NIGERIAN TEACHERS, FOREIGN PUBLISHERS AND THE PRODUCTION OF SCHOOL BOOKS IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA OF THE 1950s

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Abstract

The colonial state paid attention to school administration in Nigeria in various ways. In the early 1950s, school resources were significant for foreign publishers and producers of learning materials. Several primary and secondary schools had been in existence and owned by missionaries, communities and individuals. The colonial state introduced new initiatives to centralize and consolidate an African school culture within the context of the international capitalist system. Hence, the interests of foreign publishers influenced school book supply and subjects taught in schools. This work analyses these nuances. Specifically, Nigerian teachers evolved textbook writing culture to take advantage of the internal self-rule era in the Nigerian polity but they were entangled in the politics of book publishing. However, the Nigerian teachers were challenged by the market forces and monopoly of foreign publishers, reinforced by the capitalists' notions of the colonial state. The work adopts the historical method. Mainly, correspondence letters from files of the Ibadan Ministry of Education (IbMinEd), at the National Archives, Ibadan were utilized.

Keywords: Nigerian teachers, foreign publishers, colonial state, school administration

Introduction

Books are vital resources for teaching. It is an important tool for the civilization that shapes knowledge creation and dissemination. It creates the identity of being learned and features continuity in learning.

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In colonial Nigeria, books featured in the modernization model used by the colonial state in entrenching Western education. Introducing school books to Africans, especially in western Nigeria, was an elaborate process that complicated the processes of school management and educational administration.

In the history of education in Nigeria, Fafunwa (1974) articulated the perspective of understanding the structural trajectories of education from the pre-colonial era. The emphasis on the values and forms of education that sustained everyday life gave the impression that the heritage of learning was being passed across generations to the colonial era.

Going beyond the work of Fafunwa, this work elaborates on the nuances of relations in the entrenchment of Western education. This work considers the twists in the process of being modernized which explores the way Africans accepted and negotiated Western education. In another example, the Tswana response to education was analysed by Volz (2011). He explained the paradigm shift in the Tswana rejection of ecclesiastical-relevant education in preference for job-relevant education.

This work adopts the historical method to explore how Africans responded to the new opportunities in writing and publishing. Therefore, this work is based on archival sources from the papers of the Ibadan Ministry of Education at the Nigerian National Archives (NAI, IbMinEd). Most of the correspondence on book publication is addressed to the Deputy Director of Western Region (DDW). Several letters showing correspondence involving the education department of Western Nigeria, missionaries, teachers, community leaders, students and foreign publishers are compiled in the archival file NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV sourced from the Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

Specifically, in the 1950s, Western Nigeria experienced an influx of foreign publishers interested in marketing book lists to Nigerian schools. Formal schooling culture was well grounded in the religious beliefs of Christianity. The article analysed how the idea of decolonization evolved in the mindset of indigenous publishers and their roles in fostering literacy culture. Furthermore, the article

examined how foreign publishing influenced the administration of schools in the 1950s, with emphasis on how teaching resources for primary and secondary schools evolved in western Nigeria.

The Colonial Ideology and Literacy Culture

In the late nineteenth century in western Nigeria, Payne's *Lagos Almanack and Diary* listed the kinds of collaboration that existed between Yoruba elites and missionaries in the printing and publishing of books. Even before colonialism, Christian cultural elites canvassed for publishing texts produced locally for the new elite community (Payne, 1894: 65). Such cultural advocacy of elites established newspapers such as the *Lagos Times* founded by Richard Beale Blaize. (Tamuno, 1973: 4)

In the bid to ensure mass education for the colonies, the idea of book distribution and supply was part of a compelling change advocated by indigenous educated elites and nationalists, ideas which were deemed harmful to British values projected for the colonies. The knowledge system in Britain was forwarded as a civilizing mission by the use of foreign books (Ellerman, 1995:207).

