Suggested short title

EDUCATION FOR CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Ohikhena

EDUCATION FOR CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE YORUBA SOCIAL SYSTEM

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Yoruba Peoples

The Yoruba people are scattered all over West Africa. In Nigeria where they predominate, they form the political unit of what is now Western Nigeria,[1] and it is this area the writer has in mind in writing about the Yoruba social system. The people of Ilorin and Kabba provinces in Northern Nigeria also belong to the Yoruba group, but administratively they have witnessed the rule of the Fulani Moslem Emirs for more than a century. They are not included in this study. To the west of Nigeria are the Yoruba of Dahomey and of Togo, and there are also Yoruba immigrants in Sierra Leone, called Aku by the French in Senegal.

The Yoruba group of Western Nigeria occupies the South-western part of Nigeria with an area of 30,095 square miles. According to the 1963 census, they then numbered 10,265,845. There are different sub-groups, and these include Oyo, Ife, Ijesha, Ibadan, Egba, Ijebu, Ekiti, Ondo and the Lagos sub-groups. Each of these has its sub-culture and dialect; but the Yoruba language, which is one of the few important languages of literature in Africa, is a unifying factor. Aside from this, it is to be noted that the traditional customs connected with religious beliefs, birth,

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[1]The Mid-western region of Nigeria was up till 1963 part of Western Nigeria. Since its creation as a new region in August 1963, what remains of Western Nigeria is made up of Yoruba elements.

marriage, death, inter-personal relationships and political organization are alike in their broad outlines but different only in details between the various subgroups.

The Yoruba of Western Nigeria are probably the most urban people in Africa, a peculiar trait in a continent where native settlements are found mostly in rural village communities. Both the 1952 census and the more recent one of 1963 show that ten of the eleven largest towns in Nigeria are in the Yoruba region. Ibadan, the largest native settlement in Africa, is a Yoruba town, the capital of Western Nigeria.

Politically, the Yoruba communities are organized according to the units of the sub-cultural groups mentioned earlier. Each is headed by a ruler, known in Yorubaland as oba.[2] The Yoruba are very commercial, and this tends to make them quite mobile. But agriculture is still the mainstay of the people. Food-cropping is as important as cash-cropping. Among the important food-crops are yam, cassava, maize, rice, and ground-nuts; while cocoa, rubber, and kola-nut are the major cash-crops.

External Influences in Recent Cultural History

The main external influences on Yoruba culture have been the Islamic and Christian religions and colonization. Islam has been spreading from Northern Nigeria since the nineteenth century. Today, it is the religion of many Yoruba families. In this respect, those who profess the

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[2] Oba is a Yoruba word whose nearest English equivalent is "king". Properly speaking, a Yoruba oba is not a king in the English sense, nor is he a chief as is more commonly maintained. As a political ruler and religious head, he combines secular rule with sacerdotal functions. It is almost impossible therefore to give an accurate translation to the word, and we shall therefore prefer to use it in this thesis.

Islamic faith have tried to reconcile many aspects of it with the traditional culture. They have schools where the tenets of Islamic tradition are emphasized, but these are comparatively few. For example, in 1963, about seven per cent of the primary schools in Western Nigeria were Moslem; and correspondingly, their secondary modern schools amounted to about six per cent, secondary grammar schools, about six per cent, grade three teachers' colleges about nine per cent, and grade two teachers' colleges about six per cent.[3]

The first formal step to establish a colonial regime in Nigeria started with the Yoruba sub-cultural group of Lagos,[4] which was ceded to the British government in 1862. In 1893, a Protectorate was declared over the whole of Yorubaland and the Niger Delta area. This was followed in 1900 by a declaration of a Protectorate over what is now known as Northern Nigeria. By 1906, the process of colonization was complete when the Niger Delta and Yorubaland were united with Lagos to form the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. It was not until 1914, however, that Nigeria became one single political unit, following the amalgamation

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[3]The exact figures given are primary schools 6.9%, Secondary modern 6%, grammar schools 6.1%, grade three teachers' colleges 9.4%, and grade two 5.7%. Annual Abstract of Education Statistics 1962 and 1963 Combined , Ibadan, Ministry of Economic Planning and Community Development, January 1964, p. 4. The teachers' colleges referred to here are post-secondary modern school teacher-training institutions. The grade three colleges are of two years' duration while the grade two are from three to four years' duration. Grade three teachers can also train for two years in order to qualify as grade two teachers.

[4]Lagos, already flourishing as a Yoruba settlement at the time of cession, had grown into an urban centre through trading activities, first in slaves, and later in such Yoruba farm products as Cocoa and Kola-nuts. It has since then maintained its position as the main sea-port and seat of the government of Nigeria.

of the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria with the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.

Colonization no doubt had its implication for the cultural groups of Nigeria. It meant, for example, the introduction of an education which would produce the type of manpower needed by a colonial economy and administration. Manpower demand was therefore mainly for clerks, interpreters, and school teachers. More important for our purpose, however, was the fact that the schools which were to produce the type of manpower needed were exact copies of British schools. The transplantation of British educational institutions came to mean the acceptance of British culture and its penetration to the point where it tended to supercede the traditional culture.

One grave preconception that strengthened the cause of colonization and the transplantation of British educational institution in Nigeria was the nineteenth century myth of European racial superiority, the obverse of which was the inferiority of other races. We can thus see why such terms as 'savages' or 'barbarians' were frequently used to describe people in tropical Africa. One administrator, for example, has been quoted as saying, "The negro more than any human type has been marked out by his mental and physical characteristics as the servant of other races."[5]

Nigerians themselves appeared to accept the racial superiority myth as their contact with Western culture increased. The result of such acceptance was that the natural pride of the people (were they Yoruba, Ibo, or Hausa) in their own cultures dwindled, and with it their self-confidence. The exingencies of the colonial relationship and the technical superiority of European society undoubtedly lent credence to this myth.

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[5]Sir H. H. Johnson quoted in Otonti Nduka, Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background: Ibadan, Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 5

Little did anybody know that the two cultures could not fruitfully be compared. At the time, however, the temptation for comparison could hardly be resisted, particularly as the glittering products of Western technology - motor cars, radio, engineering works - all put the technological inferiority of the traditional cultures into sharp relief. It is little wonder then that a ludicrous attempt to copy the cultural traits of the British followed: from his religion and education to his woollen suit even in the hot tropical climate. When the secrets of the white man's superiority had to be probed, his religion and education were singled out. It was thus easy to accept the European missionary, who, with both the white man's religion and education in the same package, came to evangelize the Yoruba people.

Evangelization was the handmaiden of colonization. Through it came the establishment of British educational institutions in Yorubaland. Whereas the prime motive of the British colonial enterprise had been economic, the motive for the introduction of Western education by missionaries was evangelistic. From the start, colonial and missionary enterprise combined to remould the thinking of the Yoruba and to affect his ways of life so that he might become more and more acculturated to the British tradition. The colonialist's method had only an indirect influence; but the missionary's method was a direct demand for the soul of young people, and implicit in his activities with the native peoples through evangelization and education was his expectation of a mental revolution which would result in changing the Yoruba cosmology which is the basis of the value systems of the people.

The significance of the missionary's challenge lies in the fact that by promoting the religious idea of the Western world, he was inviting the Yoruba people to abandon their traditional beliefs in favour of his. The missionary adopted a policy of Europeanization through religious conversion. His attention was focussed, not on the adults, but on the young people, whose minds he found easy to direct. Missionary educational activities and institutions became agencies for acculturating the Yoruba child into cultures foreign to him. To the missionary, the promotion of Christian education was primary, but because he had no way of discussing Christianity outside the context of European culture, this culture moved steadily but imperceptibly from the background to the foreground of his evangelical activities.

Thus a conflict arose between the motives of the missionary evangelist and those of the Yoruba recipient of his call. To the former, the promotion of the Christian faith had been intended, and along with this, Christian education. But to the latter, the missionary's Christian message and education had been accepted in order to obtain the knowledge which forms the basis of the white man's greatness. He accepted the new religion and education, therefore, not as a substitute for his own indigenous religion and education, but as a new addition. When, therefore, missionary activities gradually turned to a demand for the total abnegation of his traditional ways, a problem of choice developed. The practical outcomes of science education and the scientific and technological impact of the colonial power made the Yoruba long for the spread of Western culture through evangelization and education. Little did he realize that the missionary did not much care about developing the scientific and technological aptitude in the Yoruba child. Meanwhile, he lived under an

illusion, and this gradually led to ambivalences towards both the indigenous culture and missionary activities. Gradually, the traditional culture tended to give way to the dominant culture of Western religion and education.

The period of missionary activities in Yorubaland has been seen as a period when a new element was introduced into the traditional life of the Yoruba people - an element of westernization through Christian religion and education. To the Yoruba, traditional education had helped people to live in, maintain, and pass on the traditions of their culture to others following after. These traditions include the skills, knowledge and principles of interpersonal conduct, religious tenets and values. Parents and relatives educated the child in his cultural heritage by giving him increasing participation in community life and ceremonials, thereby inculcating the established tradition. With the introduction of the new education by missionaries, however, a process of change began in which the function of education was seen in a new light. New knowledge and skills emerged, and as the recipients of the new education grew both in number and in their knowledge and skills, so they began to identify themselves as a new social class. For them, education did not maintain the established pattern of life in Yoruba tradition; rather, it helped them in acquiring the new knowledge and skills necessary for living in a new social order.

The Problem

For the Yoruba child change has been a necessary emphasis of formal education right from the beginning. This is perhaps more evident in the contemporary age of science and technology: for change is always a necessary emphasis of education when a society deliberately attempts

to industrialize as the Yoruba are now attempting to do. From better and quicker means of communication, from the circulation of more money as a result of trade, from the destruction of native industries as a result of large-scale industrial projects, from further development of cash-cropping - from all these arise changes, not only in the physical nature of the towns and villages, but also in the standards of living of individual people. New sanitation laws and new medical and health facilities come into vogue. Education will have to prepare people for these changes as well as repair the disruption which might result. And amidst this changing order, the Yoruba person will still need to take his place in the community life of the people, while taking advantage also of the practical outcomes of science education and industrial development. Herein lies the problem of the thesis: it is the problem of developing educational principles that would safeguard continuity in the Yoruba culture as well as adapt to social change arising from industrialization.

Industrialization, for example, on the one hand, will affect family structure and obligation where at present, rural agricultural economy makes demand on the contributions of a man's many wives and children; in an industrial economy collective effort will give way to the individual effort and the family hand will become the family mouth. In fact, each additional person to the family will be seen as a liability - hence changes in attitudes towards marriage and the maintenance of large families might be expected. On the other hand, specialization of the labour force will, in the first instance, demand that every young person be educated, so that talent may be more easily identified for a specialized training that may subsequently bring about an independent class of well-to-do people -

craftsmen, traders, businessmen and educated professionals, who will be united through guild associations rather than through kinship relationship. Because greater mobility will necessarily result from improved means of transport and communication, Yoruba communities all over will be infiltrated by people from other towns and villages who therefore owe loyalty to different lineage ancestors. Thus the members of one household will not necessarily be a homogeneous group who can worship at a common ancestral shrine. In this way, the industrial process may lead to the development of communities with mixed lineages who have very little in common in the way of family organization. Even in the face of such a social disruption, the Yoruba person might find it necessary as at present, to seek the protective and helping arm of the lineage; in his bid to contest a chieftaincy title, or while seeking to acquire land on which to build or farm. It is thus unrealistic to think that the Yoruba can accept the industrial culture without retaining the worthwhile values of the indigenous culture.

History and Present Status of the Problem

The problem of planning education to suit the cultural background of African children is not a new one. It started in the 1920's with the sending out of a commission on native education. The Phelps-Stokes report[6] which resulted from it was a policy statement of historical

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[6]Thomas Jesse Jones (ed) Education in Africa: New York, Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1922. For the second report we have Thomas Jesse Jones (ed) Education in East Africa: New York,Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1925. Abridged version of both reports can be found in L.J.Lewis (ed) Phelps-Stokes Reports on Education in Africa: London, Oxford University Press, 1962. The fund was provided in the will of Caroline Phelps-Stokes and was incorporated under the laws of New York State on May 10, 1911.

importance on education. After this came the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical African Dependencies in 1923, which two years later, produced the famous Memorandum on Education Policy in British Tropical Africa. In 1935, the principles enunciated in the above Memorandum were further elaborated in a policy statement entitled Memorandum on the Education of African Communities. Next, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act was passed in 1940. From this time on, the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies met periodically to discuss the problems of African education. Since independence, however, Nigeria, like many other independent African countries, has been expressing with new vigour, the need to develop an education that would reflect cultural continuity among school graduates. Also, the Addis Ababa conference of African states on the development of education in Africa met in 1961 to discuss, among other problems, the adaptation of education to indigenous culture.

Apart from these documents of official policy, many scholars have examined the problem of African education in relation to its culture. Among the many works of importance we may mention Bascom and Herskovit's Continuity and change in African cultures, which is a collection of papers on different aspects of African culture in different regions - Art, Music, Language, Polygyny, Marriage and Kinship, economic and social change or resistance to change. In Turnbull's The Lonely African, the problems of the African in an age of transition are discussed - problems of his inner conflict which have arisen from the culture - contact between the West and Africa. Margaret Read in her Education and Social change in Tropical Areas, discusses in a collection of interesting papers, different phases of African

life and how education can be of help particularly when both adults and children are all considered. Of particular interest is the paper on "Cultural contacts in Education", in which culture and education are linked and in which the six-fold stages of cultural contacts between Britain and the colonial territories are brought out. Another collection of papers on African education is that of Lewis' Education and Political Independence in Africa. In these, the problems of education and independence are discussed, with some emphasis on the place of Higher education, of external aid and contribution from Britain and America, and of education and social growth with particular stress on the problems of urbanization. David Scanlon's Traditions of African Education discusses the different education policies of the Colonial powers in Africa with an illuminating chapter on the Phelps-Stokes Commission and Report. Wilson's Education and Changing West African Culture brings us nearer home by concentrating on West African social, political and economic organizations with a view to understanding indigenous education vis a vis early missionary attempts at formal education. Here too, we have an up to date critical analysis of the Phelps-Stokes Report. On Nigeria, Otonti Nduka has an interesting historical account of education in his Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background.

On the Yoruba culture itself, we can mention Daryll Forde, whose The Yoruba-speaking peoples of South-Western Nigeria discusses the history, language, economy, and social organization of the Yoruba. He

goes further in part two of the book to discuss each of the sub-cultural groups of the Yoruba. P.C. Lloyd's more recent and extensive work on Yoruba Land Law deals with the history, political structure, social organization and customary laws of the Yoruba people. The laws of ownership and inheritance have been treated with a great detail. His many other writings on the different aspects of Yoruba culture are invaluable source materials for a student. Peter Marris' study[7] of family and social change in Lagos gives an insight into the trends which the development in Yoruba social organization might take when industrialization takes root in Nigeria. The religious beliefs of the Yoruba have been well treated by Dr. Geoffrey Parrinder in his Religion in an African city, a book whose findings have been based on the native town of Ibadan. Dr. Bolaji Idowu, himself Yoruba, has an interesting study of Yoruba religion in his examination of what people think about God, the Supreme Being.[8]

These studies are divided into three groups; those which are official policy statements, those which deal with the problem of education and tradition in Africa as a whole, or in parts of the continent, like West Africa, and narrower still, Nigeria, and those which deal specifically with Yoruba culture. All have something of interest and value about African way of life. But much is still left for schools to do; they still have to identify values in African social systems and hence development of children along the lines of what is basic to their way of life. The official policies and studies recognize that a problem exists, but there has been no satisfactory solution to the problems perhaps because of the general way in which they

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[7]Peter Marris, Family and Social Change in an African City; A study of re-housing in Lagos: London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961.

[8]E.Bolaji Idowu, Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief, London, Longman's 1962.

have looked at the problem. This is true also of the different works on Africa, West Africa and Nigeria. Generalization can hardly help us in solving the problem of African education. Within each African country, it has to be noted, there are different cultural groups, and unless particular studies are made about each of these cultures, it would be pretentious to hope that anything fruitful can come out of these general studies. It is true that there are certain basic beliefs and practices that are common to certain regions or even to all Africa; it is equally true, too, that differences exist from country to country, and even from culture to culture, within the same country. The Hausa attitude towards authority, for example, is far different from the Ibo, which is also different from the Yoruba. Yet all are cultural groups within the same country, Nigeria. In Basutoland, more girls go to schools than boys because the boys are useful in cattle-herding. In Yoruba culture, girls are supposed to be trained for home-making and motherhood; therefore, more boys go to schools than girls. There is something fundamental in the difference between Western Nigeria and Basutoland in their attitude towards the education of both sexes. Such fundamental differences make nonsense of general studies about Africa in general, or about particular regions, or even particular countries. One way of getting to the root of the problems is to make a study of particular cultures.

Although many studies have been made on the Yoruba society, there is yet no one that emphasizes the cultural values vis a vis education. So far, there is information for anthropologists and sociologists who want to learn about the Yoruba, but there is none for the educator's use, in the sense that no one has attempted to bring together education and

culture in the Yoruba social system. In this respect then, the problem of this thesis is new. It is new because even five years after Nigeria's independence, the education system of the country is still essentially British. In order to make it Nigerian, the educational institutions will have to be developed along cultural differences so that children will first be Yoruba, Ibo, or Hausa, before they gradually become Nigerians. This thesis therefore goes beyond the study of the Yoruba culture per se, or the study of education in Western Nigeria per se, to a study of both, in order to develop some relevant principles that could help to link education to Yoruba culture. The Yoruba-speaking peoples are at present educating their children in institutions too British to promote any sense of cultural belonging. This is our main concern.

The problem demands attention now because as we have noted, previous attempts to discuss the link between education and culture had been done on a continental, regional, or country-wide basis. Consequently, the results had been too general to be of particular help to the Yoruba as a cultural group in Nigeria. Moreover, the idea of educating the child in his social and natural environment has only an implication for adapting such an education to culture. In order to make a child develop a sense of belonging, a definite study of the Yoruba social system will be necessary. Only when we know what is of value in the culture can we attempt to develop any child with such values in mind. The problem of the educated person as a man of two worlds is now

a past time. These two worlds have to be bridged so that everyone can fit into both. The fact that the opportunity for education has been expanding at a very fast rate corresponds with the fact that industrial economy is also spreading fast. It is therefore necessary to give young people an education that will not only sustain them in their culture, but will also prepare them to live in an industrial culture. This is the new emphasis.

