

**THE CRISIS OF RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC PUBLISHING IN NIGERIAN  
UNIVERSITIES: THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND BEYOND**

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# THE CRISIS OF RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC PUBLISHING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND BEYOND\*

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## Introduction

Compared to the situation up to the late 1970s, academic publishing in Nigeria, the concomitant and index of scholarly research, has declined in terms of output, quality and regularity of publications. This reflects a general decline in the standards and funding of education, a consequence of prolonged military rule characterized by lack of accountability and a thinly veiled culture of obscurantism. It also derived from the preoccupation of most Nigerians with the problems of daily existence following the virtual collapse of the currency (the Naira) owing to sheer plunder and mismanagement by the country's military rulers and their civilian collaborators. This state of affairs generated the "brain drain" syndrome, and led to disillusionment and despair among those mired in the dismal conditions in the country. Academics were distracted from their primary assignments of teaching, research and supervision of students' research, and were made to dissipate energy confronting official neglect and wrong-headed policies. This explains the spate of seemingly endless strikes for a better academic environment since 1981. Long established reputable journals and academic publishers had collapsed in the meantime, taking a heavy toll on academic publishing in Nigeria.

In the discipline of History, for example, the Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, published by the oldest professional society in Nigeria, was an internationally respected outlet for scholarly research. It appeared regularly and was widely subscribed by scholars in Africa and in the West. The same could be said of the Ibadan History Series, books published by Longmans, which disseminated research by outstanding scholars. But, by 1980, both publications had practically died, though the Journal managed to appear twice in the 1980s. Efforts are now being made (even by Nigerian scholars resident in the United States) to resuscitate it though the prospects are still bleak.

Against this background, this paper examines strategies adopted by Nigerian scholars to cope with the collapse of journals and other outlets for their scholarly efforts.

It concludes with recommendations for encouraging research and scholarship, and for the funding and revitalization of publication outlets for scholarly research in Nigeria as well as in other African countries. For the avoidance of doubt, the discussion is limited to the research efforts of Nigerian and non-Nigerian scholars in Nigerian universities.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Beginnings of Academic Research and Publishing and the Early Challenges**

The establishment in 1948 of the University College, Ibadan may, for the sake of convenience, be taken as a starting point in the discussion on this subject. From then till the late 1970s, Ibadan was the fountain of academic research in Nigeria, particularly in the Humanities. This culminated in the Ibadan History Series, about which a lot has been written. While later critics have assailed the fossilization of the focus and research methodology of the Ibadan School, it must be conceded that, at least in the 1950s and 1960s, that school blazed the trail and set the research agenda for historical scholarship in Nigeria and, indeed, the rest of the continent.<sup>2</sup> Given the preoccupation with political independence, the focus on indirect rule and political history is quite understandable. Expectedly, there was a market for books on colonial conquest and African resistance, and aspects of indirect rule, which were the current issues of the times. Such was the currency of History that the Historical Society of Nigeria, founded in 1955, was the first such professional body to emerge in Nigeria. To its credit, the Society maintained three credible publishing outlets for academic research: the Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria; the Ibadan History Series; and Tarikh. The first two published original research by academic historians while Tarikh published articles specially prepared for secondary school and undergraduate students.

A survey of the contents of the Ibadan History Series, the flagship of academic publishing in Africa till the 1970s, reveals that contributors included Nigerian and expatriate scholars, and its coverage spanned the entire continent and diverse subjects. To be sure, political topics dealing in particular with British conquest and indirect rule in practically all parts of Nigeria were predominant, with Bill Freund's work on labour and capital in the Jos tin mines a notable exception.