The literacy culture introduced to the colonies was fashioned in line with the English Enlightenment and was the major strategy to control the decolonization process. Again educated elite and nationalists were regarded as a threat to the colonial-decolonization ideology as they advocated against colonial influence (Newell, 2002:93). Consistent with the writings of Newell and Ellerman on the purpose of education in the colonies, the idea of finding a 'suitable literature' was the cornerstone of the literacy culture entrenched in Western Nigeria. The books imported were ordered to align with the idea of suitable literature to convey the British civilization model even in the process of decolonization. The capitalist model was deployed in the book supply network in the colonies.

The type of collaboration that existed between local bookshops such as the Christian Missionary Society (C.M.S.) Bookshops and foreign publishers determined the market structure that hindered the growth of local publishing. In response to this, indigenous publishers

created a different marketing channel by forming an association to manage a warehouse in Lagos.[2] This fact demonstrates that Africans were conscious of inequalities in the book market and industry. Hence, other teachers decided to establish indigenous publishing houses, such as the Onibonoje Press and Book Industry, Fatiregun Publishers in Ilesa and Fakunle Major Services in Osogbo. (Tamuno, 1973:6)

In Tamuno's survey of the publishing industry in Nigeria, indigenous interests in the industry transformed in the 1950s beyond newspaper to book publishing, as local presses focused on producing study kits for examinations. (Tamuno 1973: 6). The revival in indigenous publishing evolved from the era of internal self-rule of the 1950s, and their manuscripts were reviewed by the Chief Inspector of Education for the Western Provinces (Mackell 1951). As noted by Apeji (1995: 111), most foreign publishers dominated the industry and they imported books that overshadowed the indigenous presence. This importation stimulated indigenous interests to participate in the book industry as Nigerian teachers authored books for publication.

Foreign Publishing and School Administration 1952-1953

Overseas publishing houses in an attempt to fulfil their sales drive introduced all forms of books. Between 1951 and 1953, a great many forms of publishing correspondence circulated through the Western Region Education Department. Based on the Western Region's Primary education scheme of the 1950s (Ajayi, 2008), the Western Region Education Department engaged in publishing and book purchasing agreements with various publishing companies in the United Kingdom. The introduction of the free primary education scheme was a way to increase the sales of educational materials. The educational administration of the Western Region found children's literature was vital for the efficiency of learning in the free education scheme. The significance of literature was taken up by Mr Levi, the Education Officer, to facilitate the purchase of comic papers and short stories (NAI

[2] See W.H. Smith "Book Distributing Centre in Nigeria, Meeting at Strand House" August 15, 1961, AUC 925/6 URSC)

IbMin Ed DDW 504 Textbooks for Use in Schools). Mr Levi proposed that 30,000 copies should be sent by Longmans Green and Co. Ltd. The bulk demand was based on the fact that the statistics of student enrollment increased at a geometric rate (Ajayi, 2008).

The Western Region Education Department set up a Literature Committee to facilitate the writing and supply of books to schools. On January 21, 1953, the secretary of the Committee was required to facilitate the production of the book - *Makers of West Africa* (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504). The request was based on the premise that the peripheries (colonies) were regarded as an area of expansion by the publishing firms. The Nigerian State was absorbed into the market network of book sales. The existence of the Literature Committee aggregated the intellectual spheres. For example, the Teacher Training Colleges had already groomed teachers to apply the curriculum through various teaching methods. For instance, Mr A.H.K. Ofrey of All Saint's School Osogbo prepared a manuscript - *An Introduction to School Method*. The preparation of the book implied that Nigerians had gained experiences from the schooling system. Correspondence concerning publishing deals concerning the proliferation of Training Colleges. To improve the free education scheme, the C.M.S. Bookshop in Lagos was an intermediary with the Education Department of the Western Region. The teachers' Mathematics curriculum was tied to books such as *Everyone's Arithmetic*.

The kind of education expected of an average Nigerian was to appreciate British culture, even in the period of internal self-rule; learning was still at the discretion of what the British wanted. For Junior secondary education, the reading of the book, - *Elizabeth Our Queen,* still meant that literacy and literary writing were dependent on the products of the University of London Press Limited. Two bound copies were introduced as school editions.