Limitation of the Problem

The discussion of the problem of the thesis will emphasize the institution of family life and kinship among the Yoruba, its role in the upbringing of children, and the social values that form the core of the Yoruba culture, and hence, the content of traditional education. Thus on the one hand, education will be discussed in relation to Yoruba culture at the primary and secondary school level, so that an attempt will be made to fit children into their social system through formal education. On the other hand, the discussion will be carried further to examine the relationship between education and economic development, and how the twin processes of education and industrialization could help in bringing about social change in Yorubaland. In this way, the problems of the Yoruba people in their traditional way of life will be brought into focus and this will enable us to discuss how education might be used to prepare the Yoruba child to live in his culture while at the same time adapting to social change.

In writing about the Yoruba social system, political, economic

and religious systems will not be discussed directly, but facts may be drawn from them where the need arises, to illustrate points of relevance. The discussion on education will illustrate mainly with primary and secondary grammar schools. Secondary modern schools may be referred to only casually, for as they form part of secondary education, they are not very much different from the grammar schools, except that they are shorter in duration. Education in the teacher-training colleges has the same over-all effect of dissociating a student-teacher from his culture, therefore, what applies to secondary education also applies to the teachers' colleges. University and other forms of higher education will be left out too, because it is felt that the greatest influences of education on children who live in an indigenous culture take place mainly at the primary and secondary school levels.

Organization of the Thesis

The first chapter of this thesis has consisted of an introduction to the Yoruba-speaking peoples, an examination of the impact of external influences such as colonization and the Christian religion, leading up to a statement of the problem. The second chapter will discuss the cultural history of the Yoruba and their settlements, and conduct an examination into their social system and organization, thus leading to an identification of the social values in the Yoruba culture. Chapter three will examine traditional education alongside Western education; this will be followed by a discussion of the attempts made in the past to

adapt education to indigenous culture in Africa and the outcome of this attempt. In chapters four and five, we shall attempt to develop some relevant principles which could govern the development of an education that would safeguard continuity in the Yoruba culture while adapting to social change at the same time. Finally, chapter six will discuss briefly, the practical outcomes of the educational principles developed in chapters four and five.

CHAPTER I I

THE YORUBA SOCIAL SYSTEM

A Brief Cultural History

As we have noted earlier, the Yoruba peoples of Western Nigeria are bound together by language, traditions, and religious beliefs and practices. Their historical origin is shrouded in obscurity; some writers think that they came originally from somewhere in the Sudan or Arabia, while others suggest Egypt as their original home. Ile-Ife is regarded as their first home in their present area of settlement. Up till the present day the Oni[1] of Ife is both the ruler of the people of Ile Ife and the religious head of the Yoruba. All the royal lineages of the various subgroups trace descent from Oduduwa, the deified ancestral hero who is credited with the creation of the world in Yoruba mythology. From his seven grandsons, according to Yoruba history, we can trace the beginning of the various branches of the Yoruba-speaking peoples.

After founding these various branches, political ascendancy gradually developed in the kingdom of Oyo, where the Alafin of Oyo became not only the ruler of Oyo people, but also the political head of the Yoruba. During the eighteenth century, constant warfare led

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[1] Oni is the official title by which the oba of Ile Ife is known. Ife is the name by which people from Ile Ife are known.

to the decline of Yoruba tribes or subgroups. There was war with Dahomey, a country to the west of present Nigeria; there were civil wars in which the Fulani warriors from the North of Nigeria intervened, over-running the country as far south as Abeokuta; and there were the constant slave-raiding expeditions which depopulated the Yoruba considerably. Because of these slave raiding activities, Lagos developed into the chief slave depot in West Africa. The wars and slave-raids continued through the nineteenth century, and from them Yorubaland emerged divided into a number of independent kingdoms as their present settlement and political organization show.

By 1849 when John Beecroft became the consul of the Bights of Benin and Biafra, direct British influence had begun. The Yoruba country had been traversed by European explorers like Captains Clapperton and Pearse, with Dr. Morrison and Richard Lander. (1825-26) The first white missionaries had settled in places like Badagry, Lagos, and Abeokuta, following the great expedition of 1842. And when in 1862, Lagos was declared a British colony, the beginning of Yoruba contact with the Western world and their institutions was becoming a thing accomplished.

Present Settlements of Sub-Cultural Groups

The Yoruba-speaking peoples of Western Nigeria occupy Lagos and its coastal area, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijebu, Ondo, and Oyo

provinces. They sometimes distinguish between the Oyo-Yoruba and the Ife-Yoruba. The latter group includes the Ife and Ijesha people of Oyo province, and the Ekiti people in Ondo province. The former group is made up of Oyo, Ibadan, Ijebu, Egba, Lagos and Ondo people, and they are held to be descendants of later immigrants who came to join the latter group in Ile Ife. Although the two groups differ in dialect, we cannot from this conclude that the distinction between them is a valid one since all the subgroups, in fact, speak different dialects of the same language, that is, Yoruba. The Oyo and Ibadan people sometimes claim that they are the Yoruba proper. The popular Yoruba myth, however, has it that Oduduwa created the world by spreading land on the surface of primeval waters. The spot where this operation started became known as Ile Ife.[2] It might be said that the attempt to distinguish between the Ife Yoruba and the Oyo Yoruba arose as a result of the different versions of the stories of origin. The facts that both groups accept Ile Ife as a first home in their present area and Oduduwa as the founder of the race make it easy for us to attempt to reconcile both groups as rivals who try to seek evidences to support the claim for leadership among the people. This is important to note because it was not impossible

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[2]Ile Ife may be translated"the spot of earth spreading." The abbreviation Ife is commonly used.

for rivalry for leadership to develop between the Oni of Ife, who was regarded as the religious head of the Yoruba, and the Alafin of Oyo who, by sheer prowess became the political leader at some later time. Perhaps, the Oni of Ife must have, at one time, combined both political and religious leadership, to begin with, and if so, this might explain why the struggle for leadership followed, after the Alafin had successfully established political suzerainty over the Yoruba.

Today, the various branches of Yoruba people can be classified under titulary heads and according to administrative divisions based on the settlements of the kingdoms of these titulary heads.

Chiefdom or Kingdom	Titular Head	Settlement of group
Egba	The Alake of Abeokuta	Abeokuta Province
Ekiti	The Ewi of Ado-Ekiti	Ondo "
Ibadan	The Olubadan of Ibadan	Ibadan "
Ife	The Oni of Ife	Oyo "
Ijebu	The Awujale of Ijebu-Ode	Ijebu "
Ijesha	The Owa of Ilesha	Oyo "
Lagos	The Oba of Lagos	Lagos and coastal area
Ondo	The Oshemawe of Ondo	Ondo Province
Oyo	The Alafin of Oyo	Oyo "

Nevertheless, we can say that the Yoruba are a homogeneous population. Despite the differences in dialect and customary methods of marriage, burial, and political structure, it is correct to say that the basic Yoruba culture is displayed in the language, names of deities, titles of chiefs, and the installation ceremonies of the chiefs which all these groups have in common. Besides, there is a common spiritual allegiance to one head, that is, the Oni of Ife.

The Social System and Organization

From the foregoing information, we note that the Yoruba cultural group of Western Nigeria is made up of towns and villages ruled by crowned heads called oba, whose allegiance to the Oni of Ife as a spiritual leader serves as a unifying bond for all people in Yorubaland. The Towns and villages are more or less independent of one another politically, but within each chiefdom or regional sub-cultural group, towns and villages look upon the titular head as the final authority. Thus, for example, the Alafin of Oyo is not only ruler of Oyo town, he is also the head of the chiefs who rule the town and villages within the Oyo Kingdom or subcultural group. The Oyo then, are not just the people from Oyo town, but people from the towns and villages that form the Oyo sub-cultural group. This also applies to the Ondo,

the Ijebu, and each of the other sub-cultural groups in Yorubaland. It is often in this sense possible for people within the same sub-culture to trace a line of common descent and to make claims on a dialect of the Yoruba, and the customary practices relating to marriage, burial, and political structures.

Each town and village in the sub-cultural unit is segmented into lineages of blood relation through the patrikin. Usually, the lineage of the founder of a town or village become the acknowledged ruling lineage. Every Yoruba oba is often able to trace his ancestry to the original founder of the town or village over which he rules, and through him to Oduduwa, the father of the Yoruba. In this way, the Yoruba are able to claim themselves as brothers and sisters, particularly when they meet in a place outside their homes, or in time of grave crisis when this tends to threaten the solidarity of the race as we may notice, for example, from the call for Yoruba unity following the political crisis in Western Nigeria in 1961.[3]

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[3]Following the suspension of the Western Nigerian government by the Nigerian Federal government, the call for Yoruba unity led to the formation of the United People's Party which took over the government in Western Nigeria after the crisis, in coalition with the Yoruba members of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens. Both the U.P.P. and the Yoruba N.C.N.C. as these political parties were called, at present rule Western Nigeria under a new political party known as the Nigerian National Democratic Party. At the federal level, this party rules Nigeria in coalition with another political party, the Northern People's Congress.

The smallest social unit within the Yoruba town or village is the family, which occupies a part of a house within the lineage compound. Usually, the family consists of a man, his wife or wives, his unmarried children, and any other persons such as his widowed mother or a younger unmarried brother, all of whom form an economic unit. The man is the head of the family and he is often referred to as the father of the house or bale. Similarly, his senior wife is regarded as the mother of the house or the iyale.

When several close patrilineal relations of family units form one aggregate, they become an extended family unit. Such a unit would include an old man and his sons, his younger brothers and their sons, his nephews together with their wives and children. The old man, as the head of the household has a moral authority over the members of the extended family. Although he performs rituals on behalf of the members of the household, the extended family is not usually an economic unit since it can often be segmented into smaller economic units, each of which is a family unit. The extended family unit is called agbole or household; it is the usual patterns of household life and organization that is common now in Yorubaland.

There is however a still larger aggregate of kinship organization which is made up of a number of extended family units or agbole. This is known as the idile or lineage. Up till recent times, and even now in some remote parts of Yorubaland, the lineage compound can be found as the one common dwelling-place. Lloyd quotes a missionary who has this to say of the Yoruba compound:

> "A 'compound' is an enclosed space (generally in the form of a square) bounded by a wall about seven feet high. There is but one entrance to this enclosed space. At night and in times of danger this is closed by strong double doors well barred. Inside, against this wall, the rooms of the house are built. These rooms are square and are covered by a thatched roof, which rests on the wall on the outside and on posts on the inside so as to give a covering for a piazza extending all around the enclosed space on the inside. In this piazza the inmates mostly live, the rooms being chiefly used for dormitories or for storage . . . . . the court of the compound . . . . . is therefore very secure against thieves and beasts of prey prowling about at night. It is for this reason little better than a barnyard . . . . . .
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> The compounds of the chiefs are very large sometimes covering several acres of ground. In such cases they are a perfect labyrinth of dwellings . . . . . Away back in these recesses, surrounded by the most trusty of their wives and retainers, the chiefs pass their leisure hours."[4]

It is perhaps in place to emphasize that Lloyd has rightly noted that there are no such compounds today in many of the Yoruba towns. Modern cement-faced buildings of one or two storey houses are now the commonest we can find. Corrugated iron sheets have replaced the thatch, and the old walls have gone with their gates, and roads have cut through the towns. All the same, however, members of the same lineage still find

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[4]P.C. Lloyd "The Yoruba lineage", Africa XXV, 1955, p.236. The words are those of R. H. Stone, a European missionary who, in 1900 wrote down his experience of "Six years among the Yorubans."

it useful to retain the traditional corporate life within the lineage. This takes the form of exchange of visits and small presents of money and food, collaboration in work, particularly when a member of the lineage is clearing a new farm plot or when building a new house, occasional monthly meetings where matters relating to the welfare of the lineage are discussed, sounding the lineage father for advice in any new venture, gathering at the lineage compound to settle any dispute with the lineage father presiding, all these are done to maintain the allegiance of every member to the lineage and its head.

It is important to note at this juncture, that the men of the component extended families living in the same compound need not be members of a single patrilineage. Daryll Forde[5] notes that in Ife, for example, three distinct groups of people can be identified in one compound. The first group are the Omole or the members of the patrikin that established the compound; then there are the wives of the patrikin (the women who came into the compound as wives of the male adults of the lineage); and finally, there are the strangers or alejo. This last group consists of the people who are admitted as residents but who cannot be assimilated into the lineage through the agnatic patrilineal relationship. They share the compound through the hospitality of the sib members.

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[5]Daryll Forde, (ed) The Yoruba-speaking peoples of South-Western Nigeria. London, International African Institute, 1951, p.11.

The oldest man of the compound (excluding the strangers) is generally acknowledged as the living head of the lineage. He often consults with the other elders of the compound who are themselves heads of the component extended families and their wives, and these in turn consult with the heads of the component family units. Thus in the case of disputes, the allocation of land for farming, or any matter affecting the general welfare of the lineage, peaceful settlement is often arrived at through discussion and concensus. In the past, tribute and taxes used to be collected through the lineage head. His rights also include getting the young men of the lineage to work on his farm, receiving gifts of farm produce from members, and taking the leg of every animal offered at any sacrifice in the compound.

Members of the patrilineal sib in a compound (excluding strangers) identify rank by seniority through age. Respect for the status of seniority is thus a fundamental practice with the Yoruba. Once a member knows those members of the compound who are senior or junior to him, he can himself recognize his place within the family unit, or in the extended family unit, and even in the lineage. All senior members of the family, household or lineage are called senior sibling or egbon, irrespective of whether they are male or female, and irrespective of whether people belong to the same parentage or not.

In the same way, all junior members, irrespective of parentage and sex, are known as junior sibling or aburo. Duties and obligations towards others within the lineage system and, by extension, towards people outside the lineage circle has come to depend on this concept of seniority and age.

The position of the married women in the family is different. With them, seniority is determined by the length of the period they have stayed in the family as married women. Without regard for physical age, married women within the lineage compound (except one's mother) are called iyawo or wives by the members of the patrikin. On the contrary, the members of the patrikin are oko or husbands, irrespective of their sex and age. Seniority also determines the interpersonal relations between the wives of the family and the members of the patrikin. A child born into the family before the marriage of any woman into that family is senior to the woman. Thus, a child of five in physical age might be senior to a woman of any age, provided the woman married into the child's family after the latter's birth. Consequently, the woman owes all the duties and obligations of a junior to the child who is considered her senior. Thus, for example, she could not normally call the child by name. Instead, she would coin a nickname.[6] To be a senior or junior wife to a particular member of the

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[6] Such nicknames take the sex of the child into consideration. For boys, nicknames might simply denote the type of profession preferred. Thus Akowe as a nickname would simply signify a boy who attends school. Girls' nicknames usually denote praise - as a result of their attractive builds. One common one is Ibadiaran - meaning literally, one whose soft skin demands the use of velvet clothing. There is the implication of being born into wealth here.

family therefore depends on one of two things. It might be determined by considering whether or not a particular member was already born when the woman became a wife to the family. If so, the wife was junior; but if that member was born while the woman was already a wife, then she was senior. Secondly, the terms senior or junior in respect of a wife are used to determine rank among the wives of a particular adult member of the family. Of two wives married by the same person, for example, the first one to be married would be the senior wife of the man, and the last to be married would be the junior. In this case then, seniority depends on the order in which the women have been married by the man. But once a woman obtains a divorce, she loses her seniority and takes a new rank in her new husband's home. This would depend on how many wives this new husband already married before taking the divorced woman to wife.

Superior status in terms of seniority carries its prerogatives; it commands respect and loyalty to physical age, and with it, duties and obligations on the part of the junior, ranging from greeting with prostration or kneeling to doing the menial jobs of the family. It determines the interpersonal relationships among members of a patrilineal kinship group as well as those of wives belonging to the same man. It also determines the relationship of family wives in general to each member of the patrikin. Usually, junior wives do the job of house cleaning. At table or in a family party, the choicest food and

drinks are often reserved for the most senior members of the household. Neither wives nor children can call their elders by their names. The head of the family is called father or baba by everybody in the family. Other elderly members are baba (father) or iya (mother) depending on the age gap which exists between them and individual junior members.

The lineage system enables each member to trace his ancestral line down to the founder of the lineage. The story of the lineage is generally told by the oldest man of the family. Such stories serve two purposes; first, they serve as history for lineage members and secondly, they are charters which help to sanction the behaviour of members of the lineage, their ceremonies, their right to land and titles. When a child is born, his umbilical cord is usually buried in one corner of the compound of his father's dwelling. The child's life history can often be traced to this spot and in consequence of this, his patrilineal line of descent. Great feasts of joy often follow child birth, particularly during the naming ceremony which comes seven or nine days after birth.[7] The importance of naming ceremonies lies in the fact that every name given to a child signifies an aspect of its family circumstances. After naming comes the cutting of facial marks which

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[7] Boys are named nine days after birth while girls are named seven days after. In many parts of Yorubaland however, there seems to be no distinction between the time boys and girls are named. This is done seven days after birth.

enables the child to grow up in recognition of his lineage membership.[8]

Lineage membership prescribes series of common reciprocal rights, duties, privileges and forebearances between members or groups. Thus, for example, while a man could not inherit anything belonging to his junior in the family, it was nevertheless his duty to make provision for the children of the deceased and to see that his wives have necessary care in the family. To the Yoruba, marriage is an unbreakable bond, not necessarily between the individual members who contract the marriage, but between two mutually exclusive family groups. This means that the death of a husband does not necessarily terminate marriage. Wives are obliged to marry any one of the designated agnates of the deceased, and in this way the alliance between the two families is maintained. The fact that children perpetuate the family line makes the marriage bond unique, for in Yoruba thinking the lineage must never die.

Occupation among the Yoruba is also prescribed by lineage affiliation. Male members follow a traditional and common occupation while female members are prepared for motherhood. Agriculture is the mainstay of family economy. Farm lands are corporately held by the lineage. Each head of lineage often divides the lineage land among the component families whose heads in turn divide each family land among

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[8] Cutting of facial marks is dying out because there seems to be no need for it in a world where inter-tribal wars have ceased and where peaceful co-existence is being encouraged.

its male members for the purpose of cropping. Just as every lineage has its own compound, so also it has its own land.

