

CONTRIBUTIONS OF WESTERN EDUCATION TO THE MAKING OF MODERN NIGERIA DURING AND AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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Abstract

What is now known as Nigeria consisted of two distinct geographical, cultural and educational divides in the course of state formation, migration and ethnic development. There existed before 1914, the Northern and Southern protectorates of Nigeria and the Colony of Lagos. The Northern protectorate was predominantly dominated by the Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri speaking people, who had for over a thousand years (700-1914) been wrapped with Islamic religion, Koranic Education and Arabic Literacy, and committed to Muslim and Arabic education, tradition and culture. The north rejected the Christian Missionary form of education when it was introduced to the area in 1845 – Graham (1966). The Southern protectorate was predominantly dominated by the Yoruba and Igbo speaking people, who for many centuries had developed along the indigenous form of traditional education and culture, and who barely seventy two years 1842-1914 imbibed the European form of education regarded as Formal or “Western Education”. The missionaries established mission schools and people became literates in the Roman script. This scenario was the case of Nigeria before the outbreak of the 1st World War in 1914. This article shows how the likelihood of war prepared Nigerians for a unilateral Amalgamation of the two protectorates without any recourse to war or civil disorder. There was no protest for or against the sudden amalgamation of the protectorates by Lord Frederick Lugard. The article in addition, showcases the impact of amalgamation on the educational development of the country, discusses how the amalgamation led to the acceptance of western form of education hitherto rejected by the Northern Protectorate and analyses the place of Western Education in fostering the making of Nigeria as a modern nation after the 1st world war.

Keywords: Western education, Nigeria

Introduction

When the First World War broke out in 1914 and lasted till 1918, little did Nigerians realize that the beginning and the end of the war would usher in a glorious beginning for Nigeria. In the north, Islam and Islamic influence came to the Hausa- Fulani and Kanuri people through Trans-Saharan Trade Routes, pilgrim traffic, trade relations with

North Africa, Middle East and the Western Sudan. Islamic or Quranic Education, gained a considerable hold in many big towns like Bornu, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Kano. The arrival of several Muslim clerics from the Western and Central Sudan from the 14th century aided Islamic and its educational revolutions in the Northern part of Nigeria - Trimingham (1962). The European incursion into the area, consequently led to the establishment of a Northern Protectorate, to check ethnic war and the spread of the 1804 Jihad of Usman Dan Fodiye, which was advancing to the southern part of Nigeria.

In the south of Nigeria, there were several ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo, Ibibio and Ijaw speaking peoples, with different historical and cultural backgrounds. Ajayi (1965) informed us that the formation of the Southern Protectorate was a result of the European “invasion” of the south to check further advancement of inter-tribal wars resulting to slave raid and slave trade that had ravaged the area for over four hundred years.

There existed before the 1914 amalgamation, and the outbreak of the 1st world war, three distinct geographical, political and religious divides - Northern and Southern Protectorates and the Colony of Lagos. As the wave of Christian Missionary Education (CME) regarded as Formal or Western Education pushed towards the Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri strongholds in the North, the powerful Emirs in the area rejected this educational system. The powerful Emirs in the territory were against the incursion of the Christian Missionary Education. They saw this type of Education as a threat to Islam and Islamic cultures which had already been firmly established according to Fafunwa (1974) in the Northern areas for a long period of time. In addition, accepting this Western Education would mean a conversion of their children into the new faith of Christianity and European cultures. Thus in furtherance of the colonial enterprise there was need for drastic action at this stage. The purpose of this article therefore, is to discuss and analyse the events leading to the amalgamation of Nigeria, make deductions of and show how the amalgamation of Nigeria, and the 1st world war contributed to the emergence of Nigeria as a united and modern nation.

Northern Protectorate before 1914

Prior to the age of European penetration, that Traditional Education had transformed the people in the spheres of technology, arts, jurisprudence,

economics and politics. The Traditional system had far reaching impact in the life of the people, especially in religion and culture. Further to the traditional system came Islam with its traditions and cultures. Trimingham (1962) stated that by the 14th and 15th centuries, Islam as a religion, had been firmly established among the Kanem-Bornu, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto areas of the North, where Muslims from the North Africa and the Arabia countries had trade contacts with the people. According to Trimingham (1962), the acceptance of Islam by these peoples in the north was ostensibly based on the fact that Islam, almost bear affinity with the traditional customs of the people. Islam was thus nationalized as a religion and a way of life of the people of northern Nigeria. Islam had been indigenized by the people in all strands of the triple cord of Myth, Cult and Fellowship, because since it was introduced, it had a steady and continuous contact with the people of the interior part of northern Nigeria. Thus, Islam and Quranic Education permeated the entire northern Nigeria and as at the time Christian missionary education, was introduced in the area, there was a total rejection of this Christian mission and education. But, by 1897, the Hausa, Kanuri, Fulbe etc of the Northern Nigeria, were occupied and proclaimed a protectorate by the British Government.