However, the Western Region Literature Committee (WRLC) proposed a Yoruba book on customs and tradition and suggested it be translated into the Oxford Yoruba textbook series Book VI. The concerns for such were to create a commercial advantage. According to the secretary of WRLC, the commercial concern is expressed thus:

> I was not concerned in my No. W.R.L.C. 6/68 of 3/10/52 with the merits of the book, but with its chances of success. To make it a commercial proposition, I estimate a sale of 1,500-2000 copies a year as necessary. The only way I can see this being achieved is by making it suitable as a class text-book or reader which means bringing it down to the vocabulary of Oxford Book VI. Then it could be recommended for supplementary reading for standard VI and make it suitable for reference for Standard IV teachers (The book being referred to here was written by Dr Lucas NAI DDW 504 Vol. IV).

The 1950s were spectacular in the history of education in the Western Region because several publishing advertisements became the subjects of correspondence with the department tagged *"To our overseas customers*". The Department of Education in the Western Region received several book productions and marketing deals, and a caption in their letter is expressed thus:

> As you may know, the American Book Company does publish a complete list of the elementary school curriculum, the middle or high school curriculum, and the entire liberal arts curriculum at the American college level (corresponding to the University level in most countries). (Forwarded by American Book Company, December 1, 1952, NAI DDW 504 IV).

Providing educational materials for schools became imperative because nationalist politicians aimed to foster a free education plan for the Western region. Thus, there was a convergence of publishers, authors, and book marketers working and seeking the attention of the Department of Education.

The Western Region Literature Committee (WRLC) was a think tank for development. On January 6, 1953, it proposed an 'Activity Reading Series' to aid in the learning of Geography and History. The recommendation to the Chief Inspector, Education headquarters in

Lagos, signified that learned individuals were interested in developing texts for school resources in the form of activity books. Therefore, the proposed Activity Reading Series for Geography and History was tagged 'African Venture' meaning it was an initiative of Africans suggested for consideration in the Education Headquarters, Lagos.

The indigenous book publishing tagged 'African Venture' became relevant in the process of educational planning. As implied from the series of correspondences in January 1953, the WRLC was granted the impression that they forward their manuscripts to overseas publishers. In correspondence from the Department of Education in the Western region, there was permission that manuscripts are forwarded to Messrs Macmillan to consider the publication of *Makers of West Africa* (NAI, IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV). A. Hunt-Cooke of the Department of Education in Western Region provided a guide for making manuscripts worthy of publishing by offering consultancy advisory to the "African Venture" initiative. For instance, the letterhead of Longman Green & requirements for manuscript development of a proposed book by Ogundele titled *Itan Ona Isalu Orun* (NAI, IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV).

Furthermore, non-profit groups packaged their books for the African market. For intervention in Science education, UNESCO found it imperative to introduce its learning series, published by Oxford University Press and written by Mrs E. Joseph. The UNESCO handbook titled *The Teaching of Science in Tropical Primary Schools* was forwarded for inclusion in the Science syllabus for primary schools. Organizations such as the British Council in Ibadan expressed interest in developing education in the colonies. Of course, the role of the council could be understood as an arm for the global expansion of English heritage. Therefore, the Council supplied a teacher's manual on the English Language to the Western Region on May 19, 1953 (NAI, IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV). Below is a sample of books sent in by foreign publishers for Nigerian schools;

Table 1: Foreign Publisher's Books Proposed for Western Region Schools, 1953

S/N	Name of Publisher	Place of Publisher	Subject Area	Books / Learning Materials
1	The Dryad Press	Leicester	Craftwork	* Junior Basket maker * Pottery without a wheel * Making colour prints * Circuits Toys * More soft toys * Woven Rugs
2	George Harrap & Co	London	Reference Texts for Teachers	* Language and Mental Development of Children * Technical Education for Adolescents
3	Blackwell	Oxford	Reference Texts for Teachers	Activity in the primary school
4	Evans Brothers	United Kingdom	Reference Texts for Teachers	Common sense in the Primary School
5	Longmans Green	London	Reference Texts for Teachers	Junior School Community
6	Longmans Green	London	Mathematics	A New Geometry and Trigonometry for Senior Secondary Schools