Other common occupations include blacksmithing, weaving, carving, drumming, hunting. While it may be claimed that farming is something every male member undertakes, we cannot say the same for these other occupations. Particular lineages are often identified with particular types of jobs and this helps to keep the lineage homogeneous, as its members are often unwilling to let out the secrets of their skills in a particular occupation to those outside the lineage group. In this way, it has been possible for the Yoruba society to keep up its economic life through its kinship grouping. Often, the history and occupation of a lineage might correlate with the family god of that lineage.[9] Thus for example, a lineage whose history reveals that hunting or blacksmithing is a family occupation would also worship Ogun, the Yoruba god of iron.

Each lineage has collective responsibility for contributing towards the success of itself. Marriage and funeral ceremonies for example, are the joint responsibilities of all the component members of the lineage. The care for elders and the indigent, the execution of religious and ancestral ceremonies are not just the undertakings of single

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[9]The Yoruba worship of ancestors and lineage gods or orisha should be differentiated. While ancestor cult is limited only to the lineage, the orisha worship may or may not belong to a lineage. Ancestor worship helps regulate the interpersonal relationship which exists within the lineage, but orisha worship is concerned with the interpersonal relationship exists among co-worshippers, irrespective of lineage. Thus, the worship of Ogun, for example, would enforce the same sanctions on all worshippers throughout Yorubaland.

individual members of the lineage, but of all the members jointly. Lineages have other means of identification. These include facial marks, praise names or oriki, taboos or ewo, and the possession of a common deity or orisha. Usually, the history of the lineage is preserved in ritual chants or rara, and praise songs which are handed down from generation to generation.

The Yoruba lineage consists not only of the living members but also of its dead, and by extension in the other direction, the children yet unborn. It is important to emphasize this fact because the intricate system of mutual obligations and responsibilities, rights and privileges, stems from this concept. This is why, for example, land can only be held in trust by an individual, for it is owned by the tribe. The universal belief in the continuity between life and death is basic to the Yoruba thought. This gives rise to the belief that once one's ancestors have passed through the gates of death, they go into the spirit world where they come in contact with diverse manifestations of the power beyond and are therefore able to intercede on behalf of the living members of the family, seek their punishment or reward. In this way, the living realize that they have certain obligations toward the dead. Similarly, the spirits of children yet unborn are believed to be in that spirit world where they leave to take on flesh, and become children for those who want them. This is the rationale behind pre-natal destiny.

The lineage is the social unit around which everything revolves among the Yoruba. From it, we can trace the household units or agbole and

from these we have the different family units. Every lineage often combines social, jural and ritual obligations. In religion, belief in a type of continuous living after man's physical death gives rise to ancestor-worship, through which means the living members of the lineage try to seek peace and security for its members. In domestic and economic affairs, activities are directed towards the communal welfare of the lineage; in political organization, the oba acts in the capacity of the living representative of the ancestor of the different lineages combined, that is, the town or village. Through marriage and the emphasis on the rearing of children, the lineage is kept alive for ever. To the Yoruba, the lineage is immortal.

An aggregate of two or more different lineages makes up a town or village. Every Yoruba town or village is thus a group of lineages. In each town or village, lineage heads can always trace their line of descent to the original founder of the town or village. Usually, the royal lineage is always more directly a descendant of the founder, and it is through the oba that each town or village traces descent back to the Yoruba ancestor Oduduwa, and to Ife, the Yoruba first home. All Yoruba towns or villages are grouped into regional chiefdoms or sub-cultural groups as the table in the earlier part of this chapter shows. It is common for a Yoruba person to identify himself simply by referring to the sub-cultural group from which he hails. Thus, to say that "I am Oyo,"

does not necessarily mean that I hail from Oyo town; rather, and more correctly, it means that I belong to the Oyo sub-cultural group. The function of facial marks in Yorubaland is to enable Yoruba citizens to identify one another's sub-cultural groups. All these Yoruba sub-groups taken together make up the Yoruba cultural unit. Politically, as we have noted, it is called Western Nigeria.

Social Values Among the Yoruba

The Yoruba society depends upon its moral and spiritual values to achieve the security and well-being of its society. Although man in the advanced societies of the West has succeeded in controlling his environment and nature, and although it would equally be necessary for man in Yoruba society to do the same through education, it has to be emphasized that scientific progress should go hand in hand with the development of the Yoruba moral and spiritual values in children. The overemphasis of Western man on economic success tends to give an erroneous impression that man is essentially a glutton, and that he lives by bread alone. There seems to be a lack of appreciation of the worth of man and of his wholesome relation with others of his species. Yet, the Yoruba society has always excelled in building human relations through an emphasis on group life within the lineage.

In the institution of the lineage and the consequent belief in ancestor-worship we find the fountain of the Yoruba social system and the values deriving from it. These values are both moral and spiritual because the Yoruba society is bound together by social, juridical and ritual ties.

There is no morality of absolute right or wrong conduct of individual responsibility. Only when a wrong affects the social order and makes the living members of a lineage and ancestors angry can we expect a punishment. This means that the whole is more important than its parts; the lineage takes precedence over the individuals that make it up. As in all communalistic societies, moral relationship, not good deeds, is the emphasis of life. It is one's relationship with one's fellow kin that determines the type of behaviour that should be exhibited. Ancestor-worship enables the Yoruba to build up the spirit of binding kinship based on mutual help and obligation. Thus, the essential relationship between a parent and his child is expressed in the parent's devoted care and the child's affectionate dependence. This may never be violated, and in this sense, it is sacred. When parents succeed in winning their children into this moral bond, they receive blessings from ancestors. If they fail in the task of this upbringing, the evil of pre-natal destiny comes upon the child and hostility results, breeding disruption within the family. Acceptance of the child is thus an important duty of parents, for only through parental care, affection, and discipline, can children grow in the normal filio-parental relationship.[10] For the society to survive, the Yoruba believes that there must be

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[10] Omo-ale or bastard is the greatest insult that can possibly be given to a Yoruba child. While it may be an exaggeration to claim that there are no omo-ale or bastards in Yorubaland, it is nevertheless true to say that they are very rare since poligamy sets no limit to the number of wives an adult may marry. When bastards are born they are brought up in the lineage of their mothers. This is opposed to the normal practice of associating a child with his father's lineage.

a whole-hearted acceptance of the child. By so doing, the child is placed inthat normal parent-child relationship which helps in the development of personality in the inculcation of the spirit of community fellow-feeling, and in being able to grow up as a responsible individual whose contribution to the mainstay of the society is an expression of his will to help others. It is thus generally believed that there can be no satisfactory life for a person except as a member of his group. Cooperation and mutual helpfulness are therefore virtues worthy of development in children.

Group life cannot succeed if the spirit of warm personal relationship is not cultivated. In this respect man's character is of supreme importance. The success of individual persons depends on their characters and the outcome of this is always good reputation. Thus, for example, cultivating the habit of saluting others is regarded as the beginning of good interpersonal relationship. As Delano puts it in his own way,

> People like the English whose custom it is not to salute themselves (i.e. one another) when they queue for a bus or meet casually in the street, curiously appreciate people saluting them. In Yoruba society this simple custom is the basis of the culture that carries a soldier or a diplomat through his career. I believe friendliness among the common people of nations can foster the cause of peace more than the efforts of diplomats or the possession of the secrets of the hydrogen bombs. Salutation is the best possible way of entrusting friendliness and peace.[11]

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[11]Isaac Delano, quoted in J.A. Sofola, "Impact of Western Cultures on Nigeria's African Cultures: A brief Analysis" Mimeographed paper read to the Nigerian Students Meeting, New York, June 1964. p. 11.

To the Yoruba, knowledge is not necessarily power. It must go hand in hand with character. Iwa (Yoruba word for character) it is, that sums up human worth.

Among the basic personal qualities that are emphasized are hospitality and generosity, especially to strangers, self-lessness, truth and rectitude, protection to the weaker sex and people, honour and respect for old age. These virtues are expected of developing children, because of their upbringing in a society which aims at producing an Omoluwabi, the Yoruba ideal educated man. (Traditional education is implied here.) By definition, an Omoluwabi is literally a child whom the god of good behaviour has begotten. Springs of religion and ritual lie at the root of the kinship and social organization of the Yoruba; it is obligatory on every member of the society to be in good relation with his fellow human beings because it makes the common interest, the collective purpose to prevail.

From the foregoing, it is easy to recognize that in the Yoruba society man is valued above all things. When libations, prayers, or sacrifices are offered to ancestors, the aim is both to ask for protection over the living members of the family, and to ask for an increase of the group through child-bearing. The very attention given to ancestors through worship gives a sense of their acknowledged nearness and influence as living beings in another world. Nature is revered through the worship of some material objects like trees and rivers. Yet these material objects are believed to exist in order to serve man's purposes -

either as intermediaries between man and the higher power, or as a means of providing man with necessary weapons to attack evil. Thus, medicine men depend on material objects for preventing illness.

Yoruba oral traditions and art are of great cultural value in expressing the dignity of the Yoruba race through self-realization and appreciation. The oral traditions include myths which tell the stories of the legendary past; the liturgies through which children are enjoined to live up to the noble tradition and prestige of their lineage; songs in the form of lyrics, ballads, and minstrelsy from which Yoruba history is built up; and proverbs, adages, and sayings which are a sine qua non of Yoruba speech. In all these, the past, present, and future are united into one whole in affirmations of basic metaphysics.

In the area of concrete form of culture such as art, the Yoruba have contributed much to the world's taste of aesthetics. Their bronze and terra cotta heads and figures have been preserved for about eight hundred years. Even if the lack of writing in Africa pointed to the non-existence of history as some people erroneously claim, it is undeniable that Yoruba art speaks for itself and for the culture it represents. Noble ancestry and the past deeds of heroes have marked out the Yoruba as great war leaders, astute rulers, and kingdom builders. Thus, art in Yorubaland is one avenue for making the Yoruba child recognize the cultural continuity of his group. Self-confidence is a necessary human quality to cultivate if the Yoruba are to be able to

appreciate the beauty of these art forms and their historical importance as source materials. Education will train the child to learn to appreciate Yoruba art through an understanding of the cultural development and heritage. In thus understanding the development, he will realize that the lack of writing alone does not prove the non-existence of history for the Yoruba. Their art, language and oral tradition speak for themselves, and whether records are written or embodied in folklore and tradition, behind them all lie real human history.

CHAPTER I I I

EXISTING PATTERNS OF EDUCATION IN YORUBALAND

The Traditional Education

When the contact of the West with the Yoruba people began, there was the naive belief that education was non-existent in that society. There was a lack of understanding of the fact that education is part of the social organization of any society, whether or not that society has any recognizable institution such as a school. As the contact grew through close studies, so more and more was known of the people, and this knowledge gave rise to an acknowledgement that a type of education does exist. Surely, education can conveniently be classified into formal and informal types. All human societies have both types in varying degrees and all use more of the informal methods in educating the young. This is understandable, since the family unit represents the first agency of education in a child's life.

For the Yoruba society, the lineage is an important agency of education. It is the function of the parents, uncles, aunts, grand parents, and any other member of the lineage to teach the young all lineage customs and traditions - history, beliefs, deities, worship, sanctions and taboos, cults, interpersonal relations, and occupations. As the child grows up in the lineage compound, he is taught, during moon-light evening stories, who the ancestors of the lineage are, their characteristics, and the traits they have passed on to the living members of the lineage.

He watches the father at worship in the ancestral shrine; listens attentively to incantations and praise names of the lineage; learns about lineage deities and the taboos that are observed for them in order to be in the right relationship with them and also with the lineage members and their ancestors. He learns about all the simple etiquette governing the interpersonal relationship in the Yoruba society from the lineage compound. This aspect of training is often very much emphasized because behaviour determines first and foremost, the worth of a person and of the type of home he has come from. At adolescence, the child is introduced into the lineage cults, the secret societies, and the voluntary associations or the egbe of the lineage members. These help the growing child in playing the role of adults and hence in learning to be a responsible member of the lineage.

Farming is a very important occupation in Yorubaland. As soon as a boy is able to walk fairly long distances, he follows his father to the farm, which is usually on a portion of the lineage land. He is taught to do simple jobs such as disintegrating an ant-hill on which fowls will feed. Later, a small hoe and cutlass is made for him, and with these he learns to clear and till the ground and to cultivate crops. Instruction does not end with the labour involved in farming, it also includes the teaching of weather signs, the seasons for planting and harvesting different crops, types of crops and the species of each crop pests, and the destructive animals and reptiles. For children who live along the coast or river banks, the teaching of fishing is systematically

done. The art of swimming, the launching of canoe and sailing, net-making and mending, and net-casting are all part of education.

Apart from farming, there are other traditional occupations such as blacksmithing, wood-working, calabash-carving, and weaving. These form what we might call the industrial arts of Yoruba society. In most of these traditional crafts, tools are many but simple. They are locally made and workers are united by kinship ties. It is thus possible for a whole lineage to share a common working place which they retain for all time. Once a lineage specializes in one craft, its members could not learn or specialize in any other. Even lineages of blacksmiths specialize in the different sub-divisions of blacksmithing such as iron-working, which produces such tools as cutlasses and hoes; brass and silver working; tinkering and gunsmithing. Usually, the oldest craftsman in the lineage is the professional leader. It is also usual for craftsmen to hold lineage and inter-lineage meetings to discuss matters relating to their crafts, fix prices for their finished products, and make rules and regulations to guide professional conduct.

The training of a son in a particular craft is done by a father; or in the case of a child whose father is not a professional, by any other craftsman of the lineage. Every male child within the lineage is supposed to have the craftblood of his lineage in his veins. During the period of training, small boys run errands and do the easier jobs.

Thus, for example, the smith's bellows might be pumped by them, calabashes might be washed, and after each day's work, it is their duty to sweep the floor. As they grow older, so they take part in the more and more complex parts of the art of production. First, they watch an operation with attention and after several examples, they are made to try the operation. They are corrected as they go on, and they repeat the process until they are deemed perfect. The principle of learning to do by doing is nowhere exemplified in traditional societies better than among the Yoruba when training a child in a craft. At the age of about sixteen, a boy is deemed to have had enough knowledge after staying as an apprentice for a period ranging from five to ten years or more. In learning to become a babalawo, or native doctor, for example, it is not unusual to find a child starting his training at the age of about nine and ending at about twenty or twenty-one. After training, a child is set on his own by his father, who supplies him with all necessary equipments for his craft.

Among the Oyo, drumming is a popular occupation and a very well organized art. Apprenticeship takes a long period because, as in divination, there is so much to learn. Drumming includes a knowledge of the literature and history of the lineage. All the wisdom of the past, long genealogies, stories of lineage heroes, battles, famines, triumphs and misfortunes are told in ballad forms, in proverbs, incantations, and in praise names. These are memorized with all their rituals, and displayed in drum sounds and song rituals that bring the past vividly

to the memories of lineage members. In such arts as drumming and divination, only what the memory can carry is handed on to succeeding generations.

The education of girls is not distinctly different from that of boys. Weaving, for example, is as much a craft for boys as it is for girls: the difference in education here lies in the methods used. While men weave the long narrow stretches of cloths of about thirty feet by four inches, women weave in looms that can produce cloths of about six feet by three or two feet, depending on what size is desired. Emphasis in girls' education is,however,on the training for motherhood, which involves the keeping of the home and the preparation of family meals. Right from childhood, therefore, a girl learns to do the duties connected with home-keeping and food preparation. These include the fetching of water from nearby springs or streams, the grinding of pepper and other condiments like melon for family meals, the tending of vegetable crops and the sweeping and cleaning of the family dwelling in the lineage compound. As Yoruba women are reputed for trade, girls can be seen in streets and market places hawking and selling their mothers' minor items of trade. The articles of trade may include indigenous products as well as imported goods. Learning to trade has its educational implications for the girls, particularly as they learn to deal in quantity and retail trade, to charge and bargain on the prices, and to account for all sales.

Traditional education in Yorubaland consists of training all the young by their elders. Observation and imitation are the main methods. Through observation, a child takes note of what the elder does and the stages through which a process has to pass. By imitating, the child learns by doing. Positive and negative measures are used in developing children during their training period. Thus, lavish praise on a child who successfully performs an act is a common feature, while failure resulting from inattention is rebuked. Cultivation and use of the memory is emphasized - in trade when girls learn to give an account of their sales; in drumming where boys learn to render the history of the lineage, and the names of heroes and deities; and in divination where the recital of the odu corpus, a body of incantations connected with Ifa or oracle are learnt.[1] Imitative devices such as dramatization and role playing always go hand in hand with the recitals.

In most African traditional societies, there are initiation bush schools which prepare young people for adult life. The Poro of the

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[1] Ifa is the god of divination from whom people can find out their destinies through special priests of the Ifa who may be called diviners. The incantations which are cited when Ifa is being consulted belong to 256 different Odu or 'characters', each with its own number of incantations. A diviner's power of divination can sometimes be judged by how many incantations of each of the 256 Odu or 'characters' he is able to recite at a time, and with what accuracy he associates particular incantations with their respective Odu. To be a qualified diviner, it is essential for a learner to know and be able to recite correctly, at least, one incantation from each of the 256 Odu.

Mende of Sierra Leone afford a good example of this. Among the Yoruba, however, there is no such bush school and accordingly, there are no formal ceremonies such as take place in the Poro for the performance of puberty rites. Circumcision of boys in Yorubaland and that of girls in some parts, is done at quite an early age of childhood and does not therefore seem to have any relationship with puberty rites. Social education rests solely with lineage members until adolescence, when secret societies, the lineage cult, and the egbe, a voluntary association of lineage members, may take up the duty of socializing the child. The secret societies particularly provide a certain amount of peculiar social knowledge and instruction which non-initiates into the cult cannot have access to. Among these may be mentioned the Ogboni, which has a widespread membership throughout Yorubaland, with its reformed parallel which is known as the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity. There is also the Opa cult which is based in Lagos, the Egungun and Oro which are organized in all towns and villages. Membership is open to all young people and adults except in the case of Oro which does not take in women members. There is however no compulsion in securing membership.