The attempts by the Christian missionaries to open missions and schools in the northern Nigeria before 1914, met with stiff resistance. There is no denying of the fact that under special permission, Dr. Walter Miller- a medical officer, in the area, was allowed to open a western education school in Zaria, as early as 1902. There were few successes according to Graham (1966) in the expansion of western education between 1900 and 1914, as a result of the efforts of Hans Visher, who according to Graham (1966) was appointed as Educational officer for the Northern Protectorate. The fact however, remained that there were 41 western education schools in the northern protectorate as against 19, 073 Quranic schools by 1914 - Fafunwa (1964).

Southern Protectorate before 1914

It would be necessary to go a few steps back to the 16th Century, the period which was regarded as that of the merchant adventurer. Jayeola-Omoyeni (2009) indicated that the European traders and merchants at the coastal areas of the southern part of Nigeria, were satisfied with the trade relations of the indigenous people that exchanged trade items of human beings with some European “luxurious” items like umbrella, mirror etc. The Europeans had no incentive and intention to penetrate into the interior parts of Nigeria, since Nigerian slaves were brought into the European coastal factories in the South.

In the 16th century, there was meaningful contact between Benin and Portugal. It is on record that there was an exchange of ambassador between the king of Benin and the King of Portugal. In addition, a palace school was established in 1515 AD, at the palace of the Oba of Benin, for the sons of the nobles to attend. The incidence of slavery and slave trade that went for over four hundred years wiped off impact of the early contact of Benin with the Europeans especially the Portuguese– Crowder (1962).

The Royal Niger Company which was chartered to protect the palm-oil trade in the Niger Delta area in 1886 established a Protectorate over the Niger and Benue valleys. By 1st January 1900 according to Trimingham (1962), the Protectorates of the Northern and Southern Nigeria, were proclaimed.

The 19th century and up to 1914, was characterized in Nigeria by letting loose of two great forces – militant Islam and European expansion, which and within no other period had been the impact of comparative forces. At the end, it came to a contest of which the strains and stresses that the two forces produced, became unbearable until the European power eventually gained complete control, and the process of recovery and readjustment was put in place. British control already extended over all the rest of Nigeria and so the administration of Nigeria under the British, continued till 1914 when the Protectorates and the Colony of Lagos, were amalgamated as a Nigeria Colony.

In summary, historical events led to the differentiation of the Northern Protectorate from the Southern Protectorate. Each of the Protectorates and the Lagos Colony had different political organizations, different transport systems and economic practices. Many of the politically uncoordinated groups paid allegiance to their Emirs and followed the dictates of the system of Emirship rather than the dictates of the British Administrator.

Politics of amalgamation and the outbreak of the 1st World War

The causes of the 1st World War can be located in the economic, political and colonial rivalries of the great powers stretching back to the 19th century. The armament race, (as a result of the rapid development of heavy industry especially in Germany), secret diplomacy between European rival groups, the formation of the Triple Alliance, according to Albrecht-Carries (1972), and the formation of the Triple Entente, were series of international crises, unrests and tensions between the different European Allies and the European Central Powers in the wake of 1914. The Balkan Wars of 1912-13, were further manifestations of the unrest in South East Europe. The assassination of Prince Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, which

occurred on June 28, 1914 at Sarajevo, precipitated the outbreak of the 1st world War on July 28, 1914.

There was a serious impact of the 1st world war on Nigeria. Frederick Lugard who was recalled back to Nigeria to be the Governor General in 1912, took advantage of the rivalries, political tensions etc. going-on among the European powers in Europe, and without consultation with Nigerians, he unilaterally amalgamated the Northern, Southern Protectorates and the Colony of Lagos to become the colony of Nigeria.

Frederick Lugard did the amalgamation in order to ensure and firmly secure the entire Nigeria for the British should there be a global war, that would need the participation of the colonies. So, Nigeria through the 1914 amalgamation was ready to fight for Britain should there be the need! But as it was, Nigeria was not dragged into the 1st world war and thus, the course of history shifted to the benefits of amalgamation, the outbreak and end of the war to Nigeria.