As for the Journal, it was for long a respected scholarly publication that attracted articles beyond Nigeria though, with few exceptions, these focused on political issues.<sup>3</sup> It

is worth noting, however, that outstanding social and economic historians of a later generation, A.G. Hopkins, Paul Lovejoy, Wale Oyemakinde, G.O. Ogunremi and Segun Osoba, all published important articles in the Journal.<sup>4</sup> As well, non-historians, such as Robin Horton, John Peel and Adekunle Adeniran, have published on subjects of historical interest. Furthermore, the pages of the Journal contain lively debates on the practice of historical scholarship, as exemplified by the debate between Peel and the social scientists on the one hand, and Smith and the historians on the other.<sup>5</sup>

Worth noting at this point is the commitment of Longman and Heinemann publishers to historical scholarship up to the late 1970s. While Longman published the Journal, Tarikh and the Ibadan History Series, Heinemann published, among others, the landmark Groundwork of Nigerian History (1980). The interest of these publishers simply reflected the prevailing market trends within both the larger economy and the book market. For as long as there was a market for tertiary books, in itself dependent upon the state of the education sector and the nation's economic conditions and priorities, these outfits continued to publish scholarly research. Unfortunately, economic downturn set in by the early 1980s and terminated the long association between them and historical scholarship in Nigeria.

### **The Economic Crisis of the 1980s and Its Impact on Academic Research and Publishing**

By the early 1980s, Nigeria had entered a period of economic crisis, culminating in the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by 1986.<sup>6</sup> An immediate consequence of this was the steady and calamitous devaluation of the currency (the Naira) which began to yield ground to the US dollar. The exchange rate plunged from a height of N1 to US 65 cents in 1979 to N1 to US\$ 35 by the late 1980s. Today, the ratio is one dollar to N132 in the black market! Another consequence of the economic depression was the general neglect of tertiary education and the specific marginalization of courses or subjects which were not considered directly relevant to the nation's quest for technological development. The Humanities in general were the early casualties of this policy at a time that, ironically, the literary giant, Wole Soyinka, won the nation's first ever Nobel Prize in 1986! In any case, the universities were given the carrot-and-

stick treatment by successive military regimes, most notably the Babangida dictatorship (1985-93). This entailed, on the one hand, a deliberate recruitment of some of the most articulate scholars and critics into top government positions (as Ministers, advisers and ambassadors), and, on the other hand, a series of repressive policies in dealing with the legitimate demands of academic staff and student unions. Prolonged and intermittent strikes, violent demonstrations and inevitable closures then became the lot of the tertiary institutions.

These crises had a direct impact on academic research and publishing.<sup>7</sup> First, many outstanding scholars simply fled the country's tottering ivory towers for more stable climes. Second, those who did not leave by choice or lack of it were distracted into pursuits aimed at ensuring their material survival. Some left the academia for business or the private sector which offered greater financial remuneration and material comfort. Still others simply vegetated as library facilities proved increasingly obsolete and grossly underfunded. Libraries could no longer subscribe to current journals and, consequently scholars could no longer keep pace with developments in their fields. Many dropped out of the race and stopped writing for international journals which routinely rejected manuscripts that attempted to disseminate outdated concepts and intellectual arguments.

Yet another dimension to the neglect of the Humanities was the drying up of funds for international conferences and personal or individual research. The collapse of the Naira and the relative drop in the budgetary allocation to (tertiary) education meant that university administrators had to focus mainly on the regular payment of staff salaries and the maintenance of rapidly collapsing infrastructure. It was no longer possible to fund lecturers' participation in international conferences and many scholars missed important conferences when the organizers could not provide the flight tickets and waive registration fees. Participation in local conferences did not suffer a complete eclipse because of the lower costs and for the fact that the committed academics could manage to fund themselves. Long standing institutional journals also bore the brunt of this neglect. This was, ironically, at a time that the age-old demand for academic publications for promotion remained unabating. As would be shown presently, Nigerian scholars were compelled to adapt to the changing circumstances, making the best of the unsavoury situation.

### **“Publish or Perish:” Coping with the Crisis of Academic Research and Publishing since the 1980s**

In the heyday of professional associations and established journals, scholars were assured that participation in the annual congress would guarantee the publication of the best papers. This motivated the production of high quality papers and sustained interest in the association. With the aforementioned crises, interest in the professional associations, notably, the Historical Society of Nigeria, waned because the Journal was no longer published regularly. It has been alleged that this was because the old generation of scholars decided to neglect the Journal because they no longer needed it for their career advancement since they had already attained the Professorship! But this cannot hold true for all members of that generation, many of whom continued to publish elsewhere. The collapse of the Journal was indeed because of benign neglect but this was in conjunction with others factors.