The objects of the secret societies as with the bush schools are to turn boys and girls into full-fledged members of the adult community and to help to maintain the link between the living members of the society with the ancestors. Psychological effect is often secured by the use of the imagination during the ceremonies. Thus, for example, the Poro initiate is made to imagine that he is being swallowed by a spirit as he enters the bush, and as marks are being made on his back which signify the

the spirit's teeth. In egungun of the Yoruba, the robed figures of men give the impression that a deceased ancestor of the lineage is making a temporary re-appearance on earth. In the Oro cult, everything is done to enhance the mysterious and terrifying characteristics of the Oro spirit in the minds of initiates. Boys learn their lessons in this imaginative way and they are thus made to feel that they are absorbing the spirit's qualities. In all the secret societies, there is present an inculcation of a general sense of comradeship. What Kenneth Little has said of the Poro and Sande of the Mende of Sierre Leone is also true of the secret societies and cults in Yorubaland:

> The common bonds of the society unite men with men and women with women as fellow-members over a very wide area, and to an extent which transcends all barriers of family, clan, tribe, and religion. It is this corporate sense arising largely out of the memory of experiences shared at an impressionable age which is mainly responsible for the extra cultural significance of the Poro and Sande . . .[2]

There is a peculiar practice among the Ijebu and Egba whereby chiefs are selected from the senior members of the Ogboni. To be a chief in these places then, one has to become first, a member of this secret society. The implication of this is that many young people grow up in these places as members of the Ogboni cult.

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[2]Kenneth A. Little quoted in Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane, "Old Roots in African Education", America's Emerging Role in Overseas Education, Syracuse University School of Education, 1962. p.112.

Throughout Yorubaland, the egungun and Oro are organized according to lineage. The egungun is believed to be a benevolent ancestral spirit to which worship is offered at an appropriate shrine. There is also the egbe, an association of lineage members which has taken on the functions of agesets in most parts of Yorubaland. Usually, people of similar age in a town or village form an egbe. They meet periodically to discuss matters relating to the interests of members. They hold feasts, and dance round the streets when any of their members get married or during such Christian festivals as Christmas and Easter. Each egbe chooses its own patron from among the important chiefs in the town. Whenever there is any dispute between members, reconciliation is attempted, first, at the meeting of the egbe, and only when this fails can the matter be taken to lineage elders or to the court as a last resort. Once a child reaches adolescence he is free to join any secret society as well as become a member of his egbe. And since membership in secret societies, is not compulsory or even obligatory, he may just belong to an egbe. The lineage, the secret societies, and the egbe, are thus agencies of education among the Yoruba, from childhood to adulthood. Marriage and the birth of children are usually the criteria of status in every compound; therefore, as soon as a person gets married and starts to have his own children, he becomes an adult in his own right, one qualified to educate the young.

The Yoruba traditional system of education trains children in building up attitudes of group sympathy. The individual thinks of himself always in relation to his lineage group, and behaves in such a way as to reflect the dignity of his lineage. The ideal of mutual helpfulness

and cooperation within the group is always striven after. The Yoruba believes in the perpetuation of the lineage; the corporate spirit of the group is inculcated so that the child may grow in the awareness of maintaining the lineage life. Thus, a man can only farm in the lineage land; traditional crafts are practised according to lineage organization; secret societies such as the egungun and the oro, and voluntary association, such as the egbe, are organized along lineage lines; adults build their new houses on the lineage land; and in all things, the lineage is given a conspicuous part. On the other hand, lineage members support its loyal members in all they do - when building new houses, they do not only have their portion of land free, they also have free labour; in conferring chieftaincy titles, only those members who are put up by the lineage are considered; in ceremonies connected with marriage and death, the whole members share in the expenditure involved, by the contribution of money, and by joining every other member in making the same style of dress with the same type of material. This dress is called aso ebi.[3] Through traditional education, the Yoruba child develops a strong sense of responsibility to the lineage group, and this in turn helps the lineage life to continue.

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[3] Aso ebi is the term used when the same material is used in sewing dresses for lineage members. As many members as are in the lineage wear outfits made from the same cloth to celebrate ceremonies connected with marriage, chieftaincy titles, and death. This signifies the strength of loyalty which lineage members have towards one another on the one hand, and all towards the lineage head, on the other.

Formal Education

Formal education was introduced into Nigeria through such Yoruba towns as Badagry, Lagos, and Abeokuta in the 1840's. The Christian missions who introduced it had their emphasis on evangelization. Obviously, the teaching of Christianity involved some education, since reading and writing were necessary tools if the gospel was to be spread through Bible reading. In this respect, native Catechists and Pastors have to be prepared, and to be effective, they required some degree of literary skills through education. Thus, when education was brought to Yorubaland, it consisted mainly of schooling through which competence in literary skills was to be gained. Moreoever, since the pioneers of formal education were missionaries who taught against the background of their European culture, both the curriculum and objective of the school were European. In this way, Yoruba formal education failed to represent the total process of social and cultural learning.

The development of trade and government further intensified the need for missionary activities in education. Both government and commercial agents needed personnel for keeping ledgers, clerical work, and minor administrative duties. The missionaries themselves needed teachers for their expanding school system. Thus, we see that the type of manpower needed by colonial government, commercial agents, and the missionaries, gave grounds fot the '3 R's' to become the paramount preoccupation of the content of education. This was the beginning of

academic education which to this day still claims the attention of Yoruba schools. It is reflected in the bookish orientation of the curriculum, as opposed to vocational orientation.

Government did not take any active part in education for quite a long time.[4] And when it did, through a system of giving grants in support of mission education, what was done had the effect of confirming and perpetuating the curriculum in its bookish orientation. Grants were given to schools according to how well they performed in public examinations that tested abilities in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. In such a system, schools in remote areas, with no facilities and minimum staffing, could hardly ever benefit from the grants. Although the Yoruba are essentially urban, yet it is true to say that even today, most of these urban settlements are rural in character. In the earlier period, therefore, it is probable that most schools which were located in places outside Lagos, Abeokuta, and Ibadan, were in rural areas, and suffered accordingly from lack of funds from the government. But more important was the fact that because payment of grants to a school depended on its performance in public external examination, teachers deliberately emphasized the preparation of children for passing examinations instead of educating them in literary as well as vocational skills. We can thus see

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[4]The first school in Yorubaland was established in 1842, but the first government Ordinance which laid down the rates and conditions for grants-in-aid was passed in 1887.

why it was difficult to give education the type of rural bias it deserved, following the report of the Phelps-Stokes Commission.

It might be important to note that government policy was in support of missionary evangelization, which tended to remove the child from his culture. Lord Lugard[5] in his The Dual Mandate (p.437) said, "Islam carries with it its own religious sanctions, while Animism and Fetish of the pagan represents no system of ethics and no principle of conduct." Here is a contrast between the Moslem North of Nigeria and the 'pagan' South; and the statement, coming as it does from the pen of the first Governor-General of a united Nigeria, suggests that government policy was in favour of replacing traditional customs with western culture. Perhaps it is against this background that we should interpret his other suggestion from the same source that elementary and secondary government schools should be headed by Britons who will set standards for missionary schools "by the stimulus of living examples." It is the examples of these Britons, the suggestion continues, "which will form the character and ideals of the boys and introduce the English Public School Code of honour." By implication, government schools were to make English gentlemen of the indigenous children as they developed, and if we

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[5]Lord Frederick D. Lugard became the Governor-General of Nigeria following his successful amalgamation of the Northern Protectorate and Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1914. His whole philosophy and practice of government he has expressed in his The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa: Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1922.

note that the few government schools served as models for all other schools in the way the former were staffed and equipped, it would seem correct to suggest that in an attempt to imitate government schools and their products, mission schools deliberately attempted to remove children from their cultural background.

From the beginning, there seemed to be no attempt made at knowing what already existed in the Yoruba social system because of the general belief that there could be no education in primitive societies. Taking into account the need of that time, it was perhaps difficult to give anything but a bookish curriculum. It was the type the missionary and government pioneers in education were used to. What was not taken into consideration, however, was that in the British society of the day, the industrial revolution was already thriving and was accordingly making demands that everyone should have an access to an education that would make possible intelligent participation in work and government; whereas in Yorubaland, we still had a pre-literate society whose development required a formal education that would reflect the worthwhile values of the society. Unfortunately, social science subjects like Sociology and Anthropology had not been given the emphasis they now claim in relation to education, so that school administrators made little or no use of them in planning education for the Yoruba.

As it happened, rote learning resulted from an education which was based on a foreign culture and which was producing men and women whose status depended on the examinations they passed. The result was that

the development of a critical spirit which was most needed in a society that was bedeviled by superstition and magic was lacking. The rise in the economic status of the few educated young ones further lent support to that type of education. The contribution these educated people made towards the well-being of their family came to represent security and social insurance, and a new status developed for them. The fact that the education they received had been bookish did not matter so long as its literary skills helped in giving a new prestige to the families that were lucky to have people among the products of the school system. In this way, economic and social security helped in perpetuating a bookish education, leaving no thought for the future of a society whose development would depend on the knowledge of practical skills of vocational technical education. What was more, those who had passed through a period of formal schooling tended to be contemptuous of the indigeneous culture. Thus, the defects of a bookish education combined with the learning of new habits associated with the English gentleman to make formal education a completely different process from that of the Yoruba tradition.

The Phelps-Stokes Commission and the Advisory Committee

The cleavage between formal education and the indigeneous tradition did not pass un-noticed both in Britain and among the educators in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. A British Imperial Edueation Conference was called

I thought this is the focal study! See page

in 1912 to discuss possible reforms, but the imminence of the first world war diverted all efforts in Britain towards the preparation for war. It was not until after the war that the problem of African education was re-opened. This time, however, the lead came, not from Britain, but from the United States. In 1919, the Phelps-Stokes Commission on African education made its way out to West Africa. Three years later, it produced its first report, to be followed in 1925 by a second, which is on East Africa. The Commission's report placed emphasis on the adaptation of education to the natural and social environment of the child. This obviously implied that education should be adapted to culture. What followed was the introduction of local bias into the teaching of subjects like History and Geography, the illustration of subjects like Nature Study and Health with local materials, the recurrence of Agriculture in the school time table, with the hope of making farmers out of school products. The teaching Of Yoruba as a language was introduced during this time. Furthermore, the report pointed out the lack of organization and supervision in the schools, and the lack of cooperation between government, mission, and commerce in the development of education, but these are not the direct concern of our work here.

The Phelps-Stokes report was followed soon after by what came to be known as the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies.[6]

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[6]This name was first applied in 1929, although the Committee had been established in 1923.

This body was still in existence by 1961, but it carried on its work through the British Government Department of Technical Cooperation. From 1925 on, the Committee started to publish papers on African education. In that year, for example, it published a paper entitled Education Policy in British Tropical Africa. In 1935 it published The Education of African Communities. The main emphasis of the Advisory Committee was the adaptation of education to native life. Thus, Margaret Read quotes from the policy paper as follows:

> Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various peoples, conserving as far as possible all sound and healthy elements in the fabric of their social life; adapting them where necessary to changed circumstances and progressive ideas, as an agent of national growth and evolution. Its aim should be to render the individual more efficient in his or her condition of life, whatever it may be, and to promote the advancement of the community as a whole through the improvement of agriculture, the development of native industries, the improvement of health, the training of people in the management of their own affairs, and the inculcation of true ideals of citizenship and service . . . The first task of education is to raise the standard alike of, character and efficiency of the bulk of the people.

The authors of the 1925 policy paper focussed attention on what they considered the chief task in the idea of adapting education to indigenous culture. To quote again what Margaret Read takes from the same source,

> The central difficulty in the problem lies in finding ways to improve what is sound in indigenous tradition. Education should strengthen the feeling of responsibility to the tribal community, and at the same time should strengthen will power; should make and keep the conscience sensitive both to moral and intellectual truth; and should impart some power of discriminating between good and evil, between reality and superstition. Since contact with civilization, and even education itself must necessarily tend to weaken tribal authority and the sanctions of

> existing beliefs, and in view of the all-prevailing belief in the supernatural which affects the whole life of the African it is essential that what is good in the old beliefs and sanctions should be strengthened and what is defective could be replaced.[7]

The Phelps-Stokes report and the papers submitted periodically by the Advisory Committee formed the basis of educational reforms in Yorubaland until the attainment of independence in Nigeria. And even since independence, there has been no change in the education system, so that much still remains to be done, although the problem of adapting education to indigenous culture had been re-stated with vigour in the Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa held in Addis Ababa in 1961. No doubt, the Phelps-Stokes report promised well, but failed to yield the desired results for many reasons. Among these may be mentioned the lack of research into African tribal societies and history. As a result, knowledge has been lacking in traditional history and customs, and this has resulted in the inability to teach with any considerable degree of accuracy about the cultural groups of Africa. It was not until Western Nigeria made a five year development plan for the period 1955-1960 that an amount of £40,000 was voted for the first time for cultural research into Yoruba history and tradition.[8] This means that

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[7]Margaret Read, Studies in Education: Education and Cultural Tradition: London, Evans Brothers Limited, 1950, p.8

[8]S.O. Biobaku, "The Yoruba Historical Research Scheme", West African Journal of Education, Vol. II, No. 1, February 1958, p.9

there has been such a serious insufficiency of authentic knowledge that it was difficult to talk about the Yoruba effectively. Moreoever, both missionary and government school administrators were foreigners who would have required some knowledge of Yoruba social system and pattern of settlements in planning education. So too, it would have been necessary to make teachers aware of the intentions of school administrators and perhaps organize some sort of in-service education to enable teachers to make themselves familiar with such information as would have been necessary to carry out the educational policy without much difficulty. Neither of these was done and the neglect of these possibilities by the report gave rise to the grave misconception that we find in the report that the teaching of rural agriculture, or of Yoruba history, was in itself enough to enable a child to grow with his cultural values in mind. It is one thing for a child to have a smattering knowledge of his local area, or even of the local crafts, it is quite another thing to plan an education with a specific aim of making the child feel conscious of the fact that he is part and parcel of his society. The demands of education had been economic; government, commerce, and even missionaries needed personnel and looked to the school products for them; so, the aim of education became primarily utilitarian both for the pioneers of education and for the Yoruba families who benefited from such an education. It is hardly surprising that up till now, education continues to be valued only from its utilitarian point of view. And so the Banjo Commission appointed to review the educational system of Western Nigeria in 1960-61 remarks:

> There is a tendency for the young primary school leavers to migrate from rural areas to the towns in search of "pen pushing" jobs which they are not even trained for. This is in spite of the inclusion of Nature Study and Gardening and Health and in some cases Rural Science in the syllabus.[9]

Alongside the fact that research has always been lacking, and therefore knowledge has not been sufficiently authentic about the Yoruba, there has also been the problem of finding teachers who would teach the relevant subjects relating to Yoruba studies. The Phelps-Stokes report emphasized rural bias in education, but there were no teachers who knew enough about rural agriculture to make the subject interesting and challenging. This is evident too in the crafts which children were supposed to learn during the handwork period. What was meant to train children in appreciating their cultural environment ended up with building an impression that Agriculture and Hand-work were meant to fill up gaps as routine subjects on the school time table, and the periods for them became the time to play truancy among children. Once children developed inertia for those subjects which were meant to develop in them the spirit of continuity and of a healthy attitude for manual work, it was inevitable that children in Lagos, for example, should prefer to hear

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[9] Report of the Commission Appointed to review the educational system of Western Nigeria: Ibadan, Government of Western Nigeria, December 1960 to January 1961, p.4. This Commission sat under the Chairmanship of Canon S.A. Banjo and its report is popularly referred to as the Banjo Commission.

about Florence Nightingale, "the lady of the lamp", than to know why the popular Tinubu square in the city had been named after Madam Tinubu, or why boys in Oyo should prefer to hide away in the latrines, rather than learn to carve calabashes.

The few people in Africa who had some type of formal education had also believed in the superiority myth of the white race. Accordingly, these people tinged their comments on the Phelps-Stokes Report with a political bias and claimed that the West which had achieved great power and wealth had done so through a bookish and classical type of education. The recommendation of the report was thus viewed as an attempt to withhold from African people the type of education that was the secret of Western supremacy. By implication, this meant that children in traditional societies such as the Yoruba can only achieve power and wealth through academic and classical type of education. The situation in the schools in Yorubaland today reflect this position.

The Phelps-Stokes Commissioners seem to have taken too much for granted. They held the traditional nineteenth century view, for example, that Africa would have to pass through distinct stages of social evolution in her development. This implied that there was a belief in the general process of development which every primitive race had to pass through; but events that followed proved that changes were taking place at a faster rate than the report had anticipated. To give an illustration, the commissioners had in mind an education for societies whose members were largely farmers engaged in food-cropping and which advanced only

gradually. This was not the case in Yorubaland, where people lived in urban settlement and where cash-cropping and trade were pursued side by side with food-cropping. The nature of Yoruba settlements thus made impossible the establishment of the Jeanes School[10] of the Southern United States, which the commissioners had recommended for both East and West African communities.

As we have already noted, the Advisory Committee published papers periodically in which British colonial policy in education appeared. These papers were always penetrating, liberal, and far-reaching in their views; but like the Phelps-Stokes Report, they too produced few practical results. The economic depression of the 1930's interrupted the programmes and consequently there was a shortage of personnel and money to carry out the plans. This apart, there seemed to have been, right from the beginning, a general lack of interest in investing in education on the part of the colonial government. As a result, educational facilities were inadequate and there was no incentive for giving teachers the right type of training that could remedy the shortcomings which the Advisory Committee was opposing in African education.

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[10] In the Jeanes school, the teacher and his wife divided their time between school work and community education. Thus, they were the model farmer and farmer's wife as well as school teachers. The American negro of the Southern United States passed through such schools which were founded privately in order to solve the problems of inequalities for negroes.

Missionary educators tended to emphasize the attitudes of piety and devotion in their teachers. Consequently, there was too little of genuine professional standards and skills taken into consideration, either in employment pre-requisites, or in assessing efficiency on the job. The results was that poor salaries were paid in the hope that those teachers who had a sense of piety and devotion would perhaps not mind their poor lot as they were building "treasures" for themselves in heaven. People of talent thus started to run away from teaching, and up till now, it is quite common for trained teachers to leave their schools in order to seek employment in commercial firms and government departments.

