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NIGERIA, AFRICAN SECURITY AND THE NUCLEAR OPTION: A RESEARCH NOTE

C. Bassey

The nuclear option controversy which surfaced in the Nigerian policy, media and academic circles in the late-seventies and eighties, was again a clear indication of the importance increasingly accorded the defence component in Nigeria's foreign policy planning.¹ This is all the more so in the orbit of nuclear diplomacy given Nigeria's earlier commitment in the nineteen sixties and early seventies to the declaration of Africa a "nuclear weapon – free zone" (no nuclear tests, bases, storage or transport) by the United Nations General Assembly (1965 and 1974).²

The complex socio-economic, bureaucratic and intellectual constituencies which underscore the current *volte face* in terms of changing perceptions and outlook for nuclear policy decision making of the 1980s and 1990s has been examined elsewhere.³ The paper focuses on the politico-strategic context of the policy debate concerning the acquisition by Nigeria of a viable intermediate retaliatory nuclear capacity: Political/military incentives, and infrastructural feasibility and prospects.

Context: Incentives for Acquisition

The acquisition of nuclear technology by most Third World states is often shrouded in secrecy and deception for reason bordering on international backlash. So is their *actual* as different from *declared* motivations and policy objectives. As Andrew Pierre aptly notes:

*the nuclear decision is likely to be made in many countries for reasons quite separate from a rational calculation of security requirements. These include factors of prestige, the desire to achieve regional dominance or to catch up with another state in the area, the interests of indigenous scientific and bureaucratic communities, or the pressures of domestic politics in which nuclear issues . . . can often become key ingredients of the national debate.*⁴

While motives undeniably vary, a distinction need be made at both conceptual and practical levels between the policy underpinnings of the 'atom for peace' and 'atom for war' programmes. While *economic motivation* might, for instance, be meaningful in the former context, it is essentially superfluous in the latter. In other words, within the context of 'peaceful uses of nuclear power', economic factors could, and have been, proffered as persuasive reasons. These cease to have any explanatory bearing once a definite intent has been made toward "weaponisation". At this level, the question becomes preeminently strategic: what policy objectives could the possession of a nuclear device by a particular country useful serve? This is the primary

concern of this paper.

Although at the inception of its atomic programme in the Murtala Muhammed era, peaceful utilisation and economic ramifications were stressed,⁵ both the tempo and direction of debate clearly shifted to status and security (through "weaponisation" of research) during the Second Republic.⁶ This was, of course, to be attributed principally to systemic development in South Africa concerning the ultimate intent of the nuclearization of its defence system. The question that, therefore, arose in this context was the strategic justification for Nigeria's quest for nuclear weapon capability.

Advocates of the nuclear option for Nigeria have invariably advanced two fundamental reasons: status and security. In the first category – status – perhaps the most forceful argument has been advanced by Ali Mazrui in his 1979 BBC Reith Lectures. Possession of nuclear arsenals he contended, invests states in contemporary international system not only with supreme military force, but also with international status and power. In this context, the existential question which arises is: whether the Non-proliferation Treaty, 'designed to minimize the number of countries that have a nuclear capacity and ultimately intended especially to discourage Third World countries from going nuclear', could not conceivably be regarded as an extension of the 'old philosophy of imperialism as a monopoly state of warfare'?⁷ Mazrui answers in the affirmative: 'those who insist on monopolising nuclear know-how for themselves, he contends, are heirs to Pax Britannica, seeking to end tribal wars in distant lands while arming to initiate world wars from their own heartland'.⁸ Africa, he urges, should 'give up the idea of promoting itself as a nuclear free zone . . . and estimate the chances of at least a continental consortium within Africa of nuclear energy, linked to a strategy of developing a small nuclear section in the military establishment of Nigeria for the time being, and in Zaire and black-ruled South Africa later'.⁹

For Mazrui as well as other exponents of this view,¹⁰ nuclear proliferation constitutes a 'process of military democratization':

*It seeks to break monopolies in weaponry in the hands of the northern warlords. Nuclear proliferation also seeks to break secret societies based on forbidden nuclear knowledge under the control of the West and the Soviet bloc.*¹¹

Thus for Nigeria in particular, and for black Africa in general, joining the nuclear club' should be seen not as a dangerous misdirection of effort from the current imperative of economic development, but as per force a new initiation, an important *rite de passage*, a recovery of adulthood' in a world pre-eminently framed and informed by security relations. As Mazrui unreservedly put it:

For the 1980s and 1990s, Nigeria should move towards making itself a nuclear power unless steps are taken before then by the world as a whole to put an end to nuclear weapons universally.