First, many of the old generation of scholars were now preoccupied with other things, especially, university administration and external politics.<sup>8</sup> Second, they too were involved in the struggle to make ends meet. Third, whether by accident or design, they did not produce or hand over to a younger generation of successors. It has been suggested that this reflected a lack of confidence in the ability of the younger generation. If this was so, the older generation of scholars could be accused of insufferable arrogance. It might be necessary at this juncture to point out that this observation is valid for the Department of History, University of Ibadan, the oldest in Nigeria, following the inevitable retirement of the old generation and the wholesale exodus of the next generation that should have succeeded it.

Fourth, the collapse of the local currency meant that annual subscriptions could no longer suffice to run the association, much less the journal. Coupled with this was the high cost of printing owing largely to the fact that the paper used was imported. Fifth, it must also be remembered that by this time, History as the intellectual handmaiden of the nationalist struggle had apparently outlived its usefulness. Hence, the discipline entered a period of internal crisis – that of relevance- from the 1980s<sup>9</sup> and that meant that the wider

society no longer accorded it patronage, such as sponsorship by government agencies or the private sector.

In the gloomy atmosphere of the last quarter of the twentieth century, scholars based in Nigeria had to take their fate into their own hands. To be sure, many resigned themselves to intellectual vegetation. Such spent their time bemoaning the state of affairs and found solace in other activities, including staff club and union activities. Others concentrated on their teaching, including private coaching as part-time teachers at other tertiary institutions.

Those not willing to perish in the academic jungle decided to take some steps. First, a number of journals sprouted in Departments and Faculties in Universities across the country. To be sure, some did not go beyond the first few issues before they collapsed either because of poor subscription and funding, or because of their internal contradictions. Regarding the latter, once the editors and their friends had published themselves and their friends, and achieved their immediate objective, they lost interest in the journal. But more fundamental was the problem of funding, which was aggravated by the poor subscription to those journals. There is no wide market for journals except there is a captive market. Such captive markets were confined to specific Departments or Faculties where students were required to subscribe to the journals as part of their registration for courses in the Departments and Faculties.

In most cases, the establishment of new journals has been a blessing, not least in creating outlets for specialised research. One remarkable development was the founding of the first specialist journal, Nigerian Journal of Economic History. Founded by the Nigerian Economic History Association, the journal was inspired by the Association's pioneer President, the late Professor G.O. Ogunremi and its editor, C.O. (Tayo) Adesina. Emerging as it did while efforts were being made to resuscitate the Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, the NJEH was opposed by notable members of the Society who saw it as an avoidable "proliferation" of journals and a dissipation of efforts. But it is significant that the journal is already in its third issue (though now hamstrung by funding) while the JHSN has yet to be revived. The NJEH has in the meantime published some significant essays by Nigerian and foreign scholars.

The publication of textbooks for University, Faculty or Departmental courses was another outlet for publications during this period. This was made possible by the introduction of general courses for university undergraduates sanctioned by the National Universities Commission (NUC). Among these are “Nigerian Peoples and Cultures” and “Use of English” which have spawned course texts by the relevant Departments and Faculties of the various Universities. At the Universities of Lagos and Benin, for example, such texts were prepared by the Department of History.<sup>10</sup> Textbooks with a narrower focus and appeal, targeted at specific courses, have also been written.<sup>11</sup> With a few exceptions, these are the products of collaborative efforts, proceedings of conferences and workshops, rather than works of sole authorship.

It might be mentioned in passing that the quality of the aforementioned books and journals is variable. Some are products of painstaking scholarship and quality printing while others are slap-dash contraptions aimed at a waiting market or the deadline for submission of papers for promotion! Meanwhile, computer technology has eased word processing and facilitated the speedy production of such texts. Yet, this has not had a significant effect on the quality of many of such “emergency” publications. Worse still, many have not been subject to the rigours of peer review and thorough copy-editing. One is aware that peer review “does not always guarantee fairness or quality.”<sup>12</sup> But it should not be jettisoned merely because of abuses just as we cannot stop using currency notes because of counterfeiting. Undoubtedly, it has helped in many instances to improve the quality of manuscripts. In any case, the result of lack of peer review in the Nigerian situation is betrayed by the quality of some texts (which are self-published in many instances). Their authors appear too eager to produce “big” books out of material that could have sustained at best a modest twenty-page journal article. Adding irrelevant illustrative material (such as blurred photographs) and appendices would take the size of the “books” to over two hundred pages! As the publishers are either the authors themselves or even less competent persons, and as competent readers were not recruited to review the manuscripts, such abysmal standards are unavoidable. In other instances, editors of some texts include as many as three of their own essays in a collection of about ten papers! Editors are also accused of swapping essays with their friends, patrons and proteges in their respective journals and edited works. In effect, a lot of inbreeding has

taken place in the system in the absence of cross-fertilization of ideas that is the essence of true scholarship.

