

About the Book

Professor R.A. Olaoye committed most of his over three decades of teaching and research career toward interrogating the changing contours of African indigenous science, technology and economic development especially since the pre-colonial epoch. Olaoye's key focus was to understand the diverse nature and values of indigenous techno-scientific ideas and to show how they contributed to the socio-economic, cultural and political development of the Nigeria societies prior to the advent of European colonialism. This book provides an especial historical analysis of the corpus of issues that undergird the field of Indigenous science, technology and economic transformation particularly from the repertoire of Professor R.A. Olaoye intellectual sagacity and scholarship over the years. Drawing from rich history of different Nigerian societies, this book demonstrates the *how* and *why* of the various forms, nature, values and challenges associated with the development of indigenous and technology in Africa. From the caboose of history, this book argues that the pursuit and realisation of Africa's sustainable techno-scientific development and industrialization will remain largely a mirage until the enormous potentials that abound in indigenous science and technology across communities in Africa are optimized and prioritized.

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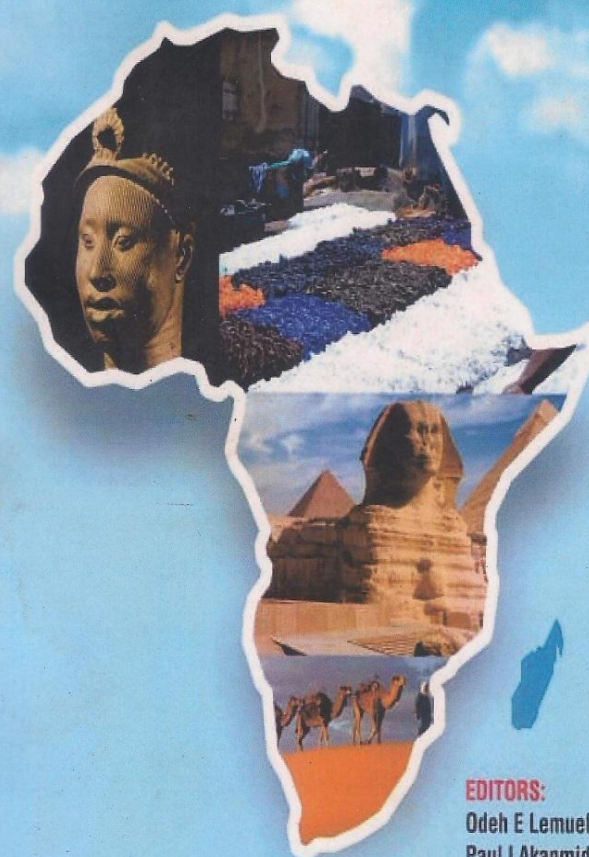
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HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

Essays in Honor of Professor Raimi A Olaoye



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CHAPTER 1

Professor Olaoye Raimi, a Historian and Administrator:
Engaging Discourse through the Mirror of his Works

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Introduction

Over the years, African scholars have neglected the memoirs or biographies of their heroes. They did not attach much importance to the life of individuals, development, geographical influences and the effects on their society role models to the next generation. Rather, most scholars have focused their attention largely on the political, economic and religious activities. While doing this, the activities of Europeans in Africa were given prominent attention. Where appreciable efforts were made on individual memoir or biography, they were often presented as epitaphs or tributes after the transition of those individuals. This sheer academic negligence has denied Africans the great experiences and exploits of Africans in different sectors of human endeavor. The European colonialist to some extent capitalized on this major shortcoming to foist on African the European historical ideas. This largely explains why Europeans explorers, colonialists, soldiers, religionists, missionaries permeated the scenes of Africa historical discourses before 1945.¹ Consequently, many African memoirs and their great achievements were lost. For example, the life histories of great hunters, fishermen and women, warriors, diviners (Babalawo) etc, were hardly documented. Paucity of early historical ideas that were known and documented on Africans was done by early Islamic writers such as al-Bakri, al-Sharif al-Idrisi, Ibn Khadun, Ibn Battuta, Ibn al-Faqui al-Hamadhani among others and later European explorers, missionaries and traders, such as Mungo Park, Hugh Clapperton, William Balfour Baikie, Charles Robert Burton,

CHAPTER 5

The Economy and Challenges of Inter-Group Relations in the 19th Century Eastern Niger Delta of Nigeria

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Introduction

The Eastern Niger Delta is located in the Eastern part of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It embraces the Cross River and Akwa-Ibom States. Some of the notable local government areas include Calabar, Boki, Ugep, Ikom, Akamkpa, Odukpani, Ogoja, Obudu, Abak, Ibeno, Eastern Obolo, Esit-Eket, EkotEkpene, Ikot-Abasi, Ibiono-Ibom, Eket, Essien-Udim and Ikono among others. Although the inhabitants spoke different languages, they all related closely for economic reasons. Historically, people took delight in maintaining good relationship either directly or indirectly with their neighbours and different communities as well. A combination of factors encouraged the inter-group relations in the Eastern Niger Delta, such as economic, political, cultural and social factors. In the various communities' people followed very rigidly rules and regulations which were very strictly kept by the citizens (Odeigah, 2015, 1).