*The development of a nuclear capacity by Africa's largest country is probably a necessary precondition if Africa's diplomatic marginality is to be ended. Nigeria should follow the example of its fellow giants – Brazil in Latin America and China and India in Asia – and pursue the goal of a modest nuclear capability. My own reasons for urging such a capability have nothing to do with making Nigeria militarily stronger. My ultimate desire is that the world as a whole should be militarily safer. Only when the Western nations and the Soviet bloc discover that they cannot keep the rest of the world from engaging in the nuclear "dream" unless they themselves give up nuclear weapons will the world at least address itself to the fundamentals of human survival.*¹²

As earlier suggested, this status-cum-diplomatic consideration advanced by Mazrui is only part of the overall complex of reasons proffered by proponents of the nuclearization of Nigeria.

Security constitutes the other imperative: the nuclear option for Nigeria is a necessary counter to the developing threat of a nuclear blackmail from the South African ruling class.¹³ In a recent overview of Africa and the Bomb', Sammy Kum Buo alluded to this growing concern among policy planners as well as informed public in Africa:

*Just as French nuclear tests in the Sahara in the 1960s may have provoked Africa's anti-nuclear diplomatic efforts, South Africa's frenzied pursuit, in the 1970s, of a nuclear-weapon capability may now be responsible for Black Africa's seemingly more favourable attitude towards the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Black African countries Proposals have therefore been made for Nigeria, in particular, and Black Africa, as a whole, to acquire nuclear weapons not only to face what is seen as a racist South Africa's nuclear threat to the rest of Africa but also to enhance Africa's diplomatic clout.*¹⁴

On this view, South Africa's intensive nuclear programme over the past couple of decades, combined with its avowed strategy for survival poses a mortal threat to Black Africa. In this regard, Nigeria's nuclear option is viewed in terms of its assumption of leadership in a common front ("Continental African Security Community" – CASC) against the perceived peril from the white laager of South Africa.

As a pariah state which combines the 'disadvantages of pygmies and paranoids along with more visceral and unrelenting opposition by its regional enemies and isolation from most of the rest of the world', South-Africa arguably has the clearest incentives to increase its military power, the shortest technical distance (in the African context) to go to build a bomb, and the least to lose in doing so. Under the pretext of the 'Atoms for Peace' programme, South Africa has received extensive inputs in terms of the technology, facilities (reactors) and expertise, from Western countries – notably the U.S., U.K., France and FRG – for its nuclear development schemes.¹⁵ As a

consequence, it is now generally assumed that South Africa has the capacity to produce nuclear explosive devices, however primitive.¹⁶

Although for the foreseeable future, its limited capacity in delivery technology puts Nigeria outside the direct orbit of South Africa's 'nuclear blackmail', the latter's current interest in battle field or theatre nuclear delivery systems brings neighbouring African states into striking distance.¹⁷ Among other things, the apartheid regime (as part of its 'forward defence' strategy) apparently hopes either to forestall any eventuality of these territories becoming bases for future Pan-African Task Force or to frighten these governments into desisting from supporting and providing sanctuaries to the liberation movements: the African National Congress and Pan-African Congress fighters.

It is on this ground, above all else, that current advocates of a nuclear option for Nigeria conceive its utility: a nuclear 'balance of power between Nigeria and Boer South Africa'. Former Nigerian President, Shagari expressed this position in his address to the Foreign Policy Association in New York: 'Nigeria will not allow Africa to be subjected to nuclear blackmail by South Africa . . . it reserved the right to do whatever she could to protect herself if racist South Africa persisted in acquiring nuclear weapons to threaten the continent'.¹⁸

It cannot be doubted that the underlying concern — i.e. contemporary developments both in the global and regional arenas — expressed by proponents for the nuclearisation of Nigeria is growing. This is especially so, as Frank Barnaby — the director of SIPRI — has noted, because the present countries in possession of nuclear arsenals have repeatedly rejected the call 'to assure the non-nuclear-weapon parties of the NPT that the weapons they have renounced would not be used against them'.¹⁹ However, it is logically unsound to equate the mere fact of existence of nuclear weapons in a given country with claims to relative status and security. For Nigeria in particular, and other LDCs aspirants in general, the problem is essentially one of credibility. That is, even if Nigeria successfully develops its nuclear option — either through expensive independent exertions or the 'shop around' approach — the likelihood of its employment is minimal.