The task of history, however is not primarily that of speculation but rather that of exposition and explanation of the records of things that happened. This explained the confidence Lugard had to unite the northern and southern protectorates as a unit in preparation for an eventful day the British would call for the support of Nigerians against British enemies. However, some Nigeria scholars were of the opinion that the amalgamation was partly done to prepare Nigeria for the British assistance and utilization of the resources of Nigeria to assist Britain in times of trouble or need.

But what is important to remember is that in such a war as later broke out in July 1914, all resources, human and materials, would be called into play. It is essential to uphold the morale of the broad masses of the people. To this end, the conviction of fighting unknown causes of war to the Nigerian peoples was of prime importance. The growing stress on moral values, economic stability, democracy and honesty of purpose whose manifestation was concomitant to British readiness to “coerce” Nigerians unto fighting a European war should there be the need for it, was significant.

As a result of the amalgamation, the end of the war, brought about the principle of self-determination. There were new orientations, new process of education and reforms, new political and economic arrangement and changes. For economic exigencies, Lugard, had sought from the home government what could be done to salvage the educational and economic imbalances between the north and south when he took over the administration in 1912. As Nicolson (1969), indicated, there was a closer relationship between the north and south in the areas of education, socio-economic and political development of Nigeria. This paper briefly discusses below the educational and political trends in Nigeria during and after the end of the 1st world war.

Education reforms

Lugard's government according to Bowen (1972) saw that the function of education was to enable people perform useful roles in his community or environment. Lugard therefore, proposed a utilitarian concept of education for all the assisted or non-assisted schools in Nigeria. In effect, there was an educational reform for all schools in the north, east and west. The utility concept of education was proposed according to Fafunwa (1974) under the following heads among others:

- i. Formation of character and discipline
- ii. Religious education and secular moral instruction
- iii. Better education in government assisted schools
- iv. Cooperation with mission and more grants -in-aid to mission schools
- v. Special encouragement for training of teachers
- vi. Adoption of education to the needs of the people
- vii. Government measure of control over all schools

These proposals led to the 1916 Education Ordinance which eventually covered the entire country in the spirit of amalgamation. The 1916 Education Ordinance, brought with it a political amalgamation which enabled the northern elements to see the place of Western Education in the governance of Nigeria.

Another impact of the amalgamation of Nigeria was the improvement and expansion of Western education in the north. There was a greater interest of government in the grant-in-aids of government funds to all mission schools. This allowed the government to be more involved in the affairs of the schools and thus aided the expansion of education. Government was able to have a deeper and firm control of education thenceforth. This manifested in the establishment of educational institutions.

Katsina College

The establishment of Katsina College in 1922, had a lasting educational, social and political effects in Nigeria history. The college which was a Teacher Training Institution was the first government's College which was a model school for the people of the northern area. When the first set of students were admitted, the students came with their wives, servants, horses etc, to the college. The powerful Emirs in the North saw that the students so admitted, were seen as good Muhammedans or good Muslims. According to Onabamiro (1983), the Emirs began to offer lands for the establishment and building of western education schools in their areas. In order to give it a wider spread, the Katsina College was in 1939, moved to Kaduna and further moved to Zaria in 1949, as Barewa College. Nearly all the graduates of Katsina, Kaduna and Zaria, held the mantle of **Leadership** at one time or the

other in Nigeria political and economic history. The western educated elites from the south and north secured independence for Nigerians.

The establishment of Katsina College in 1922, brought about a bridge that closed the educational gulf between the north and south. There was the establishment of more government schools based on western education model in the area. The use of English language was adopted in the college and other western education schools as a medium of communication. In addition, and according to Taiwo (1980), Phelps-Stoke and other educational commissions from 1925, served as eye-openers to education reforms in Nigeria, after the end of the 1st world war.

Yaba Higher College

As soon as few Nigerians were highly educated especially those Nigerians who had the opportunity to attend schools abroad, began to agitate compassionately for the establishment of a higher institution. Appeals were made to the missionaries and colonial government to establish a university in Nigeria. The colonial government however, granted the establishment of Yaba Higher College in 1932, for the production of qualified assistants in Medicine, Engineering and Teaching. In other words, Yaba Higher college was designed to produce middle-level manpower in Nigeria. Admission of students was from the entire country, East, North and West. This admission of students from all parts of Nigeria was possible as a result of the amalgamation.