A Brief Comment on the Present Situation

Today, education in Yorubaland neither reflects much training in cultural identity nor succeeds in building healthy attitudes for manual work. The six year free primary schools tend to be more successful in remaining part and parcel of Yoruba communities because their buildings, staff, and pupils are in the community. Moreover, the Yoruba language is taught as a school subject alongside English, although the latter gains greater emphasis as the child advances. At the secondary level, we find a complete break between the home and the school. Most secondary schools are boarding schools built at a distance from children's homes. Each secondary school is thus run as a self-contained little community with traditions of the English grammar school firmly entrenched. Their daily routines are usually full of activities that bear no relationship to the

Yoruba way of life.[11] The subjects taught, and the methods of teaching are determined by external examinations with rigid requirements for certification. Status among secondary schools is determined by how well a school performs in the West African School Certificate examination which draws its examiners and markers from England and the West African countries of Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. The choice of a career after secondary education is determined by how well an individual performs in the external examinations. Thus, we see that even now, there is no room for developing a cultural identity in the Yoruba secondary schools, whose rate of expansion[12] is such that their influence in promoting cultural disloyalty to Yoruba tradition is significant.

Although there is an attempt by primary schools to make pupils feel a sense of belonging to their communities, once this primary education is completed, and a child enters into the secondary school, he starts a completely new life. The fact that secondary schools are academic creates the difficulties of finding clerical jobs in the government departments, and in commercial firms. What the Phelps-Stokes report and

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[11]Traditional customs and practices are usually banned both in boarding life and in classrooms. Even Yoruba as a language must not be spoken since by a school rule English is the means of communication.

[12]In 1955, there were 73 Secondary Grammar Schools in Western Nigeria; in 1960 there were 167, and in 1963 there were 212. We should note that these figures include schools in what is now Mid-Western Nigeria.

the policy papers of the Advisory committee wanted to avoid but failed in doing as regards the education of children in West African communities can be described as the intellectual rejection of the local culture and the resulting dominance of alien culture in the schools, and the discouragement of vocational education. Even as recent as 1963 in Western Nigeria, statistics give the figures of the post-primary educational institutions as follows: Secondary Modern Schools, 699; Secondary Grammar Schools, 212; Grade Three Teacher Training Colleges, 53; Grade Two Teachers' colleges, 35; and Vocational Schools, 5.[13] From the above figures, we can see the vast difference in number, between academic secondary schools and vocational schools. We can thus reasonably conclude that the academic nature of the school curricula has made no room for non-academic students. In any society, we have to note, there will always be a few students who will aspire to the university and who would therefore need special academic preparation. Then there will be the majority of students who would usually take up employment without necessarily taking a degree. School education ought to render such people fit for work in administration, industry, or commerce. At present, Yoruba schools fall short of giving these services and in this sense we may conclude that education is not preparing the Yoruba child for life in his community. And we might even be correct to

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[13] Annual Abstract of Education Statistics 1962 and 1963 combined: ibadan, Ministry of Economic Planning and Community Development, January 1964, p.1

generalize for other cultural groups in Nigeria if we claim that education does not take into consideration the children's own environment.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION FOR CONTINUITY IN THE YORUBA CULTURE

Education and the Yoruba Ideal Child

The principle of traditional education in Yorubaland rests, as we have noted, on the preparation of children for adult roles in order that the lineage might be preserved. In developing young people, therefore, the first emphasis is on character-training, and hence on the ability to identify good and evil as society sees it. Although no organized effort is made to plan a child's training, yet the Yoruba are concerned with the development of children into good human beings, knowing that only when there are good individuals can there be good citizens. Secondly, through training in the manual arts of farming and of crafts, it is always hoped that they will become skilled workers, who will maintain the physical life of the lineageand of the Yoruba society as a result.

Formal education, however, always makes a deliberate organized effort through the school system to train children for adult roles, and therefore it stands a better chance than traditional education to implant in children the ideas and habits that would help them to develop into good workers and also good citizens. Education for continuity should thus have two sides, both of which should operate side by side if formal education is to produce the Yoruba ideal child, an Omoluwabi. The first, which is character training and citizenship,

comes under out-of-class activities, while the second, the development of skills through the knowledge of subject matter, is the concern of class-room instruction.

Class-room Instruction

Class-room instruction in Yoruba schools is largely academic, as we have noted, and as a result, the contents of school subjects are unrelated to children's social and natural environment. Education, we know, cannot be separated from the cultural tradition, because the language of instruction, the reading materials provided, the script in which writing is learned, the illustrative content of subject-matter - all lie within the field of cultural tradition. From the moment a Yoruba child enters the primary school, however, he starts on a career in which the school and the home speak in different languages. To give two simple illustrations: Arithmetic is taught as a compulsory subject in all primary schools, but what is taught at times may have no relationship with what children know in their homes. Thus farthings, florins, and crowns are taught to children without meaning since these do not occur in Nigerian currency or coinage. Even now, pupils' text books include these unfamiliar coins in the content of what is taught when simple calculation on money is being introduced. There is an equivalent of small coins like the farthing in everyday use in the homes - Onini. Ten of these make one penny and by association, these have now taken on the name farthings; but when learning at school, children say "Four farthings make one penny," they never say, "Ten farthings

or Onini make one penny." Yet, it is the latter they are familiar with at home. In Reading, which is a component of English, the same conflict arises. Class text-books contain passages describing things unknown to Yoruba children, with the result that, when studying new words, both teacher and pupils many times find words about which no idea comes to mind. Such words are usually glossed over, and consequently children are often unable to develop the habit of speaking and writing in English even after six years of primary education. Non-functional literacy is thus a common characteristic of most primary school products even now.

In secondary schools too, learning by rote is common because of the lack of association between subject matter and children's background. In English, for example, literature texts are all chosen from English novels, plays and anthologies. While it may be true that many African writings still fall below the average standard of literary scholarship, there is no doubt that a few good ones exist which are based on African and even Yoruba background. To name a few, Amos Tutuola and Wole Soyinka are accredited Yoruba writers now, and all their works are based on the Yoruba culture in which they themselves have grown. Again no Yoruba history and tradition is taught. Although the Geography of Nigeria is taught, yet no emphasis is laid upon the local features with which children are familiar. The result is that even when they see such features, they are often unable to identify them. Thus, a child might be able to define a waterfall with the example of

Niagara Falls in North America, yet be unable to identify a fall in a local river. The fact that children see these features in their environment, but are unable to identify them readily not only is an evidence of rote learning, it also shows that the knowledge they acquire is non-functional. C.J. Classen aptly quotes a Nigerian student whose name he does not disclose:

> Broadly, the problem I wish to raise is the question of the inability of an African student sincerely to appreciate certain types of English Literature without the lurking feeling that it is all a colossal deceit. This difficulty is due mainly to a difference in culture, and in bridging the gap, there is a tendency, I fear, of one becoming unAfricanised without becoming English. Being so much the study of a culture, I feel something, I don't know what, ought to be done, to relate it to African background and culture. Otherwise, what are the values one should expect from studying English; is it simply the ability to make expert criticisms of, say, Shakespeare?[1]

The important point here is that the standards a British or American student acquires during the course of his education are those he is made to adopt and were developed by his own people, scholars who have the same background, upbringing, and ways of thinking. In the case of the Yoruba student, this is not so.

The academic nature of education in Yoruba schools does not develop in children the right skills in making use of knowledge. This

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[1]In C.J. Classen, "Quo Vadis, West African Education?" West African Journal of Education. Vol III, No. 1, February 1959, p. 22. Dr. Classen was a lecturer in the Department of Classics at the University of Ibadan during this time.

is contrary to what takes place in the Yoruba homes where training in skills is undertaken in practical situations. Thus, an apprentice diviner goes through a long period of training watching, imitating, and memorizing given assignments not only to learn to be able to recite the incantations associated with the different Odu, but also to be able to interpret the Ifa or oracle symbols in order to find out whatever is likely to cause any disruption in the social order, and hence make the appropriate propritiation to the gods concerned. This is functional education, which is lacking in formal education. Rote learning might be reduced considerably if school syllabuses were redrawn so that many of the things children learn were structured largely against their background. In this respect what is most needed is the writing of new text-books to agree with the new syllabuses. Yoruba scholars who are interested should be trained in the art of text-book writing so that they might be able to relate what pupils read in their texts to what obtains in their homes and environment. This is particularly necessary at the primary level of education where new texts in Arithmetic, Reading, History, and Geography should require the most urgent attention. At the secondary level materials in English language, comprehension, and literature should include writings with Yoruba and African background in general. Also, textbooks should be necessary at both the elementary and secondary levels where a new subject matter has been found necessary as the next paragraph shows.

Apart from making available the right type of text-books, the curriculum should be revised so that a subject like English will continue to receive its usual emphasis in instructional programmes, some subjects would be given a new emphasis, some would be amalgamated, and an addition of one subject would be made. In order to understand other Nigerians, the Yoruba child would first be trained to understand himself and his culture. This would best be done through what he is taught in the class-rooms, and this is why subjects like Literature, Yoruba, and Art, would receive a new emphasis; why subjects like history, geography, and civics would simply be called Social Studies, particularly at the primary level; and why Yoruba Studies at the primary level or Nigerian Studies at the secondary level would become a new addition. Amalgamation would help children to relate geography, history, and civics as well as it would help to create room for a new subject like Yoruba or Nigerian Studies. This new addition would form a necessary background to a subject like African Studies, which is offered now as a university subject in all Nigerian universities.

English is a compulsory subject in Yoruba schools. This is necessary because in Nigeria there are three major languages and other numerous dialects. In the absence of a national language, it is only wise to make English compulsory in the curriculum so that children may be proficient in speaking it and writing it, and may therefore use it to communicate with fellow Nigerians who are non-Yoruba. In this way, it will continue to be a unifying bond in Nigeria. Secondly, an

independent Nigeria would continue to need the friendship of English-speaking world; therefore, for international understanding, it would be necessary for a Yoruba child to study the language at school. But when at the secondary level English Literature is introduced, it would be advisable as we have suggested, to select texts from both English and Nigerian or African authors. Nigerians like Tutuola, Soyinka, Clarke, Ekwensi, Achebe, Nzeku are already acclaimed novelists and playwrights. Beginning with the works of those of them who are Yoruba, the child may go on to study the works of other Nigerians so that, alongside Nigerian studies, a new insight into Yoruba and other Nigerian cultures might be gained.

Yoruba language demands a new emphasis in the school curriculum. Every child should be trained to speak and write in Yoruba fluently. Along with English, Yoruba should be a compulsory subject for all children at the primary and secondary level. This will enable the development of talent for those who would like to pursue it as a university study. Children who write Yoruba composition on topics from the sciences might find it inevitable to coin new words to portray their ideas and thus demonstrate in a practical way one way in which a language can grow. A proper appreciation of the language, would on the other hand, enable children to realise that some words lose their exact meaning through translation. A Chinese scholar has been quoted as saying:

> I always have two different meanings when I describe an object in Chinese and English. Some of the Chinese words which give a vivid interpretation of world-view cannot be found in the English language. Neither can they be accurately translated in English to mean the same thing. I prefer to write my poems in Chinese,

> and I always feel I have said what I have wanted to say in the way I have wanted to say it.[2]

A Yoruba scholar would say exactly these same words: for, the wise sayings, the incantations, and the ritual songs of the drummers can never be rendered in the English language "to mean the same thing". Some of the customary practices of the Yoruba have no equivalent vocabularies in the English language, and only a teaching of the language can implant into the minds of the young people the significance of these social customs.

Although Yoruba as a language is one of the few African languages that has its own literature, yet it does not command a corresponding popularity in the schools. As far back as 1931, for example, it was approved as a School Certificate subject, and along with this approval, it was also accepted as a subject that could exempt a candidate from some language requirements, if passed. One would have thought that by now, students, particularly those of Yoruba origin in secondary grammar schools, would be taking a full advantage of the opportunity offered. This is not the case. Latin has continued to enjoy a prestige unrivalled by any modern language. While it may be true that the absence of properly trained teachers has contributed to this situation, the fact that up till about four years ago, Yoruba was not a university subject in Nigeria ~~which~~ gives an indication that no one has been interested in developing this language as one of status

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[2]K. Ampom Darkwa, "Education for Cultural Integrity: The Ghanaian Case", Teachers College Record Vol. 64, No. 1, October 1962, p.110

and of scholarship. This is perhaps why no Yoruba specialists have been trained for the schools. Like all modern languages, it has to be emphasized that Yoruba is a living language, not dead; and therefore it is a social instrument of a most vital character.

Accordingly therefore, Yoruba should find a vigorous emphasis in the university curriculum in Nigerian universities. A study of the language at the University would help to solve the problem of finding scholars of Yoruba language and tradition for the schools. With such a renewed emphasis, it would be easy to train teachers for both secondary and primary school levels. In order to make a maximum use of a Yoruba graduate teacher, for example, it might be feasible to suggest that whoever is going to study Yoruba at the University level should also offer English, Sociology, and African Studies. This will enable such a teacher to teach the language efficiently, and also help with the teaching of Yoruba Studies or Nigerian Studies as the case may be in the primary and secondary schools. The development of new texts whose content would be based on materials from Yorubaland would be easier done at the University centres of language studies. As has been suggested earlier, speaking and writing will be the emphasis of Yoruba at the primary school levels. This will yield place to the emphasis on Yoruba literature as well as a study of the language at the secondary level.

Art is another way of expressing cultural identity. For the Yoruba, the plastic arts as well as music and dance have been expressive.

There is hardly the concept of art for art's sake among the Yoruba - for aesthetic factors intermingle with the religious, economic, political and social aspects of culture. While music and dance are very popular among young educated people, plastic art is not - and this is so inspite of the fact that the Yoruba bronze and terra-cotta heads and figures have been known for over eight hundred years, and have attracted many visitors from all over the world. It is desirable that formal education should develop children's interest in Yoruba art; for it is a way by which they can learn about the continuity of Yoruba culture, as much as it is a means of encouraging creative skill. Like language, it enables us to express an idea. Thus a work of art is judged not only by the skill with which it is accomplished, or the quality of its form and design, but also by the idea it expresses. In Yoruba art, then, we can teach the child to appreciate his people's idea of beauty as well as understand their values.

Art in elementary schools takes the form of drawing, handwork, and in very few cases, painting. "The Syllabus," in the words of the Banjo Commission, "is a reasonably good one, but it is very rarely followed by teachers".[3] Among the reasons for this inattention we may mention the lack of interest on the part of teachers. Even the few who seem to be interested are not usually encouraged. For example, it is during the period of art that pupils are usually sent out by

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[3]Report of the Commission appointed to review the educational system of Western Nigeria: Ibadan, Government of Western Nigeria, December 1960 to January 1961. p. 72.

headmasters to repair broken fences, weed paths, or sweep the school surroundings. Also, the subject is sub-divided into Drawing, Handwork, and Painting, each having about thirty minutes allocated to it on different days of the week. This makes any creative work on the part of the children impossible. They cannot always complete the work they start during each period; and yet, a work of art is best done when the doer starts and finishes with the same inspiration. As far as enlisting pupils interest is concerned during class-room lessons, it would be useful if Art were to remain unbroken. Handwork might be removed from Art lessons to general workshop period, during which time older pupils would concentrate on crafts like carving and weaving of cane chairs, while the younger ones learn to handle the various tools and their uses.

The problem of finding interested teachers might be solved by training Art teachers in special Art Training Centres which could be separate departments of Trade Schools. Every teacher need not be an artist, but there are bound to be some who would have aptitude for it. Such sould be trained as specialist teachers to handle Art in schools. In most of the schools where Art is taught, teachers hardly know how to appreciate a work of art. This is one reason why both teachers and pupils think of the subject as unimportant, and as a means of filling in the gap in the school time table. Departments of Art should flourish in the Universities where qualified Art teachers could be further trained either as full-time students, or through in-

service education. The normal teacher training centres should be staffed with specialist art teachers with university diplomas who would help to train interested student-teachers in training. At present, what is done in training colleges is that student-teachers are asked to work on their own Art and Crafts projects so that at the end of the course they have something to show as an evidence that they have worked. The interest of individual students is not considered, and no emphasis is put on the fact that the finished products to be shown at the end of the course must be students' own work. Thus, it is not unusual for students to buy finished works of Art and Crafts when they go on holidays which they keep neatly till they are asked for the year's work in this field. Training of Art teachers should be done only by those who are specially trained, and student-teachers in Art and Crafts should be those who are interested in the subject.

Yoruba Studies in the primary school, and Nigerian Studies in the secondary school, should be added to the school curriculum. This subject should combine topics on Yoruba history, social customs, religious beliefs and practices at the primary level. At the secondary level, the main emphasis on Nigerian studies should be a study of the social system of the Yoruba alongside those of the other component cultural units of Nigerian federal governments. Thus, the Ibo, Hausa, and Edo would each in turn be studied for the purpose of identifying similarities and dissimilarities in the social organization and customary practices of the people. By the time a child would be leaving a

secondary school, for example, he should be able to analyse the common values in these different systems in Nigeria. It is necessary to emphasize practices common to all cultural units because it is upon these that the idea of a common loyalty to the nation would be based. Thus, for example, an emphasis on ancestor worship as a common practice might be related to the notion of land as an inalienable property which gives everything we live on and takes us back at death to live forever more with the ancestors of the lineage and tribe. Thus children will know why land is held to be sacred throughout Nigeria. Other notions such as belief in a spirit world, good or evil destiny, and the belief that some children may be born, die, and be reborn[4] by their parents are all explainable if they understand the practice of ancestor-worship.

At present, no cultural unit seems to see beyond its nose, and the result is extensive and intensive tribal bickerings in all spheres of Nigerian life. The teaching of a subject like Yoruba Studies would enable children to beable to sift facts from fables in Yoruba history and religion, it would help them to understand why certain practices take the form they take, and hence to see why many traditional practices need to be retained, and it would revive a general interest in

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[4]Among the Yoruba, a child who finally lives only after the mother had suffered more than one loss of the infant baby is called Abiku, literally meaning "born to die". The implication is that the child can neither remain here on earth, nor stay in the spirit world; so it travels to and fro, coming to the world through birth, going back to the spirit world through death, and continuing to be born, to die, and to be reborn, until its evil destiny is removed. Then it lives, taking on the name Abiku.

such cultural areas ~~such~~ as art, music, dance, history, religion, anthropology, sociology, and political ideas; and these would form the basis for later studies, particularly at the university level where African Studies is already becoming popular. It is perhaps time to do away with the notion that certain subjects can only be studied at the universities. There seems to be no reason for this long-standing idea, and its persistence in Nigeria has contributed largely to the break which exists between the children and their home background.