Another outlet for scholarly publications since the 1980s is the publication of festschrifts for outstanding scholars, such as Saburi Biobaku, Joseph Anene, I.A. Akinjogbin, Obaro Ikime, E.J. Alagoa and G.O. Olusanya.<sup>13</sup> These were of the highest quality but the contributors were mainly members of the older and immediate generations. However, there are ongoing projects that are dominated by contributors belonging to the new generation of relatively obscure scholars based in Nigeria.

The writing of biographies has also provided a veritable outlet for the scholarly effort of Nigerian academics. Most of these are well conceived and professionally executed. The Ibadan-based Dutch publishing house, Spectrum Publishers, has specialised in the production of this genre of scholarly works.<sup>14</sup> However, other publishing outfits have produced biographical work by Nigerian historians.<sup>15</sup> But a distinction must be made between the scholarly and celebrity types of biographical and autobiographical works produced in Nigeria. The celebrity types hardly pretend to be scholarly and their scholarly worth is devalued by their ingratiating character. With an emphasis on a cash windfall at elaborate and highly publicised book launching ceremonies, many authors do not make any pretence to any semblance of objective treatment of their subject. Happily, only non-historians, especially, journalists, are, understandably, guilty of this.

The funding of publications is a related issue worthy of attention at this juncture. Owing to the cost of imported paper, publishing of tertiary texts has become an unprofitable enterprise in the absence of a vibrant reading culture in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. Demoralised lecturers rely more and more on outdated lecture notes and students demand for mimeographs or handouts, which are easier to distill than tedious textbooks. A vast majority simply paraphrase the lecture notes.

Prominent publishers of tertiary texts, such as Longman, Heinemann, Nelson and Macmillan, simply abandoned the field for the more profitable line: textbooks for primary and secondary schools. This accounted for the death of the Ibadan History Series and the journal, *Tarikh* as sales could not justify the cost of production. In the event, only a handful of publishers still remain in what has become an unprofitable venture. Even so,

they publish selectively: texts that have a captive market in certain universities or those that can be launched with fanfare. The latter would be expected to earn enough at the launching to offset the cost of printing, if nothing else. Literamed in Lagos, College Press, Davidson, Fountain Publications, Hope Publications and Rex Charles in Ibadan are some of the rising publishing houses that undertake the publishing of tertiary texts with generally satisfactory results and quality of output.<sup>16</sup> A few University publishing houses still manage to publish tertiary books and journals though without the consistency and prolificity of earlier times.

To be fair, publishers have their own problems not least the prevalence of piracy (in spite of copyrights laws); the absence of a national book policy to provide a legal regulatory framework for the industry; low returns on capital; and investors' (and banks') unwillingness to commit their funds to such an enterprise when areas of higher returns exist in the economy. There have also been complaints about the government's inadequate funding of education, professional incompetence within the industry and the poor reading culture in Nigeria. The reading culture has been assailed by the explosion of home videos, the absence of good libraries right from the secondary school level and a national tendency towards according higher priority to money-making than rigorous scholarship.<sup>17</sup>

As might be expected, Nigerian scholars themselves have devised alternative strategies to cope with this crisis. The most popular method is to ask contributors to a book or issue of a journal to contribute towards its production after their papers had been assessed and accepted for publication. The contributors pay sums of money sometimes running into a few thousands of Naira, and receive copies of the journal or book in compensation for their financial contribution towards its production. Funding also comes from social clubs, wealthy or public-spirited individuals and organizations. Such sponsors also commission works which are generally scholarly.<sup>18</sup>

It should not be assumed that all scholars based in Nigeria perpetrate sharp practices or short circuit the due process of peer review and quality research and publishing. Indeed, this writer is aware of those who publish regularly in leading international journals and who also regularly attend international conferences within and

outside the continent. It would be useful to highlight the strategies adopted by such scholars.