7	University of London Press	London	Supplementary Reading	* Better English Readers * Tales from the heart of Africa * Wanderings in South America * Tales and Fables of Old * Pinokkio * Grimm's Folktales * The Land of Seals
8	Educational Productions Ltd.	London	Learning Materials	Lathe chart
9	University of London Press	London	Geography	West Africa Atlas Notebook
10	Thomas Nelson & Sons	London	Mathematics	New Nation Arithmetic
11	Longmans & Green	London	Mathematics	Rural Arithmetic
12	Educational Productions Ltd.	Yorkshire	Learning Materials	* Wall Charts * Filmstrips
13	Philip &Tacey Ltd.	London	English	Paragon Dictionary
14	Oxford University Press	Ibadan Office	English	The New Oxford English Course
15	G.G. School Slates Company	London	Learning Materials	Learning Materials

16	University of London Press	London	Geography	What we can learn from Maps

Teacher Resources for Primary Schools

Even though there had been Teacher Training Colleges, the challenges of adequate resources for teaching abounded. In the process of standardising education for the Western Region, Longmans Green & Co Limited introduced the manuscript, - "Teach Yourself Arithmetic", to Mr A. Hunt - Cooke. (NAI IbMin Ed DDW 504 Vol. IV). The purpose was to make the education department make a monetary commitment to a publishing deal that eventually served the school libraries as reference sources for teachers. The international or foreign publishing firms found the book market in Western Nigeria viable. Subsequently, in the provision of teaching resources, the Lagos CMS Bookshop was an avenue by which foreign publishing firms sold books and engaged in publishing agreements. Several Arithmetic books were passed on to serve as teacher resources. Commercializing the provision of teaching and learning resources was lucrative to most publishers in the United Kingdom. The variations in prices were of concern in a particular item of correspondence Longman Green had with the Director of Education of Western Region which went thus:

> We are most interested to hear from Mr F. Austin about the discussion you had recently on general publishing. We should very much like to hear more about the scheme you have in mind so that we might see whether we could help you. As you know, we have nibbled at this question of general publishing with our Lantern Library but the prices, though reasonable, were of course far in advance of the prices that I gather you have in mind. I should very much like to hear from you further.[3]

[3] The letter was written by the Educational Manager of Longmans & Green Co. Limited, London on January 29, 1953. NAI, DDW 504 IV.

The concern for quality education on the part of the Western Nigerian government was part of its policy of free primary education. The foreign publishing firms had the zeal to profit from the government by introducing a general publishing scheme. From the Director of Education in the Western Region, the efforts and interest were manifested thus:

> Last year (1952) we set up a Committee to advise on the production and distribution of literature and appointed an Education Officer, Mr. Levi, as Secretary. Mr Levi has produced one comic paper for 1d and produced several short stories for 3d. The comic paper is being produced in education of 20,000 copies which are readily sold. The next edition will probably be 30,000 and in the meantime, we have to think of effective ways of distribution. An edition of 30,000 copies is found to be an economic proposition. With direct sales experience, it is easy to sell any number of copies of stories to children in Senior Primary and Junior Primary (Letter No. D.E.W. 504/669 NAI IbMin.Ed DDW 504 Vol. IV).

While scouting for resources useful to teaching and learning, the colonial state in the Western Region adopted the networks of education systems in other colonies. The research on teaching and learning English Arithmetic instituted at the University of Gold Coast Institute of Education was transferred to Nigeria. Through the Inspector-General of Education in Lagos, six copies of resources for teaching English and Arithmetic were forwarded under the "Exchange of Information Scheme" (Letter No. D.E.W. 504/690).

Much as the need for sound and quality education became the interest of the colonial state in the 1950s, independent educationists worked with the non-formal type of learning to teach, probably adults. Mr J.A. Akinsowon of No. 39, Odaliki Street, Ebute Metta raised concern for the re-introduction of a series called *Nigerian Readers* (Primer). The

book was an English Language Reading series designed specifically to suit Yoruba readers. Mr Akinsowon succinctly notes that:

> Nigerian Readers from Primer I and upwards contain Yoruba vocabulary at the end of each book, and this is a great help to those who don't have facilities of attending schools and those who want to become literate (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV.Letter written March 5, 1953).