In the Eastern Niger Delta area, hospitality was a key word in maintaining good relationship and even more significantly because of trade and inter-marriages. People left their shores to other places in order to trade and transact businesses. The Ibibio people for example travelled to Ogoja, Boki and Ikom to trade and the people were accorded with respect and hospitality. Intergroup relations in different ways also encouraged specialisation in different fields of human endeavours. The people of Ogoja, Ikom and Boki learnt the preparation of *Ekpang Nkwukwo* from the Efik and Ibibio people. It was a delicacy made from cocoyam and the recipe was prepared by the Efiks and this was achieved as a result of the interaction of both communities (Alagoa, 1980, 66-67).

Eastern Niger Delta people as a group are well known for their hospitality and for accommodating people who have travelled far and near to do business transactions in the area. Internal and external trade flourished rapidly in the area and this attracted a great deal of prestige and friendship. Trade was a vital tool in fostering and shaping inter-group relations in the area. The European economic activities in the 19th century also encouraged inter-group relations. The people witnessed the intensification of the European's interference in the Eastern Niger Economy, because the focus was shifted from the indigenous economic activities to a purely colonial economy. This also made several people to move from one destination to another carrying goods mainly export produce to the sea ports or neighbouring towns. This movement also helped in the exchange of culture and close historical contacts with the Igbo (Alagoa, 1980, 67-68).

The Eastern Niger Delta environment on its own encouraged trade, and the economy consisted basically of fishing, salt production, farming and trade because of the ecology of the area. These activities provided wealth and development to the people. The specialisation in the economy of the people that followed these activities was basically driven by inter-group relations. Inter-group relations could be looked at from the conventional approach which could be peace or conflict focused (Eremi & Bisong, 2018. 70-80).

Factors that Aided Inter-group Relations in the Eastern Niger Delta

Inter-group relations generally involve more than two ethnic groups or communities interacting or relating with one another in a mutually beneficial relationship. These relationships could also be detrimental either because of conflicts or violence. Available historical evidence has indicated that inter-group relations existed especially between the Ibibio, Efik and other communities in spite of the differences in language and norms. The Efiks and the Ibibios traded and did a lot of businesses together as a result of the similarities in their language and other cultural norms.

The inhabitants of the North Eastern part of the area were specialised in arable farming and their agricultural produce included yam, cassava and palm oil among others. Agriculture was the mainstay of the Eastern Niger Delta economy and this aided the good relationship among the

people. Arable land was found in the North and Central part of the Eastern Niger Delta where tropical crops were grown. The coastal people specialised in sea food especially fishing, crayfish business, salt production and vegetable growing among others. These combinations of economic activities assisted in the exchange of agricultural produce and this made the economy unique and it attracted people from far and near for patronage. Vigorous efforts were made by the people to foster good relationship rather than conflicts and disintegration among themselves and other communities in Nigeria. Some of the produce was consumed domestically and also some were transported to other places for sale.

The exchange of crops and other produce encouraged self-sufficiency as far as food production was concerned. Odukpani and Akamkpa communities also traded with each other and a good and lasting relationship was maintained among the people. Historical information revealed that communities such as Odukpani and Akamkpa had close relationships that played significant roles in the growth and development and territorial expansion of the two communities (Eduok, 2020).

Trade: One of the major factors that aided inter group relations in the Eastern Niger Delta was trade. Trade played an important role in establishing relationships among the communities in the Eastern Niger Delta area. Trade in its nature was an important factor that linked a lot of individuals from different areas together. Trade can be simply categorised into two; domestic and long distant trade. Domestic trade was an important form of transaction within the communities. The economic resources of the people depended also to a large extent on trade. Domestic trade aided inter-group relations especially in the distribution of consumer products (Etaelte, 2014). The exchange of commodities was often not in large quantities, but it brought people together. The domestic trade was most times associated with markets that were organised daily or periodically either every three days or five days or as arranged by the various communities (Essien 2020).

