



Paradox of Intellectual Bootlegging in *Paradox of Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria: A Review*

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The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria are mainly Christians by contemporary religious definition. Islam never penetrated Igboland in pre-colonial times as were the cases of Northern Nigeria and the Yoruba of the Southwest. Indeed up to the point the Igbo were engaged in a civil war with the rest of the country between 1967 and 1970 Islam was not only an alien religion among the Igbo but was abhorred. However, following the defeat of the Igbo in the civil war, Muslims seized the opportunity of the economic hardship that greeted the Igbo and their subsequent alienation from political power to gradually penetrate the area and began to raise a few cluster of adherents. This is the picture Professor Egodi Uchendu sought to present in her book: *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* of the Department of History and International Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The present work is therefore a critical intellectual review of the book. The appraisal is based broadly on three conceptual historical themes namely: methodology, source material analysis, and authenticity of the projected assumptions objectively applied through historical methodological approach. In the course of the analysis the work, it was found to be lacking in originality with sumptuous evidence of suspected plagiarism. Originally set in historical timeline, the author in an attempt to cover up this obvious intellectual misdemeanor sought to seek refuge under social science methodological approach. In the pursuit of the analysis, the writer tried as much as he could to limit the review to a cursory rather than surgical analysis of the work since applying the latter could mean engaging on the re-writing of the book.

Keywords: Igboland, Islam, Nigeria, Igbo, Hausa.

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INTRODUCTION

The present paper is a critical examination of some commanding aspects of the book: *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria: A History of the Arrival of Islam in Igboland*. The work is authored by Egodi Uchendu, a Professor of History at the Department of History and International Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Professor Uchendu is also a Fellow of the prestigious Historical Society of Nigeria (FHSN). Published in 2012 in Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany by Klaus Schwarz Verlag, the book is made up of nine chapters with 284 pages which include the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusion', both of which are not by the basic framework of the book assigned conventional chapter designations; although this could be assumed to be more of style than sequential intellectual omission.

At a first glance the seemingly intellectually arresting posture of the title exhumes the tendency to infest any unsuspecting scholar with the ravenous urged to go for the book head-long. The designative sumptuousness of the chapters is equally captivating to even the most oddly intellectual Paul-pry.

There is therefore no doubt that Professor Egodu Uchendu by this work has set an intellectual pace in the study of a seemingly infertile ground of historical study. The study of Islamic intrusion in Igboland, particularly at this age of Islamic fundamentalist challenges in Nigeria in particular and the world at large is no doubt as much fascinating as it is resolutely engaging and deserving.

Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria is therefore an important point of entry into what could be described as the historical wilderness of Islam in Southern Nigeria. But like every literary work of history, especially the ones dealing with supposedly virgin subjects as this one, the question of perfection in all its garbs of historical representations remains still a matter for the distant millennia. Notwithstanding its fascinating contributions to historical scholarship therefore, *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* in more than one respect represents a connubiality of spurious anachronisms, avoidable methodological flaws and patchwork of befuddling clumsy analyses of extant facts of history, all of which are woven in a captive intellectual sensationalism that more than any objective tends to veneer these obvious intellectual fault-lines.

But one fact must be made clear. The fundamental objective of historical criticism is to distil the grains of truth from the chaffs of historical absurdities, compressed in historical falsehoods, half-truths and fabrications. Thus in the pursuit of this objective, the present writer agrees with Hart (1972) when in his *“Original Preface to the Real War”* he stated:

“In my judgment of values it is more important to provide material for a true verdict than to gloss over disturbing facts so that individual reputations may be preserved....”

The primary driving force in any professional historical work is the fundamental desire to unravel the truth about past. When any work of history is curiously divorced from the realities of the same past it is meant to reconstruct, it becomes absurdly defined, at best as a fiction in history. As Garraghan (1946) succinctly put it:

“Zeal for the truth is as indispensable to the historian as a passion for beauty is to the artist. It postulates sincerity and frankness in

stating the facts, however much the writer’s feelings or those of others may be ruffled in the process”.

Whether *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* meets up with the fundamental standards of pure historical research will be determined in the following sections.

OUTLINE SYNOPSIS

The introductory part which consists of the “Preface” and “Introduction” seems to delve more on conceptual assumptions and formulations which are necessarily important in such a study as this. In a way, there is a departure from the conventional “Preface” as an explanatory summary of the basic thesis and contents of the book, to that of a conventional “Introduction”. This is evident by the assignment of references, which does not appear to be the convention in academic book publishing. In other words, there is no clear structural distinction between the “Preface” and the “Introduction”.

The main thrust of the work is embodied in chapters one, two, three and four where episodes in the tradition of Hausa migration and settlement in Igboland, with isolated instances of actual indigenous Igbo conversions are copiously narrated. On the other hand, chapters five, six and seven are more of thematic appendages and commentary on isolated episodes in conversion, which could have under a well-structured outline analytically formed part of the preceding chapters.

The “Conclusion” on the other hand, stands out as one striking example of putting the cart before the horse. The justifying objective of an epilogue to any work of history is not just a summary re-cast of the high-points of the arguments and analysis in the main body of the work, but most importantly drawing up a logical position from the broad spectrum of research questions which formed the pedestal of analysis. This is not logically evident in the whole body of the “Conclusion”. Instead what appears to have occupied the space is a medley of re-casted research questions, unproven assumptions, and suggestions that are incongruous to the thesis of the book.

Perhaps it may necessary to quote in part what could defined as the research questions of the “Conclusion” (260):

How were the early communities that emerged in northern Igboland and at Owerri managed and integrated within the mainstream? In what specific ways did the non-Muslim majority relate with the small and fledging Muslim communities? On the first Igbo convert to Islam, the question: is

how did he communicate his faith to others? Was he able to get others to join him in Islam? About Nwangui: what exactly were the influences that brought about his conversion? Why did he prefer to convert to Islam outside the shores of Nigeria when all around him, or in close proximity to him, were Muslim acquaintances and colleagues? A few other issues will be undertaken up in the remaining pages.

Arising from the foregoing excerpts from the "Conclusion" the question which then arises is, are these probable research questions intended to draw the readers back to the main body of the work? Furthermore, what is the essence of these questions without resulting answers within the compact space of the "Conclusion"?

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Argles (1970) in his treatise on historical criticism wrote:

"There are various ways of writing history, ranging from the racy and the vivid to the merely boring. The cardinal sins are pretentiousness and portentousness, either of language or of content, and the dishonesty of pretending to scholarship while in fact writing a book apparently based on no discoverable sources (or on sources which are not acknowledged). In fact, when assessing the worth of a book it is generally illuminating to turn to the footnotes or to the bibliography at the back. If references to other works are scanty or non-existent it is a safe bet that the work is unscholarly or plagiaristic".

