

# THE DIARY OF A GREAT PRINCE



RT. HON. DR. PRINCE A. A. NWAFOR ORIZU, GCON  
JULY 1914 - MARCH 1999

HORIZONTAL PUBLISHERS,  
GOD'S VILLAGE,  
BOX 48  
NNEWI, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA.  
TELEPHONE 046-460529

© 1999 HORIZONTAL PUBLISHERS

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

National Library of Nigeria Cataloguing In Publication Data

The diary of a great prince: Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince A.  
A. Nwafor Orizu GCON, July 1914 – March 1999.

1. Orizu Nwafor – Diaries 2. Orizu Nwafor – biographies

.PN 439ON685.069 1999 923

ISBN 978 2039 89 6

Printed by: **Optimal International Ltd.**  
113 Agbani Road, Enugu.  
Tel: 042-250252

ii

## NOTE

Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince Akwaeke Abyssinia Nwafor Orizu was indeed a gifted powerful and resourceful writer and historian, who believed absolutely in keeping of records of all sorts, including all aspects of daily life, as integral factor of a truly progressive society. In one of his prayer meetings with his family on September 27, 1984, in preaching the essence of each keeping a daily diary, he said, "it is for a lack of appreciation for records that Africa is the most backward continent in the world". Writing and record keeping remained his major occupation throughout life. It is in this spirit that this diary was compiled.

It contains selected one hundred and twenty-two important dates, marking major landmarks in the life of this legend. This diary easily guides one through the enormous landscape of Dr. Orizu's life which spanned almost the whole of 20th century from about 1914.

*Ms. Obianuju E. Nwafor-Orizu*  
(Librarian)  
July 11, 1999

iii

### **1. July 17, 1914**

Akwaeke Nwafor Orizu was born in Nnewi Royal Palace as the fifth son of the monarch – H.R.H. Ezeugbonyamba, Igwe Orizu I, the Obi of Nnewi and H.R.H. Madam Ejeagwunobi Onyeucheanu Orizu. This followed the pronouncements of three prophets on Nwafor Orizu's birth and life. The prophets were – Chinwuba Onumba of Aguleri, Okafor Onyeamunemenjo of Okpuno Okochi and Nwafor Ikegbolu. Then special prayers by Rev. James E. Ibeneme of Awkuzu.

### **2. 1924**

Started infant education in his father's palace by private tutorial under the tutelage of Isaiah Okwuosa and Michael Iwuchukwu both of Otolo, Nnewi.

### **3. 1925**

Completed infant education at Missionary Kindergarten School at St. Thomas Church, Otolo, Nnewi.

### **4. 1925 – 1931**

Did his elementary education between CMS Central School, Nkwo Nnewi and Central School,

Onitsha. 1925 – schooled at Nnewi, 1926 – at Onitsha, 1927 – 1929 at Nnewi, 1930 – standard five at Onitsha, 1931 standard six at Nnewi.

**5. 1930**

Baptized CHRISTOPHER at Christ Church, Onitsha by Rev. H. O. Nweje popularly called Holy Nweje.

**6. 1931**

Passed Government Standard Six Examination.

**7. Monday June 6, 1932, at 8.3 a.m.**

Became a pupil teacher at C.M.S. Central School, Nnewi.

**8. 1932**

Organised the ordering, funding and procurement of the first silver shield for competition among all Nnewi choirs. He did this to promote unity and christian faith in Nnewi. The last competition was won by Otolo Choir and the shield is at the archives of St. Thomas Church, Otolo today.

**9. 1933**

Registered as the youngest member of Nnewi Patriotic Association and one of the foundation members.

**10. 1935**

Transferred to Ubulu Ukwu Central School, Ubulu Ukwu as a pupil teacher. There, he, for the first time, initiated and introduced band playing and became the school's band master.

**11. 1936**

Transferred to Ihiala Central School as a pupil teacher.

**12. 1937**

Passed Junior Cambridge Examination through private studies.

**13. 1937**

Transferred to Onitsha Central School where his pupil teacher career ended.

**14. 1937**

Got admission into Achimota College, Accra, Ghana.

#### **15. Middle of 1937**

Orizu, while still a teacher, met Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and was inspired to further his education in America.