Market organisation: The organisation and the structure of the markets varied from community to community. The market days were fixed to avoid clashes and also to enable people attend other markets in other communities. Markets gave the people the opportunity to interact among themselves while still trading. Market places simultaneously encouraged not only trade, but also helped to develop various trade

routes. Trade was a major factor that linked different groups together because no group of people were self-sufficient in themselves. Generally, the people were involved with either manufacturing or they were into agriculture. There were also geographical factors that promoted trade in the communities (Eduok, 2020). A cash crop such as colanut was not grown in the coastal areas of the Eastern Niger Delta. This therefore gave room for the Efiks to trade with the Ogoja people.

There were communities that lacked certain items and therefore needed to purchase such items in another region or community. For instant the people from the Northern part of Nigeria traded with the Ogoja people, exchanging their cola-nuts and cattle, because the Ogoja people were not into cattle rearing and were also not cultivating colanut. This is to say that the environment played a vital role in the inter-group relations because the environment that was unable to produce certain crops could acquire such produce from another distant place because of the favourable soil composition (Odeigah, 2018, 392395). Communities therefore complemented each other in the areas of their needs. Most communities established trade relations with one another to obtain one produce or the other, Ogoja and Obudu became partners in trade because of their cordial relationship. People from Itsekiri land, the Urhobo, Isoko and Efiks also had good relations as a result of trade; this was because the Efiks had a distinctive socio-political and economic system. Some people were involved as retailers, and wholesalers and this contributed immensely to building a robust inter-group relation. People also moved from one place to another because trade enabled them to establish such cordial relationships (Panaki, 2002, 491-495).

External trade: External trade extended several kilometres away from the Eastern Niger Delta area to places such as Benue State, Kano, Lagos, Onitsha, Maiduguri and Kaduna among other places. External trade aided the Europeans to evacuate produce from the hinterland to their various countries. External trade was exclusively for the traders who were used to long distance trade because they were professionals in the trade with considerable high skills and experience as well as capital for the business.

The trade between the Eastern Niger Delta people and the Cameroonians fostered inter-group relations to an extent that the relationship was solidified. The Cameroonians patronised goods from the Ikom and Calabar markets in spite of the language barrier. Peaceful

relationship therefore existed without any political undertone and the conflicts that resulted were managed and therefore peace was enhanced among the communities. Trade routes also contributed and promoted inter-group relations and as a result of the linkage of these routes connecting several communities, peace, harmony and economic activities thrived (Ojong, 2006, 455-458).

The Oron people used water routes to travel to Calabar for trading and other activities in the area. The routes also linked other settlements and crops and some agricultural produces were taken to several of these other communities. The numerous canoes in the Eastern Niger Delta plied these routes carrying products and goods from Calabar to Oron. Furthermore, trade routes in order words promoted peaceful relationship because there was communal cohesion and solidarity especially in the maintenance of trade routes, security and the transport system. This was a joint responsibility of the connecting communities around the routes and the maintenance of these routes was also a collective effort of the communities. The social and economic activities of the people of Calabar brought together the people of Oron and notable economic activities such as crayfish and fish trade thrived between Oron and Calabar and the water transport system served as one of the basic economic trade routes that strengthened the economy of the area. The Oron and Calabar water ways therefore witnessed tremendous influx of people from Ugep, Akamkpa, Biase, Ogoja, Eket, Etinan, Ikot Abasi, Ikot Ekpene, Uyo and Odukpani among other communities for the purchase of fish and crayfish (Odiong, 2016).

Ekpe Society: Political and socio-cultural factors, also contributed to the robust inter-group relations in the Eastern Niger Delta. In many communities in the Eastern Niger Delta, there were social institutions that unified the people. The Efiks had an important institution called the Ekpe Society that had profound social and cultural prestige that made the people to be seen as special in the society. The Ekpe Society played an important role in the political and socio-cultural life of the people. Initially, the people of the Eastern Niger Delta area were segmented and had autonomous communities, but with the enormous influence of the Ekpe Society, they were able to live together in peace and harmony. There were a lot of rights and privileges enjoyed by those who were members of the society and this encouraged people from far and near to join the group. This in a way created a network of associations and relationships that robbed off on political cultural and economic stability

of the area. The Ekpe society kept the Efiks and the Ibibios in close contact with one another and thereby reducing conflicts. The influence of the Ekpe Society went beyond Efik land but also extended to Ibibio land and even beyond (Alagoa, 62).