One method is to affiliate with specialist research networks and professional associations which fund research and participation in international conferences. Taking advantage of electronic and internet facilities (such as the new H-West Africa Network), enterprising researchers access announcements of calls for papers and submit abstracts of papers which, when selected, would qualify them for partial or full support. Participation in such conferences would then depend on the benevolence of the sponsors, the occasional (and limited) support of parent institutions and the individual's personal resources. Membership of or affiliation with such bodies as the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) has proved immensely beneficial to Nigerian scholars, especially social and economic historians, at the doctoral and post-doctoral levels. The CODESRIA Grant for Thesis-Writing in African universities has been a pivotal springboard that generations of Nigerian social science researchers have utilized at different stages of their careers. Another body which has offered opportunities to carry out international research and publishing is SEPHIS, the Netherlands-based body which focuses on the History of Development in the South.

In Nigeria, US, German and French institutions and Foundations give direct material support to academic research. The US Information Service (now called the Public Affairs Section) supports, among others, the American Studies Association for Nigeria (ASAN), which has held annual conferences since its inception in 1989. Proceedings of the annual conferences have been published in the (now defunct) Nigerian Journal of American Studies and some books.<sup>19</sup> The German Goethe Institute and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation have sponsored research and conferences and published their proceedings.<sup>20</sup> The Ibadan-based French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) has also done much to promote scholarship by organizing conferences, giving research grants and publishing conferences proceedings or the results of grant-aided research.<sup>21</sup>

Another vent for the research effort of Nigerian scholars is that provided by international funding and Fellowship awarding bodies. Generations of Nigerian scholars, including historians, have utilized, among others, the Woodrow Wilson, Fulbright, British Academy, Japan Foundation, Alexander von Humboldt, Leventis (London),

Institute of Developing Economies (Tokyo), Institute of Commonwealth Studies (London), the PICA (at Northwestern University), and DAAD (Germany) Fellowships. Although the percentage of the recipients is still insignificant in the Nigerian academic community, the absolute numbers are impressive. The fact that Nigerian scholars won such honours even in the 1990s shows that they are still competitive in the international academic community.

Getting published in leading academic journals is thus a reflection of the quality of the research effort of scholars based in Nigeria. A cursory look at the International African Bibliography, published in the Netherlands, which lists the latest publications on Africa by African and non-African researchers, and internet search reveal the impressive credentials of these scholars considering the institutional and material constraints on their research efforts. It is worth noting that Nigerian scholars based in the country have published in leading refereed specialist and Africanist journals, such as Journal of Transport History (the only specialist journal in the field); Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History; Journal of African History; International Review of Social History; International Journal of African Historical Studies; African Studies Review; International Journal of Maritime History; Labour History Review; African Affairs; Journal of Borderland Studies; African Economic History; History in Africa: A Journal of Method; Immigrants and Minorities; Africa; Itinerario: European Journal of Overseas History; Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Africa Development; and Journal of Cultural Studies. To be sure, most of these journals are based in the West; this is because “regions and groups with concentrations of economic and political power tend to dominate the production and dissemination of knowledge.”<sup>22</sup> Even in Africa, Nigeria and South Africa are dominant for the same reason. As a measure of the recognition of these efforts, some Nigerian scholars have served or still serve on the editorial boards of leading journals and have applied their knowledge to consulting for government and non-governmental organizations.

This does not suggest that publishing in international journals within or outside Africa is the only test of scholarship for Nigerian historians nor does it ignore the politics of international publishing, about which much has been written. The point is that Nigerian scholars should strive to confront and overcome obstacles and endeavour to

make their mark even in the Western world where the cards are so blatantly stacked against them. As an illustration, three papers rejected for unconvincing reasons in succession by the Journal of African History, the leading Africanist journal in the field, were published after peer review in African Studies Review, Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, and International Review of Social History. It only confirms that Nigerian scholars must be tenacious and versatile in their research and publishing.