In the first place, the present and medium-term future target of Nigeria's nuclear defence option (South Africa) is over 80 percent non-white and it is unlikely that any Nigerian government would willingly imperil the lives of the great majority of South Africans even in the face of extreme provocation from the Afrikaner regime.²⁰ Such a consideration alone deprives Nigeria of one of the cardinal elements in deterrence relationship — credibility. Credible deterrence is primarily a function not only of capability but also of the estimated intentions of a nation's leadership to use the military potential at its disposal. In other words, while South Africa's tactic of cultivating irrationality through nuclear weapons acquisition may have the intended psychological effect on neighbouring states, similar effort on the part of Nigeria to

create a condition of 'mutual alarm' or mutually assured retaliation cannot but have a 'hollow ring'.

And in the second place, given the present and foreseeable level of technology in Nigeria, the problem of the gap between test detonation of a bomb and the 'weaponisation' and delivery system costs of meaningful nuclear weapon status would remain. In India, these costs provoked resistance to a full-fledged bomb programme inside the military establishment, which feared a drain on funds for conventional weapons. Several domestic opponents of any weapons-related nuclear programme in Nigeria had this factor in mind when they counselled that 'we should handle this growing nuclear obsession with care':

*The apparent strength of our economy is illusory; the kind of confrontation we envisage with any outside power (in the light of our present foreign policy) is not likely to be settled by resort to nuclear weapons but conventional (army, airforce and naval facilities and weaponry); the technology for production of nuclear weapons is very expensive and complicated and depends on a developed educational and technical base. For the rest of this century we may not be able to master it and produce an effective weapon. To direct several billions of naira as India is doing leaving 90 percent of the population in deprivation is unjustified and indeed socially criminal.*²¹

It may, therefore, be concluded on the basis of the above observations that the incentives argument — security and status — in the Nigerian context constitutes at best a misguided preoccupation of the 'new bureaucratic and intellectual constituencies' — research scientists, the diplomatic service, political and military elite — which as Robert D' A Henderson has pointed out, have 'emerged in favour of a stronger emphasis on the nuclear factor' in Nigerian decision making.²²

However, in the final analysis policy decisions in this, as in other areas of the national defence planning, may not be entirely governed by the 'limits of rational action'. The central problem is that in Nigeria, as no doubt in other countries as well, governmental organisations have their own competing interests. In their desire to protect or increase their influence, size, and budget, they are likely to oppose policy choices that reduce or jeopardise their missions and instead lobby for courses of action apt to promote 'organizational prosperity'. It is in this context that a number of domestic detractors in Nigeria have viewed with increasing alarm the undisguised attempts of the nuclear scientific community (associated with the atomic energy commission) to combine with military, bureaucratic and industrial interests to push the frontiers of their research into the military realm.²³ Since Nigeria, as Moyibi Amoda has noted, 'fits into the category of those who have nominal programmes but with the future potential to expand them',²⁴ it is, therefore, appropriate to assess the future possibilities and prospects for Nigeria in this

nuclear domain.

Prospect

Despite countervailing efforts to control proliferation by international regimes, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the technical information required to design and manufacture a nuclear explosive device is now quite readily available, as is the necessary expertise.²⁵ This trend has been considerably heightened in recent times by the increasing commercialisation of nuclear technology and research/production facilities under the so-called 'Atoms for Peace' clause of the Non-Proliferation Treaty which explicitly commits (Articles IV) the nuclear powers to aid the non-nuclear weapons states in 'development of peaceful nuclear energy capabilities, including the fullest possible exchange of equipment'.²⁶ As a consequence, acquisition of nuclear weaponry has now become a by-product of 'peaceful' nuclear programmes and delivery systems, the by-products of 'peaceful' space programmes. In terms of both money and manpower, a national nuclear force can now be acquired at a relatively low cost, as technological advances (especially in laser enrichment) and the burgeoning market for nuclear materials and technology outside the framework of any NPT regime render existing international safeguards largely, ineffective. The Indian nuclear explosion, for example, cost about \$500,000, including the cost of the plutonium and the preparation of the test site.²⁷