Independent Adult Education classes were allowed to exist in colonial Lagos and the use of *Nigerian Readers* was consented to by virtue of the response given by Mr. A. Hunt-Cooke.

The publishing interests of Longmans Green and Messrs Macmillan were quite aimed at the standard for African education systems, as they were open to publishing books written by Africans. Subsequently, their interests were aimed at African editions suitable for learning. The style of adopting an African edition came as a form of imitation. First, the Arithmetic series was put into plan by creating a facsimile of Oxford's "English Through Pictures". The Arithmetic series was designed for three class levels to include multiplication tables and revision lessons (Suggestion from C.C.S. Higham, Educational Manager of Longmans & Green, March 18, 1953).

Several foreign publishers were interested in including their books in school lists for learning. These books were aimed at all school subjects. Involved in the business of selling and distributing books was the Lagos C.M.S. Bookshop. Indirectly, the dynamics of governance and religion interplayed in the management of the education system because its politics of planning involved the business arms of the Christian missions, which the foreign publishing firms used as a channel in book distribution. And indirectly, the colonial state in Western Region was expected to include the books in the list of recommended texts for schools. To improve teacher training, European officials working in the Ministry of Education developed teaching manuals. The manual prepared by Mr. R.E. Crookall was used in teaching teachers in Ibadan and Oyo provinces and it was optimally adopted, though printed locally to allow circulation.

In the scheme of ensuring quality teaching, European Education officials organized the teaching profession with the intention of modernization. To follow up on the activities of teachers in schools and inform them about the latest trends in teaching, a teachers' periodical was published. It was a form of a magazine for teachers to bind them with the education governance of the colonial state. As stated by Mr Crookhall, all teachers were expected to have a copy of the periodical (Letter No. W.G. 194/235). Teachers' reference books were circulated among all the schools in Western Region. The trend of policy was almost to favour the commercial interests of foreign publishing houses. In addition, A. Taylor's *Equipping the Classroom* published by Thomas Nelson & Sons was circulated for use in all schools in Western Region (The list of schools with the book is stated in Letter No. D.E.W. 504/806).

Teacher Resources for Secondary Education

Attention to school systems in the early 1950s was typical of the interest of the colonial state to tie all school resources to the supplies of foreign publishers and producers of learning materials. New initiatives were introduced. Several secondary schools owned by missionaries, communities and individuals had already been in existence. Given the expansive curriculum of secondary education, indigenous African teachers were more influential in determining the direction of curriculum practices. Through the Department of Education, a New African School Record Book and Diary was formed to include subjects for weekly record of work that covered the subjects listed below:

1. Religious Knowledge
2. English Language
3. Latin
4. Ibo, Hausa or Yoruba
5. History
6. Civics
7. Geography
8. Arithmetic-Algebra and Geometry
9. Additional Mathematics
10. Physics, Biology, Chemistry
11. Agriculture or Needlework
12. Domestic Science
13. Art
14. Music
15. Physical Training

However, the C.M.S. Bookshop found the change and African intervention difficult because they already stocked books from foreign publishers on the premise of advice given by European officials in the Ministry of Education in Ibadan. The Principal of Eko Boys' High School, Lagos Mr. D.A. Odutayo vehemently emphasised the necessity of changes in the scheme. He expressed that:

> To make the position clear, I shall give one or two reasons why the change is most desirable. In the present Diary are some subjects no more taken in, nor popular with secondary schools e.g. Hygiene and Sanitation, Nature Study, Handwriting and the like, whilst important and popular subjects are not provided e.g. English Literature, Science, Latin, Yoruba and Ibo, Music, Civics et. al. (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 vol. IV)

In the present diary, four quarters are provided for, whereas most, if not all Secondary schools now run three terms. The second reason also affects the attendance register.