Going through the sources and bibliographical component of the book, there is no doubt that *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* wears the garb of a scholarly work. A work of this kind, judging from its novelty is bound to be anchored substantially on primary sources, and this one believes seems to be satisfied by the impressive size of oral interviewees recorded by the author. However, quite a number of flaws which are no more technical than they are unhistorical could be dictated.

First, historical writings are impressively based on exactitudes of facts and not on wild speculations or unscientific assumptions. Even in matters concerning dating where exactitude is often difficult to be sustained, historians are at liberty to gamble with periodization of the event within

a defined historical space. Yet, there are facts that evenly demand for exactitude. For instance, Uchendu stated at page 14:

Over 250 persons collaborated in this study. The majority was directly interviewed in English, Igbo, a combination of both, and in Pidgin English.

However, of the stated "over 250 persons" only 162 were recorded, yet without substantive identity of the informants to prove their authenticity. Her excuse for this obvious documentary lapse was that it was for "reasons of confidentiality". Uchendu did not however state those "reasons of confidentiality" that prompted her decision to have the fundamental aspects of the personal data of the informants withheld. Was it that the informants were not sure of the authenticity of their evidence? Was it also for the same "reasons of confidentiality" that the recorded number of the informants did not match the quoted number or even more?

The fact which needs stated in this case, is that historical research is not an act of espionage in which the identities of informants or the sources of evidence are kept off the knowledge of the public. For any professional work of history to be adjudged as factually objective, it must be founded on ascertainable sources and bibliography and not based on spurious evidence. Any work which fails to fulfill this condition leaves the room for scholars to suspect some levels of academic fraud. The personal data of informants in any work of history that rests substantially on oral accounts, as in the case of *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* are as judiciously imperative as the publisher, place and year of publication are to any published academic book (Nwaezeigwe, 2007).

It could therefore, in the light of this obvious unprofessional omission, be assumed that probably most of these names recorded as informants are arguably spurious in character hence the deliberate omission as a means of shrugging off detection by expert historians. A few instances would prove the spuriousness of some of these informants. On "note 368", page 126, Uchendu recorded thus:

Information on Islam in Mbaise came from interviews held in Mbaise in January and February 2006 with Malam Isa Ekeji, b.c. 1938 (converted to Islam in 1974); Malam Isa Ugiri, b.c. 1931, Imam of Mbaise, (converted to Islam in 1966). Mrs Maimuna Ugiri; Malam Mohammed Ibeh, b. 1959, (converted to Islam in 1996); Nze Desmond Njoku, b.c. 1927, traditional Prime Minister of Mbaise; Mr. A. Obube, (converted to Islam in

1977 but later recanted; Mr. A. Ibe, b.c. 1941 (converted to Islam in 1975 and recanted in 1987).

The above passage of "reference" no doubt raises a lot of questions that bother on spurious identity. The first question here is, which part of Mbaise were the interviews conducted? Or is Mbaise here treated as a single town and no longer a group of towns under five traditional clans? Why was no date of birth assigned to Mrs. Maimuna Ugiri? Above all, which community was or is Nze Desmond Njoku, its traditional Prime Minister? Or if actually he was the traditional Prime Minister of the five clans of Mbaise one would like to know the king of Mbaise?

There is no doubt that one does not need to be a historian to know that the Mbaise sub-group of the Southern Igbo are constituted into five clans, defined in Colonial era as Clan Court Areas. As Nwachukwu (1990) put it:

The former Mbaise division is made up of five major clans. Ahiara is one of the five clans and the others are Ezinihite, Ekwereazu, Nguru, and Enyioyugu.... Ahiara is made up of eleven villages but with ten ancestral symbols of office.

The other ambiguity which equally needs mention is the case of informants from Lokpanta, as recorded under "note 403", page 136:

The cattle market at Lokpanta in Umuchieze Local Government Area of Abia State is symptomatic of the cattle business and the cattle markets found in all major towns and some remote places in Igboland. The Lokpanta cattle market has a long history and can be traced back to about the time that the cattle market developed in Abakaliki in 1914. Two bands of herders left Abakaliki. One group led by Oseni, who years later became the Sarkin of Umuahia arrived at Isiama Afara-Ukwu in Umuahia, while the second group moved to Uzuakoli. It was claimed that at Umuahia the warrant chief, Wariaku Ngwuli gave Oseni and his herders a place to settle, an action that was approved by the villages.

In acknowledging the "Note 403", Uchendu wrote:

Oral data on the cattle market at Lokpanta came from Chief Godwin Ngruli, Alhaji

Maikano Mohammed, Alhaji Suleiman Mohammed, Mohammed Usman, Alhaji Yusuf, Mr. J. Ekeleme, Alhaji Mohammed Bufu, Sarkin Hayatu Adamu, Alhaji Buba Abdullahi Kedemure, Alhaji Umaru Jalingo, Kabiru Hindi, Mr. Innocent Okeke, Mrs. Veronica Nwoga, His Highness, Odogwu Eze.

The first question that arises from the first quoted paragraph concerns the location of Lokpanta. The author has stated that Lokpanta is located in Umuchieze Local Government Area of Abia State. The question here is, is Umuchieze the name of a Local Government Area or town? Is it not a common knowledge that both Lokpanta and Umuchieze are two distinct communities belonging to Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State, with both communities providing land for the cattle market?

The other observation on the oral data is that there was no attempt to engage on cross-cutting collection of oral data between the indigenous non-Muslim and their Muslim immigrant neighbours. The result was that the accounts of the informants became lineal in analysis assuming the same pattern of information delivery. There was indeed no room, for instance, for the non-Muslim indigenes of Enugu-Ezike and Ibagwa-Aka to give their own version of the tradition of Muslim migration and settlement among them. For instance, of the 30 informants from the Nsukka sub-group, only Dr. P.A. Ezema of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka appears to be the only non-Muslim indigene of the area interviewed.

Out of this 30 in number, eight were classified as having come from Enugu-Ezike, thirteen from Nsukka town, one from Orba, two from Amufie, one from Adani, one from Alor Agu, two from Ogrute and two from Ibagwa. Without arguing the wisdom of de-classifying Amufie and Ogrute from Enugu-Ezike, it is necessary to observe that, with the sprawling population of Muslim settlers in Ibagwa-Aka and Amufie - Enugu-Ezike, two informants each could not have provided adequate data for effective analysis of the sequence of historical events.