Ekpe was a group of people with common interests and ideas to improve and promote inter-group relations among the people and to bring development to the area. In the same vein, the women also had an organisation called the *Ibong Isong* Association; this association was only meant for women and they had their leaders and the Council of Priests or the heads of *Yobot*. Ekpe as a society or an organisation extended to Ekor and Ikom where structures were erected in most villages and this was seen as an instrument of governance in the area and it brought the people together in unity (Alagoa, 63)

Age Grade: In the Eastern Niger Delta area, the operation of the age grade system was another very paramount development strategy. This occurred in most communities such as Odukpani, Ikom, Biase, Obudu and Boki among others. The Age grade is a group of people born in the same year or generally around the same period. One of the most significant aspects of the age grade system was that those born within the same period, often knew themselves, kept in touch and developed good and lasting friendships. Some of these societies and age groups however were only meant for the freeborn and the Ekpe society especially comprised of elders and it was only meant for the male citizens. Ekpe society was in grades, the higher grade was controlled by the rich and the low grade was controlled by low grade who could not afford to pay some registration fees to become members (Alagoa, 256-257). Their main aim was to promote inter-group relations among themselves, the communities by extension and to enhance community development (Etim, Akpama, Asor, 2011). These groups also exchanged ideas and cultural diffusion was enhanced through participation in their various activities.

Marriage Institution: Another factor that encouraged intergroup relations was the institution of marriage in the area. The relationship between the Efik people and the Ibibios became tenacious and cohesive as a result of inter-marriages between them. Marriage within and outside the area facilitated the intergroup relations among the people. Between the Efiks and the Ibibios, inter-group marriages were common.

One of the reasons was the vibrant economic activities in the area; communities that often traded together in exchange of their products interacted more for closer relationships. Inter-marriages also occurred among the Annangs and their Abia neighbours particularly the Ikwuano, Ndoki, and Ngwa among others in spite of their different dialects and norms (Oden, 2020).

The institution of marriage facilitated unity among various communities and families and this encouraged a high level of socialisation. The people, despite their linguistic barrier found the Jukuns and the Cross River people being netted together in the institution of marriage and commerce. According to Alagoa, evidence has shown that divine kingship and the sun-worship of the Jukuns was found among the Ekoi, Okuku, Ntinya and Ibibio people. This evidence shows that inter-group relations extended beyond the shores of the Eastern Niger Delta area. Inter-group relations extended also outside the Niger Delta Region because the people of Obutong in Cross River State inter-married with the people from the Republic of Cameroon. Communities such as Brass, Nembe and Kalabari participated also in the intermarriages and several other joint social activities (Alagoa, 60-68). Women were mostly married to men from other communities especially if they shared the same religious affinity.

Salt production: Salt production also facilitated inter-group relations with other surrounding communities and this occupation existed right from the pre-colonial period. It was a production that was necessitated by need in Africa and even beyond. Traditional methods of salt production were mostly carried out by the people of Okpoma, Calabar and Oron among others. The lake that supplied the brine was found in Okpoma area and the supply of salt was to the entire Eastern Niger Delta and other parts of Nigeria. Salt production in the area brought people from far and near to purchase the product. The salt was exported to as far as Jalingo, Kano and Sokoto for business purposes. The economic importance of this industry has kept the economy vibrant and it enjoyed good relations with its neighbours. Salt production was mainly women's occupation. The production techniques were only known to those who took salt production as an occupation (Egbara, 2016).

Iron production: Iron production was mainly men's occupation and it was one of the products that attracted people to the Eastern Niger Delta.

It was a technical work and was also intensive as it involved smelting and smithing. The industry formed a technological foundation that helped the farmers to obtain their tools and implements. The tools were hoes, machetes, spearheads and hooks among others. Even hunters needed the services of blacksmiths in obtaining arrows, spears and guns for hunting. People from Benue came to Eastern Boki to purchase some of these implements (Njoku, 2014, 68-72).

The coming of the Europeans into the Niger Delta region also facilitated inter-group relations because of the economic motive of the Europeans. The Europeans encouraged influx of traders into the region because of farm produce such as palm oil and other raw materials that were carried to the sea ports for eventual evacuation to their various countries. This facilitated movement of people from the rural areas to the urban areas within the Niger Delta region. The Ekit-Ekpene people dominated the local manufacturing industries such as production of raffia fibers, basket weaving and palm oil production among others (Eduok, 2020).

The Annang people were noted for cane furniture making and basket handicrafts and they traded with the Aba people who helped in the establishment of inter-group relations among them and this has evolved into long lasting relationships among the neighbouring towns. The inter-group relations became more pronounced during the colonial era because people learnt the English language which aided communication among the different groups of people in Nigeria (Oden, 2020).