In the implementation of this initiative, experienced African teachers such as Mr D.A. Odutayo of Eko Boys' High School and Mr E.O. Alayande of Ibadan Grammar School developed a cohort of stakeholder consultants for input in the education policies of Western Nigeria. The new school diary was designed and circulated to all principals of secondary schools for application in curriculum dissemination. However, the Acting Director of Education resisted the format suggested by Mr Odutayo and Mr Alayande and requested that an overhaul and not an adaptation of the scheme of work was desirable. Thus, the design of the scheme of work was vested in the hands of the Western Region Conference of Principals (Letter No. DDW 504/835). Invariably, as the major educational supplier, the C.M.S. Bookshop had to work with the president (Principal of Kings College, Lagos) of the Western Region Conference of Principals to design a new scheme of work for secondary schools.

Syllabus Management and Publishers

C.T. Quinn-Young of the Education Department in the Eastern Region was often consulted in the Western Region. This relationship indicated the pace at which both regions tried to match their education system. From the headquarters of the Education Department in the Western Region, it was suggested that a new syllabus of a 6-year course be introduced for learning (Letter No. D.E.W. 504 1662).

The commercial implication of such was that new book structures were required and thus created a book market for publishers. "Everyone's Arithmetic", a mathematics text was used as a teaching resource and it was efficient as it encouraged practical learning and illustration in the series of 'Real life projects

Teachers in existing missionary secondary and primary schools were engaged in the book commercialising scheme. Being the era of internal self-rule, the colonial state scheme the education system to allow the ideas and initiatives of experienced African teachers. For instance, the manuscripts developed by Mr Akioye of St. John's School, Ikire on Physical Education were passed on to the Principal, Government Teacher Training College, Ibadan for scrutiny.

The politics of acceptance for publication and suitability for school use was profound among the actors involved. The basis of Mr Agbede's (St. John's School, Ikire) submission of native songs was to promote Yoruba culture in school singing and reduce reliance on English culture. (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV) The context of the petition implied that some teachers preferred to Anglicize the curriculum system while others preferred an indigenous adaptation. This was expected because the school being a missionary school worked with English and Christian values, yet the place of indigenous perception cannot be overruled in the construct of publishing interest. In a letter of May 1st 1953, Mr Akioye's book was rejected for publication with a consensus that it was not suitable.

However, not all manuscripts written for consideration qualified for publication because Mr A. Hunt-Cooke Director of Education for Western Region rejected several manuscripts written by teachers. The manuscript on Arithmetic was rejected on the basis that its content was available in other books and not suitable for publication.

While the manuscripts of African teachers were constantly rejected, the foreign publishing firms constantly proposed titles by foreign teachers to the Department of Education. Invariably, the letters of the Educational Manager of Longmans Greens constantly aim to market the titles and subsequently influenced how the Director understood the syllabus. And the need to overhaul it was not necessarily for African-centred learning content, except in the interest of foreign publishers. As foreign titles were suggested for purchase, those of indigenous authors were constantly criticized as not suitable. Longmans Green's typical reasons for the rejection of books by African teachers went thus:

> Further to our letter of October 23rd (1952), I write to say that we have now been through this manuscript very carefully and I am afraid it is not in a state where we could expect a printer to work from it. Moreover, we can't tell how some of the material is meant to be set out and, in some places, whether lines of text are meant to be headings or the first sentence of a new paragraph. It will have to be re-typed. This of course is a task for the author to do but I thought it is advisable to return it to him via yourself for various reasons. (Letter No: D.E.W. 504/679 February 20, 1953)

Despite the rejections made by Longmans Green and the Director of Education in the Western Region, African teachers exploited the competitiveness of the international publishing industry to get their content published. In a book advertising letter forwarded to the Department of Education by the Educational Manager of Collins Son & Co. Limited (from Glasgow), marketing its Hymn books depicted the input of African teachers as it was claimed that the songs were forwarded by them (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV 23rd January 1955). Although it was not evident if African teachers were the authors, their initiatives were considered.

Indirectly, the foreign publishers managed the syllabus of primary schools, secondary schools and Teacher Training Colleges. On

the other hand, the colonial state was overwhelmed with manuscripts from indigenous subject authors. For instance, Longmans Green introduced its natural science books for teaching primary school science. The list for science teaching was allocated thus:

Book 1	"Mason Wasps"
Book 2	"The Earthworm"
Book 3	"The Toad"
Book 4	"Caterpillars, Moths and Butterflies"
Book 5	"Termites"
Book 6	"Mosquitoes" (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV).