But most striking is the absence of accounts on the activities of the celebrated Igbo Muslim Alhaji Sulaiman Onyeama of Eke, Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. Most people who are well acquainted with the development of indigenous Igbo Muslims in the present Anambra and Enugu States would agree that no history of Islam among the indigenous Igbo of the present Enugu State would be deemed objective without the mention of Alhaji Suleiman Onyeama. It was indeed unfortunate that the only space where Onyeama was mentioned, if indeed he was the person being referred to, since Abdulaziz instead of Sulaiman Onyeama was mentioned, is on page 37; when

she wrote in reference to a publication in *Citizen Magazine*:

In 1991 Abdulaziz Onyeama, the most prominent Igbo Muslim and a member of the Nigerian Supreme Islamic Council, announced in an interview that there were some 10,000 Muslims of Igbo origin all over Nigeria....

It is indeed a wild omission for Uchendu to have failed to carry out part of his research on the legacies of Alhaji Onyeama or in effect interview any member of his family. There is no doubt that an interview with his first son Muhammad, who is presently a member of the Enugu State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board would have added more flesh to the skeletal historical evidence on Islam among the indigenous Igbo Muslims in Enugu and its environs. Possibly this angle of enquiry if it had been carried out, could have provided a clue to a more discernible evidence of the angle of Libyan intervention in Igboland, which is conspicuously absent in the book. It should be noted that it was under the leadership of Alhaji Suleiman Onyeama that Igbo Muslims became part of Libya's web of subtle jihad in Black Africa.

It should also be recalled that in 1987, as Shehu (1987) candidly reported, Alhaji Onyeama visited Libya where he complained to the Libyan Leader Muammar Gaddafi that some Igbo Muslim converts were made to lose their jobs for joining Islam, and this had discouraged other people from accepting the faith. Below is the report of Onyeama's Libyan venture as presented by Shehu (1987):

"The Libyan Arab Republic is to assist the spread of Islam in the Eastern parts of Nigeria through its agency, the world Islamic Call Society. As a first step, an interest-free loan is to be made available to some Moslem leaders in the area to enable them operate a commercial farm that would employ individuals who fall-out with their employers as a result of their joining Islam. This is the outcome of a joint presentation by Nigerian Moslems at an eight-day conference in Libya who impressed upon the conference, the critical position of Islam in Eastern Nigeria. Alhaji Sulaiman Onyeama, a prominent Islamic propagator based in Enugu, had claimed that some Igbo lose their jobs on joining Islam while others are deterred from joining the religion by such fears".

The essence of quoting the above report at length is to prove that quite an enormous wealth of information should have

been gathered from the Onyeama angle alone to beef up the thematic disabilities of the book. For instance it clearly opens the economic dimension of Igbo conversion from the angle of empowerment, particularly since there is always the commonplace belief that economic reasons are the primary factor for Igbo conversion to Islam.

It is therefore right to state, talking about oral data, even though seemingly exhaustive by the number of recorded informants, they clearly lack analytical authenticity. And if the oral evidence are lacking in analytical substance even though exhaustive on face value, then the archival sources could be said to be under-sourced, particularly on the part of "Owerri Province" under which both Umuahia and Okigwe were placed during the Colonial period (see Suleiman, 2012: cclxviii-cclxxi) for a more comprehensive archival documentation on the area.

Finally, going through the bibliographical list, one discovers that identities of the publishers are not included in the documentation. For a book of such intellectual magnitude to be noted for such fundamental omission simply borders more on bibliographical-lifting than intellectual negligence.

But most striking in this case of multiple ambiguities in the application of sources, is the absence of works on the history of local Islam among the Nsukka sub-group, which are legion in the form of undergraduate and Diploma Project Reports in the Departments of History and International Studies, and Religion and Cultural Studies.

One of such works of remarkable scholarly importance is a B.A. Project Report in the Department of History and International Studies by Oluwa (1996) "History of Islam in Igboland with Special Emphasis on Nsukka Zone of Enugu State". It is striking to note that this vital study which could have acted more as a primary pedestal on which Uchendu would have stood on, was conspicuously absent in her bibliographical list. Yet going through the Project Report, there appears to be some elements of evidence that the work was not after all strange to some exclusive facts raised in the *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria*. Uchendu (35) wrote:

Beginning from 1970, when concerted efforts began to be made from within and outside Nigeria to propagate Islam in Igboland, instances of conversions peaked with reported increase in the number of Igbo Muslims.

Again on page 125, she stated:

1970 marked a turning point in the journey of Islam to Igboland. It was the year when Islamic organizations from Northern and Western Nigeria and also from outside

Nigeria began to formally extend their activities to Igboland.

In historical scholarship the above paragraph borders on what could be described as exactitude of fact. Such fact could either be drawn from the analysis of trajectory historical evidence or the acceptance of an existing fact, both of which must be supported by a reference source. Uchendu did not elaborate on why the year 1970 marked a 'turning point' in the journey of Islam to Igboland beyond the fact that that was the year the Nigerian civil war ended. This is because the closest evidence to this point of assertion was, according to her, 1974, and later pushed back to 1972. As she puts it on page 126:

Muslims in Mbaise date the beginning of Islam in their town to 1974, the year Muslim visitors from Hausaland and Saudi Arabia arrived the town in the company of two of the newly converted Mbaise Muslims. Oral evidence from Mbaise, however, shows that efforts towards introducing Islam in the town began in 1972.

Apart from the fact that the above paragraph cannot be corroborated with the exact date of 1970, since there is no supporting evidence that Mbaise was the first place Islamic conversion began in Igboland after the civil war, a note of reference is again lacking on the fact of 1974, while that of 1972 was based on the spurious list of informants mentioned earlier. More importantly is the fact that one cannot fathom any meaning in the term "Mbaise town".

Secondly, Uchendu did not also explain how she got the fact of 1970 being the year Islamic organizations from Northern and Western Nigeria, as well as foreign countries began to extend their activities to Igboland. It is obvious that the source of this fact is entirely absent in the body of the book; and this may tend to suggest that the idea might have been extracted from a source without acknowledgement. And going through Oluwa's Project Report, there is strong evidence suggesting that this piece of opinion was lifted hook, line and sinker from there.

Oluwa (1996) had stated:

From the 1970s onward, probably because the war had drawn their attention to the state of Islam and Muslims in Igboland and Eastern Nigeria in general, Islamic organizations outside the region began to extend their activities to the area. One of such organizations was *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* which established a branch at Enugu under

the leadership of Sulayman Onyeama, and which during the tour of the Southeastern region by its then national secretary, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, converted over five hundred persons in the area. There was also the Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria with headquarters in Western Nigeria which established a branch at Onitsha around 1975.