Out-of-class activities

As we have noted earlier on in this chapter, the function of out-of-class activities lies mainly in character training and the development of good citizenship. Character is not learned in textbooks; it is developed in individual children over a period of years. The main influences in the formation of good character are home life and environment, schooling and companionship. At present, home life and environment hardly contribute to the development of children's character in Yorubaland. The reason for this is not far to seek. Among the influences of English education in this part of Nigeria is the boarding house system in secondary grammar schools. These schools being boarding schools stand outside the social life and structure of the Yoruba community. The school traditions they maintain are the traditions of English grammar schools. The result is that the school and the home do not pursue complementary objectives for child develop-

ment. In the schools, time tables are full of activities which are not based on familiar practices - the sports, the societies, and the method of communication. English, for example, must be spoken in preference to Yoruba. Thus, the Banjo Commission hardly overstates the point in saying that -

> The present system, whereby a proportion of the most talented children are drawn off at the tender age of twelve to undergo a form of education which is strictly academic, in separation often from their peers, their brothers, and their sisters, has many disadvantages, including the creation of a number of unnecessary cleavages in human society.[5]

If only because of these "cleavages in human society", it is enough to suggest that the boarding school system is a luxury which Yoruba parents cannot afford. The same commission argues from a financial point of view, about creating secondary educational opportunities along the line suggested by the Ashby Commission. It remarks,

> If we accept the figures contained in this Report as a guide, then, within a few years, the Western region must have, in its School Certificate classes, not less than 9,000 pupils as compared with the present figure of 1,000, and have in the Sixth forms not less than 3,000 pupils as compared with the present figure of perhaps 600. This would mean colossal expenditure on the provision of new classrooms and dormitories and considerable expenditure by parents in boarding and tuition fees.[6]

We conclude that the boarding system should be discontinued because it creates unnecessary cleavages without training character and citizenship along traditional lines, and it is too costly for parents who have children in secondary schools. In view of the necessary expansion in secondary education, the government of Western Nigeria

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[5] Report of the Commission appointed to review the educational

would find it too costly to maintain schools according to the boarding school system.

The house system is another important influence on school education in Yorubaland. In it, a school is usually divided into a number of houses, depending on its population, each with the name of an important figure in the town or area or in some cases the name of a colour. Inter-house competitions in sports and athletics are then organized once a year, with the school shield going to the house with the highest scores. This idea of living and doing things according to a house system is not something strange to a Yoruba child, and as such, it would be desirable to retain it. The lineage compound often contained all members belonging to it. A town or village is often a collection of lineage compounds. In the school, the word "house" should be a just substitute for compound - and therefore, it should be possible to organize the school according to the lineage system. Thus, for example, the school area for purposes of cleaning could be divided among the school house so that each house will be in charge of a particular section of the school premises. At present, school children are responsible, in most areas for cutting short the grasses, sweeping the school surroundings, keeping the latrines clean by disinfectants, and maintaining the school premises generally. Responsible

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system of Western Nigeria, December 1960 to January 1961. p. 21.

[6]Report of the Commission appointed to review the educational system of Western Nigeria. pp. 21-22.

house leaders would always see that their own portion of work is done so that the periods of such subjects as art, crafts, or music, need not be spent on cleaning. Each house would have an officer such as the house prefect to direct the house, just as the old man in the lineage is in charge of his compound. A school dispenser would be in charge of first aid services for each house-chest and an officer such as the games captain would be in charge of sports and athletics. At present the function of the house system is limited to sports and athletic meetings. Much as it is necessary to develop this aspect of school life, it would also be necessary to organize such things as School Festival of the Arts in which traditional music, dance, art and other displays could be held. Before the display, house members could find out from their patron's relatives what things their lineage has been known for. Thus a school house bearing its name after Oranyan in a town like Ile Ife would have found out the activities for which Oranyan's lineage was famous. Members of the school house bearing his name would thus try to emulate the characteristic features of their hero in crafts, art, music, dance, and other educational activities. In so doing, much more would be known about local areas than has been known at present.

The prefect system, which is another important influence, is again something that can be used to an advantage in order to enable a child to understand his culture while schooling. A prefect is generally chosen as the head boy of the school. He is often chosen from

the senior class and it is his duty to organize his fellow schoolmates in work and other out-of-class activities. The use of the prefect system as a training ground for increased responsibility and duty is something good, particularly as the Yoruba believes in a system of group organization in which one person is appointed head. Thus, for example, in a school, there may be one school prefect either appointed by the general concensus of the student body or elected by a majority vote, who would play the role of a head-boy in the school community. With him would be his senior advisers who would be the house prefects of the school. These may then form the executive body of the students' council. The general council would be representatives of each house in the school and all officers of such house. At present, the prefect system often degenerates into something in which the head-boy exercises a privilege and power which fellow-students resent. There is a lot in this system which can be turned into a training ground for the acceptance of civic duties and of authority. In a matter that concerns students, the headmaster would suggest his staff's plan to the prefect, who goes to discuss the matter with his advisers, that is, the house prefects. Each house prefect would then discuss with his house officers who in turn, would sound the opinion of the general body of students. In that order, suggestions come back through house officers to the house prefect, who makes the view point of his house known in the executive council. The prefect finally passes the student's suggestion to the headmaster, who makes the final decision. He passes word back to the

prefect who now makes arrangements with each house prefect about his own share of responsibility in executing the plan. Thus school administration would train students in government by discussion and concensus which is the familiar pattern known to them in their homes. It is important, however, that each school headmaster sees the value of training children along the line of familiar traditional democracy; otherwise he might become impatient with what might result in delay and inefficiency.

The acceptance of authority is not something that creates any difficulty in Yorubaland. There is not that rebellious spirit which makes children indulge in practical jokes at the teacher's or prefect's expense. There is a lack of "mischief-making desire". The reason for this is that Yoruba parents judge their children's good breeding by the degree of respect they show towards their elders and social superiors. There is therefore a peculiar emphasis on training the child to be respectful to those who are senior to him. Thus, as is done at home, children at school should greet their elders, prefects, and teachers in the way senior members of lineage are greeted at home - by prostration if a boy, but by kneeling, if a girl. The teacher, for example, is an elder who also holds a position of socially recognized authority. As such, he represents the authority of parents and lineage elders at school. Thus, a teacher should encourage children to behave in the right manner while at school. He should cooperate with the home in inculcating the social values that are emphasized in the homes. There

is a conflict, for example, in the idea of a school boy not prostrating for his teacher at school, when at home, he either does so, or else would face condemnation from parents. Because authority is believed to grow with age and experience, the teacher stands in a good position to influence a child's character in the building up of habits of industry, self-reliance, earnest and conscientious endeavour, honesty, generosity, protection to the weaker sex, care and respect for old age - and all other worthwhile behaviour necessary for good citizenship. In matters of discipline, parents would readily join hands with the school authority to plead with the headmaster not to spare the rod. In all he does, the Yoruba child is expected to be humble and earnest in character.

External Examinations and the Ideal Yoruba Child

School examinations are almost all external in Western Nigeria. The primary school - leaving examination is conducted on the Western regional basis. So too the Secondary Modern School Leaving examination. At the secondary level, the West African School Certificate is an external examination organized for all secondary school leavers in what used to be British West Africa. Those who had no opportunity for secondary education, but find themselves able, take private tuition from such correspondence colleges as Wolsey Hall, Oxford; the Rapid Results College, London; and the Metropolitan College, St. Albans; and they sit for the General Certificate of Education as private students.

Primary School Certificates and Secondary Modern School Leaving Certificates do not mean much nowadays; as a result, their holders often

struggle either to read further, or to find employment. Usually, a few succeed in entering secondary grammar schools, and all others go about the streets in urban centres looking for jobs. Secondary education and the acquisition of the School Certificate or its equivalent, the General Certificate of Education, is considered the hall-mark of a good education. The desire to acquire either of these certificates has therefore led to a considerable amount of rote learning. The syllabuses of the examinations are directed towards the next step of the educational ladder - the Higher School Certificate or the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education, and both of these in turn lead to university education. To gain the School Certificate or its equivalent therefore, is to be on the coveted path to a university degree. We can thus see why learning by rote is so much practised among students. An individual's success is judged by the results of these examinations; and secondary schools , too, are assessed on the basis of the results of the School Certificate. These examinations provide little reliable evidence to prove that successful candidates have the qualities of good citizens, and also the skills of good workers.

External examinations have their values no doubt. They help to fulfil the need for objective standards of achievement. But the difficulty still remains that neither the School Certificate nor the General Certificate of Education provides any evidence of the holder's true worth and his employability. At best, it is only a test of academic achievement and therefore indirectly of a certain type of intelligence and

ability. (In this case perhaps, of the ability to memorize and recall.) We cannot help agreeing with J.R. Bunting when he says,

> . . . it is fair to point out that many of the world's criminals have been men and women of intelligence who might have done remarkably well in an examination of this type. Most of Shakespeare's villains, as I have said on another occasion recently - if they could be brought to life - would probably have little difficulty in obtaining a reasonably good Cambridge School Certificate.[7]

In order to encourage Yoruba young people to develop the necessary skills for effective work and citizenship through the West African School Certificate and the General Certificate of Education, it would be necessary to develop a new outlook on examinations and a revised sense of values which will conform with the Yoruba expectation of what type of adult a child should grow into. At present, generation after generation of what might be loosely called "Cantab" or "G.C.E." holders are being produced - young people who believe that the mere possession of these certificates entitles them to think that Western Nigeria owes them a living. This type of thinking makes it impossible for any courses not included in these examinations to be taken with seriousness. Thus, for example, it is usual for a child to pass through primary and secondary education without developing an interest in such things as Art, Music, Crafts, and Physical Education. Voluntary associations like the Boys Scouts, school clubs and other out-of-class

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[7]J.R. Bunting, "Tradition and Innovation in Secondary Education: Address given before the Western Conference of Principals at the University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, on 26 October 1954." West African Journal of Education. Vol. V. No. 2. June 1961. p. 43.

activites which should train character and a sense of comradeship in team-work and citizenship are not popular because the time for them could be usefully spent, in the thinking of students, on reading. If education is to help Yoruba boys and girls in becoming good citizens, and if they are to develop the necessary skills which education inculcates, then the schools and their respective products should not in future be assessed exclusively on external examination results. While we would agree that they are useful in setting a national objective standard of achievement, since education is a regional affair in Nigeria, it would be equally important to design another certificate which would testify to the true worth of every individual in detail.

On completing any stage of schooling, therefore, a child would be awarded a certificate from the school he has attended. This would show, not only his success or failure in the academic field, but also his qualities as a human being. The first section of the certificate would show individual academic record, including the details of all examinations taken while at school. It is here a child's skills would be revealed. In the second section, there would be a character analysis of the child, based on the pooled opinions of the school staff. In order to guard against such opinions becoming too prejudiced to be true of a particular child, the headmaster might ask for each teacher's opinion confidentially in a written form after a long period of close observation both at work and play. These he could pool and finalize. Such opinion would include comments on such qualities

as reliability, leadership, honesty, service and cooperativeness, loyalty, and consideration for others, particularly the elders. All posts of responsibility held would be shown and so too the activities and clubs in which each has taken part. Thus, each child's certificate would give a summary of his or her cumulative record throughout the school career. It would thus be unnecessary to depend solely on School Certificate results in order to employ a young person at work. Both the School Certificate and the General Certificate of Education would then be used mainly as evidences for a minimum entrance requirement to higher education. Those who do not wish to go further in education, need not depend on them for employment, as the internally awarded certificate would have shown individual merits of character and ability during school career. These in reality are among the necessary pre-requisites for employability, job-effectiveness and good citizenship.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The Scientific and Critical Attitude

Yoruba studies, properly handled, would enable children to grow up with their loyalties to the lineage, to the sub-cultural group, and finally to Yoruba cultural unit. In traditional education, the child's training fixed him within the lineage and enabled him to maintain the status quo. In planning formal education to prepare the child for change, however, it is important to point out unwholesome traditional attitudes which children should be made to guard against. The development of the scientific attitude is here suggested as a necessary part of a Yoruba child's education for this purpose - not only because this type of training will enable him to have the basic ideas about the sciences and hence the natural laws of nature, but also because it would help develop that critical attitude which would enable him to have an independent judgement and conviction. In the final analysis, we would want a child to grow, not just as a responsible lineage or tribal member, but as a good Nigerian.

In an independent Nigeria, for example, there is a need for co-operative sentiments among the different cultural units. Up to now, the central problem of federalism in the country is how to co-exist in harmony.[1]

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[1]The election to the Nigerian Federal Parliament which took place on December 30, 1964, brought some problems relating to the peaceful co-existence of the different cultural groups into sharp focus and precipitated a cricis in which the country narrowly escaped the misfortune of disintegration. The resulting compromise which saved the situation was the formation of the present borad-based coalition government.

It is not an accident that tribal sentiments should be creating problems for the unity of Nigeria, for tribal communities in this country have always had the weakness of rigid intolerance of others who are not members of the tribe. There has always been a lack of that largeness of heart and vision to extend the altruistic cooperative spirit beyond tribal borders. This is perhaps why, among the Yoruba, anybody who cannot speak the language is regarded as a stranger. In the distant past, it was usual to look for such a stranger, and when got, to use him for sacrificial feast to the appropriate gods. Today, tribal spirit finds expression in the different names which the Yoruba call such others as the Ibo or Edo who cannot speak the language and do not belong to the Yoruba group. Marris thus quotes rightly a Calabar contractor whom he interviewed as saying, "The Yoruba don't like staying with other tribes, they call them Kobokobo".[2]

Moreover, the tribal sentiments of the Yoruba, as in most traditional societies, lack flexibility, rational and critical approach to the objective world. To the traditional Yoruba, custom is custom and must be followed. This perhaps explains why in traditional religion one finds people holding tenaciously to such conservative ideas as deifying rocks, stones, and plants; why people believe that rivers and streams are the abodes of spirits, why winds and storm, thunder and lightning, are messengers of the gods. Inflexibility in attitude gives rise to insusceptibility to change, for what has been, will always be. We can thus see why it took the

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[2]Peter Marris, Family and Social Change in an African City; A study of re-housing in Lagos: London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961. p.99. Kobokobo is a term used by the Yoruba to denote that all others who are not Yoruba are uncivilized.

missionaries and government administrators in the early colonial period such a long time to inculate the idea into the minds of the people that the lives of the members of other tribes are as important as those of the members of the Yoruba. It is therefore essential for education to develop the attitude that while the family, lineage or tribe may be important, they do not exhaust the nation of national and international social units of organization. Consequently, continued emphasis on them will not encourage national and international cooperation in current political organization. It is thus necessary that tradition be disturbed. This means that children should be trained to think rather than to imitate, evolve new ideas rather than accept traditional concepts without question.

The Yoruba child is a member of world citizenry, and as such, he has a right to share in the heritage of human successes and failures, and of its unfinished tasks. In order to make the child to know what these successes, failures, and unfinished tasks are, it should be necessary to make world history and current affairs a compulsory subject. Always, it would be important to point out the relevance of world events, past and present, for the history of his country, Nigeria. Thus, education would make the child look outside of himself, his lineage, his tribe, and even his country to the world of man in which mutual international cooperation is helping to alleviate many of the ills that have haunted man for many years. In this respect, the work of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies should be emphasized so that as the child grows through secondary education, so he would realize the fact that the age of narrow tribal and national feelings is gone. This is an age of science and technology as

much as it is an age of internationalism. Also, social science subjects like geography, civics, economics, political science, and basic concepts in international law should be drawn upon in order to make a suitable scheme for the subject-content of social studies as a secondary school subject. Along with history, social studies would enable the child to think in terms of others.

An important safeguarding principle which necessarily follows the need for national and international cooperation is that the Yoruba child has a talent which should be cultivated and shared with others, and not buried. Development of individual talent will in turn give rise to increased individual responsibility and achievement based, not on what the lineage confers, but on what the individual undertakes. This is an important point to be developed more fully later in this chapter under the heading of "Education for the development of individual status".

Another distinct but related concept is that the Yoruba child lives in a physical environment which at present controls him, but which he can control if he works in cooperation with his fellow men as adults. This implies that children should be trained to develop interest in the fundamental sciences which are basic to the modern scientific knowledge and technological advancement. At the primary level, elementary science as a subject should be taught in place of the nature study lessons given at the moment. The scientific method of observation and experimentation should also replace the present method of verbal teaching in which the parts of a flower are taught, for example, with little or no practical experience through observation on the part of the children. Through the scientific method, children can be trained to observe and prove the ideas and concepts which they at present memorize. It is through such a practical method of teaching that they can be taught to discriminate,

select or reject ideas, and arrive at satisfactory interpretation of discovered facts. The concepts that animals change as they grow; that some young animals are quite unlike their parents; that seeds contain food for the tiny plant to use at first; that air occupies space and is necessary for burning and breathing; that decay is caused by molds and bacteria; that many diseases are caused by germs or worms; these are among many others on which children can work on by the use of their eyes and hands as the case may be.

At the secondary level, mathematics should be compulsory as a subject of the school curriculum. Other science subjects like physics, chemistry, and biology should be emphasized too, but may not be compulsory for all students. A child who does not have aptitude for science subjects should at least take mathematics or any one of the science subjects. What is important is not just the offering and passing of these subjects in examinations, but understanding them enough to make a child realize the workings of his living and non-living environment. Thus an understanding of the scientific processes would lead to an understanding of the need for co-operation in education, politics, and economic development at both the national and international levels. Such an understanding may only result from practical investigation through the experimental method. In this way, a child would learn to know that the findings of science are of universal application, and therefore, cooperation is a necessary criterion if the Yoruba are to develop rapidly in science and technology. It will thus be possible for education to break the barrier of tribal intolerance and inflexibility.

It would however be important to help the child to grow in the awareness that while a change in attitude is a necessary result from science education, he need not grow up to think that everything traditional is bad or unreasonable. What he should learn to do is how best to arrive at a generalization or a value-judgement which can help him to solve any problem in his environment. Thus, for example, from an analysis of the traditional religious practice of ancestor-worship may be derived the notion of a common loyalty or of the sacredness of land. In developing children to be able to make value-judgements independently, we want to avoid an upbringing that would tend to make them become iconoclasts.

