a little while for the first criers to run back screaming: 'They have done it! They have done it!' The news was brought that all the 60 Ntorong boys had been lined up in a single line and all of them had been circumcised one right after the other in quick succession. After all had been circumcised, they demonstrated their 'stamina' and endurance of pain by dancing with knives in their mouths and in their hands, no bandages having been applied to their wounds. That kind of news was almost too much for the Bille boys to bear, now that they were already weary from waiting. But back from Ntorong came also one of the Bille initiates, circumcised at Ntorong and brought back by bicycle, appearing to be shocked and in a state of daze, the wound bleeding partially and having stained his *zane*. (He was residing in Bille but his actual family ties were at N'torong.) After he was posited in the special zana-mat compound, the rest of the Bille candidates, who had been waiting outside the compound naked, were now outfitted with hats and *zane* cloths for their final dance and serenading. Some had their faces smeared with black, blue, brown, or orange chalk. All of them appeared somewhat apprehensive of the final state of their ordeal. At last, after all had been properly outfitted, they formed a chain and marched or danced together with the townspeople. From here on to the finish the resounding and repeated, challenging phrase, sung in rhythm with the singing and dancing, would be: *Wo, woye ya ka Bali-ya!*/step/step/*Wo, woye ya ka Bali-ya!*/step/step...etc., meaning: 'If you're afraid: run to Bali! If you're afraid: run to Bali!'—for in the olden days they had no circumcision at near-by Bali.

(Tune for this final song phrase: upper-$C1\frac{1}{2}$-$E\frac{1}{2}$—$G1/E\frac{1}{2}$—$G\frac{1}{2}$ middle—*C!C!* = fast 'one-two' marching rhythm).

After the five main circumcisers had returned from Ntorong, Manasseh made final inquiry on my behalf for my liberty to take photographs and to make recordings. In fact, Manasseh requested the circumcisers to be co-operative for the taking of photographs of boys with whom Manasseh was especially familiar, particularly those closely related to him. Soon the first boys were serenaded on the shoulders of their fathers or brothers or close relatives. Back and forth they went, repeating, *Wo woye ya ka Bali-ya!*/step/step/*Wo, woye ya ka Bali'ya!*/step/step/...—blunt stress on last two notes. The first circumcision at Bille took place actually in the zana-mat compound, Sarki Yakubu being present and holding the youth (taller than most of the others). One of the men instructed the boy the stance he should assume for the circumcision: 'Bend your neck and back backwards as you rest your neck in the hook part of the stick held firmly in both of your hands...arch your back backwards, hold on firmly to your stick, and utter in your mind a 'prayer' for strength and endurance ...and very swiftly it will be all over with.' And so it was. For good measure, the boy's face was covered with a cloth to help distract his attention from the pain of the knife. Then the circumciser, exercising the care of a surgeon, would carefully examine the place on the foreskin where he would make the cut and would then quickly finish the task, briefly examining the accuracy of his work afterwards. One of the men mentioned that a

skillful circumciser could do his work with a quick, single stroke, almost painlessly, whereas a poor one would use many strokes, the operation sometimes having to be repeated on boys whose wounds are seen to be healing improperly. For one who is not used to seeing a live person wounded without the aid of anaesthetics this sight might appear shocking. First the white underskin appearing as sudden contrast to the dark outer skin where the foreskin had been removed, then the appearance of trickling blood. For those working in hospitals, such a sight is commonplace. Having myself observed surgery in the Numan hospital, this sight in itself was not so shocking. What concerned me was the possibly excruciating pain some of the boys must have felt immediately after these operations.

Sometimes by twos, sometimes by threes, the candidates would be called from the compound, serenaded on shoulders for a few minutes, and then led off to a selected spot not far away for the climactic act of three months' preparation. Each boy would then be disrobed, he would be urged to blow his whistle for the last time while older friends and relatives would shout encouragement in unison to him between his whistle blows, and he would finally get into the rigid, arched, 'trance' position before being grabbed and securely held by the father and relatives as the circumciser would quickly remove his foreskin in the presence of many observers. Everyone, excepting myself, had undergone this experience and rite, so that no one, as far as I could observe, regarded this act as anything 'curious' nor 'strange.' In fact, I noticed no overt show of sexual deviation nor perversion—indicating that sex was but an integral part of the religious seriousness toward survival and procreation among these people. In any public community, the perverts of any kind are treated as an isolated breed apart from the rest, if they are found

Ntorong youths attempting to whip each other

Bille candidates waiting for 'the event' morning 28th

out. For the initiates, at least, there could be no thought of gratification from this act, only the endurance of severe pain: perhaps this very pain being intended as a warning against the misuse of sexual power.

All in all, there were 146 boys circumcised that day. After every circumcision, the mothers and friends and relatives of the boy would run shouting and crying with joy to announce: 'It is all over! It is all over! He has survived it all without showing any fear! Horray!' The boy, still in a trance, would be quickly rushed off to one of the zanamat compounds for recovery. Doing it by twos or threes took much longer than at the Ntorong event. But it was comforting to witness the great affection thereby shown toward each, individual Bille boy as he was about to undergo the most painful part of his long ordeal.

Some of the boys, as Titus Ezekiel, were carried by their relatives to their home compounds. The women danced by the side of Titus and, half crying, half encouraging him, they would wave

Some Dong area boys after their circumcision in January 1968

their sticks (whips) above their heads and warn him that he would receive the *bulala* (whip) if he would show any sign of fear, as they would all dance and sing and march in rhythm.

The remaining boys were naturally becoming impatient to get it all over with. Even the dancers and carriers were getting noticeably weary as the clock moved past 12.00 noon. Yet, no one dared to show less concern for the last ones than they did for the first ones. Thus, they continued their serenading (before circumcision) and cheerful shouting (after the rite) as energetically as ever, until only two boys were left. The boys, sitting on the shoulders of their carriers, would sway gently to and fro with their arms and bodies in rhythm with the dancers and would occasionally blow their whistles to assure the people that they were 'with it' and full of confidence. The whole event appeared quite impressive; and, in many ways, one of the proudest moments of each boy's life-time, considering the tribal and family feeling of 'solidarity' experienced during these days. During these two days, these youths were the center of their community concern and interest. All eyes were glued on them, to detect any 'wavering' or 'flinching' or lack of faithfulness in them. Without going through and enduring this long ordeal faithfully, they would not be regarded as adults and would be barred from marriage within the tribe. If their older brothers and relatives were able to laugh and smile through it all, they were forbidden to do so except during 'off hours.' And, as far as I could observe, all these youths passed this 'cultural test' and 'examination' successfully

Manasseh's household

and were 'graduated' into the ranks of adulthood, if but to be apprentices under mature adults for several more years to come. If marriages are not consummated among the new initiates into manhood immediately, in some cases, at least, the future brides are arranged for.

At last the two last boys were serenaded and carried out to the sites of their circumcision. When the last boy was circumcised, the people let out a final shout of cheer: 'It is finished! It is finished! It is all over!' Shortly afterwards all the people gathered near Sarki Yakubu's compound, where the chief let me play back the major parts of the tape recording. When the people were satisfied that I had no wrongful intentions behind my taking photographs and recordings, they desired to depart and to return to their homes. The circumcisers and elders killed a cock in the presence of the chief—cutting off the head of the cock and smearing its blood on their foreheads to substitude the memory of the blood of the cock for the memory of the blood of the initiates. This having been accomplished, the whole event was finished and everyone departed for his home and village. After picking up my things and saying good-bye to Pastor Elisha, Sarki Yakubu, Mr Manasseh, Mr Elisya (father of Johnson), and Mr Pinon Ezekiel, too, departed.

RECOVERY PHASE—AND AFTERMATH

In the older times, before the introduction of modern medicines, the newly-circumcised youths were confined within special shelters for nearly two months for the sake of recovery. The wound was treated mostly with hot water and covered with leaves or native 'bandages.' During this long period of isolation and recovery, there was undoubtedly a definite psychological 'break' experienced between the youth and his parents as well as between his years of childhood innocence and the serious confrontation with adult responsibilities. The community cares for these youths during their recovery phase, of course. In the older days, too, serious infections, if not deaths, may have resulted from these wounds. In recent years, however, no serious cases of illness have been reported. A greater and greater number of persons are resorting to treatment at the Bille medical dispensary, reducing their recovery period to two weeks or less. Although I did not visit the Bille boys during their recovery period at their huts or rectangular, zana-mat compounds (I felt that that would be expecting too much), I did visit the Dong area boys, those wearing the hemp-like 'pants,' in a shelter identical to those used at Bille—but only three youths were left in it. And I don't think there is anything special to observe in these shelters, no more than one might observe in a hospital ward—unless he enters such places for the purpose of cheering up the persons therein. Sick persons are not in the best state of mind for objective, intellectual reflection upon events leading up to their illness.

Invested with the importance of a religious sacrament in a community which has no other prevailing form of religious organization or means of acquiring a community-wide sense of 'togetherness' or 'bodily solidarity,' the rite of circumcision serves the same function as the rite of baptism serves within the 'Christian' religions. Such a rite has meaning only within the community that honours it. As the Bille young people go out into the world beyond the bounds of the Bille tribe, they must undergo additional rites and ordeals in order to be accepted as legitimate citizens of the broader world.

But before they become involved in more-universal training for more-widely—recognized 'rites of initiation' this local rite of personal recognition shall continue to hold much importance for these young people—as similar rites continue to be regarded as important in other tribes and villages.

Literary Supplement

YORUBA AND SEMITIC LANGUAGES*

LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIP

by

MODUPE ODUYOYE

YORUBA is related to the languages of the Semitic family on more than one level. Most recent, and therefore most obvious, is the relationship of borrowing: Yoruba has received loan-words from Arabic, often through the intermediary of Hausa, in most cases in the cultural context of Islamic expansion. Such are the words *alubosa* 'onions', *alafia* 'health', *alubarika* 'blessedness', *adura* 'prayer', *alufaa* 'priest'.† But beyond this is a more ancient connection, very difficult to call borrowing. Some of the words involved are so basic that the evidence begins to weigh heavily in favour of an admission of genetic relationship. We would like to show that the data cannot be fully accounted for merely by referring to culture contact during the period of Islamic/Arabic infusion.

We shall present a sampling of Yoruba vocabulary for which cognates in Semitic will be suggested. The comparison will be expanded to cover the Afro-Asiatic family with further data from Ancient Egyptian. There is no intention to suggest any special relationship between the Yoruba language and the Semitic languages which necessarily excludes the other languages of West Africa.[1]

yidi is a borrowing from Arabic *'iid* 'a feast, a recurring annual event.' It must have come into Yoruba through Islamic influence. The Arabic word means 'festival'; the Yoruba borrowing is used to refer to the Muslim praying grounds used only during the festivals, like *Eid Ul Fitr*. But there is a Yoruba word which has an older connection with the Arabic *iid*. This is

odun[2] meaning basically 'festival.' From the making of the calendar through the recurrence of annual festivals, *odun* means also 'a year.' The question is: Is *odun*, like *yidi*, merely a loan-word, or is it a cognate of *'iid*' suggesting genetic relationship?

alaaji is a borrowing from Arabic *al-hajj*, which means 'the journey.' In Islam, it refers to

* This is the subject of a paper I presented early in the year to the Linguistic Seminar in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan.

† 'The borrowing of Arabic loan-words into Hausa is associated with two events in Hausa history. They are: the coming of Islam; the arrival of the Arabs in Hausaland...these two events were not simultaneous. (p. 18) Islam made its appearance at least as early as the middle of the fourteenth century, whereas the Arab presence is not recorded until a century later. (p. 19)... the introduction of Islam pre-dated the appearance of the Arabs in person by about a hundred years (p. 21). M. Hiskett, 'The Historical Background to the Nationalization of Arabic loan-words in Hausa' in *African Language Studies VI*, London, 1967. The page numbers refer to this publication.

[1] J. H. Greenberg admits the possibility of 'an extremely remote relationship between the Niger-Congo and Hamitic families as a whole': 'That Hamitic and Niger-Congo may ultimately be related is, of course, possible, and there are a few indications that this is so...but this does not, of course, imply a special position for Fulani as against the hundreds of other Niger-Congo Languages.' See *Languages of Africa* pp. 28 and 30.

[2] idun—as in *idunta* 'three years ago.'

'the pilgrimage', that is, the pilgrimage to Mecca. An older stage of contact yields no less than three Yoruba words. First, taking the Arabic *hajj* (al- is the Arabic definite article) we get the Yoruba word

ajo[1] 'a journey'

Next, if *alaaji* is a direct borrowing through Islam meaning 'a pilgrim to Mecca,' what of the indigenous Yoruba word.

alejo 'a stranger, a visitor, a guest?' From this it is easy to get to the third indigenous Yoruba word,

ajeji 'strange, foreign, alien.' This is related to *hajj*. The Yoruba word has dropped the initial /h/, added a final vowel, and, since no double consonants are found in Yoruba, the geminate—*jj* has been separated into *ajeji*. Now, if *alaaji* is easily explained as a loan-word from Arabic *al-hajj* through Islam, what about *alejo*, *ajo* and *ajeji*?[2] Are they borrowings or evidence of linguistic relationship?

gifa is a borrowing from the Semitic *via* Hausa. It is used in Yoruba as an adverb to qualify *ku* 'die', in the phrase *ku gifa* 'to die without being properly slaughtered.' It is used of an animal that dies from accident, or of itself, without its throat being properly cut and its blood shed in a way that makes it acceptable to religiously susceptible persons as human food. Such animals writhe in pain until they 'breathe their last.' This is the meaning of the Hebrew word *gava* 'He gave up his breath, he breathed his last,' indicating the last sigh with which life flees the body[3] Now, there is another Yoruba word which cannot be explained as a borrowing through Hausa: this is

gufe 'to throw up wind,' as one does after eating one's fill. *Gufe*,[1] then, it related to Hebrew *gava;* both refer to breathing out: 'expiration.' *Gava* is so used in Gen. 6: 17: 'Everything that *breathes* on earth.'

aleebu The initial al-(Arabic definite article) betrays this word immediately as a borrowing. Its meaning in Yoruba is identical with the meaning of the Arabic *al'a 'ib* 'the defect' –*'a'ib* 'defect.' It must have been borrowed in a religious context, from Islam, *via* Hausa, where the defect may be moral or physical. *a'ib*, however, is related to another Yoruba word

eebu 'abuse,' which is the act of pointing out verbally the defects, real or imagined, on a person in order to ridicule him. From *eebu*, we have the verb *bu* 'to abuse.'