In fact going by the sublime analysis of the impact of the Nigerian civil war on Islamic propagation in Igboland by Oluwa (26-29) in the build-up to the above paragraph, it became convincingly obvious that Oluwa had better explanations for the application of the term "turning point" to 1970 than Uchendu. Oluwa's radiant analysis on the impact of the Nigerian civil war on the presence of Islam in Igboland would leave no one in doubt as to the historicity of his work, as well as being the source of Uchendu's assertion.

Another point of reference suggesting that Uchendu borrowed extensively from Oluwa's work without the intention of acknowledging same could be found in her attempt to date the coming of Islam to Nsukka sub-group in particular and Igboland in general. On page 78 Uchendu wrote:

Although Doi made no attempt to date his story, the interaction of Nsukka Igbo with Nupe and Hausa migrants speak of the period from 1930s onwards, by which time remarkable results had begun to be observed with respect to the construction of roads, railways, and bridges that connect Igboland— and not just Nsukka Division— with parts of Nigeria far removed from them, resulting in increased communication between Igbo communities and ethnic groups in Northern Nigeria.

It was clear that the above paragraph was a rebuttal to Doi's inability to assign a definite date to the coming of Islam to Nsukka sub-group. In other words, for this rebuttal to be truly academic it must be supported with reference. This was clearly omitted. Commenting on the same issue, Oluwa (1996) wrote:

Unlike in the Nsukka zone where Islam had already become well established by 1930, it was from that year that indigenous Muslim communities began to gradually emerge in other parts of Igboland. The emergence of these communities was similarly boosted by the construction of roads and railways.

These boosted trade too which in turn, attracted Muslims to Igboland from the northern and western regions.

Although Uchendu (94-5) attempted to veneer this obvious source of her assertion through some spurious assumptions that revolved round the 1930s, her intellectual smartness was however betrayed when she wrote:

It is important to note that the chief imam of Enugu Ezike, Alhaji Ossai, dated conversion to Islam in Enugu Ezike to the 1930s but was uncertain of the year, (91).

Apart from the fact that the above assertion was not again acknowledged, it was indeed Oluwa that had fieldwork interview with Alhaji Ossai and not Uchendu. This is substantiated by the absence of Alhaji Ossai in the list of informants presented by Uchendu (264-9).

Much as both works are hinged hypothetically on Doi's work, with Oluwa making reference to both the chapter in *Doi's Islam in Nigeria* (1984), Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation, and the chapter in Luke et al (1978) (eds) *Christianity in Independent Africa*, while Uchendu only made reference to that of 1984, there is no doubt that Oluwa's work is smack of better historical professionalism, whose stream of analysis leaves no one in doubt as to the veracity of its sources. Above all, being a Project Report in a Department where Uchendu passed through, from undergraduate, through her postgraduate studies to become a Professor, she cannot therefore feign ignorance of the existence of such a work, which is supposed to be a fundamental reference point for *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria*.

Thus, that Uchendu was quite aware of the work cannot be denied. Much as one does not intend to accuse Uchendu of copying ideas from Oluwa without acknowledgment, it is obvious that her action bears resemblance to what Robinson and Davidson (1999) defined thus as plagiarism: "to copy (ideas, passages of texts, etc) from someone else's work and use them as if they were one's own". Above all, one still believes it is more of a professional disservice than intellectual dishonesty for a senior scholar of the rank of not just a Professor and Fellow of the prestigious Historical Society of Nigeria (FHSN) to refuse to acknowledge the excellent work of a junior scholar, yet made use of the same work in her book. As Goodman (2001) clearly put it:

A person who wears the label of 'professor' assumes certain responsibilities. Foremost is that his work will be thorough, fair and honest and free from preconceptions offered as conclusions.

One is not by the above statement attempting to be judgmental; however, in any historical work certain methodological indices are required for such work to be judged as truly historical. So whether *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* qualifies to be defined as truly historical can only be stated by the ability of the book to wade unscathed through the historical torrents of sustainable evidence. This would again be further determined by the following sections.

HISTORICAL MISREPRESENTATIONS

In terms of avoidable historical pitfalls which ordinarily cannot be tolerated in an undergraduate Project Report by a thorough project supervisor, the *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* is dotted with quite disturbing instances. Every critical historical research begins with the researcher feigning ignorance of the subject matter; for what then is the essence of research if the subject matter is already well known to the researcher. As the poet Wallace Stevens put it (Wain, 1972): "you must become an ignorant man again, and see the sun again with an ignorant eye".

This act of intellectual humility in historical research is profoundly lacking in *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* in both the language and structural analysis of commanding facts. The result was the preponderance of what could be described as "avoidable pitfalls" in historical writing.

Take for instance, the last paragraph of page 23 began with "Harry Johnson" instead of "Harry Johnston" (See Cooney, 1974: 116-117; 122-123; 126-131). Ordinarily this could have been taken as a simple typographic error or the "printer's devil" but being the beginning of a paragraph, one should have expected the prying eyes of a thorough historian to catch the obvious misrepresentation. Equally distorting is Uchendu's claim (page 35), that Professor Abdur Rahman Doi was a Pakistani, whereas the one time Lecturer at the then Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of Nigeria, Nsukka was indeed an Indian, although Muslim.

In the attempt by Uchendu to rebut Doi's Igala hypothesis on the introduction of Islam among the Nsukka sub-group, Uchendu (80) wrote: "A good example are the Onitsha Igbo, who trace their origin to Igala, and the Edo, who occupy land owned originally by the Igala". Agreed that part of Onitsha traces their origin to Igalaland, but that cannot stand the fact of the origin of Onitsha as a community, since majority of the indigenes claim descent from Ezechima, an eponymous migrant from Benin; a tradition which most Igbo historians are reluctant to accept since the name "Ezechime" is basically Igbo in etymology and not Edo.

On the claim that the Edo are occupying the land originally owned by the Igala, one does not seem to understand how Uchendu arrived at such hypothesis. Is Uchendu saying that the present Edoland was once the ancestral home of the

Igala? The most striking aspect of this claim is that even the reference note associated with the two hypotheses does not bear any connection with the subjects of the two assertions. Instead of addressing the sources of the generated hypotheses, Uchendu went ahead to engage on rudderless tales of unconnected themes.