#### **16. November 1937**

Orizu was invited by the then traditional ruler of Nnewi, his brother, H.R.H. Igwe J. N. Orizu II, to take over the rulership of the town. This offer he declined in order to pursue his higher education abroad.

#### **17. December 27, 1937**

Royal agreement and resolution of Umuokafor family selecting Nwafor Orizu to be the Obi of Nnewi in place of H.R.H. Igwe Orizu II was made and signed.

#### **18. January 28, 1939**

Left Nigeria for the United States of America by the ship M.V. Accra, thus Orizu became the 14th West African, 10th Nigerian and 8th Ibo man ever to study in the United States of America.

#### **19. February 28, 1939**

Arrived New York city on his first trip to U.S.A. for higher studies by the ship S.S. Samaria.

#### **20. March 1939**

Prince Orizu was registered with Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

#### **21. 1940**

Left Lincoln University for the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Prince Orizu also became a member of the Marcus Garvey Movement in New York City.

#### **22. 1940 - 1942**

Orizu was the treasurer of the Cosmopolitan Club of the Ohio State University.

#### **23. 1940 - 1942**

Orizu championed the founding of the African Students Association of the United States and Canada and its organs with its office in his residence - Rm. 411 International House, 500 River Side Drive, New York City. This he did in collaboration with John Karefa Smart of Sierra Leone, K. O. Mbadiwe, Mbonu Ojike and others.

**24. 1940 – 1942**

Orizu was a member of the Alpha Sigma Psi of the Ohio State University for distinction in classical languages.

**25. 1940 – 1942**

Orizu worked his way through college by engaging in five different jobs in the city of Columbus, Ohio.

**26. 1940 – 1942**

Orizu lectures all over the Mid West of U.S.A. on African freedom.

**27. 1941**

Orizu was the guest of the then American President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the White House, Washington D.C. under the auspices of the International Students Union.

**28. August 28, 1942**

Orizu obtained his B.A. degree in Political Science and Pre-Law from The Ohio State University to become the first graduate of Nnewi town.

**29. November 20, 1942**

Orizu visited Lord Halifax, the then British Ambassador to the United States in Washington D.C. to discuss for the first time his scholarship programme for Africa.

**30. 1943**

Became a fellow of the American Geographical Society.

**31. 1943**

Became a member of the International House New York City.

**32. 1943**

Became a member of the American Academy of Political Science.

**33. September 29, 1943**

Orizu started what may be called a missionary journey, travelling the vast states of America, approaching several universities soliciting for scholarships for Africans.

**34. December 1, 1943**

Presented and discussed his educational programme with Frances P. Bolton, a Republican Congress woman from Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A. in her Washington office.

**35. 1944**

Orizu enrolled in the Graduate School of Columbia University in New York City.

**36. April 17, 1944**

Orizu's burning desire to get Africans educated in America started turning into reality, when on this date, his international organization, the American Council on African Education (A.C.A.E.) was incorporated under the Membership Corporation Law of the State of New York.

**37. April 1944**

Orizu published his monumental book "Without Bitterness" in New York. Right from America, this book has been widely regarded as Africa's political bible up till this day.

**38. 1944**

Orizu obtained his M.A. degree in Public Law and Government from Columbia University Graduate School, New York City.

**39. 1944**

Became Associate Editor of the 'Negro Digest' in U.S.A.

**40. June 11, 1945**

New York reported that Harold L. Ickes Secretary of the Interior, had telegraphed a request to the American delegation to U.N.O. Conference in San Francisco to change its stand and write into the United Nations Charter a promise of independence for all colonial peoples. This monumental change of policy by American government came as a result of pressure by African students in America championed by Nwafor Orizu.

**41. 1945**

Orizu became an editorial columnist of the Pittsburgh Courier with his popular column "Africa Speaks" which brought the issue of African freedom to about 300,000 readers every

week. Pittsburgh Courier was a weekly newspaper which was the widest circulating black weekly newspaper published in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania in the U.S.A.

**42. November 14, 1945**

Orizu left New York for Nigeria after six years of educational sojourn.

**43. November 18, 1945**

Arrived Dakar on his journey back to Nigeria.