The sensibility of Africans was demeaned in the way the science books' author Gwen Cross was described in this phrase: "The books were written by primary school teachers with long experiences in tropical areas". This assertion was aimed at de-emphasizing the clamour for the campaign for African teachers for African books and for African students, which was a feature of the era of internal self-rule in the 1950s. Few authors were privileged to have their manuscripts considered. A similar case was Mr Akin-Ibitoye's Arithmetic book considered by the syllabus committee. The book was found suitable to serve as a children's workbook.

The trends of publishers' interest in Nigeria's education indicated a total overhaul for economic and ultimately political reasons. Since Professor Z.J. Lewis of the University College of Gold Coast agreed to be the general editor of Nelson's Education Handbooks, it was obvious that the publishers were quite futuristic in their thoughts of postcolonial retention of British ideals which meant re-colonization. As stated in a letter forwarded to Mr A. Hunt-Cooke of the Department of Education, Nelson's Education Handbook was meant for use in Teacher Education at the Training Colleges. Professor Lewis was expected to edit contributions in principles of education, teaching methods, history and philosophy of education, methods of research, and school and class management.

The management of syllabuses and textbook supply featured paradoxes that implied that foreign publishers were allowed to sell

books for school use and yet, indigenous authors were encouraged to work on manuscripts to meet international standards. The permanent secretary of the Department of Education wrote to an author that:

> Naturally, the ministry is interested in the production of school texts of good quality and will do all it can to help would-be authors see good books through the print. To reduce the initial burden of work in connection with your manuscripts, I am to request that you be good enough to say a little more about yourself e.g. about your qualifications, for undertaking to write these books. In this connection, qualification includes teaching experience (Letter No: D.E.W. 504/751).

Much as most books by foreign publishers were accepted for school use, some were criticized and returned based on non-suitability for adult school learning. Thus, Dr Winterbottom's Arithmetic book was rejected. Mr Ogunlesi, a staff of the Department of Education wrote down the criticisms. The level of foreign involvement and bid for commercialization reached such a peak that the management of Educational Productions Limited, Yorkshire requested primary and secondary school syllabus is to be sent to plan and determine their marketing strategies.

The levels of commercialization of books became an initiative that indigenous educated fellows under WRLC used to introduce educational supply as a trading arm. In its letter to all education stakeholders, its interest in supplies through its 'travelling bookshop' set to provide school needs such as school stationery, teaching aids, maps, pictures, sports equipment, books for the school library, teacher's reference books, exercise books textbooks and so on (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV).

Constant rejection of manuscripts written by indigenous teachers gradually revolutionised publishing within Africa. Gradually, teachers in the Western region resorted to publishing their manuscripts locally. For instance, Mr C.S. Giwa of Baoku African School, Oke-Foko, Ibadan decided to publish *Graded Primary School Arithmetic* and

forwarded it to the Curriculum Committee of Primary School Branch in the Western Region (NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV). Also WRLC, the manuscripts were published locally and sold through its trading outfit, to make a profit for authors. The level of involvement of the C.M.S. Bookshop Lagos was quite expressed in the concerns over the standard VI syllabus which the manager claimed:

> Since my return from leave last week, I have heard various rumours that there is a possibility of your doing away with Standard IV. As you know we have based our buying on your present syllabus and have not yet been informed that it is to be disbanded. This will cause considerable embarrassment to both C.M.S. Bookshop (Nigeria) and to publishers in England as it involves many thousands of pounds for books ordered for Standard VI.[4]

Of all the foreign publishers, Oxford University Press established its branch in Ibadan and had the opportunity to influence local sensibility to purchase *The New Oxford English Course* for primary classes I-VI. Through the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, the portions of the book were broadcast through the programme "Listen and Write"[5] The confidence Oxford University Press had in marketing the new English book was affirmed by the fact that it had been used in Gold Coast (Ghana) Schools; thus a Nigerian version was considered necessary to boost sales in West Africa.[6]

Dr Biobaku's History Books for Primary Schools

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[4] Letter from C.M.S Bookshop Lagos to the Minister of Education, Western Secretariat, Ibadan on 17th August, 1953. See NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV.