Again, there is no gainsaying the fact that history is a discipline in motion with regional geography as the compass with which historical events are spatially defined. Thus one fundamental intellectual weapon a professional historian should possess is the basic knowledge of the geography of his area of study. A number of spatial historical misrepresentations appear to suggest that Uchendu does not have elementary geographical knowledge of her area of study. Uchendu (40) wrote:

In the period of six decades from the launching of the Jihad wars in 1804, Islam was pushed southwards beyond Hausaland into Nupe, Ilorin, Abuja, Nasarawa Keffi and Adamawa located on the northern periphery of North Central Nigeria.

The question arising from the above passage is, if the aforementioned groups are actually located at the “northern periphery of North Central Nigeria” where does one place the present non-Hausa-Fulani ethnic clusters in the present Kaduna, Plateau, Gombe and Bauchi States, all of which are north of the areas so mentioned? Again, beyond the fact that the definition of Adamawa as part of North Central Nigeria is both historically and politically inaccurate in contemporary terms, ethnographically, the southern part of the present Borno State is largely made up of non-Hausa-Fulani and non-Kanuri speaking ethnic groups, most of who like the cases of Kaduna, Plateau, Bauchi and Gombe, are mainly Christian in religion.

Figure 5 at page 45 defined as “Eastern Nigeria showing the five main ethnic groups” presents another misnomer in the geographical definition of the ethno-historical character of Eastern Nigeria. If Okrika, Bonny and Kalabari could broadly be defined ethnographically as part of Ijaw ethnic nation, could the same be applied to the Ogoni who according to the map seems to have been collapsed geographically into the Ijaw ethnic nation? Again, going by the structure of the map, the present Akwa Ibom State seems to be synonymous with the Ibibio ethnic nation. Are we now being made to believe that the Anang, Oron and Eket have no basis for separate ethno-historical identity?

Finally, looking at the present Cross River State as defined by the map, is it not ridiculous to see the Efik occupying about two-third of the State? Nair (1972) clearly explains the point of Eburutu Efik migration, the course of

their migration and eventually the areas of their settlement. His account does not in any way support the geographical extent of their settlement as presented in figure five. In recent times, a clearer and more defined location of the Eburutu Efik appears to have emerged. According to Ukpong (2006) “the Efik are an ethnic group settling along the Cross River estuary and the banks of the Calabar River in Nigeria and in the Western Cameroon vicinity”. But it was *Nka Ikem Esit*¹ that aptly gave a more concise definition of Efik location: “The Efik live along the basins of the lower Cross River, the Calabar River, the Kwa River, Akpa Ikang, Eniong Creek and the Bakassi Peninsular”.

On the definition of the pre-colonial economic character of Eastern Nigeria, Uchendu (45) wrote:

As peasant farmers, traders and fishermen, the needs of the Igbo and their neighbours were limited to the basic requirements for existence, all of which were easily obtainable within their locality.

Even though the professional classification of the Igbo and their neighbours cannot adequately be limited to the three categories mentioned above, the term “peasant farmers” does not seem to properly define the form and structure of farming in Eastern Nigeria. Achebe (1958) in defining the socio-economic status of a typical Igbo farmer during the pre-colonial period wrote:

There was a wealthy man in Okonkwo’s village who had three huge barns, nine wives and thirty children. His name was Nwakibie and he had taken the highest but one title which a man could take in the clan.

The question here is, given the definition of a peasant according to Robinson and Davidson (1999) as “a farm worker or small farmer; a rough unmanly or culturally ignorant person”; could Achebe’s Nwakibie be properly defined as a peasant farmer? In contemporary African scholarship the most fashionable and appropriate term to depict the form and structure of farming in this part of Africa is subsistence farming.

Another point of reference suggesting the lack of adequate geographical knowledge of Nigeria by Uchendu could be found in her definition of the West Niger Igbo. To quote her (21):

¹Nka Ikem Esit (2016). “Who are the Efiks?” <http://www.efikdc.org/about-nka-ikem-esit/who-are-the-efiks>.

The Igbo retain a long held status as the major and dominant group in this part of Nigeria. In addition to its vast territory, it has extensive groups in the Old Central (or Warri) province, west of the Niger and therefore in the South West Nigeria. These communities were once known as the West Niger Igbo but presently as Anioma.

First, it is important to point out that there was never a time the entire West Niger Igbo group were grouped under what Uchendu called "Old Central" (or Warri) Province. The West Niger Igbo or Western Igbo as they are presently known were grouped into the Old Provinces of Benin and Warri. Furthermore, there was never a time the people officially changed their name or identity as far as scholars are concerned. So the statement: "These communities were once known as the West Niger Igbo but presently as Anioma" does not seem to apply. At best, it should have been the case of "also known as Anioma".

However, there is always the need for any thorough historian to try as much as possible to make a clear distinction between ethno-historical and raw political terminologies. The term "Anioma" which even has no ethno-historical root in meaning only emerged as a convenient unifying term for the West Niger Igbo in the course of their agitation for a separate State from the defunct Bendel State. Applying Anioma in the sense of ethnographic definition of the West Niger Igbo does not therefore seem appropriate in the context of *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria*, much as the reference to the Nsukka sub-group of northern Igbo as "Adada" or the Idoma as "Apa" would not fit into proper historical context; even though the two groups chose the two terms as the names of their proposed respective States as did the West Niger Igbo.

Again Uchendu's description of what she calls the "Igbo homeland in Eastern Nigeria" is decrepit in ethno-historical meaning. As she put it (22):

The Igbo homeland in Eastern Nigeria is enclosed within an imaginary line running outside of the western boundary of the river Niger: Enugu Ezike in the northern Igboland; Abakiliki, Afikpo, and Arochukwu on the eastern end; and Port Harcourt in the south. Towns located within this periphery are united in their acceptance of Igbo as their ethnic identity and their use of the Igbo language albeit with certain dialectical variations.

Much as the above passage does not provide any contextual meaning to what is defined as the Igbo homeland east of the

Niger, there appears to be a strong indication that both the idea and words of the passage even though wrongly applied, are not Uchendu's original creation. In other words, it is evident that the passage was lifted from the foregoing passage by Onwuejeogwu (1975) without any evidence of acknowledgement by way of reference:

The Igbo culture area is an area delimitable by an imaginary line running outside the settlements of Agbor, Kwale, Obiaruku, Ebu(West Niger Igbo area). Ahoada, Diobu, Umuagbaya (Port Harcourt area), Arochukwu, Afikpo, Ndinioafu, Isiogo (Abakiliki area), and Enugu Ezike(Nsukka area) and Nzam. This imaginary line encloses an area in which the people not only speak the various dialects of the Igbo language but also share typical and significant common culture traits and patterns, up or above 50%.