For a relative newcomer to the field such as Nigeria, such a 'civilian route' to weapons acquisition might prove to be particularly attractive. First, experience from civilian utilisations may facilitate the construction and operation of clandestine facilities for bomb production (e.g., Israel and South Africa). Second, the establishment of a nuclear fuel cycle for peaceful programme creates a permanent weapons base or option for changing regimes in Nigeria, thus enhancing policy calculations and planning for future contingencies. And third, proceeding via the 'civilian route' or under the 'civilian flag' may reduce the political costs that might be incurred by the acquisition of a nuclear fuel cycle reactor (reprocessing plant) designed specifically for military purposes. Since the development of nuclear explosives or nuclear weapons hinges ultimately on political considerations, such as backlash from the international community, which may not be easy to predict and could potentially be severe, the use of civilian fuel cycles elements as intermediary steps in the development of bombs offers the best possible route.

Although at present Nigeria is unlikely to have an operational nuclear reactor prior to the year 2000, it can readily purchase components for a small natural uranium reactor producing about 20kg of plutonium — 239 a year (more than enough for two atomic bombs) secretly on the open market for a cost of less than \$20 million.²⁸ As the Taiwan and South African example show, the same can be done in the field of reprocessing technology: a small chemical reprocessing unit could be clandestinely acquired and run by the

military. Since considerable deposits of uranium are already known to exist in Nigeria (in Benue, Niger, Sokoto, Cross River, and Bauchi States), it would not be too difficult to obtain fuel for a reactor.

Beyond these fortuitous circumstances, however, formidable problems remain to be overcome if the present or future government of Nigeria decides to press on with a nuclear programme. First, given the paucity of national technological and related skills in this field, considerable sums of money may be needed to recruit foreign expertise possibly from India, Pakistan, Brazil or Egypt to staff available facilities and support infrastructures. Even though Nigeria's human resources in this area have been growing steadily in the last decade (with many trained scientists opting for the bigger 'pies' of Europe and North America), as Henderson has noted, for the near future, Nigeria will lack enough highly-trained nuclear scientists, engineers, and technicians to support a modest nuclear research programme.²⁹

Second, given the current paranoia in the industrial West about an 'Islamic' or 'Black' bomb, even as these states demonstrate a remarkable tolerance of a 'Jewish' or 'Boer' bomb, it is to be expected that Nigeria's attempt in the future to secure the essential prerequisite (access to a commercial reprocessing plant or a Uranium - enrichment plant) for the production of nuclear weapons will be an uphill task. Already her negotiations with the West German Kraftwerkunion (KWU) and the Canadian government for the 450 megawatt medium - sized and 600 megawatt Candu reactors, respectively, have been linked to strict IAEA safeguards including supervision, inspection, and return of spent fuel rods over all of Nigeria's nuclear installations.

However, these domestic and systemic hurdles, notwithstanding, the future possibilities and potentials for Nigeria in the field of nuclear energy and weapons acquisition are considerable. If unforeseen adverse regional developments compel a major national nuclear programme, Nigeria can pursue a 'shop around' approach for production collaboration with current LDCs which are not parties to the NPT. Future non-NPT suppliers (such as India and Brazil) with compelling reasons — the need to become more competitive or to counteract great powers — could be possible candidates.

Nevertheless, the current emphasis placed upon the development of the country's conventional military power as well as its domestic 'military - industrial complex' reduces the probability that available resources will be channelled into such a costly venture. The preoccupation of successive Nigerian government and regimes since the mid-1970s with improving the armed forces' efficiency, modernising its conventional firepower and creating a regional mobility for its forces supports this order of priorities.

Thus, given its dubious strategic value to Nigeria in existing and likely conditions, the pressing problems of the armed forces modernisation programme commanding immediate attention, and the nascent technological base and political inertia, it is to be expected that the nuclearisation of Nigeria's defence system will continue to receive low priority in national planning.³⁰

Even if apartheid South Africa successfully tests and deploys its nuclear arsenal, it would still be far from certain that Nigeria would respond in a similar fashion. Rhetorics notwithstanding, any policy response by Nigeria to nuclear threat from South Africa, has to be predicated upon the calculations and perceptions of the Front Line States' governments. The reasons are fairly obvious.