### Conclusion

This paper has examined the wider and local contexts of the crisis of academic research and publishing in Nigeria since the last quarter of the twentieth century. It has demonstrated, with specific reference to Nigeria, the negative impact on scholarship and publishing of a conjunction of economic crisis and mismanagement, wrong ordering of societal values (leading to a relative neglect of tertiary education) and prolonged military rule with its culture of obscurantism. The Humanities in general and History in particular have been worst hit and great damage has been done to a proud heritage of research and scholarship in these fields.

Nevertheless, this essay has highlighted the adaptive and survival strategies of Nigerian academics caught in the web of this crisis. Multi- and interdisciplinary collaborative research and research networks, new journals, conferences and, even, self-publishing are some of the strategies adopted, particularly by the younger scholars, to cope with the dearth of outlets for scholarly research in Nigeria. While these have been salutary in most cases, others have served to compound the bad situation. For example, self-publishing clearly reflects a defeatist attitude and an unwillingness to pay the price required to survive in the competitive environment of international publishing. It also represents a self-immolating response to the pressure of “the publish-or-perish” culture of academic promotion exercises which the less endowed or less committed scholar always seeks to circumvent. To be sure, some of the self-published material could actually attain international standards if properly peer reviewed but not all Nigerian academics are willing to go down that road.

That said, an admittedly small number of Nigerian scholars still patronise foreign journals and attend international conferences. What needs to be done, at the institutional

level, is to reward such scholars in the assessment and scoring of publications for promotion. While high quality publications should attract high scores and commendation, slipshod and “emergency” publications should be penalized with outright rejection or commensurately low scores. It should be adopted as a general principle that candidates for the position of Senior Lecturer must have published at least one of their papers in an established international journal. For higher positions, the number should increase if only to attain the goal of making academic research and publishing in Nigeria to fully conform to the highest possible standards. Anything short of this would only result in the breeding of what Nigerians call “local champions,” scholars whose intellectual relevance (if any) does not extend beyond their campus or Faculty.

However, in view of the formidable constraints on academic research and publishing in contemporary Nigeria, this paper recommends an action plan that includes the creation of a fund for the publication of tertiary books and journals; provision of special funding for and revitalization of university publishing houses; creating incentives for international publishing by rewarding such efforts in the promotion of academic staff; institution of special prizes and awards for academic publishing in Africa, such as the NOMA Award for publishing in Africa, and the fostering of counterpart or joint publishing as is done by the Oxford-based James Currey Publishers, the greatest publishers of tertiary books on Africa. Nigerian scholars themselves should sustain the tradition of direct involvement in the publication of books and journals to ensure the highest academic quality. The examples of Gideon Were in Kenya and Zimbabwe’s Ibbo Mandaza should act as a spur to such efforts but these would be more credible if undertaken by the increasing number of research networks or groups in Nigeria, such as IFRA in Ibadan, and regional bodies like CODESRIA, which now publishes Afrika Zamani, journal of the Association of African Historians. As well, publishing houses in Nigeria should seek a wider market for their output through participation in book fairs and counterpart publishing. As has been noted, there is “no substitute for a vigorous publishing industry in Africa for African scholars.”<sup>23</sup>

On the whole, Nigerian scholars have risen to the peculiar challenges of their situation in various ways and with varying success. Their responses to the challenges have generally produced commendable results. For the most part, it can be claimed that

the crisis of academic research and publishing in Nigeria has brought out the resourcefulness and enterprise of diligent scholars who have turned adversity into advantage. However, better results would be obtained with a decisive reorientation among the scholars themselves by making scholarship relevant to the needs of the society and emphasising interdisciplinarity while students of tertiary institutions should be made to imbibe a reading culture. The general populace would have to develop a healthy appreciation of scholarship and quality education, shifting emphasis away from the ephemeral pursuit of wealth and celebration of mediocrity. The government should give practical and enlightened support for scholarship through the provision of the necessary infrastructure (such as up-to-date libraries and internet facilities) and adequate funding of research and participation in international conferences. It is hoped that the conscious development of a reading culture (which would sustain publication of tertiary texts and enhance the quality of graduates of tertiary institutions), a rigid insistence on the quality (rather than dubious quantity) of academic publications, and the fostering of a climate of reward for academic excellence, would combine to produce a conducive climate for research and scholarship in the twenty-first century Nigerian university system.