[5] Letter from Oxford University Press West African Office, Ibadan NAI IbMinEd DDW 504 Vol. IV

[6] The letter was copied to Chairman and Secretary of English Panel of the Syllabus Committee of the Ministry of Education, Ibadan; Principal Wesley College, Ibadan, Principal Government Teacher Training College, Ibadan and Inspector General of Education, Education Headquarters, Lagos

Like Dr Biobaku's history book, only a few books written by African teachers were put on a waiting list for the possibility of publication. Dr Saburi Biobaku was one of the foremost professional historians whose history textbooks were used in the Primary School History Syllabus. Useful for standards V and VI, the topics mostly analysed in the book focused on the slave trade, and its abolition. and the 'opening up' of West Africa. In a letter dated 3rd February, 1953, the Inspector of Training Colleges in Ibadan however criticized that the book was merely a 'source-book' whose language of presentation was incomprehensible for teachers. Therefore, it was suggested that it was not suitable for pupil comprehension, but could be used for teacher referencing and thus should be supplied to all primary school libraries.

The phrase in the letter "Quinn-Young will be able to advise you better on its possibilities for secondary school use"[7]indicate that the book was granted partial acceptance to serve as a teacher reference. The learning gap recreated the idea of forming textbooks useful for teacher decoding and learner comprehension. Precisely, in 1965, *A Thousand Years of West African History* edited by Ian Espie and J.F. Ade-Ajayi was published by Ibadan University Press (Oladejo, 2014). The book addressed Quinn-Young's observations for robust studies in the history of West Africa.

Given the learning gap identified in *Makers of West Africa*, letters from WRLC, Mr. Levi, the secretary implied that Mr. A. Hunt-Cooke and Messrs Macmillan be involved in simplifying the history syllabus and there should be another book to make history learning efficient. While foreign publishing firms were cataloguing books written by foreign authors on Africans, the Department of Education in the Western Region was still interested in Dr Biobaku's manuscript, *Makers of West Africa*. Despite the decision that it was only suitable for primary school libraries and teacher referencing, Quinn-Young of Eastern Region was pessimistic about Messrs Macmillan's interest in publishing it but was optimistic that with some form of reviews and rework it could be acceptable. The concern for the manuscript was of utmost relevance

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7 Letter No: D.E.W. 504/661 in NAI DDW 504 Vol. IV

because the titles forwarded by foreign book marketers were those written by some Africans on Africa on topics related to history and geography. (Letter No. D.E.W. 504/710).

To get the manuscript to a standard acceptable to Messrs Macmillan, Dr Biobaku found his way to Enugu to visit C.T. Quinn-Young for comprehensive details of the requirements. Reference to Quinn-Young to revise the manuscript was predicated on the fact that a book had been authored by Quinn-Young for school history. Yet, as of August 12, 1953, Messrs Macmillan still wrote to Mr A. Hunt-Cooke inquiring about the revisions done on the manuscript.

Conclusion

Modern trends in African societies featured paradoxical scenarios in the developments that unfolded after World War II. The purpose of development was aimed at welfare plans and indeed this was reflected in the introduction of free primary education in western Nigeria. However, the capitalist notions of the colonial state resonated in the way the educational management of schools was tailored to suit the demand and supply forces of foreign publishing firms. Nigerian teachers found new fortunes and sought relevance in indigenizing subject curricula through content development. The 1950s was the era of internal self-rule in Nigeria and it was indeed a struggle for indigenous teachers (authors) to fit into the standard practice set by the colonial state. The reasons for the rejection of manuscripts developed by Nigerian teachers are determined from the lens of foreign publishing firms. Thus, there were rarely efforts to train Nigerian teachers in textbook writing. Despite this, some Nigerians demonstrated the sense and spirit of self-rule by designing subject books relevant to teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools. Such a spirit was profound in the efforts of Dr Biobaku. Textbook writing for primary and secondary schools and indigenous publishing remains axiomatic, even in contemporary times.

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