That the fundamental concept of Uchendu's definition of the Igbo homeland east of the Niger is lifted from the above passage cannot be easily ruled out, even though she does not seem to be articulate enough to grasp the true meaning of the passage. For instance, there appears to be no sense and meaning in the phrase: "the Igbo homeland in Eastern Nigeria is enclosed within an imaginary line running outside the western boundary of the river Niger". But most striking is the fact that Uchendu did not in any manner acknowledge this source of an obvious misrepresented definition of the "Igbo homeland east of the Niger". Could this again be defined as a possible case of plagiarism?

HISTORICAL POINTS OF ARGUMENT

Going through some commanding historical points of argument which formed the fundamental conceptual background to the thesis of the work, one is apt to state that *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* lacks the sublime thoroughness and culture of painstaking research that are characteristic of the typical student of the Afigbo historical school. Quite a number of instances suggest that Uchendu lacks the intellectual audacity to question stale hypotheses and theories that were not grounded in sustainable evidence. For instance, Uchendu (30) wrote:

While explaining why Islam has had the edge, so far, in Africa, Horton notes: 'In many areas, it was there first. However, in many areas where Christianity was first on the scene... people opted for it as

enthusiastically as others in areas of prior Islamic presence opted for the latter.

It is therefore evident that by adopting the stated Horton's hypothesis, Uchendu agrees that Islam as it stands at present has an edge over Christianity in Africa. But could this be the true situation? Although Horton (1971) propped up the above hypothesis while reviewing Peel's *Aladura: A Religious Movement among the Yoruba* which was published in 1968, Horton's review essay was later reviewed by Fisher (1973). The main point of departure however, is that both the time frame and scope of the work which centred mainly on the history of a Church among the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria were enough reasons for any thorough historian to question the hypothesis of an "Islam having an edge over Christianity in Africa".

However, since neither Horton nor Uchendu supported the hypothesis with empirical evidence, it cannot be accepted as the truth. Commenting on the projected population of Christians and Muslims in sub-Saharan Africa, the *Pew Research Center* (2015) put the Christian population estimate at 517,320,000 against the Muslim population of 248,420,000 as at 2010, with each constituting 62.9% and 30.2% respectively.

The fact remains that even if the entire population of the seven North African countries are lumped together with the above estimate population of Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa without prejudice to their minority Christian population, Christianity will still remain most populous religion in Africa. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as put forward by *Statistics Times* (2015), the total population estimate of Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Western Sahara combined as at 27 May, 2015 stood at 217,064,145, which when added to the 248,420,000 Muslim population in Sub-Saharan Africa will still be less than the total population of Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Again, it is surprising that Uchendu (75) would accept Abdurahman Doi's claim that Islam came to the Midwest through Yorubaland without critically examining such claim, especially when it is clear that the present Ondo State which forms the western boundary to Edo State is predominantly Christian. Mason (1970) in his study of the North-Eastern Yorubaland and Afemai clearly established the historical fact that it was indeed the Nupe that brought Islam to the present northern Edo communities. On the period of early Igbo-Hausa contacts, one is surprised to note that Uchendu (48) merely relied on Adamu's scanty evidence to arrive at the conclusion that the Igbo and Hausa had had no contacts prior to 1900. As she put it:

Adamu's extensive study of Hausa com-

mercial activities in the nineteenth century offers us nothing on the probable trade interactions between the Hausa and the peoples of Eastern Nigeria except to mention a notation from John Lander's recordings of an Hausa trader he 'noticed' in the Igbo kingdom of Abo, west of the Niger, during his travels with Clapperton in 1830 to 1832.

It was based on the above observation that Uchendu (48-9) concluded thus:

It remains a mystery as to what the Hausa trader was doing in the court of the king of Abo. Was he captured like Lander was? Unfortunately, before Lander could speak to him and ascertain these details, Lander was taken away. The mystery is all the more puzzling because Hausa commercial enterprise by this date, as mentioned, was directed southwestwards to the Gold Coast and beyond through Yorubaland, completely circumventing Edo, seat of the old Benin kingdom, and the territory of the Igbo kingdom of Aboh, where the trader was 'noticed'. It also circumvented Igboland east of the Niger and the rest of Eastern Nigeria. The likely possibility, therefore, of interaction between Hausa and Igbo and other groups in Eastern Nigeria before 1900 would have been by indirect mode and occurring in areas where the Hausa maintained trade links....

There is no doubt that it is historically suicidal for Uchendu to have relied so heavily on Adamu's hypothesis without seeking to explore alternative sources or other counter-models of evidence regarding pre-colonial contacts between the Igbo and Hausa.

In the first instance, archaeological evidence from the excavations at Igbo-Ukwu by Shaw (1970) proved by the presence of images of horses that contact between the Igbo and their northern neighbours goes back into the remote past. It also suggested the remoteness of horse trade between the Igbo and her northern neighbours.

But then coming closer to the recent past and going beyond Lander's surprise and Uchendu's mystery of seeing an Hausaman in Aboh, it should be noted that if contacts between the Hausa and the Igbo of the interior is mysterious to Uchendu, such could not have been the case with respect to contact between the Hausa and the Igbo of the Niger. This

is because accounts of commercial intercourse between the Igbo of the Niger and their Hausa, Igala, Nupe and Igbira counterparts up north abound, mostly in the records of early European explorers.

Obi (1976) quoting Captain William Allen and T.R.H. Thompson on their observation of the popular *Ogbe-Olie* Market at Asaba on 31st August 1841, wrote:

At Asaba, the natives of Benin come to trade by land, they have no canoes. The Eggarah people bring their produce of the interior. Those from Abo bring European goods, when they have them, or salts. The 'Dryland' people from the hills behind Adamugu or Damoogu or Abele, bring horses.

This was the situation of commercial activities at the present *Olie* market at Asaba as at 1841. Most professional historians would agree that given the age-long role of the River Niger as an important artery of communication between the Igbo and their northern neighbours, of which both the Igala and Nupe were mostly involved, there was no way the Hausa, who were commercially mixed up with them could not have been involved. In fact Baikie (1966) during his 1854 expedition up the Rivers Niger and Benue recounted the commercial scenery of both Asaba and Onitsha on 24th July.

But it was Samuel Crowther that indeed proved the evidence of Hausa-Igbo commercial intercourse during his 1841 joint expedition with Reverend James Schon of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) up the Niger. On September 2nd, Crowther recounted thus:

I had an opportunity to-day of proving what I had learned of the Hausa language. We came to a village called Doko Abokkoh, where we saw a yam canoe. Captain Allen ordered it to be called alongside. There was a man in it who spoke Hausa, and, as we had no interpreter on board who could speak to him, I acted as interpreter of that language for the first time, (Schon and Crowther, 1970).