### **Notes and References**

\*I acknowledge the assistance and suggestions of my colleague, Dr. Olufunke Adeboye, in the preparation of this essay but remain culpable for the views expressed in it.

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3. B. O. Aboyade, "Nigerian Historians and the Dissemination of Historical Information," JHSN, IX, 2 (1978), 145-54, provides a good analysis of publications by Nigerian historians in journals indexed in Historical Abstracts and African Abstracts during this period. Cf. Zeleza's analysis of five Africanist journals in his Manufacturing African Studies, chapter 4.
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9. On the question of relevance and other crises, see A.O. Adeoye, "Understanding the Crisis in Modern Nigerian Historiography," History in Africa: A Journal of Method, 19 (1992), 1-11; and J.I. Dibua, "The Idol, Its Worshippers, and the Crisis of Relevance of Historical Scholarship in Nigeria," History in Africa: A Journal of Method, 24 (1997), 117-137.
10. Akinjide Osuntokun and Ayodeji Olukoju (eds.), Nigerian Peoples and Cultures (Ibadan, 1997), is widely used across all the Faculties in the University of Lagos and

beyond.

11. Ade Adefuye, Babatunde Agiri and Jide Osuntokun (eds.), History of the Peoples of Lagos State (Lagos, 1987); G.O Ogunremi, M.O. Opeloye and Siyan Oyeweso (eds.), Badagry: A Study in History, Culture and Traditions of an Ancient City (Ibadan, 1994); and G.O. Ogunremi and Kehinde Faluyi (eds.), Economic History of West Africa Since 1750 (Ibadan, 1996) are recommended texts for undergraduate courses on the history of Lagos and Badagry, and of West African economic history.
12. Zeleza, Manufacturing African Studies, 49.
13. A few examples of the festschrifts are: G.O. Olusanya (ed.), Studies in Yoruba History and Culture: Essays in Honour of Professor S.O. Biobaku (Ibadan, 1983); G.O. Ogunremi and B. Adediran (eds.), Culture and Society in Yorubaland (Ibadan, 1998) – in honour of Akinjogbin; N.C. Ejituwu (ed.), The Multi-Disciplinary Approach to African History: Essays in Honour of Ebiegberi Joe Alagoa (Port Harcourt, 1998); and Toyin Falola (ed.), Modern Nigeria: A Tribute to G.O. Olusanya (Lagos, 1990).
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16. Some of the books produced by these publishing houses have been cited above: Adefuye et al (eds.), History of the Peoples of Lagos State (Literamed); Olubomehin (ed.), Issues in Historiography (College Press); Osuntokun and Olukoju (eds.), Nigerian Peoples and Cultures (Davidson).
17. Yusuf Alli, “We need a national book policy,” interview with Akin Olajide, Managing Director of University Press Plc, in The PUNCH (Lagos), 22 March 2002, 36.
18. The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry funded the research leading to, and the publication of, Olukunle Iyanda (ed.), The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and the Nigerian Economy, 1888-1988 (Lagos, 1989), while the Oluyole Club of Ibadan did

likewise in respect of G. O. Ogunremi (ed.), Ibadan in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Ibadan, 1999).

19. Proceedings of the annual ASAN Conferences have been published in the Nigerian Journal of American Studies, vols. 1-3 (1991-94), and as Oyin Ogunba (ed.), Governance and the Electoral Process: Nigeria and the United States of America (Lagos, 1997); and Ogunba (ed.), The Empowerment of the Civil Society in a Democracy: Nigeria and the United States of America (Ile-Ife, 2000).
20. Friedrich Ebert has been funding, among numerous others, the annual conferences of the Environmental Protection Society of Nigeria (EPSN), chaired by Professor Akinjide Osuntokun. It also publishes the proceedings. See, for example, Osuntokun (ed.), Dimensions of Environmental Problems in Nigeria (Davidson, 1997) Osuntokun (ed.), Current Issues in Nigerian Environment (Davidson, 1998); and Osuntokun (ed.), Environmental Problems of Nigeria – With Special Emphasis on Northern Nigeria (Ibadan, 1999).
21. An example is Biodun Adediran, The Frontier States of Western Yorubaland, 1600-1889 (IFRA, 1994).
22. Zeleza, Manufacturing African Studies, 61.
23. Ibid, 62.