As a result of pressure mounted by western educated Nigerians, several important educational policy statements were issued by the Colonial Office. For example, in 1943, there was a memorandum on mass education in Africa which included Nigeria. The memorandum which Nigeria according to Taiwo (1980), accepted, further defined the goals of education in the colonies as:

- a. The improvement of health and living conditions of the people.
- b. The development of the economic well-being of the native population
- c. The development of political institution and political consciousness in anticipation of the day when the people would become self-governing.

Lending credence to the above, the colonial government launched the first Mass Literacy Campaign in 1946, to provide literacy education for the masses to enable stark illiterate adults who were out of school to read and write in the roman script. This was a giant stride towards making Nigeria a great nation.

The Richard Constitution of 1946 formalized the division of Nigeria into three regions – East, North and West, as developed in the Bourdillon`s Constitution of 1939. The enactment of the 1948 Education Ordinance, was

the first comprehensive publication of an educational policy and practice in Nigeria. The primary purpose of this Ordinance was designed to put the country into three regional and administrative units. The Ordinance decentralized educational administration by classifying education as a regional service in order for all the regions to be fully involved in the expansion of education and to foster mass education in each of the regions.

The Education Ordinance contained the following significant features:

- (i) Appointment of Director of Education for Nigeria.
- (ii) Appointment of Deputy Director of Education for the Regions
- (iii) Establishment of a Central Board of Education for Nigeria
- (iv) Establishment of Regional Boards of Education
- (v) Establishment of Native Authority and Government Schools
- (vi) Registration of Teachers
- (vii) Grants-in-Aids Regulation
- (viii) Tuition Fees.

The establishment of the first University in Nigeria (the University of Ibadan), was the result of a pressure jointly mounted by the western educated elites from the East, North and West. Besides, after the 1st world war, there was the elaboration and growth of western education. The democratic agenda and political emancipation and transformation of Nigeria to the global modern world, came as a result of the level of education attained, through the production of education memoranda, commissions and consultations. While the formulation of educational policies was the prerogative of the colonial office on the advice of the advisory committee on Education in the colonies, the implementation rested with the colonial government of Nigeria anchored by more western educated Nigerians from the North, East and West. The division or “de-amalgamation” brought about further development in the expansion of western education in the north, east and west. There was the review of grants-in-aid to schools which resulted into the expansion of schools, increase in pupils and students enrolments, employment of more teachers and education planers.

Politics

The 1914 amalgamation, brought about the emergence of Nigeria as “Colony of Nigeria” - African Encyclopedia (1974). The end of the 1st World War, led to the formation of the League of Nations, whose charter brought about among others, the spirit of self-determination that helped to promote equity in the administration of the north and south. About eight years after the outbreak of the 1st world War, and to fulfill the concept of “determinism” embraced by the League of Nations, the first Nigerian constitution came to life. This constitution, which was known as the Clifford

Constitution of 1922, gave opportunities to Nigerians to be elected into the Legislative Council in Lagos. Herbert Macaulay, thus, won a seat in Lagos as a member of the Legislative Council in 1922.

Opposition to colonial rule as stressed by Ezera (1964) developed among some western educated Nigerians in the North, East and West, who felt that economic, educational and political development was not fast enough. A sense of nationalism and demands for political change and independence grew faster in Nigeria during the 1930s till the beginning of another European hostilities in Europe.

The 1914 amalgamation brought about the effective curiosity of Nigerians to challenge the existing colonial rule and order as a nation. It enabled Nigerians to see themselves as one and as an indivisible organ of government. The 1914 amalgamation thus, performed a liberating function for Nigeria in the sense that it freed the people from the clutches of ignorance. After the end of the war, Western education schools were opened in the core towns in the north, and more schools were opened in the south.

Furthermore, in 1939, Bernard Bourdillon, as the Governor of Nigeria, divided Nigeria into three regions- East, North and West. There was a strong pressure mounted by many western educated Nigerians. These educated elites saw that a unified Nigeria, would do them more harm than good in the area of education, commerce, fair representation in the Legislative Assembly of their areas.

There were no serious civil disturbances(except the 1916 Oke-Iho riot, and the 1929, Aba women riot which were quickly quelled) in areas of politic, economic development, jurisprudence, education and social growth in the country. Politically, de-amalgamation of Nigeria in 1939, gave the country a road map towards a federated and more democratic policy. Nigeria was able to identify the serious procedure for effective governance and practical application of democracy.The end product of which led to the shaping and re-shaping of Nigeria to a modern nation. All these could not have come at the time they did if not for the western educated individuals from the east, north and west.