**44. November 20, 1945**

He arrived Lagos, Nigeria from U.S.A. with plane, thus he became first Nigerian graduate to come home to Nigeria after his studies via an aeroplane. Ship was the usual means in those days.

**45. November 26, 1945**

Orizu made his first public speech in Nigeria at Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos titled "Horizontal Education and African Irredentism". This signalled the beginning of Orizu's battle for freedom in Nigeria.

**46. December 30, 1945**

Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe held a grand reception for Orizu for his return from America. This was held at Zik's residence at Abadan Building, Upper New Market Road, Onitsha.

**47. February 1946**

Orizu left his people at Nnewi and started what he termed "Exploration North". This took him round Northern Nigeria where he met the rulers and the masses, tried to awaken them to the urgent need of education and urged them to benefit from his scholarship scheme.

**48. February 8, 1946**

Kano community welcomed Orizu with his educational mission in Kano.

**49. February 11, 1946**

Was a guest of the Emir of Kano in his palace and solicited his support and encouragement for the education of the masses.

**50. March 1946**

Orizu undertook his missionary journey of Southern Nigeria. He visited all important cities

of the South, spreading his gospel of American education for all Nigerians.

**51. July 26, 1946**

Orizu opened the West African Headquarters of his educational organization, the American Council on African Education (ACAE) in Port Harcourt, 191 Victoria Street.

**52. November 14, 1946**

Received copy of a letter addressed to the American Consulate in Lagos confirming the offer of scholarships to the first ten Nigerian students to study in American universities under Orizu's educational programme.

**53. February 9, 1947**

A Syrian, suspected to be a hired assassin, attempted to murder Orizu at Ritz Hotel in Lagos where Orizu lodged, but Orizu escaped.

**54. February 10, 1947**

The first batch of Nigerian students left Nigeria by boat to America under Orizu's scholarship scheme – the ACAE.

**55. 1947**

Mr. B. O. N. Eluwa brought Orizu message from Ibo State Union that they had decided to make him the first president of the Ibo State Union. He declined this prestigious offer because there was need for him to go back to America to cater for the welfare of African students there under his scholarship scheme.

**56. May 27, 1948**

Awarded Doctorate degree of Law (LLD) by Lane University, Jackson Tennessee for what they called his trenchant presentation of the African point of view in his book "Without Bitterness" and his educational mission in Africa.

**57. September 1949**

Orizu arrived Nigeria the second time from U.S.A. This time, with 431 American university scholarships for Africans.

**58. November 21, 1949**

The maiden issue of the West African Examiner – Orizu's Port Harcourt-based newspaper was published in Nigeria.

**59. 1949**

Orizu established a public library in Port Harcourt at 191 Victoria Street.

**60. November 1949**

Orizu was put under house arrest in his Port Harcourt residence for twenty one days, for defending the cause of coal miners following the shooting of 21 coal miners in Enugu on November 18, 1949 by the British Government.

**61. January 1, 1950**

The initial clearing of the site for Orizu's school, the Nigeria Secondary School, started.

**62. 1951**

Elected into the Eastern House of Assembly, having scored 361 votes out of 500 Electoral College votes (the highest) during the first election in the old Onitsha Province and became first Onitsha member.

**63. 1951**

Orizu originated, organized, sponsored and founded the Eastern Chiefs Conference, which

was the first recognized effective organ that championed the cause of the chiefs in Eastern Nigeria proceeding the creation of the Eastern House of Chiefs.

**64. 1951**

Orizu was elected from the floor of the Eastern House to the membership of the Federal Legislative House and thereby was a member of both the Regional and Federal Houses from 1951 - 1953. He was also the first Chief Whip of the NCNC party in both Houses.

**65. 1952**

Orizu was appointed a member of the Oil Palm Produce Representative Board, Eastern Region.

**66. January 28, 1953**

Orizu was nominated Minister of Local Government. He declined to take the office.

**67. January 30, 1953**

Orizu as a legislator drafted and was the first signatory to the document which dissolved the colonially-sponsored cabinet of Governor Clement Pleas of Eastern Region.

**68. February 2, 1953**

Orizu was arrested at the top step of the House of Assembly Enugu while the House was on recess. He was shortly after prosecuted by the government.

**69. February 9, 1953**

Hearing on Orizu's case in the court of law started today. It was Orizu vs the colonial government.