Religion also facilitated inter-group relations among the people. In the Eastern Niger Delta area, Christianity and traditional religion were the most predominant religions and they were well recognised by the people in the area. However, there was no opposition, crisis or imposition of religious faith on the people or among them. These religions did not pose any threat, rather they strengthened inter-group relations. For instance, the Catholic Church played a vital role in promoting inter-group relations among the people of Cross River State. The coming of the missionaries in Calabar and later to Ogoja brought greater interactions among the multiple tribes and dialects which the area is known for. These people came together to worship forming bonds of friendship whereby promoting peaceful coexistence among communities without molestation. It is important to also note that diplomacy was one of the factors that strengthened relationships in the

society. During inter-tribal conflicts between communities, it was only through diplomacy that church leaders joint the Chiefs to resolved conflicts and it further strengthened and solidified inter-group relations. In communal disputes the Bishop and priests always play critical and sometimes risky roles by intervening with the combatants, settling and resolving the conflicts and building peace. Some of the missionaries such as the Roman Catholic and the Presbyterian built schools, these schools have remained the centre of excellence where young people from distance tribe all over the Eastern Niger Delta area and beyond came to study and foster life-long ties of relationship, mutual interaction and associations. (Bayim, 2020)**Challenges of Inter-group Relations in the Eastern Niger Delta** It is important to note that the issue of inter-group relations and its challenges is not a new phenomenon, which has attracted several scholarly attentions. The Eastern Niger Delta is an area characterised with diversity of ethnic groups, languages, political and cultural diffusion. The cultural diversity has also created a gulf in inter-group relations in the area resulting in a lot of conflicts within the Eastern Niger Delta (Sambe, 2013). In as much as people live together, there bounds to be some challenges and conflicts, because of their diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture and language.

One of the major challenges that threatened inter-group relations was inter communal clash. This has posed a major threat and has disrupted relations among groups of people. By nature, conflicts endangered inter-group relations among the communities in the area (Ikurekong, Udo, Esin, 2012, 99-101). For instance, the inter-tribal conflicts between Ugep and Obubra had at one time or the other truncated the peace between these communities. These communal clashes have left some communities devastated and properties worth millions of naira have been destroyed. Some communal clashes were frequent and consistent occurrences had caused a lot of damage to these communities resulting in loss of lives and poor living conditions (Eremi & Bisong, 74-80). Ibibio land had also experienced a breakdown of inter-group relations especially in areas like, Oku Iboku and Ikot Offiong.

The fundamentals of peace and good relations were not emphasised by the various communities and this had resulted in breakdown of inter-group relations, conflicts, mayhem and devastation during the period of study (Ikurekong, Udo, Esin, 99101).

Conclusion

In conclusion, many factors shaped inter-group relations among the people of the Eastern Niger Delta and even its neighbours during the 19th century. No community was self-sufficient as each depended on one another to foster mutual relations especially because of geographical, environmental conditions and location that played a significant role in inter-group relations. Factors that played out to foster the inter-group relations were trade, marriage, economic activities, religious activities, socio-political and cultural factors. All these fundamentally encouraged intergroup relations in the Eastern Niger Delta area and also were the unifying factors that brought peace to the various communities.

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CHAPTER 6

Igala and Igbo Communities 1900 - 1960: A Study of Inter Group Relations in Nigeria

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Introduction

The issue of inter-group relations in Nigeria is older than the country itself, as the various groups and peoples of what make up Nigeria today were in one way or the other inter-related with themselves in the area of politics, economy, social cultural, linguistics and technological exchanges¹. Linguistic evidence revealed that about 4000 years ago, the Igbo, Yoruba, Edo, Nupe, Ebira Igala, Idoma, and the Itsekiri people, spoke the same language before they separated at a point. Even at that, they still have some common words, through which they are able to retain an enduring legacy among themselves. They all belong to the *Kwa* group of languages². This is to say, that these ethnic groups were having cultural affinity before their separation and diversification that now marked them as different ethnic groups.

The kind of inter-group relations among these ethnic groups was the type that was peaceful, in the area of religious belief, customs, and tolerance until the period of 20th century which formally marked the establishment of colonial rule. Before this colonial rule, except in the case of war, the people within the geographical entity now called Nigeria today decided their own fortunes. Thus, one group may decide to enter into a covenant of peace and friendship with one another³. Indeed, this was how relationships between groups were form. Each group was free to decide with whom it would relate with and for what purposes. In reaching such decision, the overriding consideration was what the groups involved perceived to be their own interest and how these interests could best be served.

To all Nigerians, colonial conquest, followed by its colonial rule, was a traumatic and revolutionary experience in the area of inter-group relations among the various ethnic groups⁴. This was due to the fact that, the colonial government in Nigeria, with its policy of boundary