Economics

There is no doubting the fact that the amalgamation of Nigeria had an impressive economic principle or base. Before 1914, the two Protectorates generated revenues .The duo had different resources for income generation as could be seen in figure 1.

In the Southern Protectorate, there was an impressive progress in the development of agriculture, particularly cash crop. Agriculture, earning the territory valuable foreign exchange credit balance. Nothing comparable with this development was taking place in the Northern protectorate. The

following statistics on export crops recorded in pounds sterling in 1914, of the two Protectorates is a clear testimony of the financial inadequacies of the north that the unification of the north and south redressed.

Figure 1: Revenue accrued to the two protectorates in 1914

Southern Protectorate	Amount in £	Northern Protectorate	Amount in £
Cocoa	171, 219	Cotton Lint	150, 791
Palm Kernel	2,541,150	Ground Nut	179, 219
Palm Oil	1, 571,691	Total	330,010
Rubber	38,854		
Total	4,322,914		

Source: Onabamiro, S. Glimpses into Nigerian History. P.90

One of the important policies of amalgamation to the proponent, Fredrick Lugard was on Economic and financial engagement of the country. The south was economically viable than the “bankrupt north” and secondly Lord Lugard’s amalgamation was to free the home government i.e. Britain, from the shackles of huge expensive financial burden and to transfer the whole financial burden to a new amalgamated Nigeria.

Concluding Remarks

The end of the 1st world war facilitated and instilled the societal virtues and patriotism among the western educated elites. Government and private individuals therefore, took interest in the expansion of western education in their areas. The potentials of a country as stressed by Ayandele (1974) is more accurately gauged by the quality or level of its educated force because education (better still) good education enables people to think critically, reason analytically and develop the sense of further enquiry into issues of social, political and economic that brought further developments to Nigeria.

The following deductions are carefully made after the discussions and analyses:

- (i) that Nigeria consisted of three separate “nations” of the colony of Lagos, Northern and Southern Protectorates before the outbreak of the 1st world war in 1914;
- (ii) that the three different units, ran a separate government; separate transport system, and had different attitudes to education;
- (iii) that in 1914 Frederick Lugard amalgamated the three units to become Nigeria Colony for Britain.
- (iv) that Nigerian societies existed piecemeal with variegated economic structures and cultural practice which were at different levels of development.
- (v) that the north rejected western education but quoranic education was fully embraced.

- (vi) that the south and the Colony of Lagos had been involved in western education since 1842, through the agency of Christian missionaries
- (vii) that the 1914 amalgamation fostered the coming together of the three blocks to foster their political emancipation and progress
- (viii) that after the end of the 1st world war, the northern elements saw the importance of western education and encouraged the Christian missionaries to come down to them to build schools.
- (ix) that the end of the First World war brought a new search for a political order and debates that manifested in the various constitutional changes from 1922.

It is observed that some scholars like Taiwo (1980), Adesina (1988), Perham (1960), Rodney (2009), among others, are of the view that the amalgamation of Nigeria by Frederick Lugard distorted the course of Nigeria history. But, the present article and authors are stressing the fact that the amalgamation assisted in no small measure to meet up with the exigencies of the outcome of the 1st world war in re-shaping the course of Nigeria history, fostering the acquisition of western education in the north and the expansion of western education in all the nooks and crannies of the country. The beginning and the end of the 1st world war placed Nigeria on the map of progress, political emancipation and growth. The use of English Language was adopted as an official Language for government business and communication. This enabled the north and south to communicate effectively among the various ethnic divisions and thus, prepared the country for independence later in 1960.

This paper has made uninformed scholars to understand the process of Nigeria's nationhood. A-one-time three distinct blocks of states was in 1914, united together to become one. The result of which lend credence to the longings for western education which was before 1914, rejected in the north. The acceptance of western education in the north, led to the establishment of more schools and expansion of education all over Nigeria.

The educated elites from the north and south mounted extensive pressure against colonial rule in Nigeria. Bowen (1972) is of the view that western education facilitated the process of national integration and cohesion if mildly applied to national issues. If not for the 1914 Lugardian amalgamation of Nigeria and the outbreak of the 1st world war, which remolded Nigeria into a modern nation, could not have had any meaning in the political emancipation of Nigeria.

The outbreak of the war, led to the benefits of western education which came to bear on the existence of Nigeria, as a modern nation, in the area of political, economic growth and development. Nigeria's educated elites, were empowered by western education and the knowledge was able to

influence the sought for constitutional reforms that led to de-colonization of Nigeria in 1960.

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