On the extent of Igbo commercial activities up the Niger beyond the Igala kingdom of Idah, Baikie (1966) wrote:

We passed the island on which during the dry season a celebrated market is held every ten days, and which is attended by traders from kakanda to Abo. This meeting which

during the rains takes place on the eastern shore of the river is called Ikiri or Okiri, meaning either the 'distant market between the hills', either of which explanation is suitable.

In fact Hodder and Ukwu (1969) was to conclusively divulge Uchendu's mystery of Hausa presence in Igboland during the pre-colonial period in these clear-cut words:

Hausa contact with the northern part of Iboland pre-dates European trade. The Igala affinities of the Nsukka area and the Lower Niger valley as well as the Niger-Benue riverain trade brought these areas into direct communication with Hausa people.

There is no gainsaying the fact therefore that Uchendu's intellectual promenade into the thoroughfare of Igbo-Hausa relations in pre-colonial times is short of the characteristic intellectual adventurism of a typical student of Afigbo historical school.

On her hypothesis of elephant hunting as one of the means of introducing Islam in Igboland, Uchendu (56) was not only quick in accepting the European hypothesis of the beginning of hunting tradition among the Ekoi, but contradicted herself in accepting the fact of a masked hunting deity among the same Ekoi. Who then introduced the masked hunting deity among the people? She went further (57), quoting Talbot, to describe "the Ekoi of Oban as 'race of hunters'". Yet the same Uchendu (54) stated that "elephants were not hunted in the Ekoi forest, south of Arum, in Cross River Division (later renamed Ogoja Province) before 1898", relying biblically on the accounts of Partridge (1905) as provided by Major Roupell.

If Uchendu (53) agrees, as she stated that:

The initial elephant hunters were drawn from the areas where the elephants were found, and these were: Jukunland, Tivland, Idomaland, and Igbiraland, all of the Niger-Benue area (North Central Nigeria).

Then she could have understood the weakness in accepting the historical bench-mark date of 1898 as the beginning of elephant hunting among the Ekoi, since both the Jukun and Tiv were neighbours to the Ekoi. Moreover, Baikie (1966) confirmed that the bulk of the elephant tusks that were transported from around the Niger-Benue confluence to Igboland through the Niger were sourced from Adamawa area. As he recorded:

We made inquiries about the Binue or Tshadda, but except the lower parts, they seem at Igbegbe to know little about it. They recognized, however, the name Adamawa, and said that was the country which yielded ivory.

Baikie's observation no doubt tends to question the veracity of Uchendu's inclusion of the Igbiraland in particular as one of the areas of elephant hunting at that period, since it was indeed within the vicinity of Igbiraland that the observation was made.

It could however be necessary to hazard the possibility of the land of the Ekoi being the source of the ivories that were transported down the Benue River, rather than Adamawa as mentioned. The point here is that at the time of Baikie's visit Adamawa had become widely known around the area, being one of the many centres of Usman dan Fodio's jihad which resulted in the creation of the Adamawa Emirate. It could therefore be likened to the case of ancient Ghana Kingdom being described as the land of gold, whereas the actual sources of gold were in the interior forestlands of West Africa beyond the Sahel region of the kingdom.

But then it should be equally noted that before the emergence of the Fulani Emirate of Adamawa, the dominant power in that region was the Jukun kingdom, known among the Ekoi and Igbo as the Akpa, whose wide influence encompassed many ethnic groups in both the Northeast and southeast of which the Ekoi and by extension the Igbo were among. Both Jeffreys (1951) and Boston (1962) among other scholars also agree that the present Igala royal dynasty at Idah has tincture of Jukun blood.

Describing the imperial activities of the Jukun among the Ekoi, Anene (1970) stated:

The Umon, the Uyanga, the Akunakuna and the Ekuri— all semi-bantu— have traditions of migrations which recall the Akpa (Jukun) invasion.

Anene's position was further boosted by the following accounts by Erim (1981):

The ancient kwararafa confederacy exercised both economic and political control over the fragmented groups which today inhabit the Ogoja and the Upper Cross River reaches of Nigeria and beyond. These relationships sometimes expressed themselves in form of war and enslavement, diplomacy and treaties.

But the most profound account of Jukun influence and which subsequently extended to Igboland revolves round the origins of the present Arochukwu settlement. Both Jones (1939) and Ekejuba (1972) are of the strong opinion that the present Arochukwu settlement is a medley of Ibibio, Igbo and Jukun origins. In other words, the present Aro people even though ethnographically defined as Igbo, could equally be defined as either the Jukun or Ibibio in ethnic classification.

Uchendu's attempt to define the Ekoi territory as one such isolated jungle with clusters of uncivilized people whose knowledge of elephant hunting only started in 1898 by the grace of White-men, merely borders on chronic subservience to the now discarded hamitic hypothesis. The truth of the matter as Partridge (1905) rightly explained, was that it was in 1898 that Major Roupell invited gun-bearing Hausa hunters to come and replace the use of poisoned arrows and spears in elephant hunting in the area.

It is therefore obvious that the essence of this invitation was not to introduce hunting among the Ekoi people but to discourage the use of poisoned arrows and spears among by them. This explains why as Partridge (1905) noted, "The Wild Animals, Birds, and Fish Preservation Proclamation" of 1901 was specific on its ban on the use of any form of poison for the purpose of hunting.

Partridge (1905) also not only noticed the existence of a form of cliental relationship between the natives and those he described as "foreign" hunters, but also the presence of a community of Hausa hunters who invariable pre-dated Major Roupell's 1898 invitation. Thus as Partridge (1905) put it:

According to native custom, the 'foreign' hunter must give to the chief in whose country he has killed the elephant one of the tusks and certain portions of the highly esteemed flesh'.

On the pre-1898 presence of Hausa settlement among the Ekoi, Partridge (1905) went further to state:

A little community of the Hausa hunters used to live at Nishi Atam, on the right bank of the Cross River, but have lately removed to the Aweyong, and settled at Ejege on the right bank. Their head-man is named Sariki Muru. They pay to the chiefs of the town an annual rent of twenty pieces of cloth, worth 6 'pounds' sterling. They came to the Cross River from the Niger, walking from Ogrugu on the Anambra Creek.

Again, the question which arises from the above account is, how could it have been possible for these Hausa immigrants

to move to their present abode without passing through the Igbo territory, if we decide to consider Uchendu's mystery of Hausa presence in Igboland?