Education and Industrial Manpower

The conscious effort being made by the Western Nigerian government to transform Yorubaland into an industrial society is an attempt to better the lot of the people. That there is an urge for change implies that education should not be a process by which young people would acquire a knowledge of traditional heritage alone; it should also be a means by which they would be trained to take part in the industrial process. The lineage, secret societies, and egbe, as we have known, train young people for livelihood and procreation. Literacy may not play an essential part during training in farming and traditional crafts, but it would be a necessity in an industrializing society like the Yoruba. The traditional method of apprenticeship and imitation involves procedures of trial and error which are perhaps too wasteful for an industrial worker, if he is to be an efficient producer or consumer. Quite apart from the personal

joys that would accrue from the habit of reading and figuring, there is also the fact that, in a factory or any other industrial establishment, there are accounts to be kept, plans and blueprints to be interpreted and rules to be followed. Without a formal education followed by a specialized training, it would be impossible for a person to be of maximum use in an industrial community. This is where there is a weakness at present in Yorubaland. For although there is basic literacy everywhere, yet most of the young people cannot work in any industrial business, and since in any case, there are still very few industries, school products have become what Curle has called "unskilled labour which migrates, often in massive quantities, to towns." [3]

The Yoruba form a component part of an independent Nigeria in a world living in an age of machine. Gradually the Yoruba child will learn to use the machine. Primitive agriculture will change its methods of labour from human power to machine, the Yoruba will cease to be a mere producer of raw materials only. Political independence in Nigeria implies that a measure of economic independence should be achieved too. If this is to be achieved, it should be possible to manufacture goods, for example, for which raw materials are available in Yorubaland. Year after year for many years now, tons of cotton lint have been harvested and shipped overseas. Now is the time to set up a textile industry, and for this industry to be of maximum benefit to the region, it would be necessary to train

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[3]Adam Curle, Educational Strategy for Developing Societies: A Study of Educational and Social factors in relation to economic growth: London, Tavistock Publications, 1963, p. 125

people in textile technology. Other farm raw products include cocoa, palm-oil, rubber, corn and rice. Not only will it be necessary to use machines to increase production, it will also be useful to know how to turn these raw materials into manufactured products. Agricultural industry is a necessity in Yorubaland because people there depend mainly on agricultural products. The danger of having to depend solely on an economy based on agricultural industry has to be realized, however, just as it is necessary to realize, too, that it is equally dangerous for the Yoruba to depend mostly on the economic fortunes of other countries. Education should be designed, therefore, to remove the absolute dependence both on other countries and upon the economy of agricultural industry.

As has already been noted, elementary science should find its way into the primary school curriculum so that from the very beginning of a child's life in school, he will start to develop the right type of attitude to scientific studies. At the secondary level, a foundation should be laid which will enable children to pursue post-secondary education in courses relating to studies in both theoretical and applied sciences. Work in the various industries and the different stages and processes of manufacture will require men and women with a wide knowledge of industrial technology in agriculture, textiles, building, mining, petroleum, to name just a few. The different fields of engineering - electrical, mechanical, civil, automobile, aeronautical, marine and telecommunication will demand people if industrialization is to grow fast. For just as factories and machines are necessary in industrial production, so too are roads, bridges,

telecommunication, and transportation. To have the necessary human resources to train for various projects in industrial development, we have to look for people with good grounding in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and geology, up to the school certificate level. Also, in order to have scholars who will be trained in research in the various fields of science and technology, a foundation has to be laid at the secondary school level in these subjects.

The type of manpower which industries in Yorubaland will need in manufacturing processes require that a good basic education in the sciences be laid at the high school level. There are three main levels of such manpower development - the professional level, the middle-grade, and the artisan or lower level technical grade. Without creating an opportunity for secondary education for the majority of children who leave the primary schools, human resources at the professional and middle-grade levels will always be scarce. Statistics for manpower needs in Western Nigeria have not been available for this thesis, but we can perhaps infer from the Ashby report[4] that every region in Nigeria is in acute shortage of manpower generally.

> In round figures, the minimum need over the next ten years is for 80,000 people with post-secondary education. About 30,000 of these are described as "senior: managerial, professional, and administrative". Ideally all these should be graduates or the equivalent, and in any case some

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[4] Investment in Education: The Report of the Commission on Post-School Certificate and Higher Education in Nigeria: Lagos, Federal Ministry of Education, 1960.

> 20,000 of them must be graduates. This involves an annual flow of at least 2,000 graduates from universities; the present annual flow is of the order of 300 from Ibadan and perhaps 600 from overseas. In addition to the 30,000 men and women with "senior" qualifications no fewer than 50,000 people with "intermediate"qualifications will be needed. By intermediate qualifications Harbison means those which call for two or three years of full time study after School Certificate, in technical institutes or agricultural colleges, or a correspondingly longer period of part-time study associated with apprenticeship or schemes of in-service training.[5]

Education for cultural continuity is necessary, but alone it is not enough because it would tend to be abortive and irrelevant to economic growth, the result of which might be the prevalence of 'intellectual unemployment' as is found in countries like India, Pakistan and the Philippines today. Along with scholars for the learned professions and clerks for commercial and government offices, there will be need for many skilled artisans and technicians in the fields of agriculture, trade, and industry. Men and women with a knowledge of commerce and economics will be needed to direct the marketing of farm products and other industries. With the right type of training for boys and girls who come to the world with different talents, it would be possible to hope that the problem of having adequate human resources for the process of industrial development can be solved. Moreover, education should help to shift emphasis from theoretical, academic knowledge to practical, applied knowledge, for in this way, the Yoruba child will not only learn to understand his environment with competence and accuracy, but will also be able to control it subsequently.

Vocational Education

If the Yoruba society is to be industrialized fast, there will

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[5]Ibid, p.7

be need to make definite plans not only to establish vocational schools, but also to build in young minds a healthy attitude to manual work. As we have already noted, the need for clerks in government offices and commercial firms, and for teachers in mission schools, gradually led to a disdain for manual work. Even now that there is unemployment for primary, modern and secondary grammar school products as a result of the academic nature of their knowledge, this attitude persists. None of these young people seem to realize the fact yet that a great deal of book knowledge is usually forgotten after school life, whereas a craft, once properly learned, cannot easily be forgotten. The fact of unemployment and the conscious effort to make Yoruba society an industrial one are good reasons why vocational education should take priority over the academic. There would be need for skilled craftsmen, trained technicians, and professional engineers, architects, and land surveyors. In Western Nigeria, three different institutions train these different types of workers - skilled craftsmen or artisans are trained in trade centres, the middle-grade technicians in technical colleges, and the higher professionals in universities and other higher institutes of education. From the figures on the last page of chapter three, we have noted that up till 1963, there were five vocational centres. This means that there were five trade centres and technical colleges altogether serving the whole of Western Nigeria. At that time, these were made up of one technical college for post-school certificate graduates, one occupational women's college for women teachers wishing to become home-economics teachers, and three trade centres for post-secondary modern

school products who wish to train as artisans.

As has been suggested, the problem of vocational education might be solved by beginning first with a change in the attitude towards manual labour. It is not enough to give talks to children on the dignity of labour. It would be worthwhile to make work-shop training a compulsory course for the last two years of primary schooling, and all through modern and secondary school education. In the fifth and sixth years of the primary school, pupils might go for work-shop training for one hour once every week. During this period pupils would learn to appreciate art and craftsmanship and acquire the techniques in the use of simple hand tools. At the secondary level, (both modern and grammar) pupils might attend work-shop training for about two hours a week. Here, simple models in wood-carving and weaving might be done. The purpose would not be to make craftsmen of school children, but to be able to identify those of them who have talent for vocations, and thus develop in them the desire to achieve individual status through work. If talents and aptitude for vocational training could be identified while pupils are still at school, it would be possible to channel children to further education in the trades and technical fields. This is the more necessary, because, at present, the major fault in the method of admission of pupils into existing vocational schools is that admission is by an academic entrance examination which takes no account of the interests of individual pupils. Since few pupils like manual work, it often follows that those who sit the entrance examinations to these schools are the academic failures from modern and

secondary grammar schools, who, for lack of no other institutions to go to, make vocational schools a last resort. Thus, it can reasonably be maintained that most of those who go to vocational schools at present are the left-overs in the present school system, and from an educational point of view, prestige and status never go with school left-overs nor their institutions. We can thus understand why vocational education lacks status in Western Nigeria at present. In order to give room to the right type of talents, vocational centres should not admit students strictly by academic entrance examinations. Headmasters of trade centres could admit students to their different courses, on the recommendation of modern school head-teachers. If entrance examinations are necessary, then they should be more practical in nature. So too, technical colleges could, on the recommendation of secondary school principals, admit those who have aptitude for vocations to train as middle-grade technicians in their areas of interest.

Another way by which a wholesome attitude for work may be developed is to encourage children to belong to voluntary associations and school clubs. These would not only train character, as we have shown in chapter four, they would also help to develop the spirit of self-help through manual work. Thus, for example, children might be made to attend leadership training courses[6] in which different programmes such as community and health development and expeditions will be arranged. In the former, school children might be made to practise first aid, fire fighting, knotting, bridge-building, and improving a village water supply. In

[6]The Man O'War Bay Centre organizes such a leadership training course on a national basis for young adults between the ages of 18 and 26. The counterpart of it in Western Nigeria is the Sasa leadership training course. Teachers should be encouraged to attend these courses so that they would be in a position to organize and direct the courses for school children.

expedition programme, they might map out the local school area, make surveys of local industries or occupations, visit lakes and rivers or climb local hills. In whatever children do, emphasis would be on the building up of the body through work and the subsequent realization that a relation exists between character building and the respect for work. If children pass through their schools with several compulsory attendances at such courses, they will gradually develop the notion before leaving their schools that work has an important part to play in responsible citizenship. While attending the courses children would be able to recognize their own virtues and shortcomings in work. Through such programmes of self-analysis, it would be possible to help children to develop the desirable attitudes of work we want in them.

It is not enough, however, to build up desirable attitudes in children, it would also be necessary to train children in vocations. At present, the existing vocational centres seem too few to make any impact on the thinking of school children. Therefore, the establishment of more vocational schools is a necessity. These may be run at different levels of trade and technical centres for modern and secondary school graduates respectively as at present, or vocational education may just be a department of a common secondary school which teaches all subjects ranging from the Yoruba and social studies through the humanities and science, to trade and technical ones. There is a case for such a comprehensive school. It would be less expensive for the government, and administration would be easier. There would be no need for modern schools in such a

system, since a child who leaves the primary school, could, after three years in the comprehensive secondary school, choose to specialize in a trade, if he is not the academic type. Moreover, talents for trades will be more easily identifiable where facilities for work are great. Also, those who complete secondary education but are interested in technical education would have had the necessary background that would suit them for work in technical colleges, or in the case of very brilliant students, work in the university centres for professional studies. A common comprehensive school teaching all subjects will undoubtedly tend to reduce the status-differentiation of different subjects and hence of different courses and specialization. At present people tend to look down on technical subjects. There will perhaps be a change of mind when academic and technical subjects are taken side by side in the same school.

As in the case of academic secondary schools, neither vocational centres built separately nor comprehensive schools need be boarding schools. The few vocational schools existing now tend to be boarding schools, and as we have noted, it is harmful to separate children from their homes, since they are not always capable of reconciling the values of their home background with what is taught in the boarding schools. Besides, we have to emphasize that the very fact that the existing ones are mostly boarding schools limits not only the Western Nigerian government in the work of expansion, but it also limits the attendance of the few interested children whose parents might have been able to pay the smaller amount of fees if centres were day schools. Money spent on building

boarding houses might be spent on constructing more class-rooms and buying more equipment so that more children might be admitted. Perhaps if vocational centres numbered many more, the unemployed school products drifting about the streets would prefer going into them than wandering about with no hope for employment. This would avoid the present considerable waste, and bridge the gap between academic and vocational education. And if this gap were bridged it might be possible to correct the imbalance existing between primary and secondary education in terms of the number of children who attend them. It might also be possible to increase the balance between the education of boys and that of girls.

At present, vocational centres tend to give training in those fields that are purely technical. Painters, electricians, sheet-metal workers, blacksmiths and welders, fitter-machinists, and motor mechanics are trained in good number. Similar emphasis should be placed too on cabinet-making, wood-machinists, carpentry, carving, weaving and the different commercial subjects. Apart from the fact that materials for work will readily be available in Western Nigeria, there is also the fact that finished products in the crafts would find easy markets. In siting vocational schools, it would be helpful to emphasize that some industrial centres should be of particular help in providing teaching personnel. Wherever it is feasible, schools and industries should look to one another in matters of staffing. This means that they should work hand in hand to train young people. A textile industry in Oyo, for example, may also direct a weaving school because cotton is produced in abundance

in this area. This would decrease the costs in money and manpower to maintain the establishments. Industries for processing cocoa, rubber, cotton and corn are perhaps over-due, particularly as they would not only help in training young people for work, but will also help to solve the problem of the low returns which farmers have at present from their toil. Bold planning is perhaps what the government requires in the attempt to industrialize, and this may well be the duty of industrial experts; but in so far as education will be called upon to supply the human resources, it would be necessary as well to plan the training of young people so that with a minimum of waste of money and effort, education and industry can become partners in the economic development of the region.

Perhaps the failure to run vocational centres in a relative proportion to the need of Western Nigeria stems from the lack of teachers. The training of people with adequate knowledge of vocational subjects who should teach in trade centres and run work-shops in schools is a necessity. Western Nigeria needs skilled artisans and middle-grade technicians for its industrial projects. The vocational schools and industries will need to establish some form of relationship, as we have noted, so that with many more of them it might be possible to link education with industrial practice and production. It seems desirable at this initial stage to send capable and qualified people abroad to train as technicians for industries and as teachers to man the existing vocational schools adequately. In this respect, foreign aid should also

be useful - metal work teachers from England, work-shop teachers from Canada, and home economics teachers from the United States would be of great relief. The establishment of more industries by the government and also by private bodies as well, is a crying need. It would be necessary that those who are to teach in vocational schools should be those who are already employed in industries. This is to avoid a situation where what is taught in the class-room will be out of date and irrelevant to current practice. Even now, the theoretical science learnt, according to the Banjo Report, "is very much out-of-date in keeping with modern scientific knowledge".[7] In order that schools and industries may be of maximum benefit to the region, it is in place to suggest that teachers who are to teach in vocational schools should come from the industries so that while they spend, say, the mornings on teaching in schools, afternoon hours might be spent in industries. In this way up-to-date knowledge might be acquired by both teachers and students.

At present, unemployment is everywhere in Western Nigeria, among primary, modern and secondary school products. One reason why it is difficult to solve this problem is that the government is the largest employing body. As long as this is so, so long will the situation remain relatively unimproved. But with many more industrial establishments, it might be possible for these to become the largest employing agencies. If this is possible, the government might be relieved financially to a

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[7] Report of the Commission appointed to review the educational system of Western Nigeria, December 1960 to January 1961, p. 6

great degree since, for example, the privately owned industries would have to cater for their own training of personnel and employment services. It seems certain that until education and the industries have a common goal, it would be difficult to overcome the present problem of unemployment arising from mass literacy. Mass literacy should be part of a wider scheme for improving agricultural techniques, of improving communications, of opening up new industries and hence of access to new markets and of promoting development programmes in general.

In order to attract young people into vocational jobs through specialized training, it would be necessary for the governmentand the industries to devise a salary structure in which people will earn, not only according to the certificates acquired, but also according to the skills learnt. At present, jobs in the administrative sections tend to have higher scales of salaries attached to them than technical jobs. This tendency further increases the 'traditional' emphasis on academic schooling since it is thought that only people with academic backgrounds can make good administrators. There is perhaps no sufficient reason for maintaining this attitude and only by realizing that technicians and artisans do more productive work than office clerks and should therefore earn more, can there be a rise in the status of the manual workers. If vocational centres and industries increased in number and absorbed most of the unemployed school-leavers in some type of education which will ultimately give them jobs in the industries, public opinion would encourage such a trend. Already, primary, modern, and secondary grammar schools have become

institutions which give literacy but prepare no child for employment. As the Yoruba are still essentially agricultural, and therefore relatively poor, parents regard school education as not paying the expected returns to individual families. Only vocational education alongside industrial development might save the present situation. The desire to achieve a measure of economic stability is perhaps a way of achieving political stability too, and this is why governments should have to launch a bold plan for future development.

Lastly, it is in place to suggest that guidance and counselling should play an important role in schools in a changing Yoruba society. At present, guidance services exist nowhere in the school system. If education is to help each child to realize his potential and talents, guidance should be of help and should enable children to develop naturally and without much stress through the school, home and community. At one time or the other, it has to be admitted, there is always a need for help in human life. This is more so among young people who are yet incapable of solving their life's problems in a changing society. The changes that will accompany large-scale industrialization would call for emotional adjustments which would demand that children be well directed and guided. What used to be the duties of homes will be transferred to schools, and this means that if the schools are to succeed in shouldering the many responsibilities they would owe to the children, they should stand ready to give advice where and when necessary.

With industrialization, the labour code would change in Western Nigeria, so that specialized training would be necessary if a child is to

fit into the labour market. Because of the need for specialized education, it should be necessary to increase the amount of education needed by children, and many more than at present should receive this increased education. Free schooling and an increased age requirement for a minimum education will call for guidance and counselling in the preparation of school leavers for choice of careers and vocations. As mechanization and perhaps automation would bring about relative ease and comfort to a life that had in the past struggled for bare existence, so it would be necessary to plan to use leisure in the right manner, and in this respect children would need to be guided and directed into channels which will be recreative as well as stimulating in individual personality growth.

As to who should do the work of giving advice to children, headmasters are in a position to do it, but where schools are very large, specially trained guidance officers may be employed to combine some teaching with the advisory role. Also, it might be in place to suggest that an advisory committee on vocational education be appointed to cater for government plans so that it would be possible from time to time to identify actual or potential shortages of particular skills and occupations with a view to remedying them. Such a committee would have to work in close contact with the schools on the one hand, and the industries on the other, in order to satisfy the government with the necessary information required for planning and manpower forecasting.