First, as suggested above, these states are the most likely to be affected by South Africa's nuclear blackmail, since its existing capability in delivery systems (bomber command) necessarily delimits the penetration and striking distance of its forces beyond their immediate strategic environment. And, second, should Nigeria eventually develop an atomic or nuclear device, operational imperatives concerning its 'radius of effective military action' — that is, the capacity of its military services to 'transmit power over space' — necessitates forward positioning in Southern Africa. It is not altogether certain that any one of these FLS governments will find such an offer inviting enough to risk the possibility of a preemptive strike by a fiendish regime whose domestic and international policies have so far been anything but rational.

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2. Nigeria was one of the key African States who relentlessly canvassed in the United Nations (between 1960-1976) for "denuclearization of Africa" following a series of French atomic tests in the Sahara Desert in 1960. See, among others, UN Resolutions: 1652 (26), 24 November 1961; 2033 (20), 3 December 1965; 3261 E (29), 9 December 1974; and 3471 (30), 11 December 1975. *See also the proposal submitted by the OAU to the thirty-first session of the UN General Assembly in 1976, entitled: 'Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa', *Official Record of the General Assembly, thirty-first Session, First Committee* (A/C.1/31/PV.20-52). For the text of the UN General Assembly, 'Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa', see Ian Brownlie (ed.), *Basic Documents on African Affairs* (Oxford: University Press, 1971), pp. 358-359. For the OAU declarations on the same theme, see OAU; CLAS/Plen.2/Rev.2, 25 May 1963; CA/Res.28(2), 29 February 1964; CM/Res.38 (3), 17 July 1964; and AHG/Res.11 (1), 21 July 1964; and G. Nweke, "African Perceptions

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5. The Nigerian Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) was established by the decree of 1 September, 1976, with the responsibility for "prospecting and mining radioactive minerals, construction and maintenance of nuclear plants both for electric power generation and for research into peaceful uses of atomic energy". G.A. Nweke, *African Security in the Nuclear Age* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1986), p. 100.
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7. Ali Mazrui, *The African Condition* (London: Heinemann 1980), p. 122.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
10. For variations on this same view, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: more may be better*, Adept Papers No. 171 (London: IISS, 1981); Asok Kapur, "The Nuclear Spread: A Third World View" *Third World Quarterly* 11, 1 (January 1980), pp. 59-75.
11. A. Mazrui, *Op. Cit.* p. 136.
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13. See Okolo's interview with Iya Abubakar, the first Nigerian Minister of Defence in the Shagari administration (1979-1983) in *West Africa* 19 May 1980, pp. 872-874 and editorials of Daily Sketch (Ibadan) 30 September 1980; *Daily Times*, 30 September 1980; and *National Concord (Lagos)*, 30 September 1980.
14. Sammy Kum Buo, "Africa and the Bomb", *West Africa* 2 January 1984, pp. 21. See also T. Adeniran "Nuclear proliferation and black Africa: the coming crisis of choice" *The Third World Quarterly* 3, 4 (October 1981), pp. 672-683.
15. For the extensive collaboration between South Africa and NATO powers in the nuclear field, see *U.S. Military Involvement in Southern Africa* edited by Massachusetts Association of Concerned Africa Scholars. Chapter Nine; Z. Cervenka and Barbara Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis — secret collaboration between West Germany and South Africa*; N.Y.: Freedman, 1978; and J.E. Spence, "South Africa: the Nuclear option" in J. Roherty *Defence Policy Formation* (Durman: Carolina Academic Press, 1980).
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probable South Africa – Israeli test of a nuclear device in the Southern Oceans (between South Africa and the Antarctica). Although for political reasons, the Carter Administration preferred ambiguity to outright confirmation, it was, nevertheless, revealed in a British television programme, 'World in Action', that South Africa obtained previous to the incident, 3,000,000 shell casings capable of delivering a two-to-three kiloton nuclear device with the connivance of American officials in the Pentagon. See Thomas O'Toole, "New Zealand Confirms Mystery Atom Test" *The Guardian Weekly* (Manchester) 25 November 1979, and "SA Ships in Zone of Suspected N-Blast", *The Guardian* (London) January 31, 1980.