A recent account on the origins of the Hausa communities among the Ekoi who have lately become identified as the Hausa of Ogoja clearly debunked the Uchendu's reliance on the hypothesis of Major Roupell's 1898 invitation of Hausa hunters. Ujorha (2016) recounted how the history of Hausa settlements among the Ogoja has become a symbol of north-south attempt at national integration. It went further to establish evidence of early commercial contact between the Hausa and the Ekoi group, hazarding the evidence of a commercial link that preceded elephant hunting.

Quoting a member of this Hausa community, Alhaji Salisu Hassan, Ujorha (2016) wrote:

Our forefathers used to come here and trade in woven mats. But the indigenes also knew of their special ability to hunt, and so they told them of the wild animals, especially the Elephants, which used to destroy their farms. They appealed to the Hausas to stay and help in killing all the animals. Finally, after the animals had been killed, they allowed them to reside in a place called Abakpa, which in translation means 'Hausa'.

The above account not only put the record straight on the origins of the Hausa community among the Ekoi, but also raised a new dimension in our inquiry. Thus if Alhaji Hassan describes the term "Abakpa" to mean Hausa in translation, the question which arises is, in which language does the word "Abakpa" mean Hausa, bearing in mind the presence of Abakpa settlements in both Enugu and Abakiliki?

Having so far debunked Uchendu's hypothesis of elephant hunting, the next act of historical fabrication revolves round her assertion that "the end of elephant hunting saw the switch to the trade in horses and cattle", (72). Being an assertive statement of fact, the claim must be supported with sustainable evidence. But Uchendu did not in any form provide any evidence either empirical or relative to support her claim. Apart from the archaeological evidence of remote presence of horses in Igboland mentioned earlier in the course of this paper, the foregoing evidence from the Hausa community in Ogoja clearly debunked the assertion.

However, the position of this paper is that the origin of trading in horses among the Igbo goes much into the remote past in contrast to the shallow assumptions of Uchendu. In fact to trace the beginning of horse trade in Igboland would entail tracing the origins of all the ritual and traditional ceremonies that revolve round title-taking and burial rites in

which the slaughtering of horses are involved, even to the present day. In the same token, one needs not go into untenable inquiry on the origin of elephant hunting, since hunting was man's first profession on creation, and only becomes sophisticated as his weapons became progressively sophisticated.

CONCLUSION

One major hypothetical flaw which pervades the book is the re-occurring mix-up between the history of Hausa immigration and that of Islam as a religion in Igboland. In other words, if one goes by way of question; does the presence of Igbo Christians even with their sprawling Churches in Kano State translate to either the arrival of Christianity in Kano State or evidence of Christianization among the indigenous Hausa population?

What about the Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri Christian Association of Northern Nigeria, popularly known as *Tarayyar Masihiyawan Nijeria*, who according to Gata (2009) number into millions in the upper Northern States? To what extent could their presence and activities be said to change the religious demography of their respective Northern States? These questions are neither vividly addressed nor answered in the *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria*. In other words, there is a blurred distinction in most parts of the work between what is described as the "dawn for Islam" and "dawn for Hausa immigrants" in Eastern Nigeria.

Going by the above stream of analysis, one might be tempted to ask, to what extent did Ibrahim Aduku's settlement at Enugu-Ezike or the migration and settlement of the Nupe and Yoruba Muslim immigrants in Ibagwa-Aka translate to the beginning of Islam among the indigenes? Furthermore, to what extent has Islam crept into the cultural, socio-economic and traditional political matrices of the indigenes, given that religion as interpreted in Islam is a socio-political force as much as it is spiritual? The truth is that, so long as Islam remains outside the web of the traditional society in which it is being transplanted, it cannot be said to have any significant impact on the said society. This is the position of Islam in Igboland in particular and Eastern Nigeria in general.

Fisher (1973) was explicit in his definition of the three stages of Muslim pattern of proselytization which are quarantine, mixing and reform. According to him the quarantine stage occurs when Muslim immigrants live together as an exclusive community apart from their hosts with occasional attempts to convert some few people among their hosts. On the other hand, mixing involves the stage when the once quarantined Muslim community becomes mixed up with the indigenes as a result increased conversion among their hosts. While the reform stage emerges when

those who favoured the quarantine stage as the most appropriate engage in the process of reform.

Given the demographic distribution of Islam in Nigeria, it could be right to say that the Igbo and their Eastern ethnic counterparts represent the quarantine stage; the Yoruba on the other hand are better described as occupying the mixing stage, while the jihad of Usman Dan Fodio better represents the reform stage. The golden fact is that so far as Igbo conversion to Islam means quarantine from one's ancestral kin-group, Islam will remain an alien faith among the Igbo.

Uchendu also failed to put into consideration the factor of counter-Christian evangelism among the Muslims in Igboland as exemplified by the Nsukka-based Rural Evangelical Outreach, (Wosu, 2010). In other words just as the Muslims have been engaging in Islamic conversion among the Igbo, so the Igbo Christians have been engaging in massive works of evangelism among their Muslim settlers. Thus the study of Igbo conversion to Islam without reference to the counter-activities of Christian evangelism among the Muslims in Igboland cannot validly be objective.

This paper concludes with Uchendu's proposition of a free-market style of religious conversion in Igboland. As she puts it (261):

With respect to Islam in Igboland and the Igbo claims of its threat on the dominance of Christianity, it is hereby proposed that the free market principle should be allowed. Individuals should sample all offers and decide which religion best suits their needs. This should make religious communities to market their 'products' in the most advantageous way possible.

The question which Uchendu should answer with respect to the above proposition is, between the Hausa and Igbo who does it best apply to? Is it among the Igbo where conversion to any religion is a matter of individual choice or among the Hausa-Fulani where conversion from Islam to Christianity translates into either death sentence to the convert or destruction Christian lives and their property? Did Uchendu try to find out in the course of her study the Islamic status of Igbo converts to Islam as seen through the looking-glass of the Hausa saying, *kwo ya tuba be tubaba*, which according to Ikechukwu Ugwu² translates to "Igbo Islam is a mere word of mouth and not in the heart?"

The foregoing notwithstanding, *Dawn for Islam in Eastern Nigeria* even though clearly woven in what could be described as intellectual banditry, still remains a useful point

of reference for further studies in its subject matter. Much as the work might not present the objective truth of the subject matter, to the inquiring minds of historians who believe that every literally work of history is a stepping-stone to further research, the work represents an important source material.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest.

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²Evidence of Ikechukwu Ugwu, 38 years, Vulcanizer, Umuezeokoro-Amaebo, Ibagwa-Aka, December, 30, 2015

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