**70. September, 15 1953**

Judgment on his case was given. Orizu was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and so he became a British political prisoner in Port Harcourt.

**71. October 18, 1953**

Orizu was visited in the prison by Nnamdi Azikiwe, K. O. Mbadiwe, Mbonu Ojike, V. K. Onyeri, Chief Asinobi, M. O. Okechukwu, Z. N. Obi and others. They came to ask him to elect any person of his choice from Nnewi to be fielded as a candidate for Onitsha division in the Eastern House of Assembly. This was the desire and demand of the entire electorate of

Onitsha division and which they asserted that if it was not done, they would not vote for the N.C.N.C., hence this visit. Orizu selected Ejike Chidolue and he won with a landslide.

**72. September 10, 1957**

Orizu was released from Port Harcourt prison where he served for four years – the longest political jail term recorded in the history of Nigerian freedom fighters.

**73. January 1959**

Orizu opened his school, the Nigeria Secondary School, Nnewi and became its principal from 1957 – 1972.

**74. February 22, 1959**

He delivered his prophetic speech about leadership and the future of Nigeria, titled "The Leadership We Want" at Emy Cinema Hall, Aba.

**75. 1959**

Nominated National Political Adviser of his party, the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroun (NCNC).

**76. 1959**

Orizu was granted Free Pardon for his unjust imprisonment by Her Majesty's government in Nigeria.

**77. 1959**

Orizu was nominated first class chief by the government of Eastern Region and he became a foundation member of the Eastern House of Chiefs.

**78. January 8, 1960**

Orizu was elected a senator representing Onitsha Province.

**79. August 30, 1960**

Orizu's certificate of "Free Pardon" was signed by the colonial government that imprisoned him and given to him.

**80. October 17, 1960.**

Orizu attended the United Nations Organization's General Assembly at which the Nigerian flag as member of the U.N.O. and as a sovereign nation was raised for the first time at exactly

9.40a.m. Monday. He was in company of Nigeria's first prime minister, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and others. Thus, Orizu became member of the first delegation to represent Nigeria as a free nation anywhere in the world.

**81. 1961**

Erected the first building in God's village. Had all the time been living with his mother in his father's palace.

**82. September 12, 1963**

Orizu attended the Inter-Parliamentary Union Convocation of the 52nd Conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia and was a guest of President Tito in his palace.

**83. September 14, 1963**

Orizu delivered his address to the Conference titled "World Problem of Development". He was the 12th speaker in the world conference.

**84. March 14, 1964**

Was unanimously elected President of the Nigerian Senate in the First Republic, and later re-elected for a second term.

**85. June 1965**

Attended the 700th Anniversary of the Parliament of Simon De Monfort (1265) in London as Nigerian Senate President and was a guest of Queen Elizabeth II at luncheon in Buckingham Palace on June 22, 1965.

**86. October 16, 1965**

Sworn in as the Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria by the then Chief Justice of the Federation, Adetokumbo Ademola.

**87. November 14, 1965**

Look presidential salute and thereafter laid wreath on the grave of the unknown soldier at the War Memorial Square on Armed Forces Remembrance Day.

**88. Sunday, December 5, 1965**

St. Thomas Church, Otolo Nnewi, attended Thanksgiving Service for his occupation of the office of the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**89. Sunday, January 2, 1966**

Orizu performed the opening ceremony of the Nigerian Air Force Tactical Training Wing, Kaduna.

**90. January 11, 1966**

Hosted a cocktail party in honour of the commonwealth Heads of State and government at the State House, Lagos.

**91. January 16, 1966**

Orizu suspended the civilian government of the First Republic by handing over to the military following the coup of January 15, 1966.

**92. January 18, 1966**

Orizu and his family escorted by 48 heavily armed soldiers in a convoy of tanks and armoured cars left Lagos for Nnewi.

**93. 1966 - 1970**

He resumed, and was a full-time principal of his school, the Nigeria Secondary School, Nnewi, during the Nigerian civil war. This was a humanitarian work undertaken to quell the

yearnings of desperate students, as schools were closed during the war. He even shifted the school to his residence as his school was used as army camp by the government of Biafra.