17. These include nuclear artillery (e.g. The American 155 MGS Howitzer presently assembled in South Africa), battle-field missiles (e.g. Cactus), aerial bombs and air-to-ground missiles (for its canberras, Buccanners, and Mirage).
18. See "Shagari Addresses Foreign Policy Body" *Daily Times*, 6 October 1980.
19. Frank Barnaby, "Can Nuclear-Weapon Proliferation be prevented?" *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, 1, 1977, p. 12.
20. Despite the segregation of its inhabitants along racial lines, the so-called "White South Africa" is still, in fact, overwhelmingly black as Slovo, among others, have noted. It is white "only in relation to access to wealth and power". J. Slovo et. al *Southern Africa* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1977) p. 111. Besides, given the range of destruction of such family of weapons, even the neighbouring African states cannot be insulated from collateral damages.
21. Editorial, *New Nigerian* (Kaduna), 24 November 1980, p. 1
22. Henderson, *Op. Cit.* 121.
23. This tendency towards elite (bureaucratic, institutional, policy etc.) coalitions, bargaining and competition on issues of national security was clearly apparent in the *laissez faire* politics in The Second Republic. The issue concerning organisational task expansion and funding for the Atomic Energy Commission was raised by a member of the finance committee of the National Assembly at a Conference on Science and Technology (NIPSS, Kuru, 14-17 March 1983) and immediately became a subject of passionate debate.
24. Amoda, *Op. Cit.* p. 187.
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26. For a critique of NPT resolutions, see Asok Kapur, "Nuclear Proliferation in the 1980s" *International Organization* 36, 3, (Summer 1981), pp. 535-555. Richard Betts, "Paranoias, Pygmies, Pariahs and Non-proliferation" *Foreign Policy* 59, 4 (Spring 1981), pp. 875-894; and Louis Rene Beres, "The Porcupine Theory of Nuclear Proliferation: Shortening the quills," *Parameters* 9, 3 (September 1979), pp. 31-37.
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28. Lodgaard, *Op. Cit.* p. 23.
29. Henderson, *Op. Cit.* p. 412.
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A RESEARCH NOTE

THE EARLY EVANGELIZATION OF BENIN: FURTHER REFLECTIONS

The Middle period of African Church history between early North and East African, and the 19th–20th century, missionary movement—is one of the least known but most fascinating episodes in the history of the Church. I have presented the main events of this period in my book, *A history of the Catholic Church in Tropical Africa 1445–1850*¹. Particularly intriguing is the discovery, when the Portuguese first came to Benin in the latter part of the 15th century of evidence of previous Christian influence.²

Christian influence from the African hinterland

Joao de Barros described a cross which the Benin king wore around his neck. It was sent from the "Ogane". The Benin ambassador to the Ogane wore a similar cross.³ That this cross is a Christian symbol fits well with its shape, as seen on carvings and bronzes, which is the Nubian cross, and with the presence of a chain of Christian influence and/or such crosses from Nubia right to Benin.

The identity to the Ogane is more problematic. De Barros thought he was "Prester John" or the emperor of Ethiopia. Hodgkin⁴ and Obayemi⁵, following Samuel Johnson's theory, that Ife was the cradle of the Yoruba, speculated that the Ogane was the Ooni of Ife. Recent writers have challenged Johnson's theory, which was the foundation of the pan-Yoruba ideology of Awolowo's party. A. Ryder, for instance, argues that de Barros' indication that Ogane's capital was 20 moons to the east cannot be taken literally, but it does make us look elsewhere than Ife.⁶ He finds the Niger valley a likely direction, and speculates that Idah, Nupe country or Jukun could be the site, especially since in these places is found the "cat's whisker" facial mark, which is found on the representations of Ogane's messenger. Corroborating Ryder is D. William's *Icon and Image*⁷ which points out important differences between Benin and Ife art work and speculates that Benin art styles originated first from a tradition of non-figurative brass casting coming across the Sahara down through Jukun. The figurative brass casting he attributes to European influence. Another writer, A. Obayemi, in a later article, goes further and reduces Ife to one small Yoruba kingdom among many, arguing that its fame was merely due to its bead industry.⁸

The latest important contribution to the discussion is Robin Horton's "Ancient Ife: a reassessment."⁹ In this long and complicated article, he reviews all the previous theories and weighs the evidences for them. Sirpri-