Jimo is well known among the Yorubas as a proper name common among Yoruba Muslims. It is also well known that it is given to a boy born on Friday, the day Muslims assemble in the Central Mosque for joint worship. Friday in Arabic is *yaumu-l-jum'ah*, 'the day of Assembly'; *jama'* in Arabic means 'to gather, to assemble, to come together.' *Jimo*, then, is a recent borrowing into Yoruba vocabulary. But the same cannot be said for

jumo (or junmo), as in *Adejumnobi*, *Olajumoke* where *jumo* means 'together.' This Yoruba adverb, *jumo*, is related to Arabic '*jama*'. Another Yoruba word related to the Semitic root *j-m-* is

Ojumu The word is used to refer to each of the wives in a polygamous home plus all her children together forming one unit, particularly when the inheritance of the pater-

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[1] As in *irin ajo*. It will be found that the sound /h/ occurs rarely in initial position in Yoruba words. We expect it to drop off in the Yoruba cognate, just as we expect Yoruba to end a word with a vowel and not a consonant. Hence the /o/ at the end of *ajo*.

[2] There may be even a fourth Yoruba word in this group—*aajo*, as in O *se aajo mi* 'He entertained me, He took care of me, He gave me hospitality and care.' The relation of hospitality to a visitor is obvious.

[3] Incidentally, this word is frequently followed in the Hebrew Bible by the word (*va*) *yyamat* '(and) he died', which reminds us of Hausa *yamutu* 'he is dead.' *See e.g.*, Gen. 35:29 in *Biblia Hebraica*.

[1] The voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ is absent in Yoruba where it comes out as the voiceless variant /f/. The characteristic Semitic sound represented by /'/ is a velarized glottal stop. It is not found in Yoruba.

familias is to be distributed. It is divided not into the number of children, but into the number of wives, and each one with her children is one *ojumu*. It is the same 'family or community spirit that in Swahili is called *Ujamaa*.'[1]

abere 'needle,' is a cultural loan-word from Arabic '*ibrah* 'needle.' But there are other Yoruba words based on this Semitic root '*-b-r*. The root carries the general meaning 'to cross, across, to pass through' as a needle passes through cloth or as a thread passes through the eye of the needle. The other Yoruba words are ibara in *ibaramu*, which is the facial mark cut *across the nose* (*ibara imu* > *ibaramu*); *cburu*, 'short cut', that is, the way that cuts across an area; *Ibara*, the name of the town on the other side of the river near Abeokuta; and *afara*,[2] the log that forms a bridge across a stream, a bridge. If *abere* is a borrowing, what about the other words?

Hasan is a Muslim name. It is a cultural loan-word that came among the Yorubas with the introduction of Islam. Only few Yorubas know its meaning in the Arabic: 'to be well, to be beautiful.' Yet it has an indigenous counterpart which few people suspect: this is the word

san 'to be well.' With the negative prefix ai'[3] it gives us

aisan 'illness.' To heal someone in Yoruba is to look after him until he is well—*Wo o san*. So intimate is this word in the Yoruba consciousness that even the ideophone in *omo san san* has an unmistakeable reference: it means good, handsome, beautiful. The cognate in Hausa is *sannu*: *sannu da rana* 'good day'

Kirun is a Yoruba loan-word used by Muslims to indicate 'say the prayers publicly and aloud.' It is related to another loan-word, *alukurani* 'the Koran.' Koran is the Arabic word for the Scripture of the Muslims. It is designed to be read aloud; hence the name. For Koran is Arabic *qur'an*: *qara'* is Arabic 'read aloud, recite.' It is cognate with Hebrew *qara'* 'call, proclaim, read.' We have it in Yoruba

Kere oo which is said to gain attention when someone is about to make an announcement and make a proclamation. Hebrew *qari'a* is 'a proclamation'.[1]

jihad is the Muslim holy war. It comes from Arabic *jahada* 'to struggle.' We have it in Yoruba as *ijakadi* 'wrestling, struggling' (h=k).

Hegira is the name for Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina, the *hijra*. The related Hebrew is in the name of the woman driven out of Abraham's house, Sarai's slave girl.

Hagar The name means to *leave a place*. Yoruba has it as *kuro* 'Get off'.[2] See Hausa *kaura* 'migrate', Hebrew *gara'* 'withdraw', Arabic *hajara* 'retire.'

OGUN—CAIN

Allah is the Arabic name by which Muslims all over the world know God. The word has come into Yoruba land with Islam. But it met a cognate word among the Yoruba; for Arabic *Allah* is Yoruba *Olu*. The antiquity of the word *Olu* in Yoruba is seen in its frequent occurrence in theophoric names in Yoruba: *Olufemi*, *Oluwole*, *Olulaami*, *Olusanya*, *Oludayisi*, *Oluremilekun*, etc.

Islam is certainly not the first religious influence which came into Yoruba land from the Middle East. Immigrants in the forgotten past brought the name for the deity. The word *El* was the Canaanite name for God before Moses asserted that Yahweh was the only true *el*. And *lah* had been the name of God in Arabia before

[1] Jomo Kenyatta, *Suffering without Bitterness* (East Africa Publishing House, Nairobi) p. *xi*. The Swahili *ujamaa* is, of course, Arabic in origin.

[2] /b/>/v/through fricative articulation; /v/>/f/through devoicing.

[3] Compare with the vetitive particle in Akkadian *ai*.

[1] q-w-r and q-w-l belong to the same semantic field in Semitic. Hence Hebrew qol 'voice'. The root shows up in Yoruba as in the word *kokolo* 'stammer' and in the ideophones *ko lala* (*kolala*) 'to let off a shrill call,' and *oro kulekule* 'whispering, muffled voice'.

[2] Semitic initial /h/ is dropped in Yoruba where the word has an initial /h/.

Muhammed preached to the Arabs that *Al-lah* was *the* God, the only one.[1]

The Middle East was pagan before it was Jewish or Islamic. The Arabs of pre-Islamic times who may be regarded 'as having preserved more faithfully than any other people the ancient Semitic conditions' were polydaemonistic—they believed in 'many local divinities, attached to trees, plants, rocks and water.'[2] The Ancient Egyptians made sacrifices to various gods at various shrines. An offering stone in Middle Egyptian was *b3*, the offerings were called *bw*. Compare these words with the Yoruba word *ebo* 'sacrifice.'

It was from the same source that the Hebrews got the name for Cain (Tubal-cain) that the Yorubas got the name for *Ogun*. This sounds fantastic, but here are the facts: *qayin* in Arabic means 'metal worker, worker in iron'; *qiini* (Cain) in Hebrew means 'metal worker'; *Ogun* in Yoruba is the patron saint of black smiths and all others who use metal implements whether for war or for hunting.[3]

Ogun was, therefore, first and foremost, like Vulcan, a metal worker, forging iron implements. He is the patron of blacksmiths. He was the first blacksmith. He is an *orisa*, the 'first.'[4]

(ii)

'Ogun was originally a human being; it was after his death that he was deified.'[1]

A long process that must have been: first of the nature of 'ancestor worship' with legends; then the details of the man became forgotten and the essence of the memory about him was condensed into myth. First he was just the first blacksmith (*ra'is, rishon*); then the word lost its primary significance and *Ogun* became an *orisa*—worshipped like a god.

We read in Genesis 4:22 that 'Zilah gave birth to Tubal-Cain who forged various implements of copper and iron.' He made the spear, in Hebrew *qayin*, sharp pointed like *egun* 'thorn', a Yoruba cognate. This spear the hunter used to prick animals and kill them (Yoruba for 'to prick' is *gun*). And so they, too, adopted *Ogun* as their patron. *Ogun* is Tubal-cain: *Ogun* and *Cain* are cognates. They both mean 'metal worker, forger of implements of iron.'[2]

It is interesting that popular etymology in Genesis misinterpreted the name of Cain. We are told in Genesis 4:1 that on giving birth to Cain, Eve said, 'I have *acquired* a human being with the help of Yahweh. The Hebrew for to acquire is *qanah*, a word which sounds like the Hebrew word for metal worker *qaini*.[3] This error is interesting. The Hebrews derived their word for 'property, acquisition' from the verb *qanah*. Even this word has a cognate in Yoruba, where it is specialized to refer to a particular type of acquisition—the property which one acquires from one's father, inheritance, legacy, *ogun*. Just as Hebrew *qayin* (Cain) sounds like Hebrew *qanah*, so Yoruba *Ogun* sounds like Yoruba *ogun*.

(iii)

'Ogun decided to go and live in solitude on a hill top near the town of Ire, alternatively called *Ilu Ina*, Town of Fire (because the inhabitants worshipped fire as a god).[3]

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[1] The Arabic *Allah* actually has the definite article *Al-*. Without it, it would be – *lah*, which brings it closer to the general Semitic name for the deity—*El*.

Olu in Yoruba has a variant form *Oluwa*. Please note that *Oluwa* is not Olu wa 'Our *Olu*'. *Our Lord* is Oluwa wa, not *Oluwa*.

[2] Sabatino Moscati, *Ancient Semitic Civilizations*, p. 39.

[3] 'Ogun ni alaabo awon alagbede, alafchinti awon, *jagunjagun ati gbogbo awon ti o ba nse ise irin*. P.O. Ogunbowale, *Awon Irunmale Ile Yoruba* p. 38 and the illustration on page 39.

For the correspondence Semitic q=Yoruba g, *see* p. 37 of *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* edited by Sabatino Moscati: 'The characterization of q as voiceless is not completely certain. The traditional Arabic articulation is indeed voiceless, but some indigenous grammarians and a few modern dialects support a voiced pronunciation. In Akkadian q is frequently written with the symbol for g . . .'

[4] *See* Hebrew *rosh* 'head', Arabic *ra'is* 'the leader, the president', Hebrew *rishon* 'first'.

[1] S. A. B. Babalola, *The Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala*, p. 4.

[2] Talking of hunting, take the word for the Yoruba trap *ebiti*. *See* the Arabic word *habata* 'to fall, to descend'. *ebiti* is a snare—a parapet under which is placed a bait. The platform falls on an animal trying to eat the bait. The Egyptians knew this snare: they called it '3btt (cf. ibt 'bird-trap').

See E. A. Speicer, *Genesis*. Notes on pages 29 and 30.

[3] S. A. Babalola, *The Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala*, p. 5.

A very proper place for the blacksmith to live—by his smithy, with the fire of his furnace blazing hot and bright like the fire from a vulcano. *Ire* is alternatively called *Ilu Ina*, because the meaning of *Ire* is *ina* 'fire, light'. See a cognate Yoruba word, our word for the fire-pot, *aaro*. *aaro* is our fire-pot; *Ire* is a whole town on fire. The fire of a blacksmith's furnace is a really big version of the fire in the *aaro*. *Ire* is a vulcano.

The name of Ogun's town was symbolically chosen. To say *Ogun Oni-re* is to talk of the great Vulcan at his furnace. For *or* in Hebrew means 'light. It can also mean fire.[1] The Arabic word for the fire pot is '*irah*' 'hearth'. The Arabic word for 'to burn' is '*araa*,' and the Hebrew is '*arah*.' (*See* Brown, Driver and Briggs *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.72)..

Professor Cyrus Gordon of Brandeis University, in a book which 'ends with the specific proof that establishes beyond cavil that Greek and Hebrew civilizations are parallel structures built upon the same East Mediterranean foundation,' cites Indo-European *agni* 'fire' as cognate with Latin *ignis*. 'The Ugaritic form beginning with *a*—is, however, closer to Sanskrit Agni (familiar to westerners as the Indian god of fire).'[2] I dare to assert that Indo-European *agni* 'fire' is cognate with Yoruba *Ogun*:

Ni ojo ti Ogun nt'ori oke bo...
Aso ina l'Ogun fi bo 'ra

'On the day of Ogun's coming from the hill-top...
It was with fire that he wrapped himself.'

It is revealing that in the Ijebu dialect, red hot charcoal from the fire is called *ogunna*.

[1] The Yoruba word for 'light' is the same as the word for 'fire'. *Fire* (Heat) is always the source of *light*. Our primary source of light as well as heat is that flaming ball, the sun. The Ancient Egyptians worshipped it as *re*'. To see is to experience *light* (as opposed to darkness)—to be enlightened. Hence Hebrew *ra'ah* 'to see', Arabic *ra'aa* 'to see', Yoruba *ri* 'to see'.

[2] *See* Cyrus Gordon, *Before The Bible* (Collins, London) 1962, p. 173.

(iv)

'Ogun,' writes Professor Idowu, 'was a ferocious being who was addicted to the savage sports of hunting and carnage...he went about hunting and to his wars and conquests...' *Ogun* 'war' was the sport of *Ogun*. It is not surprising that it was Cain (*Ogun*)[1] who killed Abel. The 'Song of the Sword' in Genesis 5:23 is typical of his race:

I have killed a man for wounding me,
A boy for injuring me.
If Cain be avenged sevenfold.
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.[2]

Ogun 'war' has its origin in a vengeful spirit.[3] They were tribal vendettas: 'an offence against any member of the tribe is resented by the entire tribe, and the entire tribe shares in the duty of avenging it.'[4]

Something of the nature of the name *Akinsanya* 'Akin paid back'. The Yoruba name *Akin* is never the name of girls: they are too soft and tender for war. For *Akin* means 'valiant man, valour, bravery.' Now the Ancient Egyptian word *kn't* is an adjective meaning 'brave, strong, sturdy'.[5] *knt* in Egyptian means 'valour'; and *knyt* refers to 'the Braves, the military corps d' elite.' No wonder the Yorubas say

Ikin ogun ni i pa 'lakinkanju.

The Yoruba name *Akin* is as old as the Pyramids of Egypt. I mean this literally.[6]

[1] Cain was the first-born son of Adam; *Ogun* was 'the first-born son of Oduduwa, the progenitor of the Yoruba.' See Babalola, op. cit. page 4.

[2] The song is attributed to Lamech. But Lamech's genealogy is traced back to Cain. *See* Genesis 15: 17–18. 'The poem evidently owes its inclusion in the present context to the mention of Cain in the last couplet.'— Speiser, *Genesis* p. 37.

[3] *See* Hebrew *naqam* 'to take vengeance, avenge', *naqam* 'vengeance'.

[4] Sabatino Moscati, *Ancient Semitic Civilizations*, p. 38.

[5] The root is also used as verb. It is merely the feminine suffix, for abstract noun.

[6] Any one who wants to find the root meanings of the *amutorunwa* names in Yoruba must trace them far back to the language of Ancient Egypt and among the ancient Semites. He will find that *Talabi* is masqueraded in its caul like a *tombolo* (Hebrew *labisa* 'to be dressed').

OGUN: GOD OF WAR AND IRON*

By

RENATO BERGER

OGUN has to do with the most important and actual aspect of our theme. On the background of teared up bodies by shrapnels, of proudly exhibited heads of the enemy and rumours about the eating of human flesh,[1] we have to inquire about the sense of the sacrifice, the human sacrifice, the blood sacrifice, these horrified things with which the civilized and christianized world thought to have come finally to terms. What has been called by the same world paganism or Cannibalism seems to be so actual and alive as ever as it happens a million of years after the troglodytes whose killing could be excused as an inevitable condition for survival, after nearly 2,000 years of Christianity with its noble commandments and scarcely 30 years after the blood-sacrifices in their most modern form: between the displayed heads of humans or—if it is true—the eating of human flesh on the one hand, and the carburetted corpses in the gaschambers and the lampshades made of human skin on the other hand, there is only one single difference: crude and naked barbarism here, and barbarism practised in a discreet manner there. The one practised in an open and direct way, the other in the roundabout way of domestication and repression of the animal nature of man, the one in an underdeveloped, the other in a technicalized and civilized world; here slaughter as an ocean of blood, noise and brutality of the most primitive kind, there of filtered through the mild light the lampshade and hidden behind the geranium plants decorating the windows of the nice little houses at the entrance of the concentration camps. Brutality and slaughter in which form ever–and this has to be pointed out–today not in one single country, but nearly everywhere; the difference only in so far as the crimes of the one side were brought out into the open whereas others have the chance to hide them from this fortunate rest of mankind whose potential criminality at this moment sleeps.

The difference between Nazi-Germany and the other European countries on the one hand and the difference between Nigeria and the other African countries on the other is nothing else than that: Germany and Nigeria were or are so unlucky to have their crimes discovered, while others can still go on with them or prepare them by the protection of the sacred egiosm of this part of the world which in this case forgives even the most brutal offences against humanity, as *e.g.*, the crimes in Vietnam the crimes towards the negroes in the USA and towards the Bantu of South Africa. Other crimes still are kept secret because they have not yet a political or economical effect or are not legated with interest, as *e.g.*, in the case of Sudan, whose slaughters place the Nigerian ones in the shade.

Sacrifices in form of human beings, animals, offerings are known from the very beginning of mankind. By sacrifices men have given expression to their adoration and fear of the gods the same as by cults, rituals and exorcism so as to communicate with the gods and the cosmos. This kind of dealing with the gods has been named Cannibalism by those who did reject it. For charity's sake I will not deal with the distinctions which science makes between human sacrifice, blood-sacrifice and cannibalism, I only will mention that science in this regard is as delicate and reserved as the rest of humanity looses every shame in the practical field of the

*Extract from the last chapter of the author's book *On the Flight Towards New Gods*—To be published

[1] The *Sunday Times*, 20 April, 1968.

theme. Needless to say, the word cannibalism, together with the words paganism, heathenism, fetichism, sorcery, was meant in a disdainful sense. On the background of the command: 'Thou shalt not kill!' these customs seem to be, indeed, inhuman and primitive, but confronted with reality, as it exists inside and outside Christianity, this noble command becomes very relative.

In African religion, the original purpose of the sacrifice is the establishment of the right relation between the gods and the cosmos. Or as LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR puts it: 'The sacrifice elucidates in an ideal way the interaction of the universal life-forces.'[1] The more this harmony has been deranged or the more it is necessary to restore it, the more important a sacrifice has to be. The highest form of sacrifice is the human being because, for the so-called primitive, the human being was the most precious thing he possessed. His firm belief was that under certain circumstances and in view of certain prescriptions of his religion only the sacrifice of a human being could have the right effect—similar to our belief in prayer—therefore the human sacrifice has been maintained with so much obstinacy in spite of all the influences of civilizatory education.

At the same time, in African religion the ritual essence was carried out in a concrete way while in Europe it is put in a symbolic form. The African is not satisfied to be united with his gods by prayer or religious devotion alone, as e.g., a Christian nun in her ecstasy, but he incorporates the human being representing the religious imagination or a part of it in a concrete way, or the 'totus', although meant in a ritual way, is really accomplished. This unity and equivalence of visible and invisible, rational and irrational, spiritual and material is steadily present.

God OGUN may serve as a bridge between the problem of the sacrifice in its spiritual meaning and the sacrifices in form of wars and other horrors, because as a god, he is given sacrifices and knows about the sacrifices, and at the same time he is a god of war.

The legend tells that he was 'a cheerful fellow, fond of good party, brave, daring and, on occasions, ill considered in his actions. He is tolerant and kindly until suddenly roused to anger, when he tends to act extravagantly first and to think afterwards. He has, above all, the saving grace of doing the pre-eminently right thing for, very often, quite the wrong reason. The character is, in fact', we can read further in an anonymous article in *Nigeria* Magazine, 'very similar to that of the classic Mars and the astrologers' analysis of subjects whom they would say are 'born under' the planet of the same name. It can all add up to a fairly heavy risk on the roads of West Africa when it is remembered that a fair proportion of the lorry-drivers are followers of Ogun.'[1]

The author of this article would scarcely agree with JANHEINZ JAHN who, in travelling by lorry on the same roads, gave the preference to a worshipper of Ogun before a Christian one. This man was suspicious to him because, as it was written on his lorry: 'I cannot do without the Lord'—he trusted the Lord only while the 'Yoruba Hunter' trusted his ability to drive. The African God, Jahn interpretes, watches carefully if the individual observes the rules of the game imposed on him. And God Ogun asks from the driver not blind faith but perfect knowledge of driving.[2]

After this characterization one would not expect that Ogun was the first son of Oduduwa, the father of the Yoruba people and son of the Highest God. Ogun lived as a big warrior and hunter in Ile-Ife. After a couple of successful wars, as it is narrated in the quoted article of *Nigeria* Magazine, he took a wife who had a son, OGUNDAUNSI. When he came back from the battlefield one day, he met deep in the forest a most beautiful young girl. 'So beautiful was she that he took her with him, and they were still many days march from Ile-Ife. When they arrived, Oduduwa was also smitten by the lady's beauty and asked if she were still a virgin. Ogun lied and said she was. So Oduduwa took the girl himself. After due time she bore a child, whose skin was half brown and half white. Oduduwa (who in many Yoruba legends is said to have been white skinned) asked the lady what had happened and she eventually confessed that Ogun had been her lover on the way back to Ile-Ife. Oduduwa forgave her and called her son ORANYAN who, in later years

[1] Leopold Sedar Senghor, 'The Essence of Negro-African Culture', in *BLACK BALLAD*, Diederichs, Düsseldorf, 1957.

[1] God of Iron', *NIGERIA MAGAZINE* No. 4, Lagos, 1950.

[2] Janheinz Jahn, *Through African Doors*, Faber & Fable, London, 1962.

founded Oyo. Ogun still continued to make his successful forays and during the periods when he was away Oduduwa taught Ogundaunsi and Oranyan many things so that they eventually became very wise. It was the custom of the boys to wait for the time of Ogun's return from war and to make preparations for homecoming. In this, Ogundaunsi excelled and he prepared all foods that Ogun likes best: dogs, oils, snails, mice, fish and many other delicacies. One day, Ogun was so pleased at this thoughtfulness that he gave Ogundaunsi a good share of the plunder. Oduduwa was pleased and said: 'Truly, this boy shall have good luck.' When Ogundaunsi grew up and Oduduwa thought it was time to reign over a part of the land, a beaded crown was given to the young man and he adopted the title 'Onire'—the owner of luck.

'Oranyan had also then grown up and it was not possible to have more than one crowned head in Ile-Ife. Oranyan went off with his followers and founded Oyo whilst Ogun said he would soon find a kingdom for Ogundaunsi. Ogun left Ile-Ife and eventually came to a place called Igbo-Irun, which is near Ire (Ekiti). Ogundaunsi, wearing the crown given to him by Oduduwa, became a blacksmith. He did very well at this trade and soon became rich and famous.' . . . Ogun eventually decided that he would go back to Ile-Ife and bring back his wives and family. When he got there he found that jealous neighbours had destroyed his property and his wealth and his wives were no longer there. He decided to return to Igbo-Irun for the rest of his days.

'When he came to within a short distance of Igbo-Irun he came across a new town in which a large party of men were sitting and drinking. There were many palm-wine calabashes around and Ogun was hot and thirsty, but no one offered him a drink.

'This was a dire insult. Ogun took out his great sword and slew them all. He then knelt down, as was his custom, to drink their blood. But none came. Ogun peered closer and found that he had slain his own people, who had moved their town whilst he was away.

'Ogun knew that such an action would invoke the wrath of the Supreme God, so he decided to kill himself. As he did so, the ground opened and swallowed him. The people of Ire made a shrine on the spot.'

The participants during the Ogun festival remember all these different details of the characteristics of Ogun narrated in the legend. It is a very wild festival and when the word primitive would have its right at any place it would be here. The worshippers of Ogun are men having to do in one way or another with iron, and their symbols and accessories are shown audibly and visibly during the festival. So most of the participants carry big knives, shot-guns and pistols; they gesticulate in the air with hoes, machets and knives and the hunters shoot in the air with their guns. The cloths of the priests are covered with iron thing the whole atmosphere is that of very great excitement which participates to the *ologuns* the presence of their God. The painting of the worshippers of Ogun is as wild as their clothes. Blue together with white and ockre, the sacred colours of the Yoruba religion, is painted everywhere, with preference and with admirable generosity into the faces, and some of the rough fellows are black like chimney-sweepers. In front of the very liberal kind to dress, letting to the fantasy full scope—even the turned up jacket is represented, as a last solution when fantasy and money are lacking—one would not think that for the costumes special gifts are collected. Seventeen days before the beginning of the festival, the people are informed by special trumpets made from gourds, called *ipe*. These seventeen days are consecrated to the preparations of the festival. The Oba, for us the Oshemawe of Ondo, where we attended the festival, has to take care that there is the right atmosphere for the successful celebration of the festival. As Ogun for his worshippers is at the same time the giver of peace and conserver of life, he has to be honoured peacefully.[1]

After the first confusion by the most frightening and strange figures, one can see some more venerable characters. Their dresses indicate that they must be very important personalities, so as the magicians who are responsible for the cults and concerns of general sort. Other than the priests who serve uniquely one single *orisha*, they deal with the 'minor orishas' and spirits. Therefore their appearance is more frightful than that of the high priests of Ogun, but their dances and songs are of the most fascinating character: the steps vary from very slow and solemn turns to very quick and vehement stamps as temperamentful thanks to the God, which is expected to protect them from

[1] Fola Akinrinsola, 'Ogun Festival', *NIGERIA* MAGAZINE, No. 85, June 1965.

hunger and misery. The costume of the head of the blacksmiths, OLUTUAGBEDE of Agbede Street, is covered over and over with little pieces of iron which, as symbols of Ogun, are loaded with magical force. His group is the oldest of all the *ologun* of the town and it recalls that Ogun, after having retired from his occupation as a warrior, settled in Ire where he became famous as a blacksmith. Another priest is covered by a simple sack-cloth, as if he would remember the ascetic-spiritual side of the festival. His magical power is indicated by cowrie-shells which cover his costume and his cap, but his real power does not lie in the first rank in these symbols but in his capacity to know all the *orikis* being sung to the honour of Ogun. This knowledge and the use of it give to this priest big power and holiness and by his benedictions, the divine power is transferred to the worshippers.

Amongst the different kinds of magicians and priests there are the priests and priestesses of Ogun, who, by their dresses of impeccable white, remember, more than any one else, what we in Europe may understand by priests. These priests dance the same ritual dances as they were danced during the *Idajo*—ceremony for the festival of Shango, solemn and measured ritual steps, interrupted by turns of an almost chaste kind. Their incantations are prayers for peace, prosperity, order and good regency for everybody in the town. One of these prayers is as follows: 'Ogun, the great king, son of Olofin. Both, young and old adore thee—I'm alive because Ogun exists. The way is opened by Ogun for happiness and prosperity!' Their songs are praise-songs and adjurations, *e.g.* when they sing: 'God forbid that Ogun should weep in my presence' (for when Ogun weeps he sheds blood.)[1] Like the priests of Shango, the priests of Ogun are considered as wives of their God. In their female dresses and sometimes painted like women in their faces, their dances of chaste tenderness indicate that they are in intensive communication with their God. One would not expect this motif, as it exists also in Christian mysticism, at a festival of so pronounced pagan character; as many other motifs of African religion they are hidden chastely behind much rougher and more primitive traits of the festival. Picked out of the whole, blown up and perverted by the spoiled fantasy of European chroniclers, they became what in Europe is taken for African religion.

Among the noble priests there are other figures of much cruder character. The head of one of the most frightful groups of the festival carries a snake around his neck, an animal being holy to Ogun. It looks more dangerous than it is: the snake is dead. Another *ologun* carries a snake carved out of wood, glaringly painted and accentuating its body's coils. An impressive figure is this of the night-watchman. On his front he has fixed a lantern, his attribute, on his chest he exhibits a death's head which probably shall indicate that without his protection one is doomed to death. This figure of a simple young man shows the natural attitude of most Africans towards their function and power of their post and among society, and it is not without difficulty that they become aware that the modern attributes of power and success are not so easy to acquire.

A good part of the dynamic and cheerful character of the festival is due—how could it be otherwise?—to a very generous consumption of wine and beer, and not only this: in remembrance of the offence made to Ogun, all the bottles and any vessel serving for drinking are overturned for fear that Ogun may return with his sword and slaughter them all. For the followers of Ogun interprete the motive with the wine as follows: these unfortunate folk in those days did not refuse the wine to Ogun, but they had drunk all the wine themselves and the calabashes seen by Ogun were empty. According to the temperament of the festival and its followers, the overturning changed soon in dashing them to pieces, as wild as it is done, following another legend, at New Years' Eve in Rome or after a concert with the 'Beatles'.

This colourful bustle starts long before the official beginning of the festival. All the nobles of the town, the High-Chiefs Jomo, Adaja, Odunwo and Sashere, bring sacrifices to Ogun at their private family-shrines. Four days before the beginning of the festival, the Oshemawe parades round the town, the next night the Lisa, the next in rank, and then the rest of the nobles. The festival is introduced by a procession in the afternoon of the eve, following a special route in between the town, and the same procession is repeated the next day with great pomp. All the bazaars, shops and even the market are closed during the day, corresponding

[1] Fola Akinrinsola, 'Ogun Festival', *NIGERIA MAGAZINE*, No. 85.

to the belief that 'no one markets with Ogun'. Peasants and hunters stay at home.[1]

The first official ceremony which brings the whole town together and with it innumerable visitors from outside is a 'defile' of all the participants of the festival before the Oshemawe. It lasts from 9 a.m. till 3 p.m. More than fifty groups arrive: all the members of the High-Chief houses, priests of Ogun, merchants, mechanics, lorry-drivers, gold-, silver-, tin-and blacksmiths. They all receive gifts from the king, in form of money, kolanuts, beer, coca-cola, etc. These gifts are graduated, without any restriction is only the gay palaver around the distribution, as a ritual of its own right. The Oshemawe takes the money out of a bag of sack-cloth which lies on the table where he sits. After the distribution he blesses each group with his ceremonial fan.

Like for nearly all the festivals, there is an abundant display of masks. Corresponding to the martial character of Ogun, most of them have a very impressive and provocating superstructure, sometimes formed out of different figures or groups of figures, carved in wood in a very rough way and painted in lively colours.

There is someone who, in any case, has nothing to laugh before the festival of Ogun starts, namely his favourite sacrificial animals, the dog. Malicious observers assert that a worshipper of Ogun can be recognized on the roads by their sudden curves with a view to catch one of these mostly very meagre dogs of the typical African cross-race as a sacrifice to Ogun, who in this turn, will protect the driver and his passengers from equal misery.We never have seen of these curves, but we met innumerable little dogs on the roads, in equal proportion together with birds, cats, young goats and sheep and other beasts. During a festival of Ogun, the worshippers of Ogun serve themselves with dogs in the same abundance as these same animals in Europe rejoice a protection and affection from the part of the humans which reaches far beyond what they concede to their own race. Therefore we supposed that these dear animals may take leave at the eve of a festival with the same macabre salute as it was told that the Germans did during the war! 'Remain over' because after a festival the amount of dogs is considerably reduced. If we confront this fact with the conditions in India where one can see the dogs of the same emanciated cross-boulevard race in every state of decomposition from life to death-a female animal had its whole uterus-complex hanging outside, presumably from a forcibly liberated 'penis captivus'—certain conclusions are obvious.

The sacrifice of the dog is the culminating point of the festival. In times of agitation and of wars, sacrifices were brought to reconcile Ogun and to implore for success of the enterprise. In older times, the sacrificial object was a human being, a slave who was bought by official means and carried one day before the ceremony with great splendour through the streets. This slave felt himself selected, because he was promised that he will be born again as a king.[1] Every family who worships Ogun sacrifices every year a dog in its family shrine. There are sacrifices of other animals too, as for example, chickens which are used by the hunters. In older times, the dogs not only were slaughtered but also eaten. In Ondo, the family of the Lisa was excepted from the eating. The reason for it is this: the Jomo Lila, forefather of the Lisa, was a very influential man and for this reason had many enemies. One day he had a quarrel with his people and they decided to assassinate him. The assassination was planned to happen at a feast given in the Jomo's honour. At the place where he was supposed to sit, a deep pit was dug and covered with a grass mat. But the Jomo had good friends who warned him not to go to the feast. As the Jomo was a very courageous man, he nevertheless went to the assembly, not without taking with him his faithful dog. This animal went straight to the seat, fell into the pit and died for his master. Because of this sacrificial act, the Jomo and his descendants do not eat dogs.[2]

The sacrifice of the dog which we watched during the 1964 festival, took place on a hill situated near the king's palace. In former times it was celebrated under a sacred tree. This sacred tree is replaced today by two trees, united by a curtain of grass. The grass-curtain indicates the sanctuary; in remembrance of Ogun, an iron sword lays there. We arrive at the spot together with the celebrating priest and his assistant who holds the

[1] Fola Akinrinsola, 'Ogun Festival', *NIGERIA* MAGAZINE, No. 85.

[1] J. Olumide Lucas, *The Religion of the Yorubas* C.M.S., Lagos, 1948

[2] Fola Akinrinsola, 'Ogun Festival', *NIGERIA*, MAGAZINE, No. 85.

sacrificial dog by a string. The surroundings of the hill, the street and the meadow are overcrowded with people, because this sacrifice, the single one during this festival, is official. The hill where we stand with the priest and his assistant is a holy place on which no stranger or non-initiated may set foot. To take photographs, and this by a woman and moreover by a white woman, (my wife took them) this was an absolute sacrilege. We did not know this background at the time we took the pictures, we only felt a very strange atmosphere coming from the waiting people to us, varying from admiration, astonishment to hostility. But here, as ever, these emotions were kept in check by the almighty command of the king who gave us the permission to photograph.

Preceding the sacrifice, the priest cuts a tortoise crosswise with a matchet. This is followed by the throwing of the kola-nuts for the Ifa oracle, accompanied by corresponding sentences. As soon as Ogun has accepted the sacrifice of the tortoise, which belongs to his favourite animals, the next phase of the sacrifice can take place. In this moment, the hour of the little dog has come. At the end of the string, on which the innocent animal is fixed, a piece of wood is fixed. This piece of wood serves a practical purpose in between the sacrificial ceremony, in the form the sacrifice was done in its original form: the animal was stretched out by the priest and his assistant—one takes the dog by the hind legs, the other takes it by the piece of wood which, for this purpose, was much thicker than this of 'our dog'—and then the priest had to decapitate the animal by one single stroke.When he missed it, this was a very bad sign, but fortunately nobody remembered that this had happened. The knife which was used for this sacrifice should be used for no other purpose. Before the sacrifice takes place, the celebrating priest rubs his body with magical essences.[1]

These preparations and the unique use of the knife were the same for the ceremony we could watch—BEIER's description relates to Ede—but the sacrifice itself happened in a someway domesticated way: the dog is fixed at the tree, the priest took his legs and cut his throat. Then it was slashed—the horizotal—vertical conduct of the knife recalled to me involuntarily —the Christian cross—and the dead animal was hanged up at his hind legs, the slitted belly facing the people who watched the ceremony as quietly as a mouse. After the hanging up and the exhibition of the dog, parts of the whole ceremony, all the objects serving the sacrifice were sprinkled with palm-wine: tortoise, knife, dog, meadow, the place where the tortoise had been splashed and the dog sacrificed. The priest did it in sprinkling the milky-white palm-wine, remembering sperm, out of a glass at all those places.

For those Europeans having difficulties to understand such a sacrifice, ULLI BEIER writes: 'The sacrifice of a dog is not easy to witness for one who has been brought up with the European attitude towards dogs. It is most revealing, however, to experience the tremendous release of tension that accompanies the sacrifice. The tension and concentration of the worshippers mount incessantly during the lengthy preparations. Then, as soon as the blood flows, everyone breaks into a relaxed dance. Yoruba religion is realistic about human emotions and instincts, and the sacrifice serves, amongst other things, as a discharge of socially dangerous emotions.[1]

With these phrases, Beier appeals to the interpreting and actual side of the sacrifice which we mentioned at the beginning of this extract: the sacrifice brought not only in the honour of the God and for the establishment of the rational-irrational equilibrium, but as a spiritual-psychic therapy for the worshipper himself, because every human being has to count with a certain amount of emotions and aggressions. With the current events in Vietnam, USA, Nigeria, Sudan, to name only the most important and visible ones, there seems to be only one explanation to give: in spite of Christian and classical ethics, the human beast has to let off from time to time its animal instincts, slumbering only very superficially under the extremely thin varnish of civilizatory domestication. So JANHEINZ JAHN, in a discussion in West-Berlin, has interpreted the Nigerian conflict as follows: by the erection of the protectorate and the 'Pax Britannica', the Nigerians had not had the opportunity to carry out their tribal conflicts. In a similar way, HERBERT KAUFMANN has interpreted the 'debacle' in Kenya with Mau-Mau: by these massacres, the tribes of Kenya could appease their blood-thirst, so that there is peace now. Orgies like this, one may

[1] Beier, *A Year of Sacred Festivals* in one Yoruba Town.

[1] Nigeria Magazine Publication, Lagos, 1959

suppose, would spare ritual sacrifices, although the inverse sense seems to be more desirable.

After the erection of the protectorate along the West-coast, the English have forbidden the human sacrifices. Not so much as a justification of them than as a condemnation of war, there was said: better to sacrify a couple of human beings or animals every year than all these mass-slaughters as the civilized—and the under-civilized?—society knows them. In Africa it does not seem that ritual human sacrifices diminish war-lust, on the contrary: in the kingdom which had the reputation of a particular ample generosity in the matter of human sacrifices, in old Dahomey, warefare also was very intense. The sacrifices had not so much the duty to work off aggressions but to stimulate the blood-thirst of the warriors to make them victorious. Janheinz Jahn interpretes the customs of old Dahomey as follows: 1: these sacrifices have been exaggerated very much by European historiography: 2: nearly all the victims were either prisoners of war or criminals. If we would use our criminals in a similar way, Jahn states, we would have a list as long as that of Dahomey; 3: in a country where people were sacrified by religious ceremonies to the dead and deified kings, nobody got knocked at the head for a sparsely-filled portfolio, for 'where human sacrifices are offered, human life has an echanced and sacred value.'[1] I have not as yet found out the logic of the discrepancy between the interpretation of human sacrifices as favourable to the estimation of human life, as Jahn gives it, and the mostly hysterical assertions, that the human sacrificial victims were 'only' criminals and evil-doers. If this would be true, Christian religion would have been much more consequent: the sacrificial object, in any case, was the most precious human being amongst all! But, if we join Jahn's interpretation, making some corrections to the imaginations of the blood-thirsty Dahomey which was made famous above all by the army of amazons of the penultimate king of Dahomey, BEHANZIN, we have not yet got an answer to the question if human sacrifice can change something of the potential brutality and bestiality of the human being. In the psychic therapeutic field, the role of the sacrifice may become identical with the dark aspect of everything; in considering it or simply in sacrifying egoism, vilenesses, bigger catastrophes or sacrifices may be avoided or the equilibrium of the rational-irrational polarity may be restored.

It would be worthwhile to pursue reflexions like this and, I guess, that the Africans themselves will give important contributions, once they have become so sure of their own religion, that they take it serious not only for museum conservation, but as a lively reality of their future society. Waiting for this moment, there is one alternative: the way of creativity.

Yoruba religion and culture for me has become one of the most fascinating experiences, because it has been neither corroded by rational acid nor imprisoned in sterile dogmas. And this culture still knows secrets, has space for secrets and takes care of them. Of course modernization, rationalization and material thinking start to stretch out their paralysing tentacles. We only can hope that these monsters will not be successful in devouring the last residue of this world and that the African individual will be spared the bitter lot that the Europeans had to undergo: to be left behind in their venerated temples of steel, chrome and concrete as the miserable, civilization-sick cripples whose enslaved soul cries so loudly for salvation that one day, after centuries of psychic oppression, they will destroy the whole universe only by distress.

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[1] Janheinz, Jahn, *Through African Doors*, Faber & Faber London 1962.

LUGARD REINTERPRETED

By

D. B. Adegoke

LUGARD has, for some time, been an unfortunate victim of attack. He has been said to be unable to conceive of the eventual independence of subject peoples. His uneasy relations with the officials of the Colonial Office were often cited to substantiate the claim that his public relations was bad and that he was often too domineering for his colleagues. These and many other allegations against him deserve an essay to themselves. My concern, however, is not about these but about another accusation. It is that, made by educated African nationalists (educated in the Western sense), that Lugard's 'Indirect Rule' was 'a system planned either upon wholly mistaken interpretation of African society, or as a deliberate policy to divert Africans from the true road to unity and self-government, or both'. It is because this claim has been upheld over and over again by nationalist historians (perhaps reacting justly to imperialism, perhaps not) that I deem it necessary to re-examine both Lord Lugard and his experiment.

The 'Indirect Rule' is, with us Nigerians, the sum total of those 'administrative' principles[1] which Lord Lugard developed during his High Commissionership of the former Northern Nigeria between 1900 and 1906. These principles were also later tried in the former Southern Nigeria after 1912. The system covered the several spheres of what came to be called 'native administration', *viz* the judicature, public finance, communications, aspects of the slave trade, and the labour policy of the Protectorate Government. Each of these will be examined in detail later, but suffice it to say here that series of proclamations dealing with these matters were issued between 1900 and 1906.

Do evidences justify the contention that the Lugardian rule was 'based on a mistaken interpretation of African Society'? They hardly do; though Lugard was wrong in claiming that these 'child races of the world illustrate every stage in the evolution of human society.' The claim was too absolute and necessarily open to challenge. But his classification[1] of African societies into the 'primitive tribes', the 'advanced communities', and the 'Europeanized Africans' was empiric. It is what an anthropologist or sociologist is apt to do. His empiric study of these societies has shown him the high regard and reverence each of the societies (except those at the patriarchal stage who recognize no chiefs and for whom he devised the institution of 'warrant chiefs') gave their chiefs. It is on these chiefs that he grounded his experiment. And he had had precedents. Lord Milner's declaration that 'the British policy is to rule subject-races through their own chiefs' had become well-known and highly lauded. Sir Thomas Munro (that great administrator in India) had urged the idea nearly a century before. Lord Stanmore had practised it in Fiji. Mary Kingsley had, in her very individual way, aired it. Lugard's own future neighbouring Governor of the Niger Coast Protectorate had stated that the paucity of European staff necessitated 'rule through the chiefs', and recommended that 'the general policy of ruling on African principles through native rulers must be followed for the present'.

Lugard himself shows a deeper and more defined understanding (not the ignorance ascribed to him) of the African society when he said, '...An arbitrary and despotic rule which takes no account of the native customs, traditions, and prejudices, is not suited to the successful development of an infant civilization...'[2] He similarly exhibits his precise conception of how the 'indirect rule' should operate even before he was

[1] *See* 1906 Memoranda on: Residents, Courts, Taxes, Slavery, Native Courts, Native Chiefs, Fulani Rule.

[1] Lord Lugard: *Dual Mandate*, p. 72.

[2] ibid; p. 142.

appointed High Commissioner for 'Northern Nigeria' when in an undated pencilled paper he wrote, 'In the early stages of British rule, it is desirable to retain the native authority, and to work through and by the native emirs. At the same time, it is feasible by degrees to bring them gradually into approximation with our ideas of justice and humanity. In pursuance of the above general principles, the chief civil officers of the provinces are to be called Residents, which implies one who carries on diplomatic relations, rather than Commissioners or administrators'.[1] He however held that in the less organized areas, the functions of these officers would be more administrative and less diplomatic. Thus Lugard's stand was in tune with General Smuts's view that 'the mission of the empire is liberty and self-development on no standardized lines, so that all may feel that their interests and religion are safe under the British flag—interests best secured to the native population by leaving them free to manage their own affairs through their own rulers, proportionately to their degree of advancement, under the guidance of British staff'.[2]

We may now examine the system in operation, and in its many facets. Administration first. In the emirates, the Resident was to be as far as possible an adviser rather than an administrator; but in pagan areas, with small scale and rudimentary organization, he would have to undertake many of the functions of government himself. These officers were briefed through an unceasing flow of general and particular letters from Lugard's office. Verbal advice and instructions were also given these Residents upon their visits to Zungeru, or during the High Commissioner's tour of inspection.

With regard to the judiciary, Lugard's 'administrative justice' (a devisive term used by his critics) was a five-tier hierarchy. There was the Supreme Court under the Chief Justice, with its very narrow jurisdiction. Under it were the Magistrates' Courts. There were also Commissioners' Courts which the administrative officers in each province held. These courts were supervised by the Residents. And although all sentences of over six months' imprisonment, twelve strokes, or a fine of fifty pounds had to be formally confirmed by the High Commissioner, the fact that lawyers could not plead in these courts raised criticisms which I shall explain later. The fourth category of courts was the Native Courts where the bulk of the litigation in the Protectorate was disposed of. Here the native judge (the Alkali) and behind him the Maliki Code of Muslim Law and the authority and dignity of some centuries of tradition. In 1904, Lugard recognized some of these native courts as 'A', with powers in criminal cases. They were however under the supervision of the Residents who could freely transfer cases from them to the Provincial Courts. A number of Pagan Courts was also run. The overall supervision of these courts was in the High Commissioner's portfolio. He once writes in a letter to Flora Shaw (later Lady Lugard): 'Tuesday is my judicial day on which I act as an Appeal Court and review the Cause Lists of the Provincial Courts....and I endeavour to bring to bear a strong 'common sense' point of view.... It involves the greater part of one day in every week.' The laws administered were essentially the British Common Law, subject only to any British orders-in-council, and the High Commissioner's Proclamation 6 of 1902 which recognized native law and custom when not repugnant to natural justice or any law of the Protectorate.

Another aspect of the 'Indirect Rule' is finance.[1] Unlike the solvent South, Northern Nigeria was relatively poor. Lugard, with his domain on a grant-in-aid, and always asking for more, very soon became unpopular with the British Treasury. He therefore found that he had to support the emirs' rights to taxation which had been shaken in the people's eyes by his conquest. The emirs had such dues as the old Koranic right to the tithe, tolls upon the movement of merchandise, taxes upon arable land, crops, stock, and accession to office. There was also a levy upon all forms of handicrafts and trade. All these, except the oppressive methods of collection, were supported in principle, and as Lugard wrote, 'the object in view is to retain, as far as possible, the ancient forms of taxation known to the people and, sanctioned by tradition; to utilize the existing machinery while simplifying the mode of collection;... introduce, as far as possible, some uniformity and equality of taxation....'[2] For a fair tax assessment, Lugard set his officers

[1] ibid; p. 140.
[2] ibid; p. 94.

[1] *See* Margery Perham: '*Lugard: Years of Authority*,' p. 167, for the table of revenue and expenditure for between 1901 and 1907.
[2] Land Revenue Proclamation, No. 4.

to study the resources and structure of each taxable unit and to report upon its total income and liability. The distribution of the incidence of tax and the collection of the dues were to be supervised by the administrative officers, with the indigenous authorities carrying out the act. The total tax is shared between the native authorities and the Protectorate government at half each, except Sokoto from which only one-quarter is taken. Kano, for example, in 1905–6, had £20,000; £8,000 of which was for the Emir's personal salary.

Communication was another aspect of the system. Lugard bought all the ships and built all the telegraph lines for which he could get approval from the Colonial Office; and Margery Perham said that his mind was also set upon the possibility of a railway for the Protectorate.

As for commerce, Lugard looked enviously at the palm-oil trade in the South, and studied the possibilities of cotton trade, with the help of the British Cotton-Growing Association (B.C.G.A.). He was critical of the Royal Niger Company; their failure to encourage local traders, and of the company's right to a half share in the royalties (even after the revocation of its charter) from minerals extracted from a large area of the Protectorate. And indeed according to him, he 'did not want Southerners coming north to block the way for the Northerners'.

His attitude to the slave trade and his labour policy also formed part of the Lugardian experiment. He held that a discontented slave could no longer be held by his master, and this made many masters treat their slaves with greater consideration. As time went on, he stiffened his legislation and its execution, and almost completely suppressed slave raiding and slave-dealing. He founded Slaves' Homes at Zungeru and Bornu, and paid regular visits of inspection there to intimate himself with the activities of the inmates. As regards his labour-policy, he laid down that the employment of any kind of unpaid labour was prohibited, and that even customary labour, used for the repair of local roads, was to be employed under strict rules and was always to be paid for.

This, in brief outlines, is the working of the system. The motive and spirit of its protagonist have been borne out in the various phases of the system. Furthermore, Lugard himself acknowledged the possibility of other alternative systems in 'The Fulani Rule'.[1] For instance, he had a possible choice between retaining the Fulani, or reinstating the old Habe dynasties; pondered on how far Muslim rule should be restored or extended over pagans; and, dilated a great deal on which power of the Emirs should be retained or increased. He chose the most expedient cause which scarcity of funds and personnel[2] imposed on him. It would have been unwise to chart a course whose means his resources could not meet.

This question is the test-case of the validity or otherwise of nationalist criticisms of later years. That 'the system is a deliberate policy to divert Africans from the true road to unity and self-government' is the view (perhaps not devoid of political ambition) of the first generation of western educated Africans to whom the 'indirect rule' stood for an alliance, made between imperial and tribal authorities to restrain the plebeian-African's own political advance. But these men ought to have remembered that 'in India, the principle was enunciated that the advancement in self-government must depend on the extent to which the educated class is in sympathy with and capable of representing the illiterate sections of the people. In this respect, the claim of the African "intelligentsia" is...very weak, not has the educated native, generally speaking, shown himself to be possessed of the ability to rule either his own community or backward peoples of his own race even under favourable condition's.[3] Chief Ofori Atta's speech[4] in the Gold Coast Legislature confirmed Lugard's citation and fitted well into the situation in the Protectorate then.

The fusion of administrative and judicial powers in the same officer was also criticized, especially by African lawyers in the Southern Protectorate. The fact that lawyers could not plead in many of the courts was equally unacceptable to the critics. But Lugard felt that allowing the lawyers in the courts, especially the lower ones, might cultivate litigation and thereby

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1 One of Lugard's Political Memoranda.

2 On staff shortage, *see* Perham: '*Lugard*', p. 144 for statistics: Lady Lugard: *A Tropical Dependency*, p. 419.

3 F. D. Lugard: *Dual Mandate*, p. 84.

4 'Illiterates have now a just claim that education leads to belittling and ignoring the native rulers... and that the claim of a handful of lawyers and doctors to represent the people instead of their chiefs was a base attempt to denationalize the institutions of the country'.

promote unrest. Besides, if he allowed some of his administrative judges, many of whom like Lugard were untrained in law, to be assailed by trained advocates, his judicial system might break down.

A third criticism of the Lugardian rule and especially his personal concern about the 'exploitation' by the Royal Niger Company is that he did not allow enough room for private corporate enterprise. African political leaders, on assuming power, suddenly became aware of the facts of economic life and their own retarded development. They therefore criticized (with justification) their colonial masters for allowing not much but too little of capitalist enterprise, the type which Lord Lugard cried against with regard to the Royal Niger Company.

All these criticisms examined, one cannot but exonerate Lugard, and even praise him for being realistic. He ruled through the tribal authority, and, fused administrative and judicial powers in the same officer (s) because it was the cheaper and only course his scanty resources allowed him. He almost completely smothered capitalist enterprise because he honestly felt that he was acting in the best interest of the citizens of his Protectorate. His good faith is obvious; it could not have been 'a deliberate policy to divert...' Lady Lugard's own devoted role may also be a pointer to her husband's sincerity. She did her best to persuade the Colonial Office into a bolder conception of Northern Nigeria as a good investment, and such extracts as 'the country is simply teeming with promise...'; 'everything was necessarily held in embryo for want of means...' are examples, from her letters to Chamberlain, of the type of campaign she and her husband were doing for Northern Nigeria, their 'spiritual home'.

In my opinion, Lugard's criticisms lie not in describing his system as being ill-informed of African Society, or as being a deliberate diversion of the African political march; but in his unfortunate incorrigibility of 1914 when he rejected the better judgement[1] of men who knew Nigeria well. E. D. Morel, at that time editor of the *African Mail* and a persistent critic of colonial policy, pleaded with him and advocated the division of the country into four large provinces, *viz* a Northern Province, a Central Province, Western Province, and an Eastern Province. Similarly, his Lieutenant-Governor for the North, Temple, advocated the breaking down of the country into seven provinces, suggesting three of these to be carved out of the North. But to Nigeria's woe, Lugard adopted neither of these suggestions. And this perhaps is his worst and most indefensible mistake, a mistake which remained unrectified until May 27, 1967 when a military sword incised Nigeria into twelve states. The allegation of operating two different systems in the country, one in the North and another in the South, cannot stand, because it was not deliberate but pragmatic. The indirect system was experimented in the South but failed,[1] and hence a new system had to be tried.

In all these phases of Lugard's pet system a fair critic sees nothing but good faith and genuine mistakes such as that of rejecting the re-division of the country. The system is neither a result of a misconception of African Society, nor a deliberate dishonest diversion. And one can see Lugard's sincere identification with Nigeria when, in proclaiming the unification[2] of the country in 1914, he said among other things,'..I take this opportunity of earnestly asking for that co-operation and loyal assistance, assuring you at the same time that, so far as in me lies, I shall not spare myself nor find any work too hard or arduous, if I can thereby advance the true interests of this country...' How can one serve the 'true interests' of a country in deceit?

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[1] Michael Crowder—*Story of Nigeria*, p. 248 (Iseyin protest-murders).

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NNE

By

TSARO-WIWO

OUR village, Ko, lies tucked away in the deep rain forest at the edge of one of the numerous creeks of the Niger delta. Here the mud houses crowned with thatch jostle one another in wall to wall confusion. Banana and plantains grow abundantly between the houses. Our men are mostly fishermen. They go to the creeks when there is abundant fish in the river, and sit back in the village playground drinking and gossiping when the river is 'dry'. Our women must be one of the most hardworked in Nigeria. They are farmers, traders and housekeepers. Of recent, some of them have taken to fishing, and are proving quite successful. Yet the amount of success you can expect of us is little. No car has ever come to Ko; the schools have closed because parents cannot afford to pay fees. The new ways which have seeped into the lives of people in other places have not reached us, because we are too far away from the seat of government, and because no one from Ko has ever sat on a governing Council. But we still live, because the men can get fish, and the women reap cassava from the farms. We have enough to fill our bellies. But that is all. Perhaps we should not expect anymore from life.

I have said that our women are hardworking. But there are exceptions. I know for one that Nne is not as hardworking as other women. Nne is my aunt. I have lived with her for the larger part of my life. When I was a child, she used to carry me on her back to her house whenever mama went to farm. And she would sit with me, and play with me and tell me stories. And then she would cook for me, and I would eat. In the evening, she would send me back to mama and she would tell her how troublesome I had been. And yet the following day, she would come again. She always complained, but she never stopped taking me away. I observed even then that she did not go to the farm like other women. She seemed to derive immense pleasure from taking care of me. Mama liked her for making her burden lighter. But from what I used to hear her say, I think she would have been happier if Nne had had a farm of her own like all the other women of our village. Mama used to tell me that Nne had had five children all of whom had died at birth. I felt very sorry for Nne then. And I secretly hoped that when I became a woman, my children would live so I could love them and take care

of them as mama had loved and taken care of me.

Nne's children were all dead. And so was her husband. But there was one man I always found with her each time she took me home. His name was Friday. I found him so often in the house that I began to wonder if he was ill. For if he was not ill, he should have gone to the fishing port as other men did. Mama said he was as lazy as Nne and had no fishing net of his own. But he loved Nne very much. I saw he loved me too. He always asked if I had eaten and did not want to see me in tears. If he saw me in tears, he was sure to take me in his arms, give me some dish or the other and make me happy again. Mama once told me that although he was lazy and would not go fishing, he was very kind at heart. And that was why Nne loved him. It was a good thing, she said, that he returned Nne's love. It was obvious that even though they died of hunger, they would live together as concubines for all time. But that was not to be. Friday died last December. Nne wept copiously, and asked that he be buried in the sitting-room just below the Enemekum shrine so 'he'll always be near me' as she put it. Mama was very sad, for Friday's death meant more and more loneliness for Nne. Besides, she remembered how kind he had been to her, to me and to Dede. She lamented that the clammy hands of death should have snatched him away from all of us so unceremoniously. Too many people, she said, died in Ko. Far too many. She didn't know why. She wrote to inform Dede of Friday's death.

Dede is my elder brother. He is a brilliant boy and has just left the University. When he passed his final examinations, he wrote to tell mama and I and said he would be coming home to see us. I was then on holiday from the Teacher Training College, and as usual, I had gone home to keep mama company. She always wanted me to be near her. And I had to be since Dede and I were her only children and Dede would never come home. When he did come, he only stayed with us for a night. The following morning, he would complain of boredom, saying that the people of Ko were lazy and uninformed. He did not see how he could stay among such a people for long. If he stayed, he said, he would gradually slip into their idle ways, and forget the high purposes for which he lived. And so he would have to leave Ko. Mama always let him go either because she agreed with him or because she did not want him to die as people in Ko did so often. But this time, Dede was going to stay with us for at least three days. When I read Dede's letter to mama she was very delighted. Everything in the house began to move more briskly. We asked some men to dig us a pit, and with the brown earth, we plastered our house. Mama went to the farm and dug new yams, and we ordered large quantities of fish from the fishermen. Nwiyee, mama's best friend, who apart from being chairman of the women's committee in the church is also a fish-trader, promised to get us the best available fish. We all knew that Dede loved fresh fish, and that he would devour as much of it as he could find when he came home, since he was always complaining that he never could find enough fish to eat when he was away from home. Everyone seemed excited about Dede's return. None more so than Nne. When I went to tell her about it the first day, I could not find her. She was dancing with the members of the Enemekum Society. And when Nne is dancing to the beat of the Enemekum drums, she can recognize no one. Like all the others, she works herself into a fit, and gyrates on the spot, madly, inexorably, passionately. Her eyes turn, and she foams on the lips. She keeps an Enemekum shrine in her house too. It consists of a white cloth with two red bands running diagonally across it, pinned securely to the wall four feet above the floor. On the floor, there is a pot which contains some green water. And around this pot, are some odds and ends, like an old manilla, an ostrich feather and a broken plate with kola nuts and bush pepper in it. Nne believed that her Enemekum shrine was a safeguard against all evil. And she clung to both the belief and the Enemekum as much as she had clung to her man, Friday. Nothing would ever disturb her from performing her duties to the Society. And so she did not get the news of Dede's return till the night prior to his arrival. When she did hear about it, I think she found it difficult to believe her ears.

—Nanu—that's the pet name she called him—Is my Nanu really coming back? I don't believe it. I won't believe it till I see him.—And then she asked me to tell her again whether he was really coming back. And I confirmed it once again. Then she burst into hysterical laughter. She laughed loud and long. She laughed so much that she began to cry. Her cry went up into the night air, and soon her neighbours and one

or two women who happened to be going along the road dropped in to inquire what the matter was. I suppose this was the real aim of Nne's loud cry. When asked, she proudly proclaimed that her son was returning. Her son, her Nanu who used to urinate on her, and run away and play truant when he was a child. Her naughty Nanu was at last returning. And did they know that this child of hers was now a big man? That he had been to school in foreign lands and was now one of the most learned men in the world? And he would be coming back to Ko? And who knew, he might decide to ask people to drop the ballot papers for him the next time. Her own very Nanu. She would never believe it. And she wept copiously. When she had let all her neighbours and a few passers-by know, she calmed down by degrees. When I left Nne that night, she was still considerably overwhelmed by the news. Poor woman, age was fast telling on her. She was anaemic; underfeeding had had its toll on her. But if you asked her, she would tell you that her enemies were at work on her. It pained me to see her so shrivelled up and withered, her cheek bones clearly outstanding, and the skin on her body drawn out in lines. After the grief imposed on her by the death of five children, a husband and then her man Friday, it was some comfort seeing her happy for once. But her happiness was going to cause me some mild bother when Dede arrived. There was nothing Dede dreaded more than people thronging round him whenever he arrived at home. Every woman would want to embrace him; some would want to carry him in their arms as if he were still a baby and not the man of twenty-five which he was. He had therefore begged that we did not tell people of his arrival. Nne had spread it by her behaviour. And in Ko news travels like wild fire in the harmattan. I knew we had had it.

Dede arrived the following afternoon. As usual, he was dressed very simply but neatly. He wore his usual broad smile. I ran to him and fell into his outstretched arms. He hugged me to him and I wept tears of joy. Disengaging himself, he went to mama and embraced her. She wept on his neck. Everybody else stood around and watched us with a measure of enjoyment. You could see that from their faces. When mama had wiped away her tears we all walked hand in hand into our house. Many of those who had come went into the house with us. Others thronged the doorway staring mouth-agape at the man who was said to have the new wisdom at his finger-tips. An old woman hobbled in to complain of acute rheumatic pains, and asked Dede to heal her. She refused to understand that he was no doctor. Poor Dede, how could he explain to her that he had studied Sociology at the University? Between him and all those men and women who sat in the room or stood on the doorway there was a shadow. I could see that he was feeling quite uncomfortable. He had not expected that he was going to be the centre of attraction. Although he answered the questions they threw at him politely, I could see that he was not very pleased. From time to time the shadow of a frown crossed his face. Then at last his patience exhausted, he went into the inner room, after excusing himself to mama. Gradually the crowd of admirers thinned down and Dede reappeared in the sitting room. We sat round and talked for long, he, mama and I. We had a lot to talk about. I could see that mama was very happy. You could tell that from the way she smiled with self-satisfaction each time she heard Dede speak. I was happy too. And so was Dede. He told us of the grandiose plans which he had mapped out for himself. He had not finished studying yet. He would go on to post-graduate studies. I understood that. Mama didn't. After a time, all she asked was 'And how long will that take?'

—Three years, Dede answered. And mama bowed her head, vexed.

—Three years. Another three years. Will it never end?—I understood what she meant, and so I suppose did Dede. We were all silent for a while. No one looked at the other. Then at last mama spoke again.

—And this time it will be in the white man's country?

—Yes, Dede answered.

—Go then, but return to me. Do you hear me? Return to me. And do not take a wife while you are there.

Dede smiled, knowingly. Mama got up and laid a table before him. She insisted on doing it all herself and would not have me help at all. We all had lunch together. It was only after lunch that Dede told us he would be leaving us that very afternoon.

—So soon?—we asked simultaneously.

—Yes. I have an interview to attend.—Then he told me:—Let's go and see Nne. I know she will be

waiting for me. She expects me to come to her. It's ever so long since I saw her last.—And we set out.

—As usual, nothing seems to have changed over here—said Dede as we walked along.—The same houses, only they are looking a lot more delapidated. And to think that this place was, to my infant eyes, another heaven. God, God, God, oh the days when we were young. And the people, particularly the women seem so much thinner and a lot deal shorter.—

—That's probably because you've grown taller and bigger—I said.

—It is possible. All the same, they do seem quite emaciated as far as I can see.—As Nne's house came in sight he said—And that's Nne's house. I remember it clearly. It's the same. Nothing has changed. I suppose she still has the Enemekum shrine on the wall in the sitting room?—I said it was so. And he sighed.

—Always the same. The same... What a life—he kept muttering as we walked on. When we arrived at Nne's, she was sitting on the mound of earth between the door and the wall. She had thrown a loin-cloth round her shoulders, a far-away look in her eyes. Obviously, she had been expecting Dede. When she did see him at the door, she stood up and smiled broadly. She said 'You have returned' in a warm way, but her voice was low.

Dede entered the room and sat on the mound of earth. Nne sat near her. I could hear Dede say under his breath as he cast a quick glance round the room—The same, always the same.—For a time Nne said nothing. She only sat near him, passed her hand round his shoulders, and stared at him for a long time. No one spoke. After a time three women who had obviously been waiting round the corner came in. No sooner were they in the room than one of them said:

—Your son has come to see you, Nne, and you merely sit down watching him. Get up and do something.—Nne was aroused from her seeming lethargy. She stood up, and looking at Dede said:

—Who would have believed it? And yet there he is. Do you see how big he has grown? Very big. How I wish Friday were here to see him. But he is gone to see his God, as the other five children went. As my husband did a long time ago. It is hard, Nanu. There is far too much of Death in Ko, Nanu. Too much of Death. It is good you are away from it all.—

She went into the room and brought forth a bottle. I looked at it closely. It was a bottle of coco cream. Coco cream had gone out of the market seven years earlier. She walked up to Dede and said:

—I know you people do not drink what we drink over here. If you were one of us, I would have given you gin. But you are not one of us. Therefore have this. It is all I have. I have stored it these seven years, in expectation of the day when you would return to me the great man that you now are. It is all I have. —And she gave him the bottle. He accepted it with thanks, a large smile beaming on his face. Then he opened it and drank. His face was expressionless. He passed me a glassful. I put it to my lips and spluttered instantly. The three women laughed boisterously. The mineral water had gone completely tasteless. Everyone seemed to derive immense pleasure from what I had done. It was as if they had been expecting it. The women continued to look at Dede rather appreciatively I thought.

'And he still speaks Kana very well,' one of them said.

'Of course. Why would he not', replied another. It's his mother tongue.'

'But I thought he should have forgotten it after so long an absence'.

'No,' replied Dede. 'I will always speak Kana'.

'However well he speaks Kana, he is no longer one of us,' said a third.

'I am one of you. Why not?', Dede affirmed.

'Thank God for that', they all said in unison. And we laughed. Nne continued to feast her eyes on Dede.

When she had had her fill, she said:

'Do you ever remember us?'

'Always,' Dede answered.

'It is well,' she said and sighed. Then added musingly, 'And you are already a big man, a very big man. Yet all my children, your brothers were born before ever your mother was married.'

'Is that a thing to think about?, asked one of the women. 'Leave it all to God who gave them to you, and has taken them away.'

'When I see him, I remember them. But I am happy for his sake. I am.'

Dede pierced the ground thoughfully with the end of his umbrella. At last he got up and said he was about to leave.

'When are you coming back?' Nne asked.

'I am going away today.'

'So soon? What is the hurry about?'

'I have a lot of work to do,' he answered. And dipping his hand into his pocket, he brought out a pound note which he gave to Nne. She accepted it with trembling fingers. The three women gasped. Silence in the room.

'And when are you coming back again?' she asked.

'I'm not very sure now.'

'Or perhaps you won't come again?' she said in a voice that trembled.

'Oh yes I will. Only I'm going to study again. For another three years. And then I will return.' We were already at the door. Dede was piercing the ground thoughtfully with the end of his umbrella.

'Nne' he called.

'Mm.'

'Thank you very much for all you have done for me, and for mama. Now you must cheer up. I will return.' Nne smiled cheerfully.

'I will return,' repeated he.

'And perhaps by the time you return, we will be dead,' said one of the women at the door banteringly. There was no bitterness in her voice. The three women burst into laughter. I did not see Nne's face. We had stepped out of the room.

Dede took my arm in his. As we walked away, Dede looked back once, and I with him. Nne shouted a tearful 'goodbye' from her doorway. The three women smiled broadly, and waved to us cheerily. Dede's hold of my arm became firmer; I stole a glance at his face. He was tensed up. There were tears in his eyes. When he left us that afternoon, he was still weeping copiously. Mama broke down too, and wept bitterly. And I with them. We parted in a stream of tears.

Nne died three months later.

KINGFISHER

Kingfisher
Prim playboy
Of the mangrove forest
Bedecked with feathery cascades
Of azure blue and red
Noble bird
Who sings in golden monotone
Tattler of omens good and evil
You fly from the left of the creek
And I reach for my paddle with joy
You fly from the right of the creek
And a chill uncoils my grip of it
Only my mother
The ambidextrous one
Can hope for gain
In your presageous flight
From right—or left

SOLOMON AYAGIRE.

REVIEWS

QUO VADIS BLACK EROS?

'34 x Black Love', Erotic Stories from Africa, the West Indies and North America: Collected and translated by JANHEINZ JAHN, *Bærmeier and Nikel*, Frankfort, 1968. 35*s*.

I NEVER liked very much this motive of the Christian creation myth: Adam and Eve, after having tasted the forbidden apple covering their nakedness. I did not like it, may be, because I did not understand it. I understood it only after having been in Africa; after having come in touch with the significance of the mask: Adam and Eve, having awaked to a new consciousness became aware of the overwhelming power of their flesh and the beauty of their bodies, so that they covered themselves like the dancer with the mask is covered and, representing the divine power, may neither be seen nor be touched by the by-passers. Knowing about the power of the masks and the communication with this power by rituals and sacrifices, I realized why the real meaning of the power of this primal nakedness got lost in the apocalyptic misunderstanding of the powerful attraction between the sexes as it happened very soon after the upcoming of Christianity, and which ended with the inculpation and defilement of the flesh. Without any doubt the actual sex wave in Europe and America has taken such enormous and grotesque proportions because it is for a good part nothing else than an apocalyptic rage about the agelong defilement of the formerly paradisiac purity and the criminal cutting of the last links to it. It is the same rage which made NIETZSCHE exclaim at a certain moment of European spiritual history: 'It is the Immaculate Conception that has soiled conception!' Nietzsche, the philosopher, together with HŒLDERLIN, the divine poet, was one of the most sublime geniuses in the Germanic area who has been stroken to death by the condemnation of the flesh. His desperate outcry indicates clearly that he did not condemn the purity of the flesh as it is understood by Christian monks and nuns, but that he condemned the gap between the formerly biblical: 'And they were naked and were not ashamed,' and the 'And they became aware of their nakedness; and they pinned fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons.' In spite of the orgiastic liberation of the sex in modern society, this gap has not yet been closed, and it certainly will not be closed neither by sexual libertinage and cynism as it is practised by modern youth, nor by the scientifical approach making of physical love a Freudian anti-inhibitory relaxation like the scratching of the skin, nor by the complete de-tabooing of love's initial secret. In watching the behaviour and the ceremonial character of the different outbursts of modern youth in Europe, it seems rather to be that the gap wants to be closed by the re-tabooing not of the nakedness or the function of the sexual organs, but by the re-tabooing of the very essence and expression which was meant by them, may be by the reinstatement of the secret. After this, one can imagine, a first touch or even a simple look, a gesture out of the initial power behind nakedness and sex can be more powerful and absolute than thousands of successful accomplished orgasms, repeated again and again in the clearly established technique brought into the open by armies of sexologues, these modern priests and Pythias, and their ample literature.

On this background it is interesting to know what other people understand by love and how they practise it. The title of the book, '34 *x Black Love*' in this regard is promising and the same can be said of the collector, JANHEINZ JAHN. One may guess not in vain that Africans or 'the blacks' know how to love, and Jahn, as an attractive man, gives also the appearance to know something about his subject.

After having read all the '34' kind of 'black love', one gets the impression of a very rich menu for all the tastes: from a couple of—one may excuse the expression—solid fuckeries which presumably inspired the editor to send to the reviewer the famous card making him confirm that he has past 18 years—unfortunately I have!—and that he is matured enough to swallow some thick things without indigestion, the book goes to some more tender expressions of the age old theme of love and its various appearances. The several stories or extracts differ very much in substance, expression and literary quality if sometimes one can speak of quality, as for example, in the case of the short novel in the Onitsha market style, strewed among other texts in form of parts to be continued and characterized by Jahn as a work of the respective author. This kind of 'literature' certainly once had its charm introduced by ULLI BEIER in his article, 'Public Opinion on Lovers'[1] but I have some doubts if things like these can be ranged amongst ingenious writers as PETER ABRAHAMS, CYPRIAN EKWENSI, LANGSTONE HUGHES, GEORGE LAMMING, JAMES NGUGI, WOLE SOYINKA and others. The precious space used for this amateurish product would have given the chance to many better authors. At the same time, some very vulgar texts (RONALD FAIR, 'Miss Luhester gives a Party') or some stupid ones (CYRIL CHARLES, 'White Lady') or vulgar and stupid at the same time (CHESTER HIMES, 'The End of the Party') could also have been replaced by texts of higher quality. Certainly I have some names in mind, only I do not want to mention them for not having my throat cut when coming back to Africa. This criticism has to be expressed because the collector himself uses to bring forward a murderous criticism towards highly qualified writers when these by chance have a white skin.

Next to the very famous authors such as PETER ABRAHAMS, CYPRIAN EKWENSI, WOLE SOYINKA, there are some excellent texts giving to

[1] Ulli BEIER, 'Public Opinion on Lovers', BLACK ORPHEUS No. 14, January 1964, Ibadan

the title 'Black Love' its justification, in the sense that black is not meant as it is commonly misunderstood, and love is dealt with in another way that—to put it in a vulgar way—just beyond the navel. These authors are: I. N. C. ANIEBO, *The Judgement of the Goddess*, MONGO BETI, *The Seducer* and JACKSON MUSOKWA, *The Rivals*.

What the virtuous side of the topic is concerned, it does not seem to be so much difference between black and white love. In Africa also there is the penis-cracking female (WOLE SOYINKA, *Egbo and Simi*) and the vagina-breaking male (JACQUES STEPHEN ALEXIS, *The Nina Estrellita*) and there are sadistic (ROGER MAIS, *Girlie and Papacita*) and masochistic (CHARLES WRIGHT, *The Wig*) elements as stimulation for the pleasure, and there is the classical black and white myth as sexual stimulation 'par excellence' —the 'black meat' aspect!—as the South African writer LEWIS NKOSI presents it in the story *Under the Law*. One difference comes out in the most hilarious tale of the Yoruba, *Ahun brings the Sexes together*, narrated by LEO FROBENIUS: The leader of all the women, Jalode, prefers a big penis and says to the other women, being afraid of big ones: 'You are stupid, you do not know what is good!' In Europe the leading or more differentiated woman most probably would have preferred a little penis or at least would not mind, not because she would be afraid of a big penis, that is not the case, but because European cultivated women put some accent on the rest of the male organs, and above all of the man's head or what is behind. Women preferring big penis or a good piece of flesh are considered in Europe as primitive—at least officially!

The criterion for the quality of pornographic texts in Europe is the following: if there is to be learnt something out of them. In this regard, literature hobbles very far behind the last recognitions of modern science. Together with heart transplantations and baby pills modern science, as everyone knows, has taken sexuality as its last and most cherished child in its tough and thorough arms, ready to keep it there by force until the last secrets of it have been unveiled. Waiting for these last discoveries, we may learn out of our book that in loving it is not advisable to make too much noise (CAMERON DODU, 'B') although when done by the lady it may be not without charm as it gives to the male partner audible proof of his sexual capacity.

For the Europeans, who were obliged to deny the most important instrument of physical love during centuries there is one thing he really is happy about when reading this book: the penis is given back its right among all the other accessories of voluptuous activity. Sensuality, voluptuousness, so natural, fresh and vital as it was meant by the God of Love if there is one (which one among the *orishas*?) this is the most exciting experience for the love-sick or even love-incapable European in confronting his out-worn white love to the black one although he knows that physical love alone, even in its most virtuous appearance, is not yet the real thing, that there has to be something more to satisfy not only the appetite of the senses but the exigences of the loving soul.

This very point comes out in the piece of BLOKE MODISANE, *Silvester in Sophiatown*. At the same time it shows clearly the most modern crossing point of Europe and Africa: the Europeans slowly becoming sick of their sex waves and other waves of immorality as a reaction of their puritanic and sexually inhibited past, the Africans, leaving behind a sexual attitude with the accent of procreation, fertility, uterus and sperm only, and looking for some more sensible outlook. This Silvester night described by Modisane is a sort of orgy as it may happen when young people of both sexes meet in a certain mood and expectation. In this night, everything comes forth that the male and the female individual can get out of their sexual parts, there is no restriction and, of course, no shame, but everything happens like a sort of sport or rather a competition. So the boys throw dice for the girls, and when one of the couples has done its best, the girls are exchanged.

'Afterwards I felt lonely, my body was oversaturated' Modisane writes, 'but nevertheless I felt no satisfaction; I felt compelled to cry a forgiving prayer for Fiki (his girl friend who was not present at the orgy). The things I was longing for were not in sexuality, it made me sick, its odour was gluing at the wings of my nose and crawled over my tongue, the steam of the alcohol disgusted me, I implored God to be able to vomit it out.'

The introduction of the orgy is typical for, if one may say so, the historical situation of 'black and white love': it starts by dancing to the orgiastic rhythms of the *Kwela*, a fertility dance leading to the coital movements. This is done by these young peoples first without touching their bodies, but not because of prudery or magical background; the effect should be to excite the physical desire to its highest tension, 'near to frenzy', as Modisane writes. It is the same frenzy of sex as modern youth in Europe is addicted to, and here we have the crossing point: the African fertility dance, formerly the expression of the oneness of physical lust and procreating force in its natural and pure meaning and procuring life force, today as a frivolous and perverse play for physical excitement leading to disgust and hang-over. And this remark binds us back to our introduction: the divine power of the flesh that overwhelms the loving individual to such an extent that it is inclined to accomplish some appropriate rituals before touching his partner and which makes him feel not crazy of desire but chaste and pure in adoration. May be that this reinstatement of the secret or the magical background will happen very far from heavy penile strokes and vaginal contortions or voluptuous noise and that it is a grace to keep this first revelation alive through the most intense physical realizations instead of spoiling it, together with the sperm 'flowing in the sand,' like Onan's in the modern bed orgies. So we have to wait for a new fertility dance, may be a symbolic or an integrated one, giving back to the love-longing individual its capacity to love without moral restrictions and inhibitions but at the same time including the initial purity that makes out of love, if black or white, the unique experience in life and a counter-balance in a world full of hatred.

RENATO BERGER

Strangers to the City: Urban Man in Jos *By* DR L. PLOTNICOV, *University of Pittsburg Press*, 1967: Pp 299 $6.95 Cloth, $2.95 Paper.

African Forum: *By* JOHN DICK, *Cambridge University Press*, 1968: Pp 100 *6s–6d.*

THE author, an anthropologist from the University of Pittsburg, U.S.A., in his introduction to the book stated that the purpose of this study, was to describe and analize the adjustments made by individuals to modern conditions of urban development in a West African community.

The choice of Jos for the purpose of this study is important because Jos is unique as a young industrial centre.

It was the tin mining industry which gave birth to this young and throbbing city.

Because of this fact, very few if any, can claim Jos as their home of origin, their roots lie somewhere else.

Many come to Jos to work in the civil service, trading firms, the mining industry or as traders. Most of the men belonging to these classes have the intention to return to their home-towns on retirement or as in the case of the labourers return to their homes as soon as they earn enough money. Most strikingly enough, they seldom do so. Once having worked in Jos for some years, they become alienated or detribalized and the majority of them could hardly feel happy in the home-towns and villages, and had to return to Jos to live until they die.

In such a cosmopolitan community, the tendency for ethnic groups to stick together is understandable. Each group was at first suspicious of one another and fear domination by them. Hence the strength of Tribal Unions and groups. Each group wanted to make it, an ideal model of the community at home. There are, of course, inter-tribal marriages and the various groups lived happily together except for a few tribal clashes culminating in the disturbances of May 1967 and their present national crisis.

Dr L. Plotnicov, has done a great service to Nigeria by this study. Had it not been to the disturbances very few men, whatever their ethnic groups, would ever think of abandoning Jos as a home. This book should be read by every Nigerian who wishes to understand the fears and hopes of many of the ethnic groups compelled to live together by economic reasons.

In his preface to the second book the compiler states that, it is purposely intended as a text-book of comprehension and composition for senior classes in African Schools. *African Forum*, clearly sets out to fill a long-felt need by providing a book to teach African students in Secondary Schools, how to think, write and express themselves clearly and most effectively. In the past the African Secondary School student was handicapped by the lack of materials for composition and comprehension with his background and culture in view.

The selections are made from works by well-established African writers such as Chinua Achebe; Cyprian Ekwensi; Wole Soyinka; Camara Laye; President Jomo Kenyatta; the late Chief Albert Luthuli, the 1960 Nobel Peace Prize winner and many others. Even those authors who are not Africans, had known Africa for so long that they could be counted as experts in African culture and history.

Whether read as a text-book in our Secondary Schools or read by adults in their leisure, it makes a good reading.

It is a good starting-point for those who had read the original books and will stimulate them to build a small library of their own or visit their public libraries to borrow such books. All the selections are most interesting and once one starts reading them, one will make an effort to read it from cover to cover.

What makes *African Forum* most useful are the series of questions and composition subjects at the end of each selection. It also has a list of recommended books at the end which should be read by those who had not read them to fill the gap in their knowledge of works written by Africans.

B. S. KADI

Cox and the Juju Coast (His Journal Aboard H.M.S. FLY, 1868-69, *by* JOHN GEORGE COX, R.N.) *Ellison & Co., Jersey*, 1968.

THIS Journal, its Introduction and Notes, covering 110 pages, make interesting reading. The Index, taking up three more pages, is also very helpful. There are, in addition, some illustrations which are entertaining, while others of a more serious kind will undoubtedly interest students of naval history.

Despite the publishers' advice to readers to omit both the Introduction and Notes because of the small print, these sections contain information of great value, particularly by making Cox's Journal more intelligible. The Introduction outlines the slave trade and its abolition in West Africa against the background of imperial developments. David Steer's Notes provide useful information on naval matters.

Cox's Journal enables us to understand the issues of interest to this engineer on board the gun-boat *Fly* during its trip to West Africa between 1868 and 1869. Cox's account began on 16th December, 1868, when he took up service on board *H.M.S. Fly*. His Diary came to a sudden end on 9th October, 1869. The publishers have tried to reconstruct what caused this abrupt end in a section devoted to an investigation of Cox's life before and after his trip to the West African Coast.

During this trip, *H.M.S. Fly* called at Madeira, Sierra Leone, Cape Coast, Whydah, Little Popo, Porto Novo, Lagos, Bonny and Fernando Po. Yet, as the stops at these places were brief, only very scanty information on events there could be seen in Cox's Journal.

Cox, moreover, did not appear to be very fond of going ashore except to attend divine services. He, himself, confessed on one occasion that he did not like making acquaintances 'in these parts'.

As his opportunities of obtaining information on West Africa from others during this trip appeared limited, Cox filled his Diary with a lot of *personalia*. He appeared too preoccupied with his 'affairs' before and after his wife's sudden death. His worries shifted from correspondence with his parents and beloved ones in England to the boils that infested him. His main hobbies, during this trip, appeared to have been whist games and conchology.

Information on the illegal slave trade and legitimate commerce in Cox's Journal is very thin. It would appear from his account that during 1868–9, West Africa had few slave ships that adopted the flag tricks tried by the 'Gem of Salem'. This Diary, however, makes it clear that Maria Theresa dollars were popular along the West African Coast during this period. Furthermore, Cox provides some evidence that European merchants in the Bonny river lived on board hulks, and that the Civil War in Bonny aggravated the position of debts owed them by African middlemen.

The fact that the Bonny Civil War was already in progress at the time of Cox's trip enabled him to give a very valuable account of war canoes in use then. Apart from his uncorroborated estimate of 800 dead during that Civil War, Cox was unable to obtain any detailed information on that strife from such leading personalities as Manilla Pepple.

Cox's record of events at Bonny showed that he had a low opinion of the indigenous people there. He did not therefore hesitate to refer to the Bonny people as 'savages and cannibals' and 'black scamps'. His visit to the 'Juju' House at Bonny left him with greater distaste of the people's way of life.

Cox in describing West Africans also used the term 'nigger'. It is, however, noticeable that in a Diary covering 67 pages of print, Cox used the word 'nigger' less than half a dozen times. His more usual expressions were 'natives', 'a coloured gentleman' and 'a coloured person'. The last two expressions Cox reserved for the educated elite, particularly clergymen.

Moreover, Cox did not hold in contempt 'Kroomen', though other Europeans known to him considered them disreputable. He also found distasteful the practice of flogging Kroomen adopted by the European crew on board merchant vessels in West African waters.

This naval officer, keenly interested in divine services, commented adversely on the reading of a native clergyman, and the singing of the Congregation, in Sierra Leone. It does not appear that his comments then had anything to do with colour prejudice. The colour prejudice at the root of European opposition in Lagos to the dedication of a Church by Bishop S. Ajai Crowther did not impress Cox whose opinions of this clergyman were quite high.

Cox's Diary does not disclose much evidence of serious colour prejudice affecting him and the other crew of *H.M.S. Fly*. Had it been otherwise, observers today would have raised serious doubts regarding the propriety of using persons with strong colour prejudice as the officers of the Humanitarian Squadron in West Africa.

The student of naval history will find in Cox's Journal further evidence of the health hazards, and the climatic difficulties, along the West African coast. Cox himself was attacked by 'fever', while the Captain of *H.M.S. Fly* died from a similar ailment. The diarist singled out Whydah and Lagos as the most unhealthy spots along the West African coast at the time of his visit. Though his gun-boat encountered serious gales, rain squalls, heavy seas, and the like, Cox found tornadoes a 'blessing' because of their cooling effect. In these respects, if not in others, Cox's Journal makes a contribution to West African history.

T. N. TAMUNO

THE DRAMA

IN AFRICAN RITUAL DISPLAY

By

OLA. ROTIMI

THE term DRAMA has been used so frequently—at times, freely, too freely, perhaps—to describe happenings in African ritual ceremonies that it now seems necessary for some objective criteria by which to identify in that sometimes deluding melange of forms that is Africa's culture, what really is drama, and what is not.

The standard acceptation of the term Drama, within a cultural setting, at any rate, implies 'an imitation of an action. . . . or of a person or persons in action', the ultimate object of which is to edify or to entertain. Sometimes to do both.

Some African ritual ceremonies reveal instances of 'imitation' either of an experience in life, or of the behaviour-patterns of some Power. Others merely represent certain Powers without the mimetic impulse to recreate the ways and details of those Powers. What could be, and has frequently been, mistaken for Drama in most African traditional displays, appears when this latter type of non-imitative ceremonial effervesces with movement, rhythm, and spectacle, beyond the ordinary. It is at such a point as this, that some objectivity in concept might help in the detection of what really *is* Drama.

Ritual displays that reveal in their style of presentation, in their purpose, and value, evidences of imitation, enlightenment and or entertainment, can be said to be Drama.

Thus, while the exciting series of 'abebe' dance processions that highlight the seven-day long Edi Festival of Ile-Ife cannot be called Drama, the mock-duel scene preceding the festivities is Drama.

Usually performed on the eve of Edi, known as 'frekete' it involves two traditional chiefs: Obalayan and Obalufe. The former represents forces of Peace and Fair-weather; the latter an 'embodiment' of Discord and Unrest. The Power of Evil, Obalufe, and the Power of Peace and Goodwill, Obalayan, engage in a duel at the end of which we see Obalufe subdued and taken captive. He offers a ransom, and he is later released. Obalayan then bears this ransom to the lord of the land, the Oni, who, upon receiving it, declares the Edi festival open.

In this mock-duel, one sees the essentials of Drama at work. The scene is an *imitation* of an action: the action of FIGHT. That this encounter is *entertaining* is beyond doubt. And as for *enlightenment*, the formal presentation of Obalufe's ransom to the Oni of Ife, is a symbolic endorsement of the people's loyalty to the lord of the land. A lesson in allegiance.

These criteria would rule out any classification of the Gelede masquerade display as Drama. Gelede masquerades who dance purposely to appease the Witches 'awon iya wa' only portray the make-believe externals of drama. Excitingly rhythmic as their dance movements are: more so under the accent and grandeur of costume and mask, there, however, is hardly any suggestion of 'mimesis' directed at a specific human experience or at some supernatural habit.

By contrast, aspects of the Egungun 'apidan' display, such as the 'mutation-scene' in which a masquerade 'becomes' a serpent through the magic of adroit costuming, and then goes on to make aggressive strikes at spectators, can be called Drama.

The I-Njoku elephant ceremony of the Bakwerri peoples of the Cameroon Republic becomes Drama when, after the 'Veambe' dance procession, masquerades clad in sack, palm-fronds, rafia fluffings, and wearing headpieces fitted with wooden projections for tusks between which hang long sugar-cane stems representing uprooted trees, dance about with the trampling gait of elephants, and sometimes make ferocious jabs with their 'tusks' at spectators or into the ground.

The same label of Drama can be attached to the Ekpe ritual dance of the Efiks of Nigeria, in which the masquerade, constumed in black, reticulate overalls, imitates the predatory habits of the leopard.

On the other hand, the Eyo festival of Lagos which features masquerades representing Spirits of dead ancestors, cannot be rightly called Drama, since hardly any action is consciously imitated in the whole processional thrill of 'eyo' turn-out.

Coming to rituals with less entertainment intent, one identifies Drama in such solemn events as the Puberty Ceremony of, for instance, the Sherbro natives of Sierra Leone. Here, the Cult-priest, masked as 'Min' the Power of Life and Death, goes through the motions of symbolic killing of the adolescent candidate. Later on, 'Min' 'vomits' him, and 'birth' into adulthood takes place.

Similar initiation rite, known as 'ala suwo' by the Nembe, and as 'iria' by the Okrika peoples of Nigeria, in which maidens dance to celebrate the formal transition into womanhood, cannot be termed Drama. Again, as with the Eyo, or the Gelede, specific imitation or recreation of an experience is missing here.

This all argues that not every action that highlights dancing or some involvement in an action measured to the tune of chants or to the rhythms of drum can pass for Drama.

If we are to further accept the immanence of PLOT, with its implied vitals of SUSPENSE and CONFLICT as another criterion, we find that the number of ritual displays that can be labelled Drama whittles down considerably. For whereas the I-Njoku, the Min, the Ekpe, and others of that type do relive observations on life, their creative patterns have been more or less rooted in the set formalism of religion. In this regard they stand on the same pedestal as did the Quem Quaeritis Easter mime of the Medieval Church, in which priests impersonating the three Marys and the Angel, re-enacted the story of Christ's ressurection, and no more. There was no conflict of goals between characters.

Traditional displays that inhere instances of Suspense and or Conflict in their action are much fewer than those that merely re-enact observations.

The annual Obatala festival in Ede offers an example of suspense-conflict Drama. Very similar in form to the 'Frekete' duel-scene of Ile-Ife's Edi, this drama is staged on the second day of the Obatala festival in the palace of the Timi of Ede. The characters are: the Ajagemo, as protagonist, and Oluwi, his opponent. They engage each other in a duel, the Oluwi wielding a whip and attacking, the Ajagemo mainly parrying off the strokes in self-defence. Eventually the Ajagemo is defeated, taken prisoner, and hustled off into the interior of the palace. Next, the Timi himself intervenes with a ransom, and the Ajagemo is set free.

Without necessarily probing into the historical or mythological source of this act, one recognizes points of conflict, mock conflict, true, but in essence, conflict. While the feints and counter-moves of the combatants provide moments of Suspense.

From the preceding analysis and examples, it is only appropriate that the word Drama when used to refer to traditional displays should imply an immanence of Suspense and or Conflict within the body of the approved action. Where suspense or conflict is absent, then the meaning of the term must needs rest on the broader sense of mimesis in the performance.

POEMS

THE APPLES OF EVE

One was Adam's apple.
Eve's apples were two.
The snake no apple had
But stole one from Eve.

Eve took Adam's apple
And hid it off somewhere.
'Where is my apple, Eve?'
'I 've lost both yours and mine.'

'But what are those two heaps
Just below your neck?
I know there lies the two—
Your apple and my apple.'

Soft, ripe, sweet apples
Owned by Adam and Eve
Hidden off by Eve
In her puffy fluffy blouse!

SEGUN ADELUGBA

YOU NOW LIE DEAD

You now lie dead, poor ant
That worked night and day,
Ploughing the Queen's estate,
Ransacking our barns for food
Delivering your queen of babes
And protecting her entire domain

You now lie dead, poor ant;
Scorged by the radiant sun.
Dead at last, poor ant,
Unending toil, ended in defeat.

ANAM NTUKIDEM

PERHAPS

Perhaps a spark shall flash
Like two dead stones
At each other hit
Perhaps a spark shall flash

Looming doom in dim darkness
Perhaps a spark shall flash
And for a second blaze
Blaze a new trail for all
Perhaps a spark shall flash

Worn weary road of a thousand feet
Beating. Beating. Beating.
For ever beating on a track
Hollowed and halloed
Perhaps a spark shall flash
To point a new diversion
To pass this long long wade
Perhaps a spark shall flash.

The spark shall flash
Perhaps for some moments wink
And die to flash again
But the spark shall flash

Eyes long wearied
With screening the daily
May by then be blind. . . .
Yet that spark shall flash.

KOLE OTOMOSO

THE LIZARD OF AGAMA

Had you not been manacled
And led up the Spectrum to rust
Men might not have glanced so long

I see in you a reflection
A reflection of a difficult concept
As you nod
Or hear some message fervently
Upon your dumb mud domes.

MOYO OGUNDIPE

MEDICINE FOR TENSION

'This bloody essay ne'er will end.
It winds and twines and winds!
Je suis fatigé.'
The book flips close, the radio cracks alive.
A broad yawn loud.
A pair of red lips clapping
A blazing red-tipped white stick
In a not-thick smelly cloud.

The radio cracks, the music stops.
The door knocks and knocks.
'Don't stand there knocking
Come in if you're good-looking.'
'So tee I been knocking.'
'Oh, I've just been rocking;
How's the car behaving?
Some day you'll teach me driving.'

His eyes flash and glitter
His face wrinkless out a grin.
Her hangers suspend his white robes.
A smile, a hug, a frown.

Tales—true and false,
Stories—short and tall,
In tenses—past and present.
Her pockets rustless with painted paper present.

Gentle whispers, mirthful laughters.
Brief silence, Bed-squeak breach.
A long, deep sigh.
A deafening silence.

SEGUN ADELUGBA

THE APPROACH OF WINTER

Why I alone am ill-prepared
To brace you; foul Northern wind?
Some say: 'You have not yet come.'
Yet, amidst November I begin to feel
The full force of your grip.

Your flapping wings
Play upon jaundiced park leaves
Which, being now half-dead
Fall easy prey to your lust.
With a flush of kisses,
They are coloured pale-yellow,
Sap-green pink and red.

The agitation of those leaves
Betray your rage:
Branches bow in obedience
Your midnight breath sweeps
Scurring the fallen leaves
Along and about,
Dressing the beds
That once nurtured the leaves.

Some months ago, they were green,
A few days from now, they will fall,
And falling; remind us of thy bliss.

Herbivorous wind! Now I see,
Many more shall drop
In anticipation of thy blight.
And dropping,
The early morning draft
Moistens them, and drives
Them everywhere, in mad defiance,
Asking: What use are dead leaves?

The warm summer days are gone:
With them, the green leaves of the park.
The streets are scanty of men:
Stealthily now, thou cold winter wind
Has gathered the leaves from the boughs
And tucked them hidden below the stems
And some above the roots,
Encased in a tomb of snow,
Leaving the branches bare.

Oh Northern wind!
Won't you stop howling
That I may say:
This north continent is good for me;
That when the brilliance
And the warmth of summer return,
I may say: Here is a place indeed:

Signifying, hour by hour
The temperament of nature;
Unpredictable sunshine,
Rain, wind and snow,
An artifact of women, men and materials.

That I may forsake the evergreen palms
And the warmth that clothes
The perpetual red sky
Of the setting sun, in March;
The home of the eagles
And the gnats of primeval forest
The abode of the sun, my place.

Sip through my clothes to my black skin
That you may chill my blood
Like those park trees
Now bear of leaves.

ANAM NTUKIDEM

DISTANT DRUMS

Down in the valley,
Where darkness all engulfed,
here all were busy,
fighting for the city;

Down in the valley,
Some guns were rattling,
Some were roaring,
Some were booming,
but upland beyond,
came sound of distant drums!

Now for a while,
the guns were silent,
while beyond still came,
sound of distant drums,
followed by muffled bells!

Down still in the valley,
Sadly watched I the brightest stars
departing from the cloudy sky,
and sheets of smoke darkened more,
the already darkened valley;

But clearer and clearer still came
Sound of distant drums!

Amidst the scores of vultures,
feasting on my bosom fellows fallen
wearily and fearfully though
I set for the upland side,
to see the ones behind the
sound of distant drums;

Stumbling often on my fallen friends,
I groped my way to the upland side,
to find that those on distant drums,
are my children,
and my grandchildren!

BABATUNDE MUSTAPHA

THE OIL RIVERS

Great bullion-head of oil and gas
Tucked away deep in the womb of
The Kingdom of a long line of Kings
Invisible thou wert when the ritual dance
Of the mangrove forest scaffolded
The Royal Niger Company

Gem of liquid luster whose accumulated
Globules explode into an incandescence
From the root of the accursed raffia—palm
When our gods celebrate the wealth
Of the plastic plain

Many a fisherman is frightened away from a
Catch studded creek by the flames which die
To rob us of our sight

The rest is butane, bridal of four carbon
Molecules and ten of hydrogen;

When bubbles from several layers
Deep in the molten plain
Rattle out a succession of pop sounds
The skipper from many a pot-hole
In the grove leap and caper
To a head

And minors skipper—chasing
And belly-gliding on the boggy glade
Invite the elders to an afternoon
Sport;

A fountain-head of joy these
Objects were, as venerable
As King Koko who bestrode the world
Before Britain's rape of our
Trade compelled Akassa's raid;

But now the times are out of joint:
My sins have opened up the eyes
Of the people of flash colour

My gods are trapped away in green bottles
The treasure they guarded suffers abduction
A light year stands between me
And the title of sheik

A hair's breath stands between me
And the flick of the scythe.

SOLOMON AYAGERE

HOME

Though red and green and crimson lights
Coalesce into one dazzling waterfall,
Though rotary flights show blissful heights and
Moving columns of pure breath,
Though yawning canyons downward
Spike into a ravined carbuncle,
Though pueblos rise a thousand feet
And have ten thousand deckings more,
Return, my boy, to the River Nun.

SOLOMON AYAGERE.

LETTER TO SUBSCRIBERS

Dear Subscribers,

This is to wish you "A Happy and Prosperous New Year" which we have already commenced with bright and stimulating articles. It is our wish to continue in this spirit in order to bring maximum satisfaction to you all the year round.

By the way you must have become familiar with the recent change in the Administration of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. This institution which has been the main channel through which your favourite magazine gets to you, has now become a strictly commercial undertaking. The implication is that even government establishments such as the *Nigeria* Magazine are now subjected to the new pricing policy of the Posts and Telegraphs. This has increased the burden of postage costs which the *Nigeria* Magazine has borne all along.

Furthermore, production costs have gone up as a result of the restrictive measures designed to contain the current crisis. In view of these difficulties, the *Nigeria* Magazine will now cost slightly more. That is, your copies will be forwarded to you at 2*s* per copy *plus the extra cost of postage*.

It is hoped that you will appreciate the situation and continue to patronize us.

Yours faithfully,
V. A. G. WARMATE,
Acting Editor,
Cultural Division.

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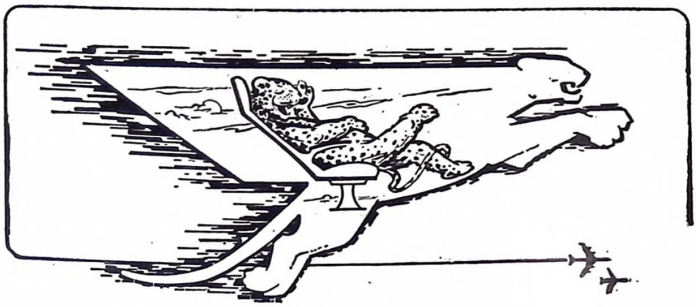

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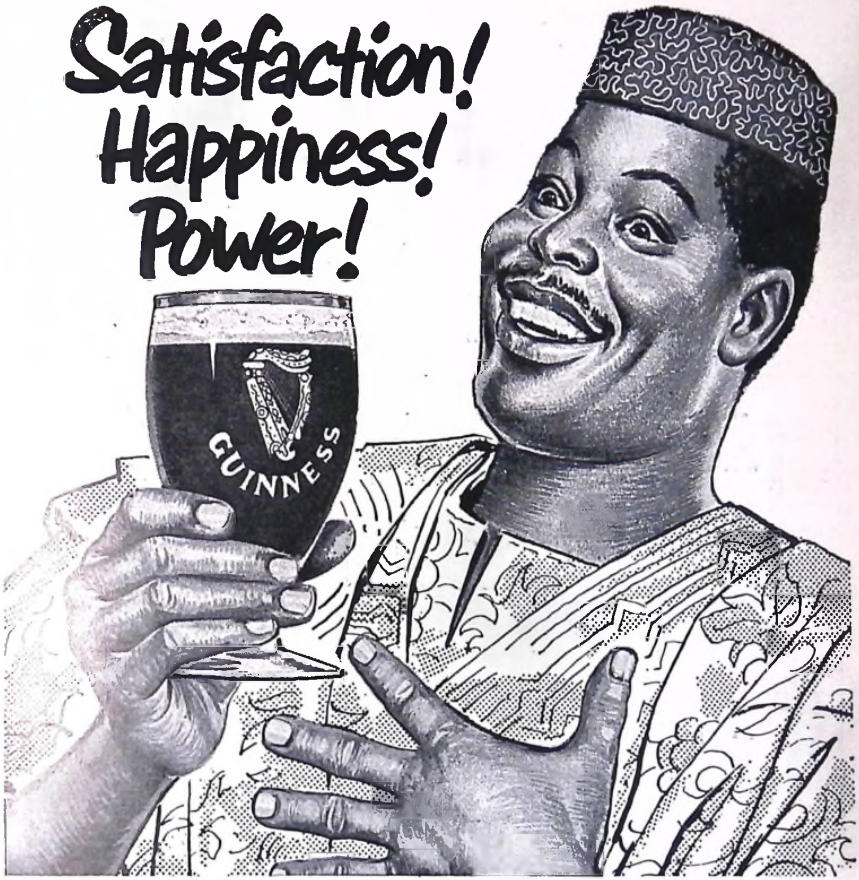

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