**94. July 5, 1971**

Appointed first Chairman, Nnewi Divisional School Board.

**95. March 22, 1971**

Appointed Chairman, Golden Guinea Breweries Ltd., Umuahia, East Central State.

**96. June 9, 1974**

Appointed National Patron of the Nigerian Society for Prevention of Accidents.

**97. September 7, 1974**

Became foundation chairman of the Teachers Service Commission, East Central State.

**98. November 12, 1974, 12 noon**

Sworn in as the chairman of the Teachers Service Commission by His Excellency the Administrator, Chief Ukpabi Asika at Government Lodge, Enugu.

**99. December 31, 1975**

Resigned as the chairman of Teachers Service Commission but was persuaded by the then Military Governor of East Central State, Lt. Col. John Atom Kpera to prolong his stay up to February 1, 1976 when the resignation finally took effect.

**100. 1978 – 1979**

Chairmanned the Steering Committee that nurtured and organized the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in Anambra State from its infant stage to maturity.

**101. November 1980**

Baptized his estate "God's Village" in appreciation for God's positive relationship with him.

**102. November 29, 1981**

Survived, unscathed, a ghastly motor accident along Onitsha-Port Harcourt Road at Ihiala.

**103. January 22, 1982**

Orizu was installed Chancellor of the University of Jos by the first executive president of Nigeria, His Excellency Alhaji Shehu Usman Shagari.

**104. January 22, 1982**

Awarded doctorate degree of letters – D.Litt, by the University of Jos.

**105. June 4, 1982**

Led Nnewi people to see the Nigerian President, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, at State House, Lagos.

**106. 1983**

Published the book "Insight Into Nigeria".

**107. 1986**

Published the first volume of his poems titled "Man's Unconquerable Mind".

**108. June 14, 1989**

Appointed Sole Convener/Arbitrator in the dispute between the families of Nwosu, Nwakanma and Enem.

**109. June 14, 1989**

Appointed Chairman, Nnewi Constitution Drafting Committee to quell the rising inter-quarter crises in Nnewi, by the Anambra State Government.

**110. 1990**

Published his book "Africa Speaks – Orizu Awakened America".

**111. January 5, 1991**

The book "Africa Speaks – Orizu Awakened America" was launched in his God's Village Home, Nnewi.

**112. June 23, 1992**

Welcomed His Excellency General Ibrahim Babangida to Nnewi and addressed the audience at Anaedo Hall, the reception ground.

**113. April 7, 1992**

Became a member of the Nigerian National Council of States.

**114. 1992**

Made a Global Patron of the International House of Prayer, New York.

**115. July 30, 1993**

The Government of Anambra State under Dr. F. C. Ezeife conducted Orizu's 79th birthday celebration at Government Lodge, Awka.

**116. 1993**

Published his book, "The Leadership We Want".

**117. 1990**

Published his 550 page autobiography, "Liberty or Chains – Africa Must Be".

**118. August 13, 1995**

He made history by being the first person to be in custody of five *ofos* at the same time. On this date 4 *ofos* were conveyed to God's Village to add to the one already there to make 5.

**119. April 24, 1997**

Launched his autobiography in his God's Village home, Nnewi.

**120. December 29, 1998.**

Conferred the Nigerian National Honours of the rank of Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON).

**121. March 8, 1999**

Left his God's Village home for his journey to Germany on medical check up. This was his last day in God's Village.

**122. March 20, 1999**

The Rt. Hon. Dr. Prince Akwaeke Abyssir Nwafor Orizu, translated peacefully into eterr glory in a German hospital.

“In the grim struggle of men to attain their ends, they are often alone – with none to succour or to hinder. Fortune is a tide. It ebbs and flows, and there is nothing in this our mortal life that can ever be looked upon as determined. If our world is purposive, it is nevertheless inconclusive; if it is mechanical, it is yet in flux. The shaping of human destiny, the creation of a new world, is within the almighty hands of human enterprise.

And what is *destiny*? Destiny is an impartial god – it follows him who wills, attends him who must, joins him who can. There is no destiny if there is no enterprise, no destiny if there is no plan, and no destiny where there is no determined spirit”.

A. A. Nwafor Orizu. “*Without Bitterness.*” (1944)  
Page 59.