Education for Health and Physical Development

In the past, it was usual in some tribes to have tests and ordeals in which the character and manhood of many men have been tested

and assessed. This does not seem to have been in vogue at any time in Yorubaland. But there has been the practice of young people growing up to get together on moon-lit nights to organize informal games which involve physical exercises such as running and wrestling. We can thus reasonably conclude that traditional education did not include formal training in physical development. Perhaps the exertion involved in manual labour was considered enough exercise for every individual. Formal education, however, has taken on itself, the deliberate effort to develop children physically. All we can say is that much more emphasis should be placed on Physical Education by making it compulsory in all schools.

If it is successfully established, many schools would undoubtedly gain by it. For it would not only teach physical exercises, but school health and the teaching of healthy habits would become the responsibility of teachers of Physical Education. At present, most schools lack the bare necessities of school health services. Many are far from hospital centres where the help of doctors can be reckoned upon. The homes are no better either - for what with superstition and belief in magic and witch-craft, medical sciences are still looked upon with some degree of suspicion in parts of Yorubaland. Thus, Physical Education would serve a dual service: it would train physical development through exercise, and more important, it would develop in children healthy attitudes towards healthy living. In educating young people for social change, it is important to draw their attention to the prevalent unhealthy surroundings of their

homes, and to change their attitudes towards the causes of many of the common diseases and the ways these might be cured. Health education will serve the purpose of making the child know what to do in order to prevent some types of common diseases, and this is why it needs to be emphasized in all schools. In 1961, for example, the ratio of doctors to potential patients in Western Nigeria was given as 1 to 25,000.[8] This means that although there may have been an improvement over this number since the last four years, yet modern sanitation and medical services are still crying needs. In the circumstance, health education in schools should serve the purpose of training young people in preventive measures and in developing attitudes that will foster the development of good health habits.

While primary and secondary modern schools are fairly alive to the taking of exercises during physical education lessons, hardly can we count on any secondary grammar schools (perhaps with the possible exception of the few government secondary schools) which take this subject. The reason for the difference in attitude is understandable. Primary and secondary modern schools are staffed with teachers who have had some type of teacher training which had prepared them in Physical Education. On coming out to teach, therefore, they have known what type of exercises are necessary and what games to play. This is not so in secondary schools

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[8]Ken Post, The New States of West Africa: Penguin Books, 1964, p. 141

where most teachers are themselves former graduates of secondary education who have had no teacher training. Thus we might conclude that the lack of teachers trained in physical education is one good reason for the lack of interest in the subject at the secondary level. Another reason may be that there are no facilities. But if interested teachers were available, it is possible they could make available all necessary facilities. Also, since physical education is not an examination subject students will tend to consider it unnecessary. At the secondary level, only subjects that contribute directly towards children's success at the School Certificate Examination are taken with seriousness.

Most of what is needed to establish Physical Education as a compulsory subject for all schools seems to lie with government measures. First, it should be stipulated by a school regulation that among the compulsory school courses every secondary school student should take is Physical Education. If it becomes a compulsory course, then the next important thing to do would be in the training of teachers for the subject. Nigeria is lucky in that there is a flourishing Physical Education Department in the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.[9] The Western Nigerian government might encourage qualified students to enter this department for work in Physical Education through the award of scholarships. School

[9]This was formerly Nigerian College of Arts, Science, and Technology. Before it was turned into a regional university in 1962 following the recommendation of the Ashby Report, the Nigerian College had an Institute of Education which trained post-school certificate students in Physical Education.

Inspectors should go round Secondary Schools to help in advising headmasters on how to make a start in the subject. At present, the available inspectors in this field only visit Teacher Training Centres to inspect student-teachers. As well as award scholarships to deserving students to pursue Physical Education Studies, it would be necessary to give status to those teachers who are already trained products of the university. There is a tendency at present to think that because they have diplomas and not degrees, they need not be paid as graduate teachers. As long as this idea persists, so long would people run away from the field into the more paying field of academic education. The way out might be in asking university authority to award a degree in Physical Education instead of the present diploma. After all, the training lasts for three years after School Certificate. All that is necessary to bring Physical Education in line with other degrees in Arts and Science is to raise admission qualification to the Higher School Certificate or the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level; or if students are admitted with School Certificate, they should stay for four years at the university. Government attitude and initiative is very important if Physical Education is ever going to succeed as a compulsory school subject; in this respect, it might be made an examination subject.

Some Conflicting Values Arising from Social Change

In Yoruba society, (that is, traditional society) personal restrictions and responsibilities are well defined. Within the lineage, authority depends

upon seniority, and within the town or village, it depends on the titles held by chiefs. As we have seen, these chieftaincy positions are derived from the lineage, particularly where a chieftaincy title is hereditary; so too, the occupations of individual members depend on their lineage. Thus we see that whatever a person becomes rests on his membership in a lineage. This criterion does not make room for the competitive spirit. In fact, the way society is organized traditionally discourages competition. Thus, as we have noted, farm lands on which the economy rests are held in common by the lineage.

Already, however, it is becoming difficult to reconcile the values inherent in family and lineage relationships with those of a mobile society of professional workers and clerks. With an education that emphasized vocational and technical training for the spread of the industrial culture, the conflict is likely to increase. Thus, for example, age will lose its authority when the experience of one generation of people becomes irrelevant to the next generation. In a rapidly changing Yoruba society, children will not necessarily work at occupations which belong to their fathers. Even if they do, the nature of the work would have changed out of all recognition from what it was. A parent who is a weaver in the traditional sense, for example, would find himself lost in the art of weaving, if he visited his child in the same occupation at an industrial weaving centre. In this case, the parent's experience of weaving would have been of no use to the child. Although due respect will still be paid to the father, such a respect will stem from the natural

tie of filial loyalty, having nothing to do with whether or not the father had all the wisdom and experience necessary for the economic continuity of the lineage. Such conflicts between the new habits acquired through education and traditional loyalties will arise even from the very method in which a young educated father would want to educate his own son. Such a father, for example, would see no conflict in refusing to give his son to a lineage member to train in, say, leather work, when he knows that such a training would be better handled in a trade school for that purpose. At present, educated young men and their traditional fathers think differently because they have passed through different experiences of life. But when both parents and their children begin to pass through a common experience of school education, most of the conflicts arising at present will be more easily resolved. Marris tells the story of a son who, as a commercial manager in a Lagos firm, was transferred to Eastern Nigeria. When his old father heard about this transfer, there was such a bitter protest on the ground of distance from home, that the son had to give up his lucrative appointment.[10] Whatever advantage the decision to give up such an appointment may have for the old father, there is no doubt that this is an example of waste of human talent - and there is certainly going to be much more such waste arising from the conflict between education and legitimate ambition on the one hand, and the claims of family affection and responsibility on the other. This is not to say that family or lineage group will intentionally discourage the progress of its members,

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[10]Peter Marris, Family and Social Change in an African City: A Study of Rehousing in Lagos: London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961, p. 137.

but that a conflict will tend to arise where lineage values differ from those of an educated member who is a professional in a mobile society.

The progress of Nigeria as an independent country will be judged, in part, by the speed with which the country attains a considerable measure of economic independence. Hence in planning education, the overall interests of the country cannot but be considered by regional governments. Through education, sectional interests of lineage and tribe would be overcome, and herein lies the importance of education for social mobility. To make the Yoruba relatively mobile, education will have to train people for careers in the trade, technical, and professional fields through a formal system of education. The Yoruba society will become more and more open, as social mobility increases, and this will in turn tend to encourage individualism and the enjoyment of leisure.

Education for the Development of Individual Status.

With the likely emphasis on the individual and what he can achieve through his own effort will come the development of status through individual achievement, rather than through what had been handed over from a father.[11] The fact that a person will be assessed by his achievements implies that anybody can compete for any job. This would be unlike the present situation where people tend to succeed in getting to responsible positions through the interests and pride of lineages, towns, and sub-cultural units in Yorubaland. Thus, it is almost impossible to execute policies in non-personal terms, and therefore, people in positions of

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[11]In technical language, this would represent a shift in emphasis from ascribed status to achieved status. All developed countries of the world tend to be characterized by the presence of achievement norms.

responsibility often find it difficult to resist falling under the pressure of abusing their authority by acts of nepotism and corruption. When education and industrialization go hand in hand, however, it is likely that job selection will break through the barrier of lineage and tribal affiliation: for since anybody would compete for any job, it would follow that a worker's relationship would be defined, not by his membership in a common kin-group, but by a labour contract.

When the development of cocoa as a cash-crop began to bring in more money to Yoruba farmers, for example, some were able to learn such trades as tailoring, carpentry, and brick-laying from non-kin members of the community through a system of signing a contract for apprenticeship. As soon as a person ended his period of training, he bought the necessary tools for his trade and looked for his own apprentices from any part of the town without regard for lineage. As a result, members of the same trade developed the method of joining themselves together through associations of craft-guilds not based on kinships. Since the birth of these craft-guilds, loyalty towards the lineage group has tended to decrease. This is perhaps a pointer to what an industrial culture is likely to bring; for in it, the occupational system will be subject to increasing differentiation of labour, and so division of labour and further division of loyalty will be a common feature. In this way, social mobility will be fostered by universal, impersonal values, in which contract rather than status will determine individual responsibility.

For the Yoruba child, formal education will be necessary, not

just because the right to an education is a fundamental human right, but more because the human mentality is, in Lewis' phrase 'multi-dimensional'.[12] This means that children vary in talent and ability, and that therefore, education should help in the direction of their abilities and talents towards vocations as well as towards professions. To do this satisfactorily, all children would have to be given equal opportunity to develop any abilities they might possess, even if these did not lie in the intellectual field. Up to now, the idea of equality of opportunity in education has meant that, given the chance, any child with intelligence should rise to the top academically. While it may be valid to accept the view that educational resources have been scarce in Yorubaland, and therefore, it has been impossible to avoid making a choice between the children who are to be adequately educated and those who must then receive a second best, it is nevertheless out of place to say that as industrialization takes root, so the Yoruba society will be able to reckon on more and more wealth. This will enable it to provide vocational education that can be equal in status to academic education and also take into consideration different talents among Yoruba children.

From the selective nature of secondary and higher education and the very method of selection of students, people tend to associate post-primary education in Yorubaland with leadership training for the few children who are able to secure admission into secondary schools and higher institutions for tertiary education. But as opportunities for education widen

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[12]L. J. Lewis, Education and Political Independence in Africa and other essays: Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962, p. 102.

at these levels, so more and more people will acknowledge the challenge of education in developing different abilities and aptitudes. In a modern economy such as Western Nigeria is trying to build through industrialization, jobs will present a wide range of demands on both talent and ability. A highly productive society would make varied demands requiring further education on people of different abilities, both on their general level of educational competence and on their ability to adjust to the requirements of social re-organization resulting from change. In order to have the human resources who will possess the ability with which to start work on the mastery of industrial techniques and the emotional adjustments necessary for life in an industrial Yoruba society, Western Nigeria should expand the opportunities for education at secondary level. The ideal is that all who finish the primary education should enter into secondary schools; but at present, the 1962-68 development programme of Western Nigeria only hopes to have ten per cent of primary school products in secondary schools. It is important to strive to fulfil this hope and do much more, because talent for the different skills will be easily identified in children where there is a wide range of abilities.

It has to be noted that ability is not something fixed and it does not therefore remain constant throughout life. Also, educators are agreed on the fact that ability is largely acquired, and that therefore a child can become more or less intelligent, according to the kind of family he has and the social educational experiences he passes through. The implication of this for a traditional society like the Yoruba is of an urgent need for creating a mobile society where every child will have a

relatively good home, in which low income, bad living conditions, and illiteracy among lineage members[13] will be eradicated so that progress for the development of individual status and that of society can be assured. This means that a rise in the standard of living of parents, and an improvement on school expansion, and a compulsory lengthening of school life will become necessities.

Already, the development of cash-crops like cocoa, kola-nuts, and rubber, and trade in foreign goods like textiles has brought about some degree of social mobility. As industrialization and education increase, and as communication improves, so mobility will; and as small-scale holdings give place to large-scale ones, so personal benefits would increase. Industrialization would make it necessary for education to prepare every individual for making a better living in society, and hence all young people should be given a chance to develop their abilities along the line of their interests. If the general mass of the Yoruba people in Lagos were educated, for example, Marris would have had a point in suggesting that the best way to compensate the Yoruba women traders who have lost their trade as a result of the rehousing scheme in the central area of Lagos would be to establish industries in the Suru-Lere area, where they now live after being evacuated from the central area of the city. He quotes one of them as saying, "We'd like a job. You go morning, come back, sleep, go morning, come back, sleep, and at the end of the month get salary. Ah, thanks!" [14] It is not difficult to imagine how

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[13] The greatest good which the free six-year primary schooling has succeeded in establishing is that it has opened the eyes of all young people towards present limitations and future possibilities.

[14] Peter Marris, Op cit, p. 126

easy life would become if, by working in industrial estates these women traders had a regular source of income that would make them relatively independent in financial matters. This financial independence is even much more assured when workers have some measure of training in their skills. Efficiency in both management and production in industrial business depend largely on education and the skills acquired, and this is why education is currently regarded as a means of production and a new source of creating wealth for the individual and the society at large. We can see then that in an industrialized Yoruba society, the status of individual members will depend on the level of education as well as the skills each has acquired. In this way, education and industrialization will help to bring about more effectively individual upward mobility.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Summary and Practical Outcomes

In discussing education for continuity and change in Yoruba culture, we have examined in brief cultural history and social organization of the people, and have accordingly identified some of the important values in the culture. We have examined Yoruba traditional education alongside formal education from its inception till the present time and we have seen the serious weakness of formal education in not helping the Yoruba child to grow in his culture, despite the efforts that have been made to remedy this weakness. The first task of the thesis, therefore, has been to establish some principles which could help a child to understand his culture and be able to grow in it without developing that attitude of contempt such as is common today in Yorubaland among many boys and girls.

We realize that if Yorubaland (governed politically as Western Nigeria) as a component of an independent Nigeria is to achieve a considerable measure of economic independence, a conscious effort at industrialization will be inevitable. This means that it will not be enough to educate a child in his culture, it will also be necessary to prepare him to become an efficient producer and consumer in the economic labour market. As industrialization will bring about social change, so it would be necessary to prepare the child for change. The second task of the thesis, therefore, has been to discuss some of the types of change industrialization might bring about in Yoruba society, and to suggest some ways by which a child might be prepared for an industrial culture and the changes that will result.

Thus, Yoruba society will evolve a new pattern of life different from the traditional, and education will be looked upon as an important instrument through which a child will be prepared to fit into the new society. The society in its new character, will be a blend of different social values; it will have values indigenous to Yoruba culture; values from the Western culture with which the Yoruba people, like their fellow Nigerians, have been in contact for so long; and it will contain values from the contemporary world culture which is continually changing as a result of the speedy advance in science and technology. In order that education may fulfil the task of preparing the Yoruba child for continuity and change, an appropriate aim of education in Yoruba schools might be borrowed from J. L. Myers,

> To train the child first to appreciate what is going on in the natural world around him and among the members of society into which he is born, and second, to react intelligently to situations and events, physical and social, as they occur in his life. [14]

The implication of an education based on this aim is that the child would reflect his upbringing in Yoruba culture while at the same time developing habits suitable for life in an industrial culture. Thus, as a Yoruba, such practices as respect to and care of elders and the weaker sex, generosity and hospitality to visitors, selfless service to others in need, and mutual cooperativeness would be desirable traditional attitudes to be encouraged. Knowing that the Yoruba emphasized good behavior as a mark of good home-breeding, he will develop habits that would reflect

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[14] J.L. Myers, quoted in L.J. Lewis, Education and Political Independence in Africa and other essays. Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962. p.110

a healthy interpersonal relationship with others. But as a child growing up in an industrial society, on the other hand, he would develop a regular and constructive habit of work, realizing that economic, political, and even social status shall be determined more by impersonal contracts than by kinship affiliation. His thinking would reflect the attitude of one who is developing the habit of inquiry and experimentation, so that he will no more be overawed by magic and superstition. No longer, for example, would rocks, stones, and plants be regarded as gods; no more would rivers and streams to be the abode of spirits; nor would the winds, storm, thunder, and lightning be thought of as messengers of the gods. They would be treated as material phenomena to be studied and used for the good of man. He would reflect his belief in progress through scientific and technological development, and through such a belief, he would develop a sense of mutual cooperation in the development of his society. In thus identifying himself with progress through the industrial process, he would gradually develop the spirit of loyalty to the nation, rather than to the tribe, and in this way the foundation for a united prosperous Nigeria may be laid.

Change, therefore, will be a necessary emphasis in education for the Yoruba child. Thus, he will develop a healthy spirit for change by rejecting the narrow idea of education in the lineage, by the lineage, and for the lineage. This is not to say that the schools should be viewed as institutions that pursue aims different from those of lineage members in the education of young men. The task of education, whether

traditional or formal, is that of development - development of children who in turn would help to develop society. In formal education, however, there exists a more dramatic relationship between literacy and economic development than we would find between traditional education and economic development. Herein lies the importance of formal education over the traditional. And the free primary school education in Yorubaland is thus important because it is a phase of growth, a beginning, but nevertheless forward-looking - for it is through mass literacy and the channelling of talent and ability to the needs of society that education can help development. The fact that literacy exists throughout the rank and file of society enables the growth of a healthy climate suitable for development. But as the industrial process develops and expands, so more and more specialized education will be needed by more and more people. This implies that as industrialization brings more wealth to Yorubaland, more opportunity for further education should be created so that like primary education, secondary education would also be free. This is perhaps why the scheme of the free primary education is only a beginning, forward-looking to further expansion towards free secondary education as more and more wealth comes in. Gradually then, Yoruba society shall develop to become an enlightened educated democracy, able to count on a responsible, strong public opinion, as well as individual independent judgement and conviction. While it is necessary to emphasize the fact of change in order to be able to satisfy the demands of this second half

of the twentieth century, it is nevertheless also necessary to agree with Janheinz Jahn that "Only where man feels himself to be an heir and successor to the past has he the strength for a new beginning".[2]

[2]Janheinz Jahn, quoted in Clarence W. Hunnicut (ed) America's Emerging Role in Overseas Education: Syracuse University School of Education, 